



SCULPTURE AND ITS RELATION TO WRITING, MUSIC, PHOTOGRAPHY AND MODERNISM



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Proceedings of the 2015 Company of Ideas Forum

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at The Jeffrey Rubinoff Sculpture Park

2015 Forum Convenor

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ISBN 978-0-9917154-6-6

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PREFACE

This volume is a record of the proceedings of the Company of Ideas Forum held at The Jeffrey Rubinoff Sculpture Park in June 2015.

The purpose of the Company of Ideas Forums, of which this is the eighth, is to advance the perception of art as a source of knowledge. This year's forum, convened by the Canadian cultural historian Dr. Maria Tippett, considers the ways in which the work of Jeffrey Rubinoff and his contemporaries relates to the printed word, to photography, to music, and to modernism.

Following each session, the Forum's patron, Jeffrey Rubinoff, was invited to respond with his own observations before the discussion was opened to the delegates and observers.

INTRODUCTION

by Maria Tippett

As a biographer, a cultural historian and as the chair of the 2015 Company of Ideas Forum, I'd like to give you a sense of the world into which Jeffrey Rubinoff was born — London, Ontario, 1945. At the time of Jeffrey's birth, the Second World War had just ended and the Cold War had just begun. Sculpture in Canada was dominated by the practitioners of the Beaux-Arts tradition. These largely academic artists founded the Sculpture Society of Canada. They presided over classrooms in art schools across the country. They were the beneficiaries of lucrative provincial and federal government commissions. However, by the time Jeffrey graduated from high school in the early 1960s, things had radically changed since 1945. The Sculpture Society of Canada had lost its prominence. Modernist sculptors, like Vancouver's Lionel Thomas (1915-2005), were demanding that 'there must be no artistic compromise — an attempt to impose academic realism must be resisted.'¹ Thomas, along with his fellow Modernist sculptors, were collaborating with architects to create new 'cityscapes' in Canada's major cities and airports. They were teaching at art schools and colleges. They were forming sculpture societies in opposition to the Sculpture Society of Canada. They were exhibiting their sculptures in private art galleries and contributing their work to exhibitions around the world. And, from the late 1950s, they were the beneficiaries of funding from the newly-created Canada Council.

Despite all of this activity, Jeffrey chose to pursue his undergraduate education in the United States.

1 Lionel Thomas, 'An Artist Relates his Skills to Architecture' *Canadian Art* (Autumn 1955) 204

Jeffrey crossed the Canadian-American border in 1964. He spent three years in the History and Visual Arts Department at Michigan's Oakland University. Then he moved further south to the University of Oklahoma in Norman. It was here that Jeffrey fell in love with metal. Here that he began to create assemblages in welded steel and in bronze. And here that he met two visiting sculptors: Canada's leading Modernist sculptor, Robert Murray (1936-) and the American sculptor, Tony Smith (1912-1980) whose work and reclusive lifestyle would have a profound effect on the young sculptor.

After completing his Master of Fine Arts degree in 1969, Jeffrey returned to Canada. Initially, he worked in London, Ontario where he exhibited with a local group known as the Artists' Co-operative. Then, in 1970, the twenty-five-year-old artist moved his studio to Toronto. A year after that, Jeffrey's professional career was launched when his welded steel assemblages were exhibited at the Ontario Science Centre in Toronto and at the Helen Mazelow Gallery in the same city. It was also in the early 1970s that Jeffrey purchased two hundred acres of land on a remote island off the coast of British Columbia.

In 1973 Jeffrey became a permanent resident of Hornby Island. It was now, with the assistance of groundsman John Kirk, that he began turning the former farm into a sculpture park. The two men cleared the forest. They cut back the dense underbrush. They created berms and mounds. And, always under the directorship of Jeffrey, they dug small and large lakes and deep trenches. Creating the sculpture park was no easy task. 'This is a crushing environment for sculpture,' Jeffrey recently observed, 'because it's so sculptural itself.'² Within a few years, however, the farm's old

2 Jeffrey Rubinoff quoted in Karun Koernig, ed. *Perspectives on Art as a Source of Knowledge: Proceedings of the 2012 Company of Ideas Forum* (Hornby Island, BC: Jeffrey Rubinoff Sculpture Park, 2013) 48-49

barn had become Jeffrey's studio and the landscape his exhibition space.

Although Jeffrey was now living the reclusive lifestyle of his mentor, Tony Smith, and although by the end of the 1970s Modernist sculpture had been overtaken by Land Art, Pop and Performance Art, Neo-Conceptualism and Neo-Expressionism, among other movements and styles, Jeffrey Rubinoff never lost touch with the international centres of art. He travelled frequently to New York City. In 1980, he made the first of many visits to Italy in order to view Donatello's (1386-1466) small wooden sculpture of the penitent Mary Magdalene in Florence's Museo del-Opera del Domo and Michelangelo's four unfinished *Slaves* at the Accademia di Belle Arti. (This made the thirty-six-year-old artist realize the 'debt' that he owed to his 'ancestors.'³)

Jeffrey also continued to show his sculptures in Canada and the United States. In 1984, the prestigious Marlborough Gallery in New York began to show Jeffrey's work. A year later, the Nathan Manilow Sculpture Park in Chicago gave Jeffrey a solo exhibition. And a year after that, Ontario's York University put his work on display around the campus. In 1996, Jeffrey and fellow sculptor Don Bonham founded the *Two Sculptors* gallery in downtown Manhattan. Over the course of two years Jeffrey and Don not only showed their own work, they held exhibitions featuring Louise Nevelson (1899-1998), Alexander Calder (1898-1976), David Smith, Antony Caro (1924-2013), among other Modernist sculptors. More recently, New York's Beadleston Gallery exhibited Jeffrey's work alongside David Smith (1924-2013), Robert Murray, Beverly Pepper (1922-2020), among others, in an exhibition titled *20th Century Steel Sculpture*.

3 Jeffrey Rubinoff, 'Introduction to the 2010 Company of Ideas Forum, May 2010,' *Rubinoff on Art: The Collected Writings of Sculptor, Jeffrey Rubinoff* (Hornby Island, BC: Jeffrey Rubinoff Sculpture Park, 2013) 16

These are only a few of the ways in which Jeffrey has moved between the centre and the periphery of the art world. On Hornby Island itself, Jeffrey and Betty Kennedy have opened the sculpture park to the general public – Jeffrey often serving as a guide. They have hosted a series of chamber music concerts, again with no admission charge. And they have hosted annual forums to which scholars and artists from Europe and North America are invited to discuss art in general and to consider themes relating to Jeffrey Rubinoff's own sculpture.

This year marks the eighth Company of Ideas Forum. And I am sure that with the inclusion of writing, photography and music into the discourse, we can look forward to three rewarding days.

SESSION 1. ARTISTS AND WRITERS: A CREATIVE TENSION

INTRODUCTION TO THE IDEAS OF JEFFREY RUBINOFF

by Peter Clarke

This introduction will mainly concern itself with the ideas expressed in Jeffrey Rubinoff's writings, many of them collected in the new edition of his work, *Rubinoff on Art*.⁴ What you will find if you look at this book is that it's not about Jeffrey's own work at all. He has a very clear view that the work actually speaks for itself, that we recover its meaning by responding directly to the work, not by reading about it. His works convey the sense that the sculpture has not done its own work if it needs a lot of exegesis and if it needs a lot of verbal justification. Nonetheless, Jeffrey has shown himself to be a very able and productive writer. Indeed, his writings are quite extensive and what is collected in *Rubinoff on Art* are essentially pieces that he first gave as papers to previous meetings of the Company of Ideas Forum.

There is a deep significance to the series of aphorisms that he has presented to the Forums more than once. During the 2011 Forum that I attended, Jeffrey presented a paper that finished with six aphorisms, which we were left to ponder at that time. When I returned to the Forum in 2012 and Jeffrey spoke, we had the same 6 aphorisms presented again. I have playfully referred to this as a possible charge of 'self-plagiarism', but we can acquit him because of the crucial weight and significance that he gives to these aphorisms.

⁴ Jeffrey Rubinoff *Rubinoff on Art*, The Collected Writings of Sculptor Jeffrey Rubinoff (Hornby Island, British Columbia: The Jeffrey Rubinoff Sculpture Park, 2013)

The six aphorisms were:

‘I was born in the shadow of the end game.’

‘I am an artist.’

‘Art is an act of will in accordance with a mature conscience.’

‘There can be no resignation.’

‘The artist is witness to existence itself.’

‘Art is the celebration.’

Now clearly Jeffrey attaches great importance to these aphorisms, which are an elegant and economical way of formulating these ideas. Nevertheless, although they have their own beauty in this very abbreviated form, I think that some of us with more literal minds need to do a bit more digging to see what he is really saying. To do that, we need to unpack these aphorisms.

The first one, ‘I was born in the shadow of the end game’, implies the shadow of nuclear war which hung over his early years in London, Ontario, when he would watch the bombers overhead and go through bomb drills in school. We can see that there is obvious biographical significance here and this consciousness of nuclear war is not just a childhood memory; it is something that certainly stayed with him into adulthood.

Secondly, he tells us that he is an artist. As Maria has indicated, Jeffrey took this commitment with due professional seriousness and enlisted in various programs in which he acquired the technical skills as well as the expansion of his aesthetic understanding in order to equip himself for this role. His emergence as a sculptor recognized this.

Then we come to the third aphorism: ‘Art is an act of will in accordance with a mature conscience.’ I think this is perhaps the most important statement and the one that requires the most unpacking. What Jeffrey is saying is that art is not just a pleasant or pleasure-loving activity; it has a more fundamental or serious purpose and the artist, in executing his or her work, should be fulfilling this purpose. In particular, what Jeffrey means is that the artist must be concerned with what he calls the existential realities of the artist’s time. What are these?

The first one is nuclear deterrence – this shadow of the end-game – the awareness of the fate of the world dangling in this way. The second one is transgenic engineering which he has become increasingly concerned with in recent years. It is important to understand here that he does not mean that he has any hostility or even scepticism towards genetic research. Nor does he condemn the kind of individual genetic modification that might help in medical extremities. What Jeffrey is concerned with is transgenic engineering of a kind that would alter the fundamental genetic basis of evolution of the human species.

Jeffrey mentions global warming, as a third possible existential reality of our time. It may seem an obvious issue that a mature conscience ought to be concerned with. But after some thought, he dismisses it from his list on grounds that there is a means of solving it without the sort of intervention that he is otherwise talking about.

So, the third existential reality is actually art itself. He means that there is a very specific, and indeed even crucial, need for the artist (who acts in accordance with a mature conscience) not to engage in propaganda or to use his or her prominence as an artist to gain our attention through the print media or other verbal formulations, but to produce art itself. This conclusion is implied in Jeffrey’s assertion that ‘art is self-contained truth.’

So, I pass rather quickly over the last three aphorisms – ‘there can be no resignation’, ‘the artist is witness to existence itself’, and ‘art is the celebration’ – which all seem to me to be variations on that important theme.

If ‘art is self-contained truth’ do we conclude from this that, for Jeffrey, art is superior to science? No, but science is different from art in that, as Jeffrey puts it, ‘science is truth by analogy, art is truth by metaphor’. Now analogy and metaphor are terms that we sometimes use in a rather sloppy way, as though they mean the same thing. The difference is that analogy can be explicated – you can deploy yet further analogies if someone does not understand it. You can explain exactly what you mean by the analogy. Metaphor works through its immediate impact on the spot – either it works or it does not. So, Jeffrey is suggesting a methodological distinction between art and science.

Two further points need to be noted. First of all, that art is older than science. The origins of science and mathematics are ancient; indeed, the Greeks and the ancient Egyptians laid the foundations. But the origins of art can be found no less than 35,000 years ago in the caves of Chauvet, and hence the significance for Jeffrey of what he calls the ‘age of agriculture’.

I must admit that the significance of this concept puzzled me for some time in my early days at these Forums. I now realize that what Jeffrey means by this is the widespread significance of the historical move towards the protection of crops and arable land by a warrior class. Historically it boils down to this: if you were going to grow crops you had to protect them and hence the need for warriors.

However, does that lead Jeffrey to conclude that war is part of the human condition? No, he would disagree with philosophers like Thomas Hobbes who tells us that the war of every man against

every man is absolutely endemic within ourselves. Yet what is missing in the 35,000-year-old paintings of the caves of Chauvet in France, Jeffrey tells us, is any depiction of warfare.

Jeffrey is making the point that art is certainly older than science and that art is also older than war itself. Because, if he is right in this interpretation of Chauvet and what these early examples of cave art are showing us, art is a more fundamental human need existing prior to the rise of the warrior class in the age of agriculture. The artist precedes the warrior here. This important argument suggests why Jeffrey writes about the general status of art in history, as well as about his own particular work.

VERBAL AND VISUAL COMMUNICATION IN HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE

by Linda Goddard

I would like to open up by discussing three key issues related to artists' writings: the relationship of their words to their art works, the value of their writings for art history, and the way in which artists themselves write about their art. Can we identify a distinctive type or set of concerns?

It is common for visual artists to write – and has been throughout history – but it's perhaps just as common for artists to express some reservations about this writing and about how it might relate to their practice. It might be helpful to begin with Jeffrey Rubinoff's own thoughts on this topic in his collective writings.⁵ In them he describes his statements as insights that evolved with and from the sculpture. He also explains that his insights are realized as ideas in the sculptures. I take this to mean that his ideas did not precede the work in the sense of providing some form of program for it. Nor do his insights explain his work retrospectively. His ideas find expression in the works, initially, which may then themselves suggest other ways of formulating these ideas verbally. His emphasis on the independence of the work of art from *a priori* ideas, as well as from art critical or art historical interpretations, has a long history.

The period in which I have specialized, which has been the latter part of the nineteenth century, two factors have brought this issue to a crisis point. Firstly, there is the rise of the critic and

the increasing power of the writer over the reputations and livelihoods of artists. And secondly, and this relates particularly to painting, I've noted a move away from narrative, specifically from an expectation that literature supplies the themes for painting. At the same time, as visual artists were finding a new level of independence in their means of expression, writers claimed that they held the key to interpretation as critics, poets, and novelists. This sense of rivalry between the printed word and the work of art explains why visual artists have written about their work in order to prevent misinterpretation.

Here are a few examples. The French nineteenth Century painter Thomas Couture (1815-1879) said, 'what I am writing is not literature'; Paul Gauguin (1848-1903): 'I am not a writer'; Ad Reinhart (1913-1967): 'I never say anything about my paintings'; Mel Bochner (1940-): 'The idea of being a writer was the furthest thing from my mind'. In his famous 'Ten O'clock Lecture' of 1885 James McNeill Whistler (1834-1903) denounced the critic as a middleman whose literary explanations distort the painters' poetry of colour and forms. In 1902, Paul Gauguin wrote a piece which he called counter critics. In it he called 'Dauber's Gossip', suggesting that under no circumstances do painters need the support or instruction of literary men. This may help to explain why artists seem hesitant about the writing that they do and help us to understand why they want to assert their distance from professional writers.

Artists' writing, of course, is not just defensive. It can offer insights or can be a creative form of expression in its own right. Despite the reservation that artists seem to have concerning verbal expression, their writings have played an undeniable role in the shaping of art history. Jeffrey Rubinoff speaks of an artist's history – as opposed to an art history – and a history of art by artists. He admits to being much more receptive to art history when it's written by historians who were, or at least wanted, to be artists.

⁵ Jeffrey Rubinoff Rubinoff on Art, The Collected Writings of Sculptor Jeffrey Rubinoff (Hornby Island, British Columbia: The Jeffrey Rubinoff Sculpture Park, 2013)

He rightly points to the significance of Giorgio Vasari's (1511-1574) *Lives of the Most Eminent Painters, Sculptors, and Architects* (1550), which is widely considered to be one of the foundation texts of art history written by a painter. A century earlier, the memoirs of the Florentine sculptor Lorenzo Ghiberti (1378-1455) or *Craftsman's Handbook* (turn of the fifteenth century) by the Italian painter Cennino d'Andrea Cennini's (1360- ca. 1437) are also key moments in the history of Western art writing.

Artists have always written but, since the twentieth century there has been a veritable explosion of their manifestos, memoirs, and criticism. For example, Jeffrey Rubinoff has particular praise for Wassily Kandinsky's (1866-1944) *Concerning the Spiritual in Art* (1911). There are other examples that are far too many to mention. Even so, I want to note two book series that indicate how seriously artists writings are taken as contributions to art theory. One is the *Documents of Modern Art* series edited by the Abstract Expressionist painter Robert Motherwell (1915-1991), beginning in 1944. The other is MIT Press's *Writing Art* series (1991-). The latter on-going series consists of writings by largely twentieth century post-war artists. The rubric for this series is quite helpful in thinking through how we might interpret artists' words. It and argues that:

Writings by artists convey a specific type of knowledge or way of thinking about artistic practice that the writings of professional and academic observers do not. It is not just a matter of an artist's text filling discursive gaps between critical writing and artistic production. It is also a question of texts by artists creating intellectual, political, and cultural possibilities that would not otherwise exist.

This suggests that artists' writings have an interest in their own right, in part, because they are able to make connections between ideas and practice. This connection which is unique to artists who

write, might be something that unites what otherwise seems to be an extraordinarily diverse field with problematic borderlines. After all, this category of artists' writings could include statements, manifestos, interviews, art theory or criticism, or manuals or treatises, or correspondence, diaries, autobiography, artists' books, text-based artwork and even poetry or fiction.

In thinking about this category, should we distinguish between public and private writing, between artists' writings, or art work that consists of texts? It is often very difficult to draw the lines here. Is a poem or a novel still an artist's writing or is it a work of literature that just happens to be written by an artist?

I want to end my talk by noting one feature that seems common to many artists' writings, one that was mentioned by Peter and this is a tendency towards aphorism—directness, brevity of statement, the use of epigrams, and so on. George Braque's (1882-1963) *Thoughts and Reflections on Painting* (1917) is one famous example. Braque's tome features pithy statements such as 'the painter thinks in terms of form and colour' or 'new means, new subjects'. Jeffrey's statement on Donatello – 'the surprising power and overwhelming presence of Donatello's *Magdalen* simply is' – seems to fit into this tradition. The statement itself has an arresting quality and frankness that accords with the qualities of the sculpture, without offering detailed description of it.⁶

It seems logical that artists who have something to say, but are resistant to the notion that words can explain the visual, would lean towards modes of writing that are less discursive. In the work that I have been doing lately the French symbolist painter Paul Gauguin, I have found an extraordinary creativity in writing that

⁶ Jeffrey Rubinoff Rubinoff on Art, *The Collected Writings of Sculptor Jeffrey Rubinoff* (Hornby Island, British Columbia: The Jeffrey Rubinoff Sculpture Park, 2013) 25.

deliberately resists the conventions of standard prose – such as analysis, description, narrative development – and instead uses techniques such as assemblage of voices, pseudonyms, anecdote and aphorisms, quotation and poetry.⁷ This is writing that tells us something about Gauguin's practice as an artist, but it is not criticism and it is not history; it is its own category – artists' writing.

⁷ See Linda Goddard's recently published, *Savage Tales, the writings of Paul Gauguin* (Princeton: Yale University Press, 2019)

DIALOGUE ON ARTISTS AND WRITERS

Jeffrey Rubinoff: For me, writing evolved from an odd place. The ideas were flowing from the work. I could not really call them ideas because they had not been hashed out by anyone publicly. They were self-contained within the work; they were an argument of art history itself. (If the work cannot hold its own in its argument, then is not worth doing.)

What I found happened, which was a big surprise to me, was that the work could actually evolve ideas and not the other way around. This ran counter to the concept that the artwork was reflective of the culture it lived in and not itself capable of actually generating ideas. This is what really surprised me.

One of the most important ideas following from this is that art is an act of will in accordance with a mature conscience. The concept that individual conscience is an existential act grew from a statement made by the French novelist and philosopher, Simone de Beauvoir (1908-1986). The most important aspect of embracing this was that I was looking for a way for artists themselves to measure their own work. That meant that this was an artist-to-artist statement which could be broken down by asking two questions: has the art entered the work before the artist even begins it? And, has he or she accomplished their obligation to art by completing the work? In other words, does the art still reside in the work when the artist has finished it?

I had seen too many pieces throughout the history of art in which that had not happened. The art does not enter the work but the artist still manages to finish the work often hating it all the way through. The art work is left to history and the artist is often the only one who knows whether the art entered the work and

whether or not the artist fulfilled his or her obligation. That was the concept of an act of will in accord with a mature conscience. It does expand outward. It expands from art out into the world itself, which underscores Simone de Beauvoir's concept that individual conscience is an existential act.

My daughter Leba suggested that Karun Koernig might be the person to organize the Forums. When Karun first came to the sculpture park I took him on a tour of the work, after which he sat me down for three days and transcribed my verbal ideas. I choose to call my ideas insights since they had not been publicly discussed or debated at all. Once Karun had transcribed my insights, I realized that they could become a basis for a series of forums. During the first forum I tested some of my ideas on Karun and Leba's friends. Though the group was diverse and well educated, my insights – all of which were new to them – seemed to be over their heads.

One of the things that I have learned since that first Forum is that there are people who welcome ideas that they have never heard before and there are people who turn their backs on new ideas because they have never heard them before. There is a clear split between the two groups.

The ensuing Forums covered other aspects relating to my insights. They prompted me to start writing in order to expand my insights. If I had not done so, my ideas and insights would have remained simply a private part of what I understood about art. The idea of writing, then publishing the papers presented at the Forums, happened almost accidentally. Of course, we could have gone in a different direction altogether it just happens that we chose to go in this particular one.

The Forums have been very exciting because we have always been able to find a group of people to engaged with my insights.

And the process of doing so has brought my ideas to life. From initially being insights, they were given a kind of 'life-hood' by being discussed, documented and published at the conclusion of every forum.

But I really do hold, as I said earlier, that the work itself has to stand as its own argument in art history. If it does not, you have not done your job as an artist. The artist cannot really rationalize the work in terms of its historical significance. And it is always a surprise when the work itself actually produces ideas.

For several years, the forums have been explicitly on the theme of, 'Art as a source of knowledge' which is my perspective, especially on history. This is very different from other people's perspectives, just as an original work of art gives us an original perspective. As a source of knowledge, art changes people's perspectives. This, of course, is what the artist has to offer in terms of ideas: a perspective that has not been presented before. So, it follows that for those who turn their backs on things they have never heard before, the artist is perceived to be just talking into the air. But for those who are interested in things they have never heard before – given another way of looking and perceiving things – then the artist's work becomes valuable.

Marcus Milwright: There is this sort of underlying antagonism between artists' writings and the writings of critics and historians – particularly art historians – who are simply trying to explain things. And then, there is a problem between words and images. This makes me think about the way the art historian Michael Baxandall talks about what we do when we write about paintings. I wonder if we are setting up a kind of false dichotomy because the thing is, what art history does is to explore the potential intentionality of an artist. When writing about a living artist, the art historian has to offer something fairly compelling in order to suggest that an artist is not correct about the point of view

they hold on their own work. In addition to this, I think the art historian is also looking at the artwork once it enters the world as it interacts with its different audiences, as it interacts within the spaces, and certainly in pre-modern situations, as it performs ritualistic functions. I do not think that there is art history on one side and artists' writing on the other. So, to my mind, there is no conflict at all.

Jeffrey Rubinoff: I would like to raise an historical point going back to the word impressionist. It was first used in a pejorative sense when it was applied by other writers to describe their particular style. The Impressionists, themselves, were actually just independent artists making an independent statement. The writers created pejorative statements about their work that became categories that were actually incorporated into art history. So, we can use the word impressionist now and it actually has an art historical sense. But I feel badly for the Impressionists whose work was demonized by the critics. A similar thing happened with Cubism. The followers of that style did not call themselves Cubists and they never thought of themselves as Cubists. That term was also meant as a put-down. It is very interesting to see how the critics have been able to criticize, label, and group together artists together who have made independent statements. And also interesting to consider the ways in which the art critics' pejorative statements have been incorporated into art history itself.

Linda Goddard: I would not want you to believe that I have suggested that there is a complete split between art history and artists' writings. I was proposing that we think of 'artists' writings' as a category of writing, but that does not completely filter into these existing categories we are discussing such as art history, literature, or criticism. Those borders are porous. However, I find it interesting when an artist who is engaged in practice is also writing down his or her ideas. As I mentioned earlier, many artists have contributed to art history in direct ways; writing major art

historical texts is just one example. So there certainly is a cross-over. But perhaps when we write as art historians or as art critics, we are writing from a different position. We are not writing from a position of having to think about how to explain, or to think about what we are doing in our own art. So, in my view, there is something specific about the genre of artists' writings.

Peter Clarke: I find this very interesting. I speak as a historian and I am reminded of the debates many historians and philosophers had thirty or forty years ago about meaning and intention. The debate was about how far one privileges the meaning that a text held for the person that created it, and therefore the intention governing what its meaning would be. There is an obvious parallel to the issues that you are raising here. Two extreme positions might be to say that *only* an artist knows what the meaning of his or her own work is, versus saying that the meaning of the work is something that the artist might even not consciously recognize? I am not sure that I would adopt either position, but it seems to me that they are both perspectives on the same position.

Paul Walde: I would like to add to the comments on privileging the artist's voice. One of the things we do in teaching studio classes is to hold a critique of a student's work. There are different ways of organizing critiques. In some critiques, the student speaks first about their work. In others, the teacher is the first one to speak. However, I prefer to ask the class to go first because I find that if the professor – acting in the role of the critic – speaks first, his or her viewpoint is privileged to the point where the students cannot respond to the work and express their own opinions.

When the students are allowed to speak first quite often they get to the heart of the matter and decode the work. In that way, the student-artist has an opportunity to see how the work has

communicated on its own. And I do think that it is important for the work to speak on its own. What I appreciated about your tour yesterday, Jeffrey, was that you did not explain the work, you provided a context for it but did not attempt to explain it. I also think that in most artists' writings, there is a tendency to avoid explaining the work for these reasons.

Karun Koernig: I wanted to just ask Linda Goddard what she thinks about the writings of someone like Gauguin and what they add to the viewer's understanding of his work. Are they completely on a different track? And, if so, should they be viewed as their own category of writing or perhaps not even a part of their artwork at all? Or is a greater understanding of the work enhanced by knowing more about an artists' writings?

Linda Goddard: Gauguin's writings do not explain his paintings, in fact, they do just the opposite. If you read them they may appear, at least initially, to be describing what is happening in a given work. But if you read the words and then look at the painting, you find that rather than explaining what's actually happening in the picture, the work actually becomes more complicated. Writing is a way of preserving some kind of independence for the work, especially from the way it might be interpreted by critics. It is also a way to preserve interest in the painting and prevent it from being easily translatable into words. So, Gauguin is actually using writing to further protect the image from words which sounds paradoxical. In his sense, I also see his writing as part of his practice which is quite multimedia. His paintings have words in them, his sculptures sometimes have words in them too, and his writings have images in them. I think he is very interested in the crossover between the various media.

Maria Tippett: In my study of Emily Carr (1871-1945) I noted that whenever she wrote about a painting it was from an emotional point of view. For example, she felt that the making of

a work of art was a spiritual act. Discovering this by reading her voluminous correspondence – and especially her journals – gave me an insight into her inner world which was, to my mind, the very source of her art.

Alan Antliff: In relation to Cubism I thought I should mention two artists who did adopt the term at the time. Albert Gleizes (1881-1954) and Jean Metzinger (1883-1956) published a book called *On Cubism* (1912) in which they inverted the pejorative view into a positive one. There are also interesting dialogues that emerged from the concept of the expansion of reception which I think art criticism and art history is all about. In that sense, I think of myself as a critic and as an art historian who contributes to – not getting in the way of – the understanding of art.

Jeffrey Rubinoff: What interests me is how art history, especially in the late nineteenth century as well as in the twentieth century, moves in a direction of interconnection with criticism that lends itself to the commodification of art. This does not necessarily mean that the Cubists did not want to be commodified. But I refer to the commodification of art because of where it led to. It seems to me that it is at this juncture, especially when considering the Impressionists, that we were on our way to creating a new market for art. This was a different from previously.

So, this is a very interesting aspect which I am sure we are going to get into later: how the commodification of art came about and how complete it became within a hundred years. The artists who were later termed Impressionists were making an independent statement in 1874 about their own work in relationship to the world. However, by the 1980s I figure the artists were in about sixth place as to their importance in the marketing of their own work. By then it was the major collectors who had the say on what would be art. This caused the artist to go down, down, down in

the order of importance. How art historians, themselves, became part of that trend led to the commodification of art which is a very important part of art history.

Alan Antliff: I write extensively about artists' resistance to commodification and I am interested in how it functions historically as well as at the present time. My own role as an art historian is not to further the commodification of art. I occupy a space of dissonance in relation to that process. I am not pro-capitalist. When I think about anti-commodification in relation to the Neo-Impressionists, I think of their deep engagement in the anarchist movement through the contributions they made as illustrators to anarchist publications. I also think of the ways, during hard times, they helped one another. These avenues support a set of values that are quite different from the ones you are talking about.

Jeffrey Rubinoff: So, what you are saying is that you can actually come down on one side or, on the another and that you have come down on the side of the receiver.

Perhaps, equally, the personality of the artist and their unique perspective expressed either through writing or whatever medium they are able to master, can be seen as multiple pathways towards expression.

I wonder whether this might be a perspective to consider. Perhaps art is not the physical piece but what is happening internally that the artist is trying to share. If this is the case, you would have those pathways and the physical object as well.

Marcus Milwright: I actually did a studio art degree as my first degree. Now I am not claiming to be an artist, as it is not something I do for a living, but I noticed that a work starts with a certain intention. That intention works itself out through the

process of making something, through the various points at which you stand back and look, as it develops.

It struck me that when we went on the sculpture tour with Jeffrey we were seeing him talk about the several series of pieces done over several decades. What we were hearing was both his recollections of the process as it occurred and the culmination of his thinking about it now that the sculptures were all there.

And so, when one is evaluating the writings of artists, one needs to consider it very clearly in terms of the actual process of making the work. I think that the initial intention is always going to be at a certain level of distance from the perceptions that you have at the end of making an individual piece or making a series of pieces.

Charo Neville: I wanted to contribute something from the perspective of the role of the curator which I think is a bit different from what we have been talking about, but maybe exists somewhere between the critic and the art historian. As a curator of a public art institution, I write a lot of texts that interpret the artist's work. I do a lot of extended label texts for exhibitions and I write for publications or facilitate working with writers for publications on artists' work. I feel my contribution is really important because there are many artists who cannot write about their own work. Having said that, more and more it is expected that artists, especially if they have done an MFA, should be able to write critically about art. But drawing from my own experience, I still think that it is important to help the viewer interpret the work in an exhibition. I also think that the curator's writing can expand the ideas of what the artist is doing visually. I do not think that there is any conflict here. I think that, especially when the curator is working with the artist, the writing is a success. This is the way that a meaningful conversation develops. The best writers that I am working with on publications will conduct many interviews with the artist in order to include the artist's perspective. But the

writer can also offer something more. So, I think that kind of writing, in the form of a book that exists after an exhibition has closed, is really important.

Maria Tippett: I think you are right Charo. As art historians, we have all benefitted from the exhibition catalogues and books that have been written to complement an exhibition.

Brad Buie: When you talk about the consciousness of the creator and the consciousness of the receiver, does it matter what medium the artist is working in? Every medium has its potential and its limitation. Words are able to express certain clarities and certain distinctions that other media may not. I'm not suggesting that words are superior to sculpture, or to music, or to any other kind of medium, but that the written word does something different. Perhaps this is why we need written interpretations of art. Whether an artist feels this is necessary is, of course, another question.

Paul Walde: An interesting term that is used by the Canadian Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council (one of our funding bodies for various scholarly activities) is *research-creation*. It is the concept acknowledging that the creative process is actually a form of research and that the creation of a work of art contains the thought processes of the scholar. I think that this is something that Jeffrey is insisting is going on in his work, that is, the work itself is a product of the thought process. His writing is the reflection on some of the things that have come out of his work. This is something that we have not fully discussed: the relationship of the artistic process as a scholarly activity or as a mode of research.

Sergei Petrov: I would like to come back to what Linda said about the writings of Paul Gauguin which actually make his work seem to be more complex. I think that is probably the

way it should be. Let me make an analogy with science. Science loves dealing with infinities. It can take infinite numbers, infinite universes, and reduce them to very neat formulas which can fit on a quarter-inch-sized piece of paper. Art is just the opposite. Whether it is a book, a piece of music or a sculpture, it is a finite object. And yet, within these works are infinite possibilities of perception. By supplementing his work with his writings, Gauguin indicated that it would be wrong to seek a simple explanation or a simple understanding. So, his writings are more like an invitation to infinity.

I am afraid that when today's popular audiences read art criticism, they expect to find a simple formula for understanding a work of art. This results in making the art seem easy, even trivial. Writing about art should not be an explanation but an indication of just how complex a work of art really is.

Jeffrey Rubinoff: Peter mentioned the difference between analogy and metaphor which I talked about. One of the keys to truth with regard to analogy is that the truths are repeatable. Success in science depends on observing truths that can be proven over and over again.

On the other hand, the metaphor opens. The more you study the metaphor, the more you become lost outside of the parameters of your own mind. In that, I think Peter is dead-on by describing two aspects of writing: the analogy and the metaphor.

Linda Goddard: What I have found is that artists' writings are often used by art historians who are looking for an explanation for a work of art. It is very difficult to resist doing that. As Marcus said, if you are researching an artist who is alive, it is challenging to come up with an explanation of their work other than what they have said. And yet often, when artists are writing they are doing something that in itself is creative rather than explaining

what they have done in a visual form. Or there might be particular motivations for their writing – such as in Gauguin’s case – to put people off course. I do not think we can ever use artists’ writings as some kind of simple way of explaining what they have done in their practice. However, I do find that quite often that is how their writings are used. We use their accounts of what the significance of the subject of the work might be; we use their writings on the artistic processes which might be based on unreliable memories or might be deliberately misleading. So, I think that we have to be very careful of how we treat them as documents.

Annabel Howard: As a young writer, it is interesting to note that there is a huge cult of personality that the artist is encouraged to create. I am encouraged, even at this stage, to have a tagline. ‘What am I writing about?’ ‘Who am I?’ ‘What is the selling point?’ For contemporary artists there is, equally, pressure to create a verbal tagline. There are so few exhibitions that I see now where the artist has not written a statement or left it implicitly in the work itself. Sometimes it is literally on the wall. I find Jeffrey’s writing quite interesting because it is not doing that. I would be quite interested to know where you think your writing fits into our discussion. Because I feel that what a lot of contemporary visual artists are required to do is something very different from what the art historian is doing.

Jeffrey Rubinoff: This links directly to one thing we have not talked about: the two forms of commodification. One is obviously the marketplace. The other more interesting one that emerged after the Second World War, is cultural and political commodification and the national agenda or aspiration to maintain the culture in a certain way.

In Canada, it is a way of satisfying that national sentiment or aspiration. Essentially, the Canada Council grew in the mid-1960s when there was a very strong separatist movement in Quebec.

And, as a way of co-opting that movement, the Canada Council gave a lot of money to artists in Quebec. As a result, I noticed how, when I went to New York, Americans expressed their contempt for the Canada Council. They also had contempt for the Canadian government-run 49th Parallel Gallery in New York which showcased Canadian artists.⁸ That is where I really saw a lot of that work on the wall. It was coming out of the Canada Council and the 49th Parallel. That was an example of commodifying art.

Now the United States does this in spades. For example, in 1967 when they created the American Pavilion at Expo ’67, the artists really leant themselves to propaganda. This type of commodification really needs to be looked at, because in looking for that alternative to the market, the work actually becomes a cultural and political commodity in and of itself.

My exposure to that commodification arises from the statement of the alternate avant-garde. Ironically the avant-garde tends to be government funded. So, Annabel, you are right when you call it a form of marketing. It tries to cross over into the art market itself, and sometimes succeeds.

In Germany, there is a state-supported avant-garde that just will not quit. They actually had state-supported anarchism towards the end of the cold war. It usually involved words. Why? Because the work engaged its audience through propaganda. It is a different form of propaganda, but it is, nevertheless, propaganda. That really was stated in that American pavilion at Expo ’67. This underlies the cold war sociopolitical commodification.

Annabel Howard: That is not something I have thought about deeply so this is very interesting.

⁸ For more information on the 49th Parallel Gallery see: ‘49th Parallel/49e Parallèle fonds’, 1981-1992, National Gallery of Canada: Library and Archives. <http://www.gallery.ca/english/library/biblio/ngc025.html#aseries9> accessed February 2, 2016.

Allan Antliff: The issue of commodification, dissidence, different modes of co-optation are all related to state power. One particular interesting book dealing with this was George Woodcock's *Strange Bedfellows: The State and the Arts in Canada* (1985). Woodcock discussed the Canada Council and gave an anarchist's critique of state sponsorship and how it could sully things.

Maria Tippett: How far can the achievement of an artist be compromised by his or her own intentions? I'm referring here to Jeffrey's aphorism that 'art is an act of will in accord with a mature conscience'. Are you saying that it is *necessary*? Or are you saying it *ought* to be so?

Jeffrey Rubinoff: That is a value judgement, so you were probably right to use the word 'ought.' But what the artist *ought* to do is not something that comes externally; it's something that has to come internally. Only the artist knows whether or not the art has entered the work. Only the artist knows whether or not they have accomplished it.

I have seen too many works where the art has never entered an artist's piece. As a result, the work of art was never finished. This is especially true of a lot of art created during the 1950s where the genius was in the spontaneous aspect that depended on where you began and how you finished a particular work.

A lot of work was unfinished, and a lot of it sat on racks. When the artist died, in came the collectors and the dealers and started selling work that the artist themselves had withheld. The artist should have destroyed it. They should have known that if they could not have completed it in the instant, those pieces were self-defeating.

Unidentified Speaker: This brings up an interesting point about commodification and capitalism. You do sense whether a work has been made with intentionality for a market, or whether a work has been created independently and then finds a market after the fact.

I think there is a period in which the commodification of art *frees* artists from being slaves to religious or state sponsorship. To a certain extent, market commodification freed those artists from patronage, because they were spreading out their income over a larger group of people. I think it allowed the ideas within contemporary art to expand at a very great pace.

Sergei Petrov: An artist working in the Soviet Union in the thirties, forties, and fifties – when the Soviet state was at its best – had several choices. The artist could drink her or himself into oblivion. Or the artist could join the official painters' union and create propaganda, as it was required, and get all the necessary privileges. (This was not as easy to do as it may seem because so many artists wanted to do it. Becoming a member of the painters' union was a process of social selection and the ones who were the best at it succeeded.) Or an artist could follow her or his moral conscience and fight the regime through their art. (This did not happen very often until the 1960s and 1970s because it was simply impossible.)

The predicament that many artists faced in the 1970s was: 'Well, we should protest because we hate the regime. We are artists, we should use our art as a protest.' Very few actually realized that this was a kind of a game; that it was not important to win; that it was not important to participate.; that by becoming the enemy of the state, you were still part of the state. By fighting what you hate through your art you were actually supporting the state, because the totalitarian state needs enemies as much as it needs

supporters. There were very few artists in Russia at that time who recognized this dilemma.

Artists could also fight the state by saying ‘it is not worth fighting’ and walk away and create pure art. (This was easy to do for my friends who were musicians, because music is more abstract.)

Now we realize that official art in the Soviet Union along with work associated with the Russian avant-garde and anti-Soviet art, is pretty much forgotten because the state has disappeared. Only those masterpieces that were created in opposition to the Soviet state have survived. And I think that for these few artists who created their work within the historical tradition, and thereby ignored the Soviet state, were making a greater statement than those creating anti-Soviet propaganda.

I also would like to say that during the last years of the Soviet Union there was a commodification of art which benefitted the artist in a very bizarre way. For example, even the members of the official painters’ union would paint a girl in a field, which had absolutely no political statement, in order to gain their artistic freedom. But they would call it *A Young Komsomol Member on the Way to School*. So, they commodified it, but nevertheless gave them freedom to include their work in the official exhibits. It was ingenious, but it was reverse commodification when it actually worked for freedom.

Maria Tippett: When I was working in the George Costakis collection in Moscow in the late 1960s, artists would come in all the time with their work in hope that Costakis would sell it.⁹ And he did. He sold their paintings to people at the embas-

⁹ George Costakis (1913-1990) amassed a significant collection of early-twentieth century paintings and sculptures produced by the Russian avant-garde. Since the 1970s Costakis’ collection has been widely exhibited around the world. Before his death in 1990, Costakis donated the bulk of his collection to The State Museum of Contemporary Art in Thessaloniki, Greece.

sies, as well as to art historians and other Western visitors like myself. In this sense, there was an internal market of which I am sure Sergei is well aware.

Sergei Petrov: Yes, that market was supported by the foreign community – journalists, diplomats, and businessmen – who were looking for cheap art. It was not commodification as we see it now, but it did support the artists.

Regarding the ‘pure’ artists in Russia at the time, I would like to share with you a very short story about somebody I knew who lived in a tiny apartment in Moscow. He had a canvas on an easel next to his bed that was blank. Every morning he would get up and paint on that canvas using water. Now water will darken the canvas when it is wet and this creates a relief. He did not paint any abstract work; he actually painted realistic portraits and people would sit for him. That is how he worked because for him it was important just to study. As I was watching him, certain areas would start to dry up, other areas would darken, and the painting would come alive! But then, by the next morning, everything would be dry and he would start fresh. So, I asked him why did he not record the work by taking a photograph of it? And he gave me such a look that I never asked him again. For him, it was all about creating art. The object was absolutely irrelevant. The only thing that mattered to him was what was going on in his head while he was painting. For him painting was a source of knowledge of his own mind. Everything else was a by-product.

THE HISTORY OF MODERNISM AND ITS RELATIONSHIP TO SCULPTURE

by Alistair Rider

A poem written by David Smith (1906-1965) titled *The Landscape* and dating from the 1940s, offers a helpful point of entry into his sculptural practice and towards the themes I want to talk about. I concede that Smith's poem is hardly a polished literary work: 'I have never looked at a landscape without seeing other landscapes,' he begins. And what follows is a meandering list of places and images, morphing from one to the other. The poetic lines set in motion a stream of metaphors that proliferate almost uncontrollably. For example, halfway through the poem we veer from ancient Assyria, to a river in Ireland, then to Indiana. We move forward and backwards in time; from the prehistoric to the contemporary.

Smith describes how faces and apparitions loom out of the formations of woods and mountains. The landscape is constantly congealing into a figurative form. But then comes a break in the stream of associations and Smith adopts a different register: 'the position of vision has undergone changes.' He is responding, then, to the historical present. He is not talking about a timeless point of view. Something has changed about the position of vision vis-à-vis the landscape. In other words, modernity has altered the way we see the world. His attention turns almost immediately to the aerial view as he considers what the marks of human activity look like when you are peering down on them from above. And the last lines of the poem offer's an image of oil cylinders as seen from a plane: 'sixty-four belly buttons for a hundred square miles.'

It is the look of this instrumental-zing use of the land that Smith is concerned with here.

Smith made sculptures by welding steel. He was not the first to do this, but he liked this approach because it had its origins in industry and had little significant artistic precedent. For him, iron and steel were the materials of modernity. When he used this medium to represent a landscape, as he did on a number of occasions in the 1950s, we have to understand Smith's work not as a timeless terrain, but as evidencing the conditions by which 'landscape' is configured within modernity.

The formal issue he had to overcome was how to communicate multiple points of view within a single stationary sculpture such as *Song of the Landscape* (1950). One way to understand the two rectangular apertures that appear towards the top of the composition is to see them as frames that the landscape exceeds. The aligned, fixed point of view, is pictorialized as one vista onto the world. Our view as spectators onto the figure on the land, is roaming, ungrounded, displaced, possibly disconnected. And in Smith's better-known work, *Hudson River Landscape* (1951) – now installed in the new Whitney Museum of American Art in New York – the theme is refined. In *Song of the Landscape*, rods and small sheets of steel are bent and welded into a configuration resembling a cradle or basket, still invoking – possibly too literally for Smith – a bird's eye view of undulating ground. *Hudson River* avoids this by adopting a vertical format and a more frontal position. Whiplash lines provide an armature, while smaller angular metal shapes are clustered at certain points in ways intended to hold our attention. According to Smith, this design was an accumulation of many sketches that he had completed on train journeys between Albany and Poughkeepsie – both stations on the Hudson railroad. But Smith chose not to privilege a single coherent vista. Instead, we are offered an array of disconnected shapes, signifying multiple fleeting glimpses. The landscape

appears in fragmented views. The land, punctuated by marks of human activity, is *en-framed* in this sculpture as a single self-contained form. The seventy-five-mile stretch of the Hudson River which is the ground for human activity for the railroad, light industry, shipping, *etcetera*, is unified in this sculpture. But it is presented in such a way that it always remains distant however near we choose to stand as spectators to these metal rods. This is, I think, quite an interesting, complicated, and problematic view that the sculptor is looking at but it strikes me that perhaps this is how the land appears within modernity. It's seen as an abstraction, as something that is far off from us, separate. And although *Hudson River Landscape* is displayed in gallery settings, Smith himself chose to photograph the sculpture against the backdrop of the sky with a field and trees visible in the distance. This begs the question: what is the relationship between the sculpture and the landscape background? Is the photograph claiming the work as indigenous to this place? Or is Smith merely invoking an abstracted, blurry notion of nature in order to provide the ground for his figure? Recent scholarship on Smith, which is very strong, tends towards the latter view.

There is nothing particularly original about siting sculptural monuments or sculptures in urban centres or in urban parks. But the tradition of intentionally placing sculptures in natural settings was reinvigorated in the twentieth century. Jacquetta Hawkes film, *Figures in a Landscape* (1953), shows the British sculptor Barbara Hepworth (1903-1975) with a variety of her works filmed against the natural landscape. One work has actually been placed directly on the beach – probably in St. Ives – with the waves lapping around the sculpture. It is very strange, but important, to put sculptures in a natural setting. It is a legacy that continues and one to which Jeffrey Rubinoff belongs.

The most well-known exponents of this tradition were Jean Arp (1886-1966), Henry Moore (1898-1986), and David Smith.

These artists, I admit, are hardly representative of all the many sculptors around the world who have been interested in locating their work in natural settings. Yet they serve as helpful points of reference for evaluating subsequent sculptural practices. Each of them, in varying ways, made statements in which they voiced their commitment to siting their work in nature. They advocated this for different reasons but were, nevertheless, all concerned with matters of terrain, landscape, the environment, nature, or natural processes. Registering their intentions is one thing; but it takes more work to read the relationship between the forms of the sculpture and a natural setting as amounting to a visual statement about the modern world. I am bracketing out from this conversation works such as Richard Serra's *Shift*, a sculpture that consists of six concrete walls which take their dimensions from the topography of the site or Carl Andre's (1935-) influential notion of sculpture as place in which an intervention in an environment shifts the viewer's perception of a certain location.

During the 1960s, many artists moved from producing vertical self-contained forms sited in a landscape to marking the sites directly. This art activates a heightened awareness of the horizontal reach of an entire landscape. This is not the theme that I want to pursue. Instead, my focus is on works that are non-site specific and offer a symbolic representation of the idea of nature in a more general way. For instance, art historians have acknowledged the positive associations that Moore placed on the very idea of 'the outdoors'. Moore grew up in a polluted coal-mining town in Northern England and regarded the British countryside as a restorative social force. He also viewed the land as archaic, timeless, and as an antidote to the aggressive forces of modernity. This is reflected in the abstracted forms his sculptures assume. Since the works' compositions often seem to be inspired by natural forms and processes, he masks his forms in ways that make them look as though the same erosive forces that shaped the rocks and the hills had formed them too. And this morphological affinity

makes it easy for commentators to interpret his sculptures as being of the landscape, or in harmony with their chosen site.

Now Arp, whose work was informed by 1930s Surrealism, wrote that he wanted his art to 'find its humble place in the woods, the mountains and in nature.' His concept of nature is even more abstracted and less culturally specific than it was for Moore. He took blocks of plaster and cut and sanded them into biomorphic forms and shapes that are intended to evoke processes of natural evolution, decay, or growth. These visual associations are accentuated in Carola Giedion-Welcker's *Contemporary Sculpture and Evolution in Form and Space* (1960) in which the author juxtaposes photographs of Arp's *Human Concretion* (1932) with an unidentified photograph of globules of melting snow. She also pairs a photograph of a sleeping signet with Arp's *Cloud Shepherd* (1949-53). The visual claim being made here is that Arp's sculpture belongs more to the natural world than it does to the realm of history and culture. Arp himself took a dim view of human progress and believed that nature could redirect the course of humanity.

David Smith's view, on the other hand, was quite different. As most art historians and critics have recognized, his installations seem to strike a more dissonant cord. This is apparent from the photographs he took of his own sculptures located in the fields around his home at Bolton Landing, on the shores of Lake George in upstate New York. It is striking how disjunctive and anomalous his works look in their rural setting. Unlike Arp and Moore, who aspired to make sculptures and then place them in the landscapes that seemed attuned to their natural surroundings, Smith sought out disjuncture and contrast. In photographs of his stainless steel *Cubi* series, Smith intentionally positioned the horizon line of the distant tree-lined hills on the far side of the lake just below the elevated sculptural forms. This accentuated their incongruence with the undulating shapes of the land. This

photographic composition deprives us of getting an impression of the sculptures' actual sizes. The low horizon makes them appear monumental, disproportionately large in relation to the size of a human or to any 'natural order of things.' We might suggest these attributes seem intended to testify to the *instrumentalized* relationship that modernity adopts towards the land.

I think that Jeffrey's sculptures – and this is completely open to discussion – are closer to Smith than to Moore or Arp in terms of the contrasts and discrepancies his sculptures establish with the surrounding landscape. Many of Jeffrey's works make less of an attempt to blend into the scenery and look deliberately anomalous in their setting. This seems particularly true for the *Series Two* sculptures largely because of their prominent knuckle joints which feature in four of them. My interpretation, looking at these images, is that they imply the possibility of mechanized moving parts. Although they might possess the capacity for immense torque, they are presently idle. They are vaguely reminiscent, for me, of sections of large-scale heavy machines which might be used in the extraction industry. Their proportions are such that they loom over a viewer in a way that feels threatening. They do not come across as either graceful or elegant. To position them on a grassy expanse in plain sight of woods, mountains, and sea, seems intentionally provocative. I would not want to ascribe a single meaning to them. However, they do not strike me as particularly celebratory of technological intervention in the land. Even so, I do not think it is possible to speak in equivalent terms for many of the later sculptures – particularly those from *Series Six* onwards – which seem more in accord with their environment. Pieces from this series are made from weathering steel and their reddish oxidized coating, looks less man-made when sighted in a natural setting than does the burnished glimmer of stainless steel. These associations are, of course, culturally conditioned. Nevertheless, they are important to recognize. The material – metal – is meant to 'signify' quite differently than it does in *Series Two*. Machinery

and technology are no longer the reference point. Instead, the works seem more informed by different forms of knowledge, ones that are more ancient and time-tested. The curved organic shapes and the use of cast forms consolidate this impression. From a distance their silhouettes are not dramatic; instead they invite viewers to see them close up. This is in contrast to the work in *Series Two* which accentuates ground play in a quite different way. These observations are not intended to lead to any clear-cut conclusions. I only want to stress that, across the park, the landscape setting plays varying roles through each series of sculptures.

Something that we might explore further is the relationship between Jeffrey's work and the landscape environment, particularly given his broader insights on agriculture and the land.

DIALOGUE ON SCULPTURE AND MODERNISM

Jeffrey Rubinoff The pieces are in counterpoint to this landscape. This is a very different thing because counterpoint also implies harmony. It can be dissonant but it also remains part of the single aspect of looking at a piece. So, the transitions here have to do with how the work evolves in its time and in its relationship to the landscape itself. Having lived here, I know how rapidly the landscape gobbles up human endeavour. The first part of it is how fast the land will eat up farm fields and how fast it will simply transition to another space. The idea that human beings are here to compete with space, as is the case in B.C. with logging and mining and the other aspects of resource industries, is really very different from my particular approach. My approach places human endeavour within and in counterpoint to this environment. Even the way that the landscape was created in its initial stages reflects this idea of counterpoint to the environment.

It became very clear to me that the first exploitation of the land with its giant cedars, was simply to remove all of the landscape from it. Coming into this space on a daily basis the land did provide an open environment for my work. It also required, in the evolution of civilizing this part of the country, that human beings had to be in counterpoint with the land. That meant not trying to compete with it. Looking from the park across the ocean to the distant landscape we see an area that is being logged. Giant machines take down acres of forest in a day. All of a sudden it will be raining one day and a few days later you will find huge swaths taken out of the mountains. That is one activity that keeps going on here. What I wanted from my work was to be able to say:

'human beings can be here, but at a scale where they can live with this and live in counterpoint with it.'

Understanding counterpoint in relation to the internal aspects of the sculpture itself entails considering how the sculpture represents human counterpoint within this environment. It is not a matter of defeating the land, but of living in counterpoint with it without trying either to blend in and be part of it, or to act in such a way that the counterpoint actually exists. When you look at each one of these pieces – all from very different series and in time and in evolution – they are working in counterpoint with the very environment that they are sitting in. That is still the way that I see David Smith's work. The difference with me is that originally, I had my work very concentrated so that it could go to a show. I could see that David Smith did the same thing. If the work needs to be picked up and moved and go to an exhibition, you have got to keep it accessible. In 1998, I finally spread it out over the park even though I had planned on doing that for many, many years. Selecting their sites was selecting a counterpoint position for each one of the works.

In a way, the work could act independently which was what I wanted it to do in 1980 when I got back to work. Rather than replicating what James Turrell (1943-) or Michael Heizer (1944-) were doing, I wanted to make my pieces evolve in counterpoint to the environment. The way that I measured each piece was to place it outside of the barn – a very large and imposing structure in itself. Viewing the work from every direction, I was able to see if it could live with the landscape. If I felt that if it was a strong enough piece to act in counterpoint to the land itself – and this would take a year – then I would photograph the work.

I think that thanks to David Smith, I was able to look at each piece in counterpoint to this environment, rather than try and do an entire piece like Michael Heizer's work out in the desert which

imposes human will on the space. The imposition of my sculptures was significantly, I think, more modest in terms of being able to keep them within the realm of human scale – which I thought was the genius of David Smith – and still have them work in counterpoint with the essentially bone-crushing environment. After all, when we look at the environment on Hornby Island, we realize how dominant it is. If you look at the environment in upstate New York, it is a little calmer than here. But you can still see that David Smith's work presented itself in terms of the overwhelming landscape of mountains and space. Maintaining the human presence in counterpoint with nature itself, rather than trying for an invisible harmony, is what interests me here.

That is, I look at both the internal counterpoint within the work and the external counterpoint – as it may exist in an environment like this – as essential aesthetic principles that have gone on throughout art history. For example, when we look at the Chauvet caves (between 30,000 and 32,000 years old) even though they are two-dimensional, each piece works in counterpoint to its particular cave. Indeed, the entire idea of the cave, the ability to be able to use it, shows how human beings were in counterpoint with the entire environment. I think that this was part of their goal and this is definitely the goal that I hope to reach in all of my work. I think that the evolution of my work took its own course and it could only happen in a way that I know with each one of these pieces; it could not happen until I could actually do them and conceive of them. As we move towards the last series the pieces get smaller and deal with that landscape and then they become larger again. But I could not do the piece on the left until I had done the piece on the right. That is just the way that it is; it could not have come the other way around.

Maria Tippett: I'd like to invite John Kirk to offer some of his thoughts on what it was like to help Jeffrey shape and to transform this farm into a sculpture park.

John Kirk: One of the first times I ever walked in the back fields where *Series Eight* and now *Series Nine* is presently located, the canary grass was over my head. Jeffrey and I would be walking through this landscape and just come across one of these huge Cor-Ten pieces in the grass. It was like trekking through the jungle and suddenly coming upon some Mayan ruin. It was quite astonishing. Those Cor-Ten steel pieces were eventually moved down into the main field. Of course, the move was prompted by Jeffrey's vision. It was a challenge for me to get into Jeffrey's mind in order to visualize what he wanted.

To get the pieces up higher in order to see them we placed them on risers. We always placed a pond nearby when we positioned the pieces. It has always been interesting to see the evolution of the space as Jeffrey moved through the different series, especially when getting into the *Series Nine*, which he is still working on. The work in this particular series is so bright that it requires a lot of individual space to view them. When you walk into the back field and one of these pieces catches your eye, you do not want one piece to distract from another that lies behind it.

It has been a challenge to stay ahead of Jeffrey's output in order to create spaces for new works. Sometimes the space that we create just fails and we have to redo areas to get it right. Sometimes it takes two or three attempts, sometimes two or three years, to get a site ready for a specific piece.

Karun Koernig: I would like to ask Alistair if he could elaborate on what the significance is of the landscape and the objective of Modernism. Is there something that you see as a particular development in Modernism at a particular time?

Alistair Rider: That is a good question and I am still working this out for myself. First, I would like to say that there are many different types of Modernists. This is very important to acknowledge and, in fact, it is problematic to homogenize them. However, within the history of Modernist sculpture, we do see at the beginning of the twentieth century – or at least during the first half – that a decision was made by a number of keen advocates of that movement to place their work outside of the gallery or outside of the museum. This decision was made for pragmatic reasons, space being the obvious issue. Sculpture takes up a lot of space but it is also easy to place out-of-doors.

In the work of Barbara Hepworth and other British sculptors, they all heaved things out of the building. But this seems rather strange because their works were often made of materials that would not weather well. This prompted the artists to present their work to the world through photographic images of their pieces surrounded by trees and land or the sea. There are places in a natural environment where signs of human activity are bracketed out of the conversation. This is an acknowledged phenomenon that struck me as rather interesting.

David Smith takes up this idea of moving out of the gallery; he works in stainless steel for a particular reason. The justification is that it is an ideal metal to use if you want to have your sculptures out-of-doors because it does not weather as rapidly as other steels do. However, we also have artists and an art critic, Clement Greenberg, who famously did not care about this sort of landscape component that was important to this particular brand of Modernism. To Greenberg, the works could also be seen indoors; it did not make a difference. Smith clearly thought that there was something important about seeing sculpture outside of a building or outside any other man-made structure.

I think this is probably very important for Jeffrey, as well.

As to the larger story concerning Modernism, I am more hesitant to speak about it because, unlike other people, I do not see any kind of categorical break between Modernism and post-Modernism. I certainly do not see Carl Andre, Richard Serra (1938), Micheal Heizer, Richard Long (1945), to name a few land artists, doing anything that is particularly different from the Modernists. While they are intervening out-of-doors or in the wilderness in different ways, I think their agendas are quite similar.

Jeffrey Rubinoff: I have spent a lot of time talking about post-Modernism. The first time I encountered the term was in New York and before that I had never thought about post-Modernism and I did not even think it was a concept. It became a buzzword in 1982 with the construction of the Philip Johnson building. Then it became a buzzword among the dealers in New York who had decided that the works that they were selling were post-Modernist. This straight-up marketing term has disturbed me all these years because it was only invented as a marketing term. The way it has become more intellectually used is even more disturbing. The definition of post-Modernism has been simplified in the essay 'What is Post-Modernism?' by Jean-François Lyotard.¹⁰ This work is a very important part of this discussion because it asks: 'What is post-Modernism? What place does it, or does it not occupy?' It is undoubtedly a part of the modern. All that has been received, if only yesterday – 'modo, modo' Petronius used to say – must be suspected.¹¹ Thinking about the Impressionists, what space does Paul Cezanne (1839-1906) challenge? What object did Picasso (1881-1973) and Braque (1882-1963) attack? What supposition does Marcel Duchamp (1887-168) break with his influential 1912 painting *Nude Descending a Staircase* (1912)?

10 See Jean-François Lyotard's *The Postmodern Condition*, 1979

11 Refers to a quotation found in the 1st century BC work by Gaius Petronius Arbiter, *Satyricon*, which states: 'Modo, modo collo suo circumferebat onera venalia, nunc etiam adversus Norbanum se extendit. Litterae thesaurus est, et artificium nunquam moritur.'

This was a piece that challenged the boundaries of the Cubist movement and questioned the place of the presentation of a work of art.

In an amazing acceleration, the generations precipitate themselves. As Lyotard wrote: 'a work can become modern only if it is first post-modern. Post-Modernism, thus understood, is not Modernism at its end, but in the nascent state, and this state is constant.'¹² This is probably the most succinct definition of post-Modernism. We are in the nascent stage of post-Modernism. You cannot be at the post-Modernist stage unless you have had Modernism. The way Lyotard looked at post-Modernism and the way I interpret it, is that Modernism in its time was a manifestation of displacement.

In terms of music, there was such an ease into the fixed narrative, or the pictorial narrative, when incredible counterpoint was first written in the Gregorian chant.¹³ Music, in my view, was able to do what we now call abstraction much more easily and with much easier transitions. It made absolutely no difference whether there was a narrative or not. (The *Bach B Minor Mass* is one of the examples that I have in mind.)¹⁴ In other words, the human voice was not to be discounted; it simply could be part of the same abstraction that music was viewed to be. And in art there was a tremendous reaction against that. This is because the artists had a job to do: to immortalize the warrior class. I think that is what they had done ever since the age of agriculture. They were expected to draw analogies, to perform the function of story-teller to illiterate people. (We did not have a concept of literacy until after the Renaissance.) Drawing was a means of passing on history. It was the artists' job to immortalize the great stories of the battles, the

12 *Ibid.*, Lyotard's *The Postmodern Condition*

13 Refers to the tenth century when the Gregorian chant was first recorded.

14 Refers to Johann Sebastian Bach's composition, *B Minor Mass* (1749).

inventions of Gods and all of those other things that were passed on as a cultural statement. The interesting part is that music, as I understand it, has had a significantly easier transition into its abstraction – or its instrumental time – in the Baroque period than art did for the next couple of hundred years.

I think what enabled art to be able to do that was the photograph. The photograph meant that anyone could be immortalized through a picture. It usurped the role of the artist on one side and, on the other, it liberated the artist. What we see in the independence of the Impressionists is the use of colour, which could not have been done in the photograph. But the innate ability of the artist to be able to draw became significantly less important once the photograph displaced portraiture. Photographs of civil war soldiers, probably killed not long after their photographs were taken, became part of the immortal statement of that particular war. This is part of what happened in the nineteenth-century.

In this time of displacement, Cezanne displaced the Impressionists. Then, within this period of rapid displacement within the art world – about 1870 to 1914 – he was displaced. This allowed abstraction, as we see with Wassily Kandinsky, to become as important as the pictorial narrative. This raises an important question: is abstractionism equal to the pictorial narrative. It does not *have* to displace it; and that is part of the problem that I have with the idea that there is a clean-cut distinction between post-Modernism and Modernism. I think it is absolutely silly to make a distinction. As with music, once you go through this period of extreme displacement, it makes no difference whether a piece is abstract or has a fixed narrative.

Modernism itself is this transition in art that the Baroque period of music went through with its extraordinary counterpoint. A contributing factor during the Baroque period was the universality of certain instruments – which finally came in tune with

each other – and the ability to tune the strings to the oboe. Once this happened, the manufacturing of other instruments beyond the ear of the actual composers, was possible. This allowed for the vast expanse of counterpoint because those instruments were able to cover the whole gamut covered by the human voice.

In the case of the photograph, it simply liberated the artist. It also displaced them too. It took their jobs away from them. We can see that there was a vast displacement up until about World War I. And after this, we are all post-Modernists and that is the definition. All of this raises another question: how do you arrive at a point where the displacement has reached its peak?

I remember seeing an exhibition of eighteenth-century instrument makers. It revealed the complex variety of instruments that were produced: trumpets that went up and swirled around, wind instruments of all sorts, and string instruments as strange as you could possibly imagine. They were all there. They were part of the instrumental repertoire until it became the objective of the composer to write the music in such a way that it could be passed on to future generations.

I am as much a post-Modernist as anyone else who would claim to be called a post-Modernist. When I went to university nobody cared what mode or style anybody was working in. What they really cared about was the intent of the artist. The idea of infinite invention was the way that I came to art. It really took a matter of judgement, not a matter of trying to find some cut-off point that would be good branding. I saw the branding of post-Modernism emerge in the market-place in New York in 1983. I did not know what it was. I never understood it. I now prefer to see it through Lyotard's understanding of post-Modernism. But I do not understand it as something that should be divisive within the general discussion of art.

Jennifer Wise: It is just fascinating how theatre history confirms with what you are saying: that the distinction between Modernism and post-Modernism is absolutely arbitrary and artificial and does not exist. We can look at the most arch-Modernist theatre artists – Jean Cocteau (1889-1963) or Igor Stravinsky (1882-1971), and so on – and if you analyze what they are doing on the stage and what supposed Modernists, like Julie Thyamor (1952-) or Robert Wilson (1941-) are doing, it is precisely the same thing.

Theatre history is also interesting if we compare it with the desire of the artist to take sculpture out of the gallery. One of the central motives of theatre artists during the Modernist period was to take theatre out of the theatres. In the first phase of this change, they were trying to get theatre art into unconventional spaces in order to liberate theatre from all of the conventions of bourgeois theatre practice. They challenged traditional practices with regard to the theatre building, the lights, the separation between the audience and the performers, and so on. At first, they took theatre into urinals, storefronts, shopping malls, and the streets. In the second phase, which could be called post-Modern but really is the same thing, the tendency was to return theatre to its location in nature. This is called site-specific theatre today, but it is really a return to the ancient Greek practice of performing theatre out-of-doors, often with a view of the Mediterranean as a backdrop to the actors. So, there is a real parallel between theatre and art.

Maria Tippett: Jennifer, where would you put Agitprop theatre – performed in factories, on the streets, and in trains during the early years of the Soviet Union – into your discussion? It was certainly intentional.

Jennifer Wise: Absolutely. As Alistair mentioned, Modernism is a multifarious phenomenon. There was not just

one strain of Modernism, for sure. But getting the art *out* of the conventional space was a big part of almost all Modernist theatre.

Annabel Howard: In Britain the relationship with the land had something to do with nationalism. Barbara Hepworth was using particular native stones and really engaging with what it was to be British at that time. When we were going around the sculpture garden yesterday with Jeffrey, he was saying how his use of material is in direct opposition to the European compressive style which he said was compressive and oppressive. Jeffrey, I was wondering how this relates to the sculpture being in the land in the same tradition of that kind of sculpture in nature which has grown out of Modernism. Is this something you thought about when you were putting it in the landscape?

Jeffrey Rubinoff: I related the idea of the compressive to the European tendency to repeat the rebuilding of Rome – and what a disaster that was for Europe until 1945. The connection I was making was less about where the material came from but what the result of trying to rebuild Rome was from an historical point of view. The transition into the American culture – the question of steel, the expansiveness of steel and the breadth of steel and its ability to move us around the world – is a different thing. So, my comment was not about the landscape but about the imposition of human beings on the landscape. And that imposition, as I have said, cannot be to dominate or to take ownership over it in the way that steel did. Steel, on the other hand, is a material that is by nature international and touches more of humanity than any other material that I know of. It is that touch of humanity that I look at as the meaning of the modern statement of art: that it represents humanity itself, not the material.

Paul Walde: As a teacher, I often have to deal with these overarching concepts. I try to characterize them to my students because they are very difficult to define and we do this as

a way of understanding them. We could characterize Modernism in art as pre-Second World War and question all the disciplines of art, or we could look at the essential characteristics of what art is. Whether it is Expressionism or Cubism, these are all questioning various aspects of what art could be. Then after the Second World War the term Modernism, which is now termed as high-Modernism, was really characterized through Greenbergian Formalism as it relates to specific disciplines. Rather than looking at what is art, we are looking at what is painting, what is sculpture. For example, in painting we are looking at the essential characteristics of what painting is: the drips, splatters, colour, two-dimensionality, non-representation. Whether we are looking at the essential characteristics of art, or the essential characteristics of the specific mediums within the art, there is a reductionism. That is the altruism of Modernism, this idea that it can evolve to a pure state. There are many reasons why artists want to do this and many of them have good intentions.

However, what happens is what we see with Minimalism. We get to a point of reduction where people's voices are limited to a certain degree. What becomes characterized as post-Modernism is an adding back-in. We see Minimalism as maybe a fulcrum towards late-Modernism. Post-Modernism is putting back unheard voices and thereby marginalizing certain cultures. For example, Indigenous cultures become marginalized because artists have other things they want to talk about. If we think of America being at war in the late 1960s, artists wanted to talk about other things rather than the formal qualities of a work. So, there is really a break, not in terms of the overall larger question of whether it is art, because the adding back in is also questioning.

So, is it still a painting if I use photography in it? The answer in terms of Greenberg would be no, it is not a painting. But you know we have movements like photorealism, where we are contaminating the disciplines and bringing hybridity and secondary

disciplines emerging like performance art combining two disciplines or sound art. The thing is this is really not cut and dry. I do not think post-Modernism is just a marketing ploy. There is still this questioning going on. Post-Modernism is not an end of the tradition of talking about some of these essential characteristics.

Jeffrey Rubinoff: The problem as I see it is that in the 1960s art became an ideological argument. So, you are really talking about ideologies here, like the purity of sculpture or the purity of painting. This is an ideological and very scary concept. My generation of artists rejected ideology out of. We could not conceive of an ideological art and you can see from what Sergei was saying earlier, that once art becomes ideological, you begin to bring it to a point. If you are talking about a reaction to that ideology, then that is something else. When I was in graduate school no one thought that they were ideological artists. They used every discipline that they could possibly imagine. So, ideology may have had a role in New York, but it certainly had no place in the Midwest.

Marlowe Rainey: Jeffrey, having grown up in a vastly different society than we have today, do you see any trends in the changes of how art is demonstrated in society?

Jeffrey Rubinoff: There is a change from what I think was an ideological split which is kind of a throwback for me back to forty years or forty-five years ago. To me this is very welcome. I am hoping that this continues. That ideological part that divides artists among themselves was a very terrible thing. And so yes, I am seeing that this is starting to happen again. I think that that is a very positive sign. So, there is a continuation of that conversation.

Sergei Petrov: I would like to come back to the relationship between the sculptures and the landscape. There are many ways to look at particular questions or particular sculptures, so

I would like to share my personal view of Jeffrey's work. I think it is important to emphasize that Jeffrey not only picked up from where David Smith left off. He advanced far beyond it through his understanding and use of gravity. For example, if you look at the *Series One*, the sculptures are overly balanced just like David Smith's work. But the gravity definitely holds them down. If you look at any joint and see where it connects to others, there is a tension. There is a pressure. The works exist in gravity. Now if you look at the arm joints in *Series Two* this is where the tension is. The arm, even if in reality it supports a lot of weight, does not feel like this. It feels as though I can take a piece of paper and slide it right underneath the piece. The sculpture moves and it fights the gravity just as nature does. Similarly, the pieces from *Series Two* are very organic even if they are made in clearly square pieces of metal. It is organic the way it deals with the gravity. It does not belong to man's manmade world; it belongs to the organic world because it tries to open up, the same as the branch of a tree growing out of the ground. That is how I see the counterpoint in the work.

If you look at *Series Four* the gravity ceases to exist. Jeffrey's sculptures do not fight the gravity – gravity itself does not exist. Those pieces – even though they are placed in the field – could be floating in space. The weight of steel is absent; only the shape remains. Many of the works in *Series Four* are organically shaped. Seamlessly and effortlessly they come out of the ground and work against it. For that reason, these pieces belong to the open ground, surrounded by organic shapes. I cannot see them in the city surrounded by other shapes which would hide their sense of gravity.

Alistair Rider: I became very interested in thinking about grass and the lawn and the role that they play at the sculpture park. The lawn is not natural; it has to be maintained constantly, weekly probably. It is an invention of modernity. Lawns probably

date back to the beginning of the nineteenth century. So, lawns are ideologically determined. They signify space, signify the absence of trees; they are a clearing. But it is a clearing that is made to look natural. The lawn is a surface on which human activities can take place. So, the lawn is a figure of background. This is a highly artificial way of bringing in what we would like nature to be. Now the perfect example of this concept in North America is Monticello where Thomas Jefferson wanted lawns to extend from his property right up to the Blue Ridge Mountains. There is a nice continuous stretch where you can just allow your eye to drift over the open space. And we all know there were special pathways built for the slaves, so they would not interfere with this sightline. So, this vision-scape was entirely constructed.

Now, it is very interesting to think about Modernist sculpture, and I am thinking about welded steel sculpture from the post-war period. And I am not just thinking about Jeffrey's work, but about how Tony Caro and Robert Murray used the ground plane. Caro is very interested in the ground plane. And in a way, he does not work very well on the grass. I think he works very well in a parking lot overlooking a large expanse of the landscape. Caro's favourite photographer is London-based John Riddy, who was a very good photographer of sculpture. Riddy's best photographs are when Caro's sculptures are placed in a parking lot with the landscape falling away. But Caro is also interested in flatness, the flatness of the ground. He carries that into the work in interesting ways. And so, the question is what do you do with that, what can you say about that? What larger point is at stake here? And I wondered whether it is a celebration of space, in a very abstracted way, in the same way that grass is.

Jeffrey Rubinoff: I will throw something at you that you have probably never thought of before, and that is an article that I read before I got back to work here about why Americans love to cut grass and mold their lawns. When I was farming this place,

I was actually growing clover for seed and I admired these beautiful plants and flowers growing up around me. But what struck me about this incredible article was the idea that we carry lawns genetically, right from the veldt. The low grass of the veldt is actually what we carry within ourselves in order to revisit our own evolution. This is a fascinating idea and I loved it when I read it because this is what I wanted to put out with these pieces: to get that space, to be able to stop time within ourselves and thereby return to that particular thing where we all came from before we left the veldt.

Alistair Rider: Well, I would like to know a little bit more about the veldt.

Jeffrey Rubinoff: The short grasslands of Africa from which our ancestors emerged.

Alistair Rider: What is the ideal length of the veldt? Is it like half an inch?

Jeffrey Rubinoff: It has to be low enough so that you can see the animals. It would cause too much anxiety to walk in long grass because you'd suddenly find an animal in front of you. So, you cut it down so you could see. But most of the animals were herbivores. If you look at sheep on a farm you will see that the grass is down to half an inch; they take it right down.

John Kirk: This week in May you can see how green everything is. Come back in September and the pieces will look completely different because by that time you have a brown field. I mean it is an artist's palette out there from month to month. It changes and the colours change the sculptures.

Marcus Milwright: I was very struck by how Henry Moore's sculptures were actually placed on large rectangular plinths. And I wondered whether the grass is actually like a plinth.

Alistair Rider: No, my preferred analogy would be the white walls of a gallery. Sculpture parks are a phenomenon and one could narrate their history. The ideal sculpture park has green expanses of lawn. And it has walls that are constructed from trees or foliage. Landscape gardeners use a vocabulary that is borrowed from architecture to speak about the types of landscapes they are creating. I would not see the sculpture park as a plinth. But maybe you disagree. Can you say a little bit more about this?

Marcus Milwright: I was just struck by Moore's desire to be united with nature. Then suddenly, you see a sheep next to this rectangular plinth and there is a real discontinuity between desire and reality. You started talking about the essential artificial nature of grass, and the thing is that one needs to use pesticides, presumably, to stop weeds coming up. And when you referred to Monticello, I thought about English country houses. I thought about these wonderful lawns which would have a dip so that the cows could be down below and you do not really get a sense of why they cannot suddenly find their way up onto the lawn. There is so much illusion within that. It is not a critique of the grass, but it just seems to me to be introducing it into an idea that what it does with the sculpture is very important.

Sergei Petrov: From the point of view of a photographer there is a very simple reason why the grass works. Grass absorbs shadows. It reduces shadows because of its texture and it reduces the contrast between light and dark. It is an environment unlike concrete. If you put the same sculptures on any flat surface the contrast, especially from the sun, would be harsh because the shadow would start to interfere with the shape of the sculpture. Grass softens the shadows.

Peter Clarke: Jeffrey when, in your career as a sculptor, did you begin making your pieces specifically to be exhibited out of doors?

Jeffrey Rubinoff: This would have been the large project that I did in London, Ontario.¹⁵ But actually, the first series that I did when I moved back to Canada were out-of-door pieces. This would, I think, have been 1969 or 1970. I have no photographs of those pieces.

Maria Tippett: I am thinking of the contrast between Henry Moore's pillared pieces in the field at the Yorkshire Sculpture Park and his pieces at Much Hadham, where he actually lived. In comparison to the Yorkshire Sculpture Park, the installation of Moore's work at Much Hadham is poor. When Peter Clarke and I first visited Much Hadham a couple of years ago, we could not view the work properly. This was because the sculptures appeared to be cluttered, in a jumble. Some were even surrounded by low hedges. I found all of this unsympathetic to Moore's work. And I was prompted to think how carefully, by contrast, Jeffrey had sited his sculptures in the park here.

Alistair Rider: Our impression of Much Hadham was that it was like a recreation of the indoors-outdoors. It was all compartmentalized, with neat rectangular hedges enclosing the pieces. You got no sense, as you do here, of a space beyond in which the work was actually situated.

Maria Tippett: I wonder what role Henry Moore played in installing those works in Yorkshire where you do get an expansive view – as well as at Much Hadham where you do not.

Alistair Rider: Actually, the Yorkshire sculpture park is not an installation that Moore set up. The whole field is actually quite complicated because we want to know, when we are visiting Modernist sculptures, whether they reflect the artist's intentions or not. Here it is not the case. This is part of a major exhibition of Moore's work, which is ongoing, and it is about Moore in the land. The plinth plays an important role because it sets aside a different type of space. It is a way of saying that the sculpture occupies different spatial co-ordinates which are metaphorical or scaled. Moore could put work on the ground on a tiny base similar to what Jeffrey does for most of his works. When a sculpture is placed on the ground the viewer is occupying the same space as the work. As such, you have a different spatial relationship with it.

I am interested in the notion about where a sculpture invites you to view the work. Some sculptures ask you to get really close to them in order to look at the detailing. Other sculptures need more space and ask you to stand a bit further back so you can take in the surroundings. This is something that is really important for Sergei when he photographs a sculpture. Where do you put the camera? What is the distance? And different works call for different distances. And that is all part of the conversation I wanted to raise in this session.

Linda Goddard: It seems to me that the photograph has a large role to play in how the sculptor relates their work to the landscape. Whether David Smith is taking his own photograph such that the sculpture appears to be sort of discordant with, or dominating over the landscape, or whether it is Corolla Gideon taking the photographs comparing art sculptures to nature, it is not a pure experience of seeing the work in nature, it is mediated by the photograph and that seems important.

¹⁵ In 1973 Jeffrey Rubinoff designed, and also created, several sculptures for the White Oaks Shopping Mall in London, Ontario.

THE PHYSICAL AND SPATIAL CHARACTERISTICS OF COUNTERPOINT IN MUSIC AND IN SCULPTURE

by Christopher Butterfield

Thank you to Jeffrey Rubinoff and Maria Tippett for inviting me to take part in this year's extraordinary Company of Ideas Forum. I get the feeling that we are just beginning; I would like to stay another week – maybe next time. It is lovely to be on Hornby Island. One of my happiest musical memories is of conducting a program of music composed by Pierre Boulez (1925-2016), Karlheinz Stockhausen (1928-2007), and John Cage (1912-1992) at the Hornby Island Festival here in 1995. I think that most of the people that attended the festival were expecting to hear folk music. As a result, the organizer of the festival was dismissed shortly afterwards.

The American musicologist Leo Treitler has written that speaking about music is almost impossible because you either deal in metaphor, which can be interpreted by each person differently, or else you deal with technique and structure in which case you very quickly lose any audience that has not had musical training.¹⁶ I will try and locate my talk somewhere between the two. I do not aim to create a thesis here, rather to offer some ideas that we might talk about. I do not claim to be terribly original here. Most of what I am going to say has already been written about somewhere or other. The title of my talk is 'Music and Sculpture: Strange Bedfel-

¹⁶ See, for example, Leo Treitler *Music and the Historical Imagination* (Cambridge, MA, 1989)

lows?' The question is not mine; it came with the invitation to speak and much as I can see that people might wonder what the plastic arts have in common with a form that has no apparent material substance at all, I believe there are more than enough similarities to make them very compatible between the sheets.

First, I want to talk about counterpoint, a word that comes from the Latin *contra punctum*. The full phrase is *punctus contra punctum*: point against point. This is one of the fundamental structural ideas in music and it might also be the most graspable analog between music and sculpture. Any set of moving sounds can be assumed to be contrapuntal because counterpoint suggests that several things are happening at once. Another term for counterpoint might be polyphony – a play of many voices. As the American musicologist, Richard Taruskin claims in his writings on western music, there has probably never been a time when humans did not sing or play polyphonically. In other words, when they have made sounds together more or less organized.

In the ninth-century European monks began to notate what had always very much been an oral tradition. They discovered ways to concretize and make repeatable what was often an improvisation – or something remembered. Early polyphonic notation resembles points in space with no lines. I think most of us are familiar with music notation as having lines and then a series of dots and stems and connections of various kinds. This is a very early illustration of an association between points which is supposed to represent some kind of tone and the syllables of the text underneath it which is called the underlay. But there is nothing that actually locates the pictures. The points float quite freely on the page above the text. By the eleventh century, the French monk Adémar de Chabannes (988-1034), was probably the first to figure out the pitch-time plane. In other words, pitch is registered vertically and time is registered horizontally. But there was no precise way to notate pitch other than differentially – up is higher, down is lower. And

there certainly was no way to notate duration. This took another couple of hundred years. What early polyphonic notation reveals is an idea of a mode, of a scale and somehow the notation between that and the memorized scale defines what the actual differences in pitch will be.

The earliest known notation of more than one voice emerged in the twelfth-century from the abbey of St. Martial in Limoges. The notes were represented by little square dots called *neumes*. In the upper voice – quite articulated – and in the longer durations of the second voice below, you actually have an attempt to notate two voices at the same time. This is an early example of trying to make a notation of something moving in time in a strict relationship. We did not have duration. Indeed, there was nothing there except space to tell you. The correspondence between one symbol and the other tells us when the events are occurring, but a durational symbol has yet to be defined. What is interesting about this is that there are lines: four lines above and then the thick line and then the two below. These have actually been inked in later because, in the original manuscript, they were just inscribed with a sharp point. It is almost as if the monks were not quite sure about its location. Even so, they were beginning to develop an idea of where we can have lines and where everything happens in relation to the lines.

Over the next three hundred years, notation and counterpoint developed remarkably complex music to the degree that it caused Pope John XII to issue a document in 1324 excoriating avant-garde church composers for their sophisticated style and calling for a return to the traditional organum – an early contrapuntal method developed some three hundred years earlier. But, of course, it is hard to legislate the artistic imagination. Instead of returning to the simplest form of polyphony based on fourths, fifths, and octaves – very simple intervals in music – composers developed a more accessible style culminating in the works of

composers like the sixteenth century Italian, Giovanni Palestrina (1525-1594). This music was much more acceptable to the church. To our ears, it has a lot more finesse, but it does not have the awkward charm that makes pre-Renaissance music so alluring. In a 1316 piece attributed to the French composer Philippe de Vitry (1291-1361) *Servant regem / O Philippe / Rex regum*, you can hear the long voice underneath and the two sort of complementary voices on top doing a kind of embellishment of the text. There would be a kind of *cantus firmus* underneath – very long tones and then this slightly elaborate counterpoint on top.¹⁷ De Vitry was a member of the neo-complexity school of composers of the fourteenth century known as *Ars Nova*.

By the beginning of the seventeenth-century, the rules for harmony and counterpoint that most of us are familiar with today, were in place. This provided the structural basis for music of the Baroque period, including that of its master, J. S. Bach (1685-1750). If we keep imitative counterpoint in the round *Row, Row, Row Your Boat* in mind we can explore its structure which is called a *canon* or a *fugue*. An example of a much more elaborate imitative counterpoint is present in a piece that Bach wrote late in his life: the six voice *Ricecar*. Bach was given a rather difficult subject by one of the local kings and he said: ‘I cannot improvise on this right away; I’m going to have to get back to you in the morning’. And everybody thought that the king was trying to make a fool out of Bach and this, of course, is not a good idea. Bach came back in the morning with *Ricecar*. It was written using a technique called *klangfarbenmelodie*, which means ‘tone colour melody’, in which you have an orchestra and the orchestral instruments that are all coming and going in the line. The result is that the timbre and sound changes while the line sounds like it should be played by one voice. The colour changes as well as the texture and the counterpoint. What is heard are the instruments all coming in, then

¹⁷ *Cantus firmus* refers to a pre-existing melody used as the base for the composition.

after two or three notes, another instrument takes its place but you still get the sense of the line.

In imitative counterpoint, you have independent lines strongly related to each other and moving in relationships that reinforce the developing harmonic idea. There is no culture that I know of that has come up with a similar multilayered way of expression in which separate lines, combining pitch and duration, move in an integrated and repeatable way. And by repeatable, I mean notated in order to be done again in exactly the same way. This, more than anything else, is a result of notation as it has developed over the last thousand years. This allowed composers to analyze and refine the techniques of counterpoint and harmony.

The idea of notating things so that it was concrete and you could look at it and determine what you are going to do next was really crucial. For the next hundred and fifty years – from 1750 to 1900 – western art music was based on the idea of harmonic movement: the skillful manipulation of melody, harmony, and counterpoint that creates some kind of apprehend-able expression in time. But music, as always, contains the seeds of its own destruction as harmony became more complex with the nineteenth-century and tidy concepts like democracy, free will, and individual expression allowed composers to control and change the grammar of music rather than being controlled by it. Rigid structures of music built up over previous structures of music gave way and Modernism in all its kaleidoscopic glory.

Depending on its form and site, one possible definition of sculpture might be a particular sculpture's material and volume time and depending on its form and site, its political, social, recreational, economic and decorative time. What it shares with music is time. It is the optical equivalent of the time-based aural experience. With music, the listener is usually in a fixed position experiencing a set of fugitive acoustic events pervading a space.

With sculpture, the viewer is usually mobile observing the sculptural object from points anywhere up to 360 degrees. The object usually occupies the space physically. Time is a parameter in both experiences. Unlike painting, a sculpture is in a dynamic relationship with its site, whether interior or exterior. Again, this brings time into the experience of sculpture with its changing scale dependent on the position of the viewer. The body, then, is central to the sculptural experience; the physical self enters into a physical relationship with an object that can then be multiplied by the number of viewers. I thought that this brought up an interesting example in music: the idea of spatial location of music and sound. In sixteenth-century Venice, the composer Giovanni Gabrieli (1557-1612) wrote antiphonal music for Saint Mark's Basilica. The musicians were separated into two groups with the wind players stationed in galleries across from each other with the two galleries positioned on either side of the nave. Then they played complementary musical passages back and forth. This is what antiphony or antiphonal music means. This is very interesting because it creates a perspectival image acoustically where the directionality of sound gives the impression of something actually material.

The revolution in sculpture at the beginning of the twentieth century was extreme, simply because of what I will call the 'Duchampian Turn'. The transition from Auguste Rodin's (1840-1917) *Monument to Victor Hugo* (1890) with all its kind of emptied-out spaces, undressed subject, and amorphous form to Constantin Brâncuși's (1876-1957) *The Kiss* (1907) and then to Marcel Duchamp's *Snow Shovel* (1915) is incredible.¹⁸ The transition is precipitous; going a long way in a very short time. All of a sudden there is another factor at work in the experience of sculpture: the realization that any object has form, and can,

18 Also known as *The Palais Royal Monument* of 1890, this bronze sculpture depicts an unidealized nude portrait of Victor Hugo dedicated to the poet and located in the gardens of the Palais-Royal.

if re-contextualized, acquire a value that is both aesthetic and conceptual. This is where the body is in a relationship with the fabricated object. Now any object could be considered a sculpture. Where before we had a mutually agreeable contract between viewer and artist – a closed space to give an acoustic analogy – we now had a situation where the contrast was a lot looser and a lot more speculative. Today it is acoustically possible to have immense space where critical and philosophical reflections on the objects resound for far longer and may, in fact, just continue to amplify and may not in fact be silenced. There is no final resolution to a critique of the artist's work. I would like to hope that we are all thinking metaphorically as much as possible about music, sculpture, space, and counterpoint so that we are able to consider the observable relationship between any sound, object, words, images, and movement.

There are two examples of music that are a direct analog to sculpture. The first brings together the Franco-American composer Edgard Varèse (1883-1965) and the American sculptor Alexander Calder. Varèse's *Intégrales* (1925) demonstrated from the opening of a piece that his idea of music was something spatial because he talks about moving bodies in space. In other words, for Varèse, music is object with a form that gives a clear impression of volumes and planes moving in counterpoint with each other. In the opening form of the piece, there is a strong interplay between three objects: a rising clarinet motif on the E flat and two sets of chords underneath. The absolutely crucial part, is that there is a percussion section in this group which does something that percussion has never done in western music before: it seems to be conducting its own party. There is this extremely rhythmic, almost improvisational thing. We are used to thinking of percussion as something that reinforces music; it comes in and accents the strong beat. For example, is it conducting a completely separate sort of affair off on the side? Would it make us wonder who

was in fact playing the melody? In this sense, percussion is the noise.

Varèse piece demonstrates a kind of juxtaposition of shapes moving around. What is interesting here is that there are never exact repetitions of brass and woodwind passages; each repetition varies in time and length of separation from the previous one; everything is just slightly off. The important thing is that they are not uniform repetitions, they are dissonant. They give the impression of being repetitive which makes them more strongly functional and memorable for being so. Calder and Varèse were close friends. They lived in the same building in Paris for a few years. Calder had made articulated sculptures for years before he came up with the idea of the mobile in the 1930s. The idea of morphological shapes of different sizes moving in a spatially limited but contrapuntally infinite envelope is the closest visual analog to Varèse's moving sound blocks that I know of.

The second example comes a few decades later. In the late 1960s and early 1970s, music and art developed a closeness that had not been seen since the beginning of the century in the works of composers, artists, writers, and choreographers. I am referring to the various collaborations between Igor Stravinsky, Erik Satie (1866-1925), Pablo Picasso, Jean Cocteau (1889-1963), Fernand Léger (1881-1955), and members of the Ballet Russe – the whole gang! Choreographers like Simone Forti (1935-), Lucinda Childs (1940-), and Douglas Dunn (1942-) choreographed dances using repetition and everyday movement. Artists like Sol LeWitt (1928-1907), Carl Andre, and Donald Judd (1928-1944) reduced the materials of sculpture to a minimum, relying on philosophical rigor to come up with the simplest forms which nonetheless carried an enormous aesthetic charge. Reductive in materials and form, the results themselves are persuasively contrapuntal. The elements of LeWitt's *Cube Structure Based on Five* (1972), endlessly interact within themselves. Judd's enameled copper

boxes are very large and heavy and beautiful objects that set up a dynamic state between the plain polished copper exterior and the alluringly enameled interior. The copper plates in Andre's ten by ten *Altstadt Copper Square* (1967) are different enough in finish that they create a counterpoint of dissimilar materials for the viewers.

Strongly related to these other forms are the early 1960s compositions of the American, Steve Reich (1936-). What interests Reich is a compositional process in which sound and music are one and the same thing. The basis of his earliest compositions uses deceptively simple material that observably transforms itself over time through very simple processes of changing temporal relationships. In *Piano Phase* (1967) there are two identical lines made up of twelve notes comprising only five pitches from the well-tempered scale played in unison on two pianos – one which speeds up while the other remains steady. You have to consider how difficult this is. You have got two pianos, playing the simple notes in unison and then one of them has to stay absolutely steady while the other very gently speeds up, thus changing the whole relationship. The resulting counterpoint, as the lines move into new relationships note by note, is shockingly dense. Acoustically there are all sorts of other artifacts and phenomena that occur, until eventually the moving line goes through all twelve permutations and comes back to the unison again. This is as close as music can come to the object.

What is even more remarkable about this music which is percussive, rapid, and uninterrupted, is that it sets up acoustic nodes in the space where it is being played. In other words, by moving one's head or moving around the room, one finds areas in which the sound is reinforced appearing louder or with a different timbre. This is impossible to experience with a reproduction recording. We can only do this if we have two pianos in the room. It becomes an effect which is spatially contrapuntal through the listener's

changing station. This is perhaps a modern counterpart of the sixteenth-century antiphonal music performed in Saint Mark's Basilica, Venice, where directionality of the instruments created a materiality in the music.

In conclusion, as the nineteenth century German poet, Johann von Goethe (1749-1832) wrote, 'Music is liquid sculpture and sculpture is frozen music.' And based on that observation, discussion of similarities will be endless.

DIALOGUE ON SCULPTURE AND MUSIC

Janet Sit: On the sculpture tour with Jeffrey we spoke about proportions and durations; duration and time. With counterpoint in music, the independent lines not only move together, there is also a sense of proportion to it. With counterpoint in sculpture, it is about the relation between the person who is looking at it and the sculpture's surroundings. What we can think about are the proportions and lines, not so much in the sculpture itself, but with the sculpture in relation to the park. In a sense, the ground becomes the *cantus firmus*. We can actually look at the sculptures as these separate lines that are moving though the park with the background of the mountains as well as the rest of the landscape. In musical counterpoint, we are also talking about listening to music through time. In the previous session, Sergei spoke about the grass changing colour and I had completely forgotten that, yes, over time the grass changes colour. The landscape changes over time and the counterpoint between the sculpture and its surroundings changes at different intervals too. Now, I am interested to hear Jeffrey's thoughts on proportion and time on a macro scale.

Jeffrey Rubinoff: The one thing that we have not discussed is the question of visual counterpoint versus aural counterpoint. In music, once you go over four voices, you want to run from the room. We are dealing with what happens with our aural sense, versus our visual sense. Our visual sense is counterpoint to an infinite number of voices with the possibilities existing within that infinite number of voices. When dealing with outdoor sculpture, it is very different from dealing with sculpture within the gallery space where you are looking at the internal counterpoint of the which is designed for that to happen. My very earliest work was displayed in a white cube gallery. In that context, you were looking

internally as you measured the counterpoint within the limits of the piece itself. What happens when the work goes outside, is that you start dealing with infinite counterpoint. When you deal with infinite counterpoint you are dealing with something really quite different from music. When the pieces are outside the mountain is not a mountain anymore; it is a time sequence. Each tree is a time sequence. There is the linear effect of the sculpture moving within every one of those other time sequences.

When you select different parts of the time sequence, you will actually see the piece in a different context. Not just in the shifts in weather on a given day, but also in shifts in the lines of what you can actually see in the views. Our mountain may show right now, at least along its line, but other mountains are not showing. What is shown at any point in time are different linear spaces in the permanent surroundings of the sculpture. And that is before the weather change, and before the colours change. If we look at counterpoint from the point of view of sculpture our brains deal with it very differently. This is probably something that has a genetic origin – the same genetic origin of the limited number of voices. It involves fight or flight whereas the visual realities involve a much more advanced sense of hunting and gathering. Is one superior to the other? Absolutely not. They just function very differently. Understanding that difference makes us look at this work very differently. I love to use the analogy with music because music does deal with a limited number of voices. It is much easier to see the way this functions in a white cube gallery than it is here. Out here in the park, the levels of complexity really do change. The linearity of music is limited to four voices and it really does expand once you are walking in the field.

C. Butterfield: The word counterpoint seems to cover enormous ground. However, we can talk about formal counterpoint in the western tradition in music. There is something happening with composers at the very end of the nineteenth-century and very

beginning of the twentieth-century. Counterpoint involves simultaneities – very tightly controlled and structured simultaneities. It is the intentional relationships between moving voices. This is exemplified in the works of composers like the American Charles Ives (1874-1954) and the Austrian, Gustav Mahler (1860-1911). Mahler wanted his symphony to represent the whole world. His world in relationship to Ives represents a fiddler outside a pub. Ives starts to make it possible for us to actually hear the whole world. He never realized in his own lifetime that his unfinished *Universe Symphony* (1915-1928) would be played on mountains, in fields, and in towns. The effect was this simultaneous and enormous kind of music that was almost unimaginable in its logistical difficulties. But he really was the first one to see this open-air sense of what music could be. It came from his father who used to march the town band down the street, past other bands or put them up in the steeples and on the top of the newspaper building and so on and have them all conducted from a central point. This resulted in a very complex music but with recognizable parts within it. If you change your location while listening, you really do hear it as sculpture. You hear it in time; you hear it as an object. Ives is still looked upon as this a brilliant amateur but he was probably the greatest composer America has produced. His only European counterpart in that time were composers like Darius Milhaud (1892-1974). This French composer wrote what is called *polytonal music* and *bitonal music* in which you actually have key areas that are happening simultaneously. It is almost as if we can take the word counterpoint and just move it gently aside and allow the word *simultanism*—simultaneity—to take its place. Because if I am thinking about where I am and what I am experiencing in the visual realm and not just the visual realm but also the physical realm, ‘simultaneity’ is the word I would use. Apart from anything else, it combines the whole sensorium. You are really not closed in. Your ears are working. Your body is working. And your eyes are working. This does not, however, work in a confined space, rather, it becomes much more a thoughtful process.

Maria Tippett: Christopher, I'd like to know more about the ninth-century manuscript you've just shown us which has no indication of time on the score. Did a conductor establish the rhythm, pace, and the time?

C. Butterfield: Though I cannot say for sure, I think there would have been a leader. That leader would have lead in some physical way, whether by the intake of breath, or a movement of the head, or the position of the body. One interesting thing to keep in mind is that when you have a lot of musical parts they are usually assembled in a score so that the conductor, or the person leading, can see all the parts at once. This did not happen until the sixteenth-century. Before this, everybody had their own part, but nobody thought ‘we should put them in the same book’. When thinking of the counterpoint of many voices, a double choir of eight voices – to say nothing of the polyphonic forty-part motets – probably did not have a conductor. I do not know if they even had a score. This is the extraordinary thing that makes one wonder, as with early music, about the people who experienced the performance. But perhaps it was not like that? Perhaps things just did not line up? Perhaps everything was just all slightly a-swim. While you might have points of arrival, points of correspondence this kind of one, two, three, four, indicated by the director, might not have been there yet. This is an extraordinary idea if you try to imagine what that would have sounded like.

Mona Holmlund: I was particularly attracted to the ninth-century manuscript that Maria mentioned. Of particular interest to me was your comment about the dots on the page which were an attempt to fix or simplify points in space. There is a resonance here with Linda's talk around the idea of trying to transcribe into one form, something that fundamentally exists in a different form, in a different language. Artists' writings begin as aphorisms or poetry – a kind of a collage of written forms that attempt to

talk about the visual. In the ninth-century example you showed us, those points in space are trying to represent what is going on in the oral tradition.

The ideas that resonated for me from our discussions have been about the placement of the sculptures physically in the space in this particular landscape. I've been thinking about how Alistair's comment about the lawn being a means of controlling interaction with the work. All of these ideas have struck me as being like the scribes who made impressions onto what I assume to be vellum and then tried to fix something physically in space. I throw that out as a topic of conversation.

Natalie Massong: Christopher, I was interested in your suggestion that, unlike music and sculpture, paintings do not have the same dynamic relationship with their surroundings. From your discussion, I am starting to see that because of the spatial relationship between sculpture and music they actually feel more complementary as an art form than painting.

I would also like to suggest that a painting on the wall also has a dynamic relationship with other objects in the room where it is placed: such as the walls and the people who enter that space. Would you therefore agree that sculpture is more similar to music in terms of this spatial relationship?

C. Butterfield: I always found that, as a composer, I learned more from looking at painting than I learned from looking at sculpture. But I now think that sculpture probably has in its essence, qualities that are more similar to music than painting does. So, I can look at a painting and I can render a kind of idea of its form and transpose it into some musical idea pretty quickly. Sculpture is a little more complicated and more complex, especially if it finds itself outdoors in a landscape. The painting is in a closed area – I can move about it pretty quickly – but sculptures,

by comparison, are not. The sculpture has more in common, in an essential way, with music than the painting does.

Linda Goddard: I want to pick up on Mona's point about comparisons between the arts. First, I want to say that comparisons between music and painting were extremely prominent, as many people probably know, in the late nineteenth-century as well as during other periods. But artists and other media are often prompted to compare their art forms.

The point about sculpture functioning like music, which seems a very persuasive argument, interested me because Jennifer and I were talking yesterday about Gotthold Ephraim Lessing (1729-1781).

In Lessing's famous eighteenth-century essay on the visual arts – represented by sculpture – and the verbal arts, he draws his examples from the Lascaux caves, ancient sculptures and the writings of the Roman poet, Virgil (70 BC – 19 BC). In Lessing's view, sculpture can only take one static position which is quite amazing to think about after having looked at Jeffrey's sculptures. But for Lessing, poetry and writing opens up all these possible spaces for the imagination and is essentially a temporal form. This is, of course, true but the idea that sculpture is one fixed moment seems very easy to challenge now. I wonder whether the way in which we seek to classify the arts according to their specific properties is fundamentally problematic. The idea that music works this way, sculpture works that way, painting works another way, is just problematic. People can set up these models which end up being very influential but ultimately then they can be challenged.

Sergei Petrov: You can look at sculpture and music in fundamentally different ways. Because music is a sequence of sounds, we cannot perceive it without remembering and perceiving the sequence. Music always has a history; it has been

passed on to the present. Sculpture is something very different. It has to do with our visual apparatus. If I pick up a coffee cup and turn it around, I do not perceive it as a sequence of images but as a single object. It does not matter how I turn it, the more I look at it the more I remember it as an object. The next time I come here, even a year from now, I know that it is the same cup I saw before. This is also what we do with faces. When we know somebody, we do not perceive them as a sequence of different expressions in time. Because the image of their face is created within our minds even before our consciousness starts to think about it. The image is compressed.

When I look at sculpture, especially at Jeffrey's work and I view his work from different angles, I do not see it in a sequence. There is not a particular order of images which form in my mind. It has all been compressed and presented in one single object, one single experience. That is why I think music exists only with time and in time. If, for example, you reach a state of mind when time stops, you can no longer perceive music. With sculpture, it is different. Time can stop but you can still interact with the object. Now ballet is a completely different story; you have a sequence of movements; you have to remember what the dancer did before and what he or she did after.

There is a way to classify the different arts purely by what group of our senses are being used and how our sensual apparatus, our visual apparatus – or our audio apparatus – deals with time. This relates to how we were created by evolution. It is good to remember that our senses were not created for the purpose of perceiving art but strictly for survival. Our visual apparatus is something that we needed in order to survive. It was essential; we had to decide very quickly: 'Do I flee, or fight?' 'Do I eat, or be eaten?' You cannot beat millions of years of evolution. But the artists that know how this apparatus works can apply it to their work consciously or subconsciously, the same way as composers

use a completely different sort of apparatus that acknowledges how objects are perceived.

Marcus Milwright: Bringing up the issue of the sequence: architecture is a rather good point of comparison. I was thinking of the very complex intercolumniation at the courtyards of the Alhambra.¹⁹ It has been suggested that the courtyards are actually based on some sort of musical rhythmic structure. I was just recently reading about inscriptions in medieval buildings. Prior to the twelfth-century, it was common practice to read out loud while walking around the spaces that had bands of inscriptions that went around the building. In this way, you were both moving and speaking; creating a soundscape within the space. That would have been the common practice because you simply did not do it in your head. There had to be a sound while you were doing it.

Alistair Rider: I just wanted to add that rhythm and duration have a very interesting interplay in early Modernist sculpture. This idea is filtered through Henri Bergson's philosophy of creative evolution which has influenced composers as well as poets like Gertrude Stein. They wrote about the dynamic interplay of our subjective experience of temporality. Bergson would argue that subjectivity is also creative; hence the term 'creative evolution' which extends into our experience of time. There are many examples of sculptors, like Alexander Archipenko (1887-1964), who were not interested in completing their work, thereby leaving gaps for us to fill in. The experience of these works can vary from person to person. Archipenko anticipates a kind of creative reading into the work, a reading of a space where a head should be. He anticipates a different kind of subjective experience of sculpture through that gap, through that absence. Christopher, do you have anything to add regarding how Bergson figures in terms of rhythm?

¹⁹ Alhambra is a 14th-16th Century palace located in Granada, Andalusia, Spain with distinct Moorish design influence.

C. Butterfield: In the transitional moment in music – between 1907 and 1913 – there are profound examinations of the basic parameters of music. There is a profound examination of pitch arising from the destruction of tonality. There is, as well, a profound examination of rhythm coming from the so-called *Primitivism* of Stravinsky. This is nothing but high artifice made primal. I am unsure about Bergson, but the one that is really interesting is Claude Debussy's (1862-1918) use of time. For him, time becomes an analog. In the opening two-hundred-and-forty measures of *Jeux* (1913) – a ballet that he wrote for Nijinsky – there is no moment longer than eight seconds where time is steady and regular. Time becomes a texture. This was an extraordinary thing that I do not think had been done before. You might possibly find it in some of the extemporized vocal music in Italy in the early seventeenth-century, but that is a text-based narrative, a drama of some kind, quasi-improvisation. But in Debussy's *Jeux*, the structure is controlled. Time is no longer secure. This is where I would see Bergson's having some influence.

Jennifer Wise: Christopher, I was wondering what you think about the influence of Indonesian gamelan music, composed for the Paris exposition of 1889, on Debussy and Maurice Ravel's (1875-1937) concept of time as well as their sense of what counterpoint is or might be.

C. Butterfield: The quick answer is that I think Indonesian gamelan music had more of an influence in pitch and in harmony because it reduced a scale. In an Indonesian scale, you either have five notes or seven notes which is a little different from the whole chromatic set of twelve notes in the western scale. Indonesian music has a non-modulating scale with no harmonic movement. At the same time the music has a great deal of internal movement. I do not think the influence on Ravel and Debussy was rhythmic. It was more in timbre and harmony.

Peter Clarke: I think a lot of what has been said makes obvious sense because we are talking about affinities between different modes of creation. Now, some of this may be just in the *perception* of these affinities subsequent to the creation of the works themselves. But I would like to ask a question, specifically to Jeffrey, who obviously has long been alert to the significance of counterpoint in his own work. Did you come to this, Jeffrey, having created sculpture, saying 'this is counterpoint.' Or was it more programmatic than that, in the sense that you were working from the metaphor of counterpoint in actually creating the work in the first place?

Jeffrey Rubinoff: This is something that I wanted to discuss. There is more of a difference between the necessary sequence of putting a piece together than there is in observing it the way Sergei suggested. One of the problems that will happen between 'Christopher and Christopher' – just as there is a problem between 'me and me' – is that we both create and we both become observers of our own work. The question is where does this come into play? Sergei is absolutely right when he claimed that in observing the piece after it is done, one is in a very different place than during the sequences that are necessary to put it together. Similarly, Christopher is his strongest audience, too. He hears his work during its creation and then after it is done. So, is he talking about his work afterwards or is he talking about his work before? We are confused; there is no question about it. What you have raised is probably the most important question here: as the creator, which side are you on?

Sergei is absolutely correct about a finished piece, but the sequences that go into it before have to be envisioned. Which came first? This is very difficult for me to answer because I was a musician before I was a sculptor. I would have to say that I was aware of music in making sculpture from its inception. But does it become a sequential part of looking at the piece when it is

being constructed in my mind before it is even constructed in the studio? Absolutely, yes. A work becomes composed in my mind in a similar way to the act of putting it together.

I have watched Christopher switch back and forth while he was talking about the audible and what he envisions in his mind. Something audible suddenly becomes visual to him. It can be visual to him in the way he hears it, envisions it as he hears it, or envisions it as he writes it down on a piece of paper. There is a very interesting thing that happens with language and written language, in that we hear it and we see it, and we experience it all as a whole. Poetry is one of those things where you can do all of those things. You hear it, you see it, and you envision it in your mind at the same time. In a way, then, composing is very similar to that; just as composing this sculpture is very similar to that. However, there is a before and an after result.

PHOTOGRAPHING SCULPTURES

by Sergei Petrov

Thank you Maria for suggesting this topic. My discussion will not only be about sculpture and photography; it will be about photographing sculpture and photographing art in general. It is a subject that we all take for granted, especially since reproducing art has become so commonplace. However, I think there are a few points we need to address.

My photographic career began in 1977 after I left a position as a research scientist in the Soviet Defense Industry for a job at an art-publishing house. With my background in science and technology, the transition was easy. So, mastering photographic techniques and equipment did not take long. Within a few months, I was photographing paintings and sculpture at major Russian museums such as the Hermitage in St. Petersburg and the Tretyakov Gallery in Moscow.

During my career, I have photographed several thousand paintings and hundreds of sculptures. However, it took me a long time to fully appreciate the irony that, in order to successfully photograph sculpture, one has to accept the fact that the project will inevitably be a failure. No matter how sophisticated, my flat two-dimensional image could not possibly represent the complexity of a three-dimensional object in real space. In other words, when photographing sculpture, success can only be defined in terms of a lesser or greater degree of failure. With this limitation in mind, I shall discuss sculpture in photography.

The question of whether photography is, by itself, an art form is still being debated. The utilitarian side of it has been obvious from the very beginning. The excitement of having discovered a fast, technological process to capture images without tedious hours of drawing, led to the widespread adoption of photography as a means to catalogue and popularize art. The photographic apparatus quickly became the universal recorder and led to the common belief that 'the camera never lies'. Only recently, has advancement in neuroscience given us a better understanding of how the human brain receives our three-dimensional world. These discoveries have revealed that not only does a camera lie, it does so with a vengeance. By providing an abundance of detail in the photographic image, it fools our brain into thinking that we are looking at real objects in real space. However, the object's size, its shape, and its relationship to its surroundings may be, at best, left undefined or, at worst, completely distorted. Modern photography gives us incredibly powerful tools to capture, edit, and enhance images. However, when such power is left unchecked, it makes photography a medium of illusions, rather than a record of reality.

Most applications of photography – from family shots, to nature and to advertising – actually benefit from the augmentation of reality. However, for the reproduction of sculpture, it spells a disaster. Masterpieces of grace and elegance can easily turn into crude, tasteless objects. On the other hand, mediocre boring pieces can end up looking vibrant and full of energy. To better understand the nature of why this is so and to understand the ways to mitigate it, we need to consider two things. What actually happens when we use a camera and the lens to capture an image? And, how is the end product different from our human perception? When seeking to resolve this particular problem I find that it is useful to think of an object as having three different types of form: physical, visual, and perceived. Today, three-dimensional scanning allows us to map any three-dimensional object with

incredible detail and accuracy. It is not far-fetched to imagine that soon we will be able to do such mapping at microscopic or even molecular levels. This kind of data represents an object's physical form. It may even enable us to create exact replicas of an object. But as human beings we cannot process it directly. Knowing the physical form is equivalent to having an object in a dark storage room. We know we have it, but we cannot form any opinion about its aesthetic qualities.

Visual form is created by the interaction of physical form and the light that illuminates the object. Hypothetically speaking, if you surround an object with a sphere that is capable of recording light and then releasing it, an outside observer will never be able to tell the difference between the real object and its visual form played back. It is natural for us to think that we see with our eyes. However, what our mind actually looks at is a simulation constructed by our brain in a highly complex process of the integration of various sources of information – not all of them visual. This integration can happen on a subconscious level; some of it happens on our retina, but most of the time leaves us blissfully unaware of its intricacy. It is a continuous process of sense and integration. As we move our eyes from one part of the object to the other, as we walk around it, and look at its surroundings, we actively interact with visual form and explore it in greater and greater detail. Yet all of these different views are being simultaneously combined in a single perceived form of the object that is already in our mind. A photographic camera, on the other hand, is capable of recording only the tiniest bit of the visual form in an instant of time. The lens makes a linear projection of a three-dimensional object on a two-dimensional flat surface. Most of the information is lost. The back of the object is not visible; the sides are distorted; even the front loses some of its spatial characteristics. Taking multiple photographs of the same object does not help. Our brain cannot integrate a collection of separately presented images into a single form. Rather, when we are looking

at a set of photographic prints we continue to perceive the works for what they are: distinct objects in space. A person with a trained visual sense can build a mental image of an object based on a set of different photographic views. However, the result of this conscious effort lacks the intimacy and the immediacy of direct interaction of our senses with the visual form. Although such mental reconstruction may serve a purpose in a technical design or engineering project, it is useless when it comes to viewing and experiencing a work of art. So, when we look at the photograph of a sculpture, our brain's capability to create the perceived form is severely limited by the lack of visual input. Instead of a complete novel, we get a half page abstract. Instead of a movie, we get a one-minute preview. This is a fundamental problem which can never be fully resolved. However, there is a way to remedy this dilemma.

Being able to recognize distinct objects in the three-dimensional space in which we live, has been crucial for our survival as a species. Our visual apparatus has evolved with multiple levels of redundancy. When stereoscopic vision with two eyes is not available, or when we cannot move and thereby change our point of view, our brain falls back on other visual information – such as shading, perspective and, colouring – in order to render the perceived shape of the three-dimensional object. Our brain's ability to process these secondary sources into 'special' information allows us to look at two-dimensional images and perceive them as three-dimensional forms and shapes. It is possible to take a photograph of a sculpture in such a way that when a person looks at the image, the mind creates the perceived form to a similar degree as to what it would have created looking directly at the original.

Mastering photographic techniques is no easy task. It requires a detailed understanding of the mechanisms of human perception. For me, studying the history of art and observing how painters

create different perceptions of space and form in their work, has been a crucial source of this vital knowledge and skill.

The arrival of digital photography and digital editing tools, in particular, has not only removed practically all of the technical difficulties, it has removed the element of chance. Yet such freedom has come with a price. Today, a novice photographer is easily overwhelmed by the numerous possibilities that have become available to him or her and can no longer hide behind the narrow aesthetics of a particular photographic technique. But even a skilled photographer who can be very precise in achieving the desired objective, faces a daunting task. 'What should be done with an image,' rather than, 'what can be done with it?' In a strange way, the advancement of digital technology has made photography less technological, brought it more in line with the traditional graphic arts and with the dilemma of having a blank canvas and of deciding what to do with it.

What photography has gone through in the last decade is truly revolutionary. This transformative change has brought many intended, as well as unintended, consequences. For a photographer of sculpture, it has stressed – more than ever before – the need to have clear guidelines in order to prevent the photographer from creating a new work of art instead of reproducing the original sculpture. In an ideal world, no-one is in a better position to make a judgement-call than the creator of the sculpture. But only a few artists have successfully photographed their own work. A productive collaboration between the artist and the photographer – whereby the artist takes the role of a director and the photographer acts as a cameraman – is very rare for one obvious reason. Most of the sculptors lived well before photography had been created. This means that the photographer has to act alone and derive his or her guidance from the artwork itself.

In my professional career as a photographer of sculpture, I have developed several guidelines. First, and most importantly, the photographer needs to abandon any artistic ego and artistic ambitions when photographing a piece of sculpture. Although photography requires a lot of special skills and experience, taking photographs of art works should not be a creative process. The absolutely worst thing that a photographer can do is to impose a new artistic vision on someone else's original art. Second, the photographer should not try to capture the artistic essence of the work and then somehow express it in a different media. Even if successful, which is highly unlikely given the inherent limitations of the reproduction process, it would mean imposing the photographer's personal interpretation and thereby misrepresenting the work of art. What the photographer should do is try to collect, in a single image, as much of the visual form of the original sculpture as possible then express it without distorting the flat medium. The result will always be far inferior to the original work, but it would not be misleading. It is therefore important for the photograph to show that the photograph does not do justice to the original work.

In conclusion, there are inherent limitations to reproducing three-dimensional art in a two-dimensional flat medium. Photographers of sculpture today face many challenges. This brings us to the central question: what is the actual purpose of reproducing art and specifically sculpture? Is there another objective beyond the obvious one of cataloguing and coding art for identification and authentication? Should we try to capture the essence of a work – regardless of its limitations – with the hope that some of it will survive the reproduction process and can be shared with those who have not seen it and indeed may never see the original work? Or do we limit the reproduction process to creating an image which is clearly inferior to the original while nevertheless providing enough visual content to raise an interest and suggest that it is worth making the effort to see and experience the original work? I hope that in the following discussion

we can address some of my concerns, along with other questions relating to photographing sculpture and art in general.

DIALOGUE ON SCULPTURE AND PHOTOGRAPHY

Mona Holmlund: It has always been my concern, especially when teaching undergraduates from rural parts of Canada, that their only exposure to a lot of the canonical work will only be through photographs. Thus, for them, art history becomes 'slide history'. I am just wondering if other art history educators here have thought about how they might get around this problem – other than sending your students to galleries and to places like this where they can experience a work of art first hand.

With regard to understanding Minimalism, there is a vast difference between looking at a photograph of a work and in actually experiencing the work *in situ*. Alistair spoke about the difference between looking at photographs of Jeffrey's work and seeing it in the sculpture park and how it affected his interpretation of the work. I want to know if other people encountered that same difficulty of getting students past their own experiential limitations.

Natalie Massong: I think that the best thing is to actually see sculptural work and to encourage students to actually go and see the work in person. There are also a lot of advantages of using the internet. For example, Google Art Project allows students to experience the gallery itself. It offers a street view within the gallery that allows one to go up to the artwork and zoom the actual piece of art. In this way, the student can experience what it would be like to walk through a gallery like the Louvre. Of course, nothing can replace the actual experience of viewing a work *in situ*.

Brad Buie: During Sergei's workshop yesterday, he pointed out that it was a very bad day to photograph art. In fact, he told us: 'you have to accept that photographs are a failure.' If we think about Jeffrey's work, an important aspect is the context of the sculpture park and each piece's counterpoint with the environment. A photograph is really just encapsulating the sculpture.

What is the difficulty of photographing in a sculpture park? Does it have something to do with the difficulty of capturing this landscape?

Sergei Petrov: There is no difficulty because the better the art, the more aware I become of how inferior the final result will be. When I photograph great pieces of art, it always makes me humble. And photographing them in this setting, in this environment, you have to deal with so many unknowns. I think that in this particular case, Jeffrey is in an excellent position because he is here all the time and he can observe his sculpture in different lights and under different conditions. After all, it is his judgement as the creator of the sculpture that is most important. What I have found is that the park is actually very easy to work in because all of the pieces are positioned very thoughtfully according to light and according to the position of the other sculptures. I have photographed sculpture outdoors and in sculpture parks only a few times. I found that it was very difficult because there was little consideration of how they would line up with other works. Providing one has enough patience to wait for the right lighting conditions, I find it easy to photograph Jeffrey's sculpture.

Maria Tippett: What are the ideal lighting conditions?

Sergei Petrov: It depends on the material.

Jeffrey Rubinoff: Sergei has hit the nail on the head here. It usually takes me two years before I photograph a piece. I walk

the park every day; going clockwise one day and counter-clockwise the other. When I have placed a piece, I look at it over and over and over again in all the different lights that I can see on a daily basis until I know the ideal light for any given piece. Once I have made the decision to photograph, I wait for that light and I stop everything else that I am doing. I put the camera on a tripod and go out and start shooting. It usually takes several shots, over a long period of time, to get that piece right. And when I say right, I mean that the sculptor is in a very, very difficult position because he or she wants to introduce the audience to the work and that is all that it is, just an introduction. So, at that point you want the right introduction and that is really all that you can expect to get out of it. The problem is that, as Sergei pointed out, there is an infinite number of picture planes available. The most difficult thing, both in placing the piece and in photographing the piece, is having to choose an iconic view that will capture the three-dimensional piece in a two-dimensional medium.

You have to understand that the best that you can do is to introduce somebody to the piece – and this is where the artist comes in – and hope that the photographs that he or she selects serves as a welcoming introduction to the piece itself. Then, when someone comes into the park, they can say, ‘Oh, I recognize that work.’ The strangest thing to hear is when people say, ‘I am familiar with your work,’ when their experience of it has only been through photographs. This is strange. I would not say that you want people to be familiar with it, or even claim to be familiar with it. So, the photograph is that first introduction, a handshake to the piece that says, ‘I would kind of like to look at that piece, I would kind of like to be there.’ (I have included photographs of my sculptures on the covers of my books with the hope that they are a welcoming introduction to my sculptures.)

For somebody else’s work in another environment, I will not photograph it. And generally speaking, I do not let anybody else

photograph my own work. I trust Sergei because I know that he understands the problems. It becomes far too easy to look at a detail in a piece. There are an infinite number of picture planes and almost anyone can choose one that they like then present it as their own work.

I have never liked the idea that work can be appropriated. I think that that kills the whole idea of art. I know that people probably could write papers on why they feel that this is not true and why this should not be true, but I still see it that way. It is very difficult to deal with isolating any parts of those pieces. I know that in art history you are always going to have detail shots and the detail shots usually are not very good as far as the piece is concerned. But then, the biggest thing about photographing sculpture is that sculpture has presence. Now paintings have presence too, but for sculpture it is a rather total thing – the aspect of presence itself.

Janet Sit: There infinite planes for taking a photograph of sculpture and, in terms of introducing people to listening to music, there are infinite interpretations of a musical work too. Even though you can listen to the same piece by different performers again and again, it will never be quite the same. One performance or encounter can only serve as an introduction to a piece of music or a piece of sculpture.

Jennifer Wise: I empathize with your problem, but imagine teaching theatre history. There is no data, there is no document, and no photograph! I would love to have even a poor photograph because the alternative is having nothing at all. In my field, this lack of a visual image is definitely a problem.

Marcus Milwright: Just picking up on the issue of teaching. Most of the students in my field, Islamic art, will never have an opportunity to see the objects that we study. This means that they cannot appreciate the spatial qualities of architecture and

sculpture and so on. But there is also the issue of materiality. For example, bronze has different qualities and constraints than steel. This is something that I have emphasized whenever it is possible to handle the objects. In these handling sessions, I show my students steel, bronze, brass, glass and ceramic objects, as well as metal works, to help them appreciate the tactile qualities of these things. This valuable teaching tool gives the students some insight into the physical properties of the pieces that we are studying.

Jeffrey Rubinoff: That is excellent.

Alistair Rider: This is a very rich conversation and yet I am not entirely happy with the direction in which it is going because it is rather platonic. It implies that there is an absolute ideal experience and everything else is a kind of poor replica of it. If we adopt that perspective, we are all destined to fail. It's the idea that, whatever kind of reproduction or translation that we attempt, we are going to end up with something that is not as good as the actual experience of the thing. And, of course, that is right. Who would prefer a photograph than actually being in front of a sculpture? We can all agree with that. Yet I am just trying to think of ways in which we can shift this around. Not so that we can say that the reproduction is preferable, but open it up so that we can acknowledge that it is necessary.

If you are a historian, you are always dealing with things that cannot be brought back, are gone – in the past. Artworks stay in one place which is very problematic if you live somewhere else. Likewise, if you actually view the work *in situ*, you only have one experience and that is never total. I have come to see Jeffrey's park in May and it will look very different in November and that is something of which I am painfully aware. Moreover, I have only seen the work for a certain amount of time. Limitation is built into experience and once we exceed that point, then I think we

can maybe open up the conversation and think of productive ways to expand our experience.

Karun Koernig : I think you are right. As a curator, I ask: 'Do you think that your perception of the work would be aided by seeing a photograph of it in a different season or with a different light?' I think that Jeffrey is completely right in saying that from our perspective, we are introducing the work. However, photographs are very useful for introducing viewers to the work who have never seen sculpture before or perhaps even scholars who come here only one time.

Detailed shots may not be that interesting to the creator of the work, but they may be interesting to other people. I tend to think of photographs as abstractions, as tools to help focus someone's attention on certain aesthetic aspects of the work. Our brains do not learn in totalities. Rather they learn piece by piece, layer by layer. When you are presenting something to someone as an educator, you want to present it to them layer by layer. I love how the works in the park overwhelm people. They experience the work on a gut level and when they go back home it is great for them to be able to study the sculptures in a more considered manner by looking at photographs of them. I have lots of photographs in which the light is different and in which the pieces look different from different angles. To me looking at them enhances my understanding of the work. In fact, I go back to the photographs quite a bit. I feel that the photograph is a tool for enhancing my understanding of the work. Of course, as Sergei said, it is better to have been here before viewing the photographs because you have that picture of the piece in your mind. But with photography, you are adding information to your mental image, you are adding layers of perception. So, I think that sometimes the simplification of a photograph is really good in helping to bring out those layers clearly.

We have not talked a lot about internal counterpoint. We have talked about counterpoint in relation to the landscape, but the internal counterpoint is something that – with the background included in the gaze – is really difficult for some people to grasp. When you bring in another medium like photography, you can simplify the background so that you can see the internal counterpoint. A photograph can then be quite important for someone for whom counterpoint is a new concept. Being in front of the sculptures in this setting is really overwhelming for some people. I have had Ph.D students in art history say, ‘it took me a few times to recognize the visual counterpoint before it became completely obvious.’ And so, once you recognize counterpoint, you have a deeper perception of the work.

I would rather see the photograph as fundamentally an abstraction. It is an abstraction of a physical object on a two-dimensional plane. I also see it as a tool. On the other hand, I also respect the artist’s wish to present the work in its entirety. We know it is probably painful for you, Christopher, to present two seconds or two minutes of one of your compositions, but it serves as an introduction that enables us to get a sense of the work. I think both perspectives can exist at the same time.

Maria Tippett: I agree with Karun Koernig’s comment that ‘the photograph is a tool for understanding.’ But I wanted to ask Alistair what he thought of Sergei’s remark – made almost in passing – that the photographer should not aim to create a work of art?

Alistair Rider: I think that is a very important point. The analogy that was running through my head was of somebody who is translating a piece of literature into another language. You do not want the translator to become more important than the author’s work. It is a subsidiary role that you are adopting and there is a kind of established cultural position for that. It is not the

same as an artist’s status. It is a very worthwhile activity and we need them alongside our artists and originators and it’s important to recognize this.

Maria Tippett: Alistair, you are right. Certainly, in Canada there are now major awards for editors and for translators. The whole infrastructure of writing, in my experience, has become so professionalized that in many cases the publisher and the editor take ownership of an author’s work. And I think that this is largely because they want to be creators themselves. Thus, many editors do not realize that they are in a subsidiary role. So, I welcome your comment.

Leba Rubinoff: For those of you who are here for the first time, I am just curious to know what the experience was like coming to the park after viewing the photographs. I know how hard Karun and my father have been working to produce them. So, I am curious to know if you got a sense of the scale, the size, and the scope of the park from the photographs before you came.

Paul Walde: I think maybe my position is a little different because I have spent so much time as an artist. When I was a student, a lot of us were making very big, flat, colorful paintings of uniform scale in response to the slides that we were seeing. We were all really surprised when we went to New York and saw that these things were actually all different sizes. Our perception has changed because we have developed a way of reading the subtleties in a photograph. We can tell, for example, if the colours have been augmented or saturated.

In our culture, we look at a lot of art online or in magazines and I would have to say that I was not surprised when I saw the work here in real life. I felt that I already had some relationship with the sculptures. I think the analogy of you having an introduction is a very good one. When I document my own work, I know that the

photograph is not going to match the colour. I know that it is not going to match the scale. And I know that the viewer is not going to see the whole as I represented it. This makes me wonder how I can take a photograph that is going to make people want to come and look at my work?

Allan Brodie: Prior to becoming a graduate student in the Department of Theatre at the University of Victoria, I had a twenty-five-year career as a lighting designer in the theatre. Over the years, I have therefore spent a lot of time debating with my colleagues as to whether we are, in fact, artists at all. We are certainly at the service of other artists as well as playwrights and directors.

Light is an ephemeral medium; it is a medium that, within the context of the theatrical production, exists over time. The properties of light that we manipulate have to do with intensity and colour and contrast, and there are so many different factors at work.

Maria Tippett: Do you see yourself as an artist?

Allan Brodie: I do, but I am an artist who works at the service of somebody else's vision. I would not place myself in the first order of artists.

Jennifer Wise: I am sorry, but I disagree. Allan is much too modest. He is great in his art as a lighting designer. In fact, he is one of the major lighting designers in the country.

Allan Brodie: Thank you Jennifer but the medium that I work with is very difficult to capture outside of the moment of the performance. The audience experiences the medium of light in time, in space, and then, like the performance, it is gone. This is an equally challenging – though not uniquely challenging –

artistic medium. For instance, with the Theatre Department's assessment of an incoming graduate in lighting design we have found it completely impossible to assess a student's ability as a lighting designer from a photograph. It is impossible to gauge the merit, as an artist, of the person standing before us who works in the medium of light.

Sergei Petrov: Alistair, I disagree with your suggestion that photographing art is like translating because when you translate it, it might be from one language to another but both are languages, both have the same level of complexity. When you photograph sculpture, you go from a three-dimensional object to a two-dimensional object. You go from life size, to a smaller scale. Photography is a fundamentally different medium here. I would compare photographing sculpture to writing a half-page review of a book. This is okay if it is treated as an introduction. But what happens today, with the advancement of digital printing and photography, is that this little introduction, if it is not done carefully, becomes so real that it overshadows the original piece. It creates an illusion that it is enough to just look at the picture. From my experience, I am convinced that you cannot tell a good painter from a bad painter by looking at the photograph. If you are not familiar with the artist's work, if you have never seen it, you cannot tell a good sculptor from a bad sculptor by looking at photographs of their work. This is like not being able to tell if a book is good or a bad by only reading an abstract of it.

Today viewing works of art through the mass media and digital printing has become a substitute for travelling overseas and going to museums. I am afraid this situation threatens to make our knowledge of art encyclopaedic. What we need is the experience of the art itself.

Maria Tippett: Sergei, you obviously saw Jeffrey's work online before you actually saw it *in situ*. Can you respond to Leba's

remark about whether or not you got a sense of the scale and the size and the scope of the park from the photographs of the work before you came?

Sergei Petrov: I have several decades of experience on how not to judge pieces known to me only through photographs. In fact, when I started photographing art, I stopped looking at art books because I realized that they all lied. When I looked at Jeffrey's photographs online I made a conscious effort to pass no judgement.

Mona Holmlund: I think sometimes the act of reproduction, or the reproduction itself, becomes the subject of inquiry. There are many inherent limitations, but it goes a bit beyond just acknowledging them and moving on. For example, when Alistair discussed the Moore's and Smith's work in particular, the way in which the perspective had been chosen to elevate the work above the landscape became the subject of the inquiry. This made the reproduction of the work itself the object of visual study.

The photograph is a tool and it is an introduction, absolutely. Photographing works of art is a whole other layer of mediation that is an art form in itself. I think we are shifting back and forth between treating the photograph as a window and treating it as an object in itself.

Jeffrey Rubinoff: I would like to speak to the idea of the ephemeral. The object of this park is for it to go on in perpetuity. It is one of the things that I have got as a result of my previous visits to Florence and how each visit has changed my perception of the work. Now the problem with any art show is that it has an ephemeral quality itself. The show may last three weeks, might last three months, might even last a year, but what happens is that experiencing the work is temporary. Neither the painting or the sculpture returns to where it was exhibited.

One of the things that I have always got from my visits to Florence is being able to return to the same place, return to the same work. From my point of view, a measure of the quality of work that I see there is whether or not it can change with me. Whether it is a piece of music or sculpture or a painting, I measure its quality as to whether or not I see it with fresh eyes. In this case, the painting has not changed, that place has not changed, but I have changed – five years later, ten years later, twenty years later, sometimes thirty years later.

This is one of the aspects that I am trying to focus on here in the park: to create an environment that you can return to. The hope is that if anyone wants to return to the park sometime in the future, they can do so. Whether or not the work can grow with them after returning here in five years, ten years, or twenty years, will be determined by their reaction to it. But I think that is really what makes an outstanding work of art. Since there is no way the artist can measure their work – even during their lifetime – the concept of the park was to place these pieces here in perpetuity. There are a couple of parks like this which have really been meaningful to me. I know that I can always go to the Rodin sculpture garden in Paris and see how that has changed. I know that when I visit Florence, I can always go to the Academia or I can always see Donatello's (1386-1466) *Maria Magdalena* (1453-1455) in the Duomo also in Florence.

Alistair Rider: Stopping time seems to be very important for you Jeffrey. That might be another way into these conversations about photography. A lot of the works that we have seen at the park seems to involve setting up a scenario with forms that look like they are in motion. They look like they are collapsing, or bursting into the air, or going somewhere. And yet, they have been frozen using welding as a technique.

What welding does is that it enables improbable relationships that you cannot get in other situations. Cubes hang in space and they look like they should not be able to do that. But they can because of the amazing strength of the material that you are using, which is steel. The photograph does that, too. It does something very odd; nobody sees in the way that a photograph sees. We see in time, everything is changing over time. But the photograph stops time. It is a very, very artificial medium. I would like to throw that up in the air. I wonder whether we could speak to that ambition to do something which is highly artificial: to stop time.

Marlowe Rainey: I am very curious to see where virtual reality will take us in the future. Being immersed in technology is part of my youth and I have found that there is more of a push towards reproducing or augmenting reality. This has been one of the major trends in the last few years. I am very curious to see where this will take us in the art world because many of my friends say, 'look what I made in this little game, look what I made in this little program' and say, 'this is art.' And I keep thinking that this will never come close, as Sergei said, to reproducing the real thing. My question is, how long before we cannot tell the difference between reality and the reproduction?

Sergei Petrov: Regarding virtual reality, I would like to clarify a point that I made earlier. If you identify yourself with your consciousness, you are not looking at reality. You are not seeing the world; you are not seeing the material world. What our mind sees is a simulation in our brain. It has been confirmed over and over again by neuroscientists. That is what distinguishes us from animals because we can look at two-dimensional pictures and translate them into the three-dimensional world and perceive them in the three-dimensional world. When we are talking about perceived shapes, perceived reality, it does not matter what triggers it. It could be a two-dimensional object, it could be virtual reality, or it could be an object in real time and space. It has to do

with how much information is new and can pass into our brain. If you look from this point of view, nothing substitutes for interaction with a real object like a piece of sculpture. And if the virtual reality goes beyond being a little toy, then it will be no different from any other form of reality.

Jeffrey Rubinoff: For the last ten or twelve years, my sculptures have evolved from three-dimensional computer programming: virtual reality. I use it in the evolution of the work. I could not have done these pieces forty years ago when I was modeling and drawing because I could not have read what the stainless steel would look like in space. This is the way that I have considered the relationship between the thickness of the steel and the shapes themselves. In this sense, computers had to catch up with what I was already doing. When I began using the computer, the programming was so bad and the computers were so slow that I could not use them for this purpose because I could not draw my own work. But gradually things changed. I had to go through three generations of computers and software in any given year in order to bring them up to speed. Eventually, I was able to design in three-dimension. Now this is not really three-dimensions because it violates the basic rule of physics by allowing you to have two objects at the same point in space at exactly the same time. That is one of the things that you have to learn.

Drawing in the computer program in three-dimensional space was really interesting because I had always felt that was what the Renaissance artists would have loved to have had the ability to do. As this began to happen, I had to count on the programming in order to give the work the kind of detailing that I wanted. From graduate school onward, I had always wanted to make intaglio prints but I could not stand the mess. One of the reasons I stayed with the first computer program was that even though it was awful, it was capable of lighting and doing really superb intaglio printing. The laser printers that I had were able to reproduce the

spectrum of greys that were necessary to do the etchings. I was able to illuminate them and put my three-dimensional object onto several different planes that gave me several different prints. That is how I began. I also used excellent paper. Now what happened was that the programs would start to grow. One of my favourite programs was one of the most crash-able. It would take me three months to do the drawing that I wanted to do then it would crash. Nevertheless, it provided me with superb detail.

Maria Tippett: I have seen your intaglio prints, Jeffrey, and they are works of art on their own right.

Jeffrey Rubinoff: Gradually, one had to love these drawings in order to spend that kind of time with them. It was taking longer than the pieces themselves. Gradually, they simplified the program and make it crash less frequently. But the detail was lost. I was really upset with that. Now the question of designing still went on and still went on as if I were making models out of matte board. There was no colour, everything was in black and white which is nuts. It went the same way as photography but it never solved the stainless-steel issue. It eventually solved the casting issue so that I could now model the pieces that are in the castings with all the imagination required. What I found was that it actually improved the creativity due to the evolution of the work.

From 1989 on, I used the metaphor of the Burgess Shale.²⁰ When I did that, I had to change my view of evolution because my original view of it was vertical integration with the work. You would move onward in time by adding more organization to the piece and then it would eventually evolve. But what happened was that with computer drawing there was an analogy to Darwin's missing fossils' record. The missing pieces of sculpture were those that

²⁰ The Burgess Shale is a quarry at Mt Stephen in the Canadian Rockies containing ancient fossils of soft and hard bodied organisms.

were rejected and deleted. And so, rather than transferring from one piece to another, all these layers of complexity were deleted in that rejection. What I was able to do, with the assistance of the computer, was to catch the horizontality of a work in terms of evolution. I did not feel I had ownership of those drawings. I felt like those drawings could be easily tossed in the garbage when I hit the delete key. In the end, I have a series of prints that are computer designed.

Now, the prints did not deal with the stainless-steel problem. I did not solve this problem until 2004 when the program I was using allowed me to paint the pieces while I was working on them in real time. I photographed my own stainless steel pieces and used them to paint the pieces. This allowed me to conceive them in stainless steel. The last series of sculptures I did was totally based on that process and I could not have visualized these pieces without that computer program.

There are limitations to the stainless steel itself. It might be strange to suggest this, but the thickness of stainless steel – half-inch plate – was fixed when I was creating *Series Three*. In order to get the volumes that I wanted, and also the relationships that I needed, I had to visualize the work in three-dimensions. So, when you say, 'How did I realize virtual reality?', I say that these pieces were created in and are part of virtual reality.

Marlowe Rainey: Relating this idea to music, I have found that there is a limit to what can be described on a page versus what can be played in real life. And I find that there are two kinds of music for me. Written music played with a band or with other musicians. Playing with other musicians, you have a true conversation. On the other hand, the written music is pre-thought out, the conversation is pre-written. With programming, I feel that you are crossing these two domains. It's just like removing a dimension of photography by taking a two-dimensional picture of a

three-dimensional object. You are crossing domains and there is something you will be losing by doing that. Just like writing a piece of music down, versus playing it: it always brings a sense of failure.

Sergei Petrov: What I would like to do is to make a few comments about new ways of reproducing media. Stereo photography came pretty much the day after photography was invented. Now we all have '3D' movies with '3D' glasses. They are a complete disaster because our brains have to process so much information. So, when you present your brain with stereoscopic vision and focus it right in front of your eye, it looks like a doll's house. I have seen the goggles where you walk into a virtual reality. However, it still does not fool your brain? When you present a work in virtual reality, you immediately start shaking your head to see if the image moves. And the moment your brain subconsciously realizes that the image is not moving when you move your head, the brain knows that is phony.

And there are also holograms. There were great expectations about holograms but it is limited in size. What has been done so far, would probably work for a couple of coins or small miniatures. So, there is no hope for holograms either.

Also interesting are 'moving stills'. This is when you take a video instead of a photograph and the camera pans. You'd recognize this from the movies which show the space by moving the camera. But obviously, people thought about using it to photograph sculpture: you move the camera around, or just a little bit, and that is supposed to help your brain recognize that the sculpture is a three-dimensional object. Again, this is a complete failure because, yes, you recognize the work as a three-dimensional object, but you cannot experience it as an object of art because the movement is imposed on you. You have no control over it. To me, experiencing art in three-dimensional requires the ability to

subconsciously move and interact with the visual form. Moving stills act as though somebody put you in a wheelchair and wheeled you through a museum and at the same time taped your eyes so you could only look where they directed you to look. What kind of an art experience is that? So, in the end there is no substitution for experiencing art *in situ*.

Peter Clarke: Can I take up Sergei on this ground? When he spoke about how the photograph was always going to be totally inferior and totally different from the reality of the sculpture because you are translating three dimensions into two dimensions, I nodded along with him. But the more I think about it, the more I think this is too hard and fast. It is not completely false, but it is not completely true either. Because, after all, our brains are clever and we do not only see in three-dimensions when we have both eyes open. You try it. If you shut one eye, you do not immediately flash into two-dimensions, your brain is compensating. The brain knows which images it is taking in. Actually, you *see* with one eye more or less what you see with two eyes. And the same thing, it seems to me, applies when we are looking at a photograph which we know perfectly well is in two-dimensions. But because we know that the subject of a two-dimensional photograph is in three-dimensions, I think we are compensating for that in our brains. Therefore, we are seeing much more than, it seems to me, you are acknowledging.

Sergei Petrov: Well actually, I was acknowledging this. I was saying that is the problem which cannot be solved but could be mitigated.

Maria Tippett: Alan, you deal with light in the theatre all the time. Could you comment here?

Alan Brodie: In the theatre, the lighting designer's job is to throw light upon the actor or the scenic environment.

However, there are times where the light itself becomes the three-dimensional subject on the stage. But in order to do that, we have to make the air dense so that the light has something to catch in space. This is the point where light itself becomes the sculptural medium. We see this happening most often in concerts and in the dance world. More and more, directors seem to be interested in deploying this sort of device. The result is that the light becomes a three-dimensional character just like one of the human characters on the stage. It is an interesting line to walk. At times, the light really serves to illuminate the body and in doing so it becomes a sculptural tool in the revelation of the three-dimensional form of the human body. At other times, at I said, the light itself becomes a three-dimensional medium. There are trends and fads in the theatre as in all disciplines. In the theatre, we see increasingly how light is used as a three-dimensional sculptural medium itself.

Alistair Rider: I can agree with Sergei to a certain degree. In fact, there is a legal precedent, here. Earlier I was talking about how I can decipher these images. And I agree with Peter that if you are trained to look at art images you can interpret them. But, the average person is not able to do that and I will give you the example of Jeff Koons' (1955-) work *String Of Puppies* (1988). He based one piece on a postcard of a photograph of a couple holding twelve puppies that he got at the airport. Koons made a three-dimensional sculpture based on this photograph and then when the piece became famous and was selling for a great deal of money, the photographer decided to sue Jeff Koons for using his image. Of course, everyone thought this was absolutely ridiculous. Jeff Koons thought it was absolutely ridiculous. And the lawyers thought it was absolutely ridiculous because Koons's work was a three-dimensional life-size sculpture. The puppies were blue; the whole thing was coloured unlike the original black and white photograph. However, because Koons' lawyers thought that they had such a good chance of winning, they did not bring

the actual sculpture but a photograph of the sculpture into the court room. As a result, they lost their case.

Marcus Milwright: I was just thinking that it is remarkable, as well as shocking, how little time we actually tend to spend in front of art objects. There have been surveys at national galleries where they have found that people spent an average of twelve seconds in front of each piece. And when we went around the sculpture park there were pieces where we stopped and we talked and others where we walked past only making momentary reflections on them. The thing is that there is the element of time and the difference between actually sitting down with an art book – several days in a row for long periods of time – and the relatively fleeting experience that we sometimes get of objects when we are off doing research. Much of our perception of art objects has to do with our memory. I think we talk about the idea of this moment of being there, but much of our processing and our real experience of the work occurs after the fact.

Maria Tippett: Yes, that is absolutely right. Sometimes it is very difficult to experience a work of art when people are standing in front of you taking a photograph of it. Often, they do not look at the work at all; they just take a photograph – or a selfie – of a painting or sculpture then move on to the next piece.

C. Butterfield: I have been thinking about this for about the last hour and trying to figure out how to say it. I have had a problem being here, not that it is not wonderful to be here, but I realize all of a sudden that what I have been dealing with is a form of chaos and that chaos has to deal with a scale of both space and time. I have not had the time to assimilate everything that I have seen, nor can I comprehend the way that I am expected to look at certain objects and then fit them into the larger experience. I am stuck now as I take the ferry home again with an ineffable sense that arises out of chaos the scale of which I talk about with my

students. Because there is no such thing as chaos: there is only order that you have not yet perceived. And this also fits in with Marcus's view. All I have got to go on now is my memory – until I return – which happens while experiencing any work of art. And, yes, I have the *aide mémoire* of the photograph. As a composer, I have the *aide mémoire* of the recording because that is all a recording can be. So, all I have until I come back and try to figure out how that experience of time and space works is my memory.

2015 COMPANY OF IDEAS FORUM HOST, PRESENTERS AND PARTICIPANTS

HOST AND ARTIST

Jeffrey Rubinoff is a leading North American sculptor. During the 1960s he completed his BA and MFA in the United States, returning to Canada in 1969. Jeffrey'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, as well as at the Two Sculptors Gallery in New York. As the co-founder and director of the latter gallery, Jeffrey mounted exhibitions of David Smith, Alexander Calder, Anthony Caro, Mark di Suvero, Nancy Graves, George Rickey, Beverly Pepper, Tony Smith, and Robert Murray.

In the early 1970s, Jeffrey purchased an 80-hectare farm on Hornby Island lying off the west coast of British Columbia. Over time became the Jeffrey Rubinoff Sculpture Park. Taking the property's former barn as his studio, Jeffrey created over one hundred sculptures in Cor-Ten and stainless steel. His studio is uniquely equipped with a one-person steel foundry which not only enables Jeffrey to work without assistance, but allows him to cast the complex shapes which are evident in his later series.

PRESENTERS

Christopher Butterfield was a choir boy at King's College, Cambridge University then prior to completing graduate studies at State University of New York in Stony Brook, an undergraduate student of composition at the University of Victoria. Christopher went on to write orchestral and stage music, chamber music, music for voice and piano, and music for several multimedia performances. These include the *Dark Set*, *Trotsky in Amherst*, and the four-part composition, *My World as I Remember It*. Christopher currently teaches in the Music Department at the University of Victoria.

Peter Clarke is professor emeritus of modern history in the Department of History at Cambridge University and former Master of Trinity Hall at Cambridge. He writes regularly on history and politics for *The Times Literary Supplement* and *The Financial Times*. Among Peter's ten books are *Hope and Glory, Britain 1900-1990* (2000), *Mr. Churchill's Profession* (2012) and, more recently, *The Locomotive of War: Money, Empire, Power and Guilt* (2017).

Linda Goddard teaches nineteenth and twentieth century art history at the University of Saint Andrews in Scotland. She has held fellowships at the Sorbonne in Paris; Churchill College, Cambridge University; the Cornell Institute of Art; and at the Advanced Institute for Study in Princeton. Among her most recent books are *Word and Image* (2012) and *Savage Tales: The Writings of Paul Gauguin* (2019). In her role as a curator, Linda has mounted several exhibitions in England.

Sergei Petrov After graduating from Moscow's Institute of Physics and Technology, Sergei worked for the Soviet Centre for Advanced Defense Studies. In 1978 Sergei became a photographer. He has photographed sculptures and paintings at the

Tretyakov Gallery in Moscow and in the Hermitage Museum in St. Petersburg among other museums and galleries in Russia. In 1981 Sergei became a dissident and in an effort to win permission to leave the Soviet Union, he went on a fifty-day-long hunger strike. In 1989, just months before the Berlin wall came down, the Soviet authorities 'invited' Sergei to leave the country. After spending several years in the United States, Sergei took up residence on Pender Island where he continues to pursue his interest in photography.

Alistair Rider teaches at the School of Art History at the University of Saint Andrews in Scotland. Alistair's research interests focus on experimental art practices – from the 1950s to the 1970s – in the United States and theories of modern sculpture from the late nineteenth century to the present. Among his publications is his monograph, *Carl Andre: Things in Their Elements* (2011). He is a regular contributor to *The Burlington Magazine*, *The Sculpture Journal* and *The History of Photography*. Alistair has not only written about art, he has curated several exhibitions.

Maria Tippett is a curator, a cultural historian, teacher, and the author of fifteen books one of which, *Emily Carr, a biography* (1979), won the Governor General's Award for non-fiction in 1979. Maria has served on the editorial boards of the *Canadian Historical Review*, *Arts Canada* and *Art Focus*. From 1986 to 1987 she was Robarts Professor of Canadian Studies at York University – where she first saw Jeffrey's work. From 1995 to 2004 she was a fellow of Churchill College at Cambridge University where she was chair of the Churchill College Art Gallery and member of the Faculty of History. Maria was elected to the Royal Society of Canada in 1992 and has received honorary doctorates from Windsor University (1994), the University of Victoria (2006), and Simon Fraser University (2006).

PARTICIPANTS

Allan Antliff began his appointment as Canada Research Chair at the University of Victoria in 2003 where he now teaches courses on activism and art, anarchist aesthetics, Russian Constructivism, and New York Dada. He is art editor for the interdisciplinary journals *Anarchist Studies* and *Anarchist Developments in Cultural Studies* and he has also published articles in the *Canadian Art Magazine*, *Fuse*, *C Magazine*, and *Galleries West*. Allan has produced two feature programs for CBC Radio: *Guernica: A Political Odyssey* (2007) and *Anarchy and Art and Activism* (2002).

Alan Brodie earned his Master of Fine Arts in the Theatre Department at the University of Victoria in 2016. Prior to that, he was a theatrical lighting designer for over twenty-five years during which he created lighting designs for professional theatre, dance, and opera for production companies across Canada, the United States, as well as in Europe. Alan has also taught at the University of British Columbia, Langara College (Studio 58), the Banff Centre, and at the National Theatre School of Canada.

Daniel S. Ellingsen is an undergraduate student in the Visual Arts Department at the University of Victoria. Primarily an installation artist, photographer and a sculptor, he has exhibited his work in Canada and in the United States.

Mona Holmlund After completing her Ph.D at Cambridge University, Mona became an assistant professor, specializing in visual culture and art history at Dalhousie University. She is the author, with Cheryl Avery, of *Better Off Forgetting? Essays on Archives, Public Policy and Collecting Memory* (2010); *SHIFTS: Art and Art History at the University of Saskatchewan* (2010); *Inspiring Women: A Celebration of Herstory*, with Gail Youngberg (2003); and *Women Together: Portraits of Love, Commitment and Life* (1999).

UNIVERSITY OF VICTORIA FACULTY AND STUDENT PARTICIPANTS

Annabel Howard is a Master of Fine Arts student in the Department of Writing at the University of Victoria. After graduating from Oxford University, she taught at various museums, art galleries, and schools in Italy and in the United Kingdom. Her books include graphic biographies of Kandinsky and Caravaggio. Annabel's studies in art history and her creative non-fiction have appeared in *The White Review*, *The Spectator*, and *The World of Interiors*. She has taught the history of art at museums and galleries across Europe.

Alexandra Macdonald earned Master of Arts degrees from the Art History and Visual Studies Department at the University of Victoria (2016) and from the History Department at William & Mary University (2018) where she pursuing a Ph.D. Her research interests include textiles, clothing and self-fashioning through dress; the social life of things; material cultural studies of the English gentry and aristocracy; cultural representations of female life stages; and gender studies in Stuart and Georgian England. Alexandra's current research interests centre on Johan Zoffany's conversation pieces which built a new understanding of female sociability and material culture in Georgian England.

Natalie Massong holds a Master of Fine Arts in Art History & Visual Studies from the University of Victoria, an M.Phil in history from Cambridge University and is currently a research student at IMT School for Advanced Studies in Italy. Natalie's main research interests focusses on public spaces and their art objects in Medieval and Early Modern Europe. Using the case study of Bologna, her work has explored the evolution of civic sculpture and space and the formation of the Republic's identity.

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 in Honolulu. Among his books are *The Fortress of the Raven: Karak in the Middle Islamic Period (1100-1650)* (2008), *An Introduction to Islamic Archaeology* (2010) and *Islamic Arts and Crafts* (2017).

Janet Sit holds a B.Sc. in Zoology (2004) and a B.Mus in Composition (1912) from the University of Toronto, as well as an ARCT in piano performance from the Royal Conservatory of Music (2008). She is currently a graduate student at the University of California. Using scientific data in a variety of compositional processes, Janet explores whale behavioural responses to anthropogenic sounds (specifically sonar). Her compositions have been performed in Beijing, Berlin, Toronto, and Vancouver by ensembles such as Arraymusic and Quatuor Bozzini.

Paul Walde After earning his BFA at the University of Western Ontario and his Master of Arts from New York University, Paul joined the University of Victoria where he is now Chair of the Visual Arts Department. Paul is also an intermedia artist, composer, and curator. Among his exhibitions in Canada and the United States are *Composition for Light Percussion and Ultrasound* – premiered in 1911 at the Music Gallery in Toronto – and *Polar Shift* (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 and in 2020 his video installation, *Tom Thomson, Centennial Swim*, debuted at Touchstones Nelson Museum of Art History in Nelson, British Columbia.

Jennifer Wise is an award-winning playwright, translator, theatre historian, and teaches in the Department of Theatre at the University of Victoria. Her articles have appeared in *Theater der Zeit Recherchen*, *Reader's Digest*, *Theatre Survey*, *Arethusa*, and *Theatre Research International*. Among her books are *Dionysus Writes: The Invention of Theatre in Ancient Greece* (1998). Jennifer's site-specific comedy, *The Girl Rabbi of the Golden West*, won the Canadian Jewish Playwriting Competition in 2013 and her play, *Orbit*, was written in 2009 to commemorate the International Year of Astronomy.