

The Jeffrey Rubinoff Sculpture Park

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Paths to Understanding the Sculpture of Jeffrey Rubinoff

Proceedings of the 2015 Company of Ideas Forum of The Jeffrey Rubinoff Sculpture Park

2015 Forum Convenor

Dr. Maria Tippett

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Preface

This volume is the record of proceedings of the eighth annual Forum held at The Jeffrey Rubinoff Sculpture Park. The purpose of the Forum series is to advance the perception of art as a source of knowledge.

The 2015 Forum was convened by noted Canadian cultural historian Dr. Maria Tippett. It considered the ways in which the work of Jeffrey Rubinoff and other sculptors related to their writings and photography, as well as to their understanding of Modernism and the perception of music.

Each of the dialogue sessions was introduced by an expert in the field, after which Jeffrey Rubinoff was invited to comment from an artist's perspective.

Following Rubinoff's comments, Dr. Maria Tippett moderated a discussion among all delegates and participants.

The Dialogue Topics

Dialogue Session 1

Artists and Writers: a creative tension

Discussion leaders: Peter Clarke and Linda Goddard

Introduction to the Ideas of Jeffrey Rubinoff

Peter introduced the Forum to Jeffrey Rubinoff's writings about his own work. He argues that few artists write so much and so well about their own work as Jeffrey Rubinoff does.

Verbal and visual communication in historical perspective

Linda has recently published a book and article on artists as writers, and argues that "artists' writings," as she puts it, should be read as a specific type of literature with its own modes and purposes, which has not yet been satisfactorily understood.

Dialogue Session 2

Sculpture and Modernism

Discussion leader: Alistair Rider

Alistair explored the history of modernism in relation to sculpture, and placed Jeffrey's work within that tradition.

Dialogue Session 3

Sculpture, Music and Counterpoint: Strange Bedfellows?

Discussion Leader: Christopher Butterfield

Christopher described the concept of counterpoint in music with a view to its spatial and physical characteristics, and illustrated it with examples from Bach, Varese, and Reich.

Dialogue Session 4

Sculpture and photography: Who should call the shots?

Discussion Leader: Sergei Petrov

Sergei discussed the various considerations that go into how sculpture is photographed. Jeffrey Rubinoff related his own experiences in this respect and explained how artists can give a special rendering of their work when photographing it themselves.

2015 Company of Ideas Forum Delegates' Biographies

Delegates from the University of Victoria

Art History and Visual Studies

Dr. Allan Antliff

Allan Antliff began his appointment as Canada Research Chair at the University of Victoria in 2003. He has taught courses on activism and art, anarchist aesthetics, Russian Constructivism, New York Dada, and a host of other subjects dealing with modernism and contemporary art. In addition to his art historical work, he is Director of the Anarchist Archive at the University of Victoria where he is involved with archival acquisitions and the development of the Archive's Digitization Centre and on-line Virtual Archive. Allan is art editor for the interdisciplinary journals *Anarchist Studies* and *Anarchist Developments in Cultural Studies*.

Allan is the author of three books and is editor of *Only a Beginning*, an anthology of the anarchist movement in Canada. Active as a theorist and art historian, he has written on a wide range of topics including pedagogy, post-structuralism, new media, and aesthetics. In his role as art critic he has published numerous art reviews and feature articles in journals such as *Canadian Art Magazine*, *Fuse*, *C Magazine*, and *Galleries West*. He has also contributed to exhibition catalogues for the Whitney Museum of Art, the Vancouver Art Gallery, and other institutions. Allan has produced two feature programs for CBC Radio: *Guernica: A Political Odyssey*, (2007); *Anarchy and Art and Activism* (2002).

Dr. Marcus Milwright

Marcus Milwright is professor of Islamic art and archaeology in the Department of Art History and Visual Studies at the University of Victoria. He has held fellowships at the Aga Khan Programs for Islamic Architecture at Harvard and MIT and the Doris Duke Foundation for Islamic Art at Shangri La (Honolulu). His research interests include the art and archaeology of the Islamic Middle East, labour and craft practices in the urban environment, and cross-cultural contacts in the Medieval Mediterranean. He has published *The Fortress of the Raven: Karak in the Middle Islamic Period (1100-1650)* (Brill, 2008) and *An Introduction to Islamic Archaeology* (Edinburgh University Press, 2010). His forthcoming book with Edinburgh University Press offers a new interpretation of the Umayyad mosaic inscriptions of the Dome of the Rock. He is also working on a history of the balsam of Matariyya in Egypt; an anthology of primary sources describing traditional craft practices in the Islamic world; and analysis of an Arabic dictionary of the crafts of Damascus written between c. 1890 and 1908.

Alexandra Macdonald

Alexandra Macdonald is a first-year MA candidate in the Art History and Visual Studies Department at the University of Victoria. Her research interests include textiles, clothing and self-fashioning through dress, the social life of things, material culture studies of the English gentility and aristocracy, cultural representations of female life stages, and gender studies in Stuart and Georgian England. Her past research has focused on ecclesiastic textiles in community parishes, documenting these works to contribute to a more nuanced understanding of the relationship between material culture and communal memory.

Alexandra's current research centres on Johan Zoffany's conversation pieces to build a new understanding of female sociability and material culture in Georgian England.

Natalie Massong

Natalie Massong holds a BA in Mediterranean Studies and an MA in Art History & Visual Studies from the University of Victoria. She received a Fellowship and a Joseph Armand Bombardier Canada Graduate Scholarship for her master's studies. Natalie's main research interests encompass Medieval and Early Modern Europe focussing on Italian public spaces and their art objects. Using the case study of Bologna, her work has explored the evolution of civic sculpture and space and the the formation of the Republic's identity. Building on Natalie's master's work, her doctoral research will examine the impact of sculpture and space on the experience of the early modern citizen. She has been accepted to pursue doctoral studies in History of Art at Trinity Hall, Cambridge University.

School of Music

Christopher Butterfield

Composer Christopher Butterfield's career highlights include the production of his opera *Zurich 1916*, at the Banff Summer Festival in 1998; a position as composer in residence of the Victoria Symphony 1999-2002; the premiere of his score for Bill Coleman's dance epic *Convoy PQ17* in St. Petersburg, Russia in 2001 (remounted in St. Petersburg in 2005, and Victoria BC in 2013); and the first performance of his complete settings of Jacques Prévert's *Contes pour enfants pas sages* in Toronto by Continuum Contemporary Music and Choir 21 (2012). For five months in 2007 he was a fellow at the Camargo Foundation in Cassis, France. Recent activities include co-ordinating and curating the Cage 100 Festival in Victoria (2012), celebrating American composer John Cage's centenary, with the Victoria Symphony, Open Space, the Art Gallery of Greater Victoria, and the University of Victoria; and judging the International Gaudeamus Composition competition in Utrecht, Netherlands (2012), where his piece *Bosquet, for 22 flutes and 1 'cello* was performed. In March 2014, Victoria's Aventa Ensemble and percussionist Rick Sacks toured 5 cities in Canada and the USA performing *parc*, a vibraphone concerto commissioned by the group. Butterfield's translation of three plays by Paris Dada Georges Ribemont-Dessaignes was published by the Wakefield Press in Cambridge, MA (2015). Since 1977 he has been the recipient of many commissions from the Canada Council for the Arts, and the Ontario and BC Arts Council.

Janet Sit

Janet Sit is an M.Mus. candidate studying composition with Christopher Butterfield at the University of Victoria. Her research examines whale behavioural responses to anthropogenic sounds (specifically sonar), and uses the scientific data in a variety of compositional processes. Janet's recent work has employed interactive technologies in an installation setting, and she continues to apply her scientific and artistic training in the creation of multidisciplinary works that explore new media. Her compositions have been performed in Beijing, Berlin, Toronto, and Vancouver by ensembles such as Arraymusic and Quatuor Bozzini. In addition to studying with Alexander Rapoport and Norbert Palej in Toronto, Janet has received critique on her work from Marc Sabat, Samuel Adler, and Chen Yi. She is a member of the Victoria Composers' Collective and also performs in the local new music scene. Janet holds a B.Mus. in Composition (2012) and a B.Sc. in Zoology (2004) from the University of Toronto, as well as an ARCT in piano performance from the Royal Conservatory of Music (2008). In 2014, she was awarded the Joseph-Armand Bombardier

Canada Graduate Master's Scholarship (SSHRC). She enjoys volunteering as a theory instructor for the Victoria Children's Choir and contributing to music events in the community.

Department of Theatre

Dr. Jennifer Wise

Jennifer Wise is an award-winning playwright, translator, theatre historian, and associate professor in the Department of Theatre at the University of Victoria. Her work is published in Canada, Germany, the U.S., and the U.K. in *Theater der Zeit Recherchen*, *Reader's Digest*, *Theatre Survey*, *Arethusa*, and *Theatre Research International*. Her books include *Dionysus Writes: The Invention of Theatre in Ancient Greece* (Cornell 1998), *The Broadview Anthology of Drama* (as co-editor), *Hudson's Bay Journals* (as illustrator), and Methuen's new *The Resistible Rise of Arturo Ui* by Brecht (as translator). Her site-specific comedy *The Girl Rabbi of the Golden West* won the 2013 Canadian Jewish Playwriting Competition, and her play about Galileo's children, *Orbit*, written for the International Year of Astronomy (2009), inaugurated the theatre of the Snøhetta-designed Isabel Bader Centre for the Performing Arts in Kingston, Ontario, in 2014. Jennifer works and teaches in the areas of theatre and technology, theories of acting, opera history, and theatre and democratic revolutions. SHE is currently working on a book for Northwestern University Press about how theatre people, plays, and playhouse practices between 1688 and 1730 contributed to the secularization and democratization of Europe.

Alan Brodie

Alan Brodie, MFA candidate in directing, is a theatrical lighting designer based in Vancouver, BC. For twenty-six years he has created lighting designs for professional theatre, dance, and opera productions across Canada, and periodically in America and Europe. Brodie has numerous design awards, including ten Jessie Richardson Awards for excellence in theatrical design (Vancouver), the Betty Mitchell Award (Calgary), the Sterling Award (Edmonton) and the Bay Area Theatre Critics Circle Award. He has twice been nominated for the Dora Mavor Moore Award in Toronto. In 2012 he was shortlisted for the \$100,000 Siminovitch Prize in Theatre, the largest individual award of its kind in Canada. Alan has taught in the theatre programs at the University of British Columbia, Langara College (Studio 58), the Banff Centre and the National Theatre School of Canada.

Department of Visual Arts

Paul Walde

Paul Walde, Chair of Visual Arts, is an intermedia artist, composer, and curator. He earned his BFA at the University of Western Ontario and his MA from New York University. Walde's body of work suggests unexpected interconnections between landscape, identity, and technology and includes painting, photography, printmaking, video, installation, and audio. His work has been included in numerous exhibitions in Canada and the United States, including: *Composition for Light Percussion and Ultrasound* at the Music Gallery, Toronto (2011) and *Polar Shift* at Museum London (2012). In 2013, his *Requiem for a Glacier* featuring a fifty-five-piece choir and orchestra, was performed on the Farnham Glacier in the Purcell Mountains. From 2007 to 2010, he was the Artistic Director and Visual Arts curator of the London Ontario Live Arts Festival. Paul is a founding member of Audio Lodge,

a Canadian experimental sound art collective and EMU Experimental Music Unit a Victoria-based sound ensemble.

Daniel S. Ellingsen

Born in the UK in 1968, Ellingsen has lived and worked on islands around the world. Primarily an installation artist and a sculptor, Ellingsen has exhibited in Canada and in the US. As a proud (former) member of the Fort Garry Ladies Pony Club and a lifetime member of Baldessari's Community of The Submerged, his work takes form in the poetic margins, often made from queer things stumbled across in ecotone's.

Department of Writing

Annabel Howard

Annabel Howard is an MFA student in the department of writing at the University of Victoria. She holds an undergraduate degree in art history from Oxford, graduating with first class honours. Since graduating she has taught at various museums, galleries, and schools in Italy and the United Kingdom. Her interests in writing and art history will be brought together in forthcoming books to be published by Laurence King. These include graphic biographies of Kandinsky and Caravaggio, and a survey of visionary artists to be co-authored with New York art historian, Mark Getlein. Annabel's studies in art history and her creative non-fiction have also appeared in magazines including *The White Review*, *The Spectator*, and *The World of Interiors*.

Delegates from the University of St Andrews

School of Art History

Dr. Linda Goddard

Linda Goddard teaches nineteenth- and twentieth-century European art and its intersections with literature. She has been a Junior Research Fellow at Churchill College, Cambridge, a British Academy Postdoctoral Fellow at The Courtauld Institute of Art, and a Member of the School of Historical Studies at the Institute for Advanced Study, Princeton. Her research focuses on relations between word and image, particularly in nineteenth- and twentieth-century France, and on artists' writings. She is the author of *Aesthetic Rivalries: word and image in France, 1880-1926* (Peter Lang, 2012), which explores the tensions as well as associations between literature and visual art during this period. Interactions between the arts are also central to her new book project, on the writings of Paul Gauguin, and to a collection of essays that she edited for a special issue of *Word & Image* on 'Artists' writings 1850-present' (2012). Her interests in word-image relations also include the visual and literary cultures of travel and colonialism, the connections between visual art and autobiography, and the writing of art's histories.

Dr. Alistair Rider

Alistair Riders research includes sculpture, as well as the historical period 1950-1980. He has a special interest in minimalism in the United States, which he explored in his first book, *Carl Andre: Things in their Elements* (2011). This study suggests adopting a wider approach to the study of minimal art, one that recognizes the extent to which it is dependent on its

historically specific context for its impact. His recent research engages with notions of artistic selfhood. He is completing a book-length study of twentieth-century artists who chose to pursue long-term art projects, and whose ongoing practice has become equally — if not more — important than their individual works. This investigation involves exploring the ways in which artists' lives intersect with wider cultural debates focussing on 'how' we should live. For several years he has been studying these issues with the poet Thomas A. Clark and together they have contributed to a blog called 'The Single Road', <http://thesingleroad.blogspot.com>. The site currently receives around 1000 hits per month. More broadly, Alistair Rider has an interest in theories of modern sculpture from the nineteenth century to the present day. He is particularly concerned with questions relating to materiality, durability, contingency, manufacture, scale, modes of display, and issues relating to point of view and location, as well as processes of perception. In recent years his research has embraced artists from a range of different countries, including Brazil, Germany, Poland, Italy, and Canada.

Delegates from Dalhousie University

Department of History

Dr. Mona Holmlund

Mona Holmlund is an assistant professor in the Department of History at Dalhousie University, specializing in visual culture and art history. Dr. Holmlund is also the author of *Better Off Forgetting? Essays on Archives, Public Policy and Collecting Memory*, with Cheryl Avery, (University of Toronto Press, 2010); *SHIFTS: Art and Art History at the University of Saskatchewan*, (Kenderdine Art Gallery, 2010); *Inspiring Women: A Celebration of Herstory*, with Gail Youngberg, forward by Margaret Atwood (Coteau Books, 2003); and *Women Together: Portraits of Love, Commitment and Life*, (Running Press, 1999). Dr. Holmlund earned her Ph.D. in History from the University of Cambridge, under the supervision of Dr. Maria Tippett.

Delegates from Cambridge University

Faculty of History

Dr. Maria Tippett

Maria Tippett is a Canadian cultural historian, the author of fifteen books one of which who won the Governor General's Award for English language non-fiction in 1979. Raised in Victoria, Maria lived in Europe for three years following high school then attended Simon Fraser University. In 1982 she received her doctorate in history from the University of London. Tippett has been a member of the editorial boards of the *Canadian Historical Review*, *Arts Canada* and *Art Focus*, and was an Arts Journalist fellow at The Banff Centre in 1988. In 1989, Tippett was a guest curator at the London Regional Art Gallery in London Ontario and from 1996-2000 chair of the Churchill College Art Gallery in Cambridge. In 1992 she was elected a fellow of the Royal Society of Canada. She has received honorary doctorates from Windsor University (1994) and from the University of Victoria and Simon Fraser University (2006).

Dr. Peter Clarke

Peter Clarke completed his BA in 1963, his MA and PhD in 1967, and was awarded a LittD in 1989 at Cambridge University. Peter was reader in modern history at University College, London from 1978 to 1980, lecturer in history from 1980 to 1987 at the University of Cambridge, fellow of St John's College, Cambridge from 1980 to 2000, tutor at St John's College from 1982 to 1987, reader in modern history from 1987 to 1991, and professor of modern British history from 1991 to 2004. Peter was elected a fellow of the British Academy for the Humanities and Social Sciences in 1989. He was master of Trinity Hall, Cambridge, from October 2000 to 2004. Peter Clarke has published twelve major books on aspects of British political history in the late 19th and 20th centuries, including: *The Keynesian Revolution in the Making 1924-1936* (1988). He is the author of Volume Nine of the *Penguin History of Britain*, "Hope and Glory, Britain 1900-1990." He writes regularly on history and politics for *The Times Literary Supplement* and *The London Review of Books*.

Independent delegates

Jeffrey Rubinoff

Jeffrey Rubinoff is a leading Canadian sculptor. He completed his BA and MFA in the 1960s in the United States, returning to Canada in 1969. Rubinoff's one-man shows were held at the Helen Mazelow Gallery, the Ontario Science Center, the Nathan Manilow Sculpture Park, Queen's Park Toronto, York University, and at the Two Sculptors Gallery in New York. As the co-founder and director of the latter gallery Rubinoff mounted exhibitions by sculptors including David Smith, Alexander Calder, Anthony Caro, Mark di Suvero, Nancy Graves, George Rickey, Beverly Pepper, Tony Smith, and Robert Murray. In 1973, Rubinoff purchased an 80-hectare farm on Hornby Island, off the west coast of British Columbia, Canada that became the Jeffrey Rubinoff Sculpture Park. Living and working on-site, he has created over one hundred sculptures, constructing each piece alone in his studio from Corten or stainless steel. Located in the former barn, the studio is uniquely equipped with a one-man steel foundry, making it possible for Rubinoff to cast the complex shapes evident in his later series.

Sergei Petrov

Born in Moscow in 1953, Sergei Petrov graduated from the elite Moscow Institute of Physics and Technology. He earned his advanced degree in the Reliability of Complex Electronic Systems at the Soviet Centre of Advanced Defence Studies in Moscow. His professional photographic career began in 1978 when Sergei left his position as a researcher in the Soviet defence industry and began working for leading Russian publishing houses. He photographed sculpture and paintings in the Tretyakov Gallery in Moscow and the Hermitage in Saint Petersburg. In 1981, he became a dissident, first coming to international attention in 1982 when he spent 50 days on a hunger strike in an attempt to emigrate. Unable to leave the Soviet Union, Sergei completed a number of assignments for Western magazines including *Architectural Digest*, *Discover*, *New York Times Magazine*, and *Le Figaro*. In 1988 an "in absentia" exhibition of his work was opened at the State Department in Washington DC by former US Secretary of State George Shultz. The following year Sergei was finally permitted to leave the Soviet Union, the culmination of years of sustained pressure from the US Government and, in particular, President Reagan and the US Ambassador to Moscow, Arthur Hartman, and his wife, Donna. His art was featured in *American Photographer* and *The Washington Post Magazine*. In 1991 The Corcoran Gallery of Art made a purchase of his work. Sergei's art was featured in the *Masterpieces of the*

Russian Underground project at Lincoln Center in New York in 2003. He continues to pursue his passion for art and continues his research in information technology and data security.

Attending Board members, Staff, and other Observers

Leba Rubinoff
Charo Neville
Betty Kennedy
Craig Willms
John Kirk
Karun Koernig
Robert Denning
Brad Buie
Marlowe Rainey
Susan Cain
Vaughn Neville
Heather Goldman
Dick Goldman
Bruce Jolliffe
Doug DeMarzo

Dialogues

{Edited dialogue transcriptions available upon request}