

Young, Brian. *Respectable Burial: Montreal's Mount Royal Cemetery*. Kingston and Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2003. Pp. lvi, 230. Colour photographs by Geoffrey James. Illustrations, maps. \$49.95 (hardcover)

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"museum aura," as if to counter the installation N. E. Thing Co. had placed in the ground floor of the gallery's Lorne building, to transform the space back into an office building, precisely what the site was before the gallery came to occupy it.

Through this preamble we are made to understand that there is a dialogue between building and collection, between collection and director, between director and policy maker, and so on. The gallery's campaign for "proper housing," which began with Eric Brown and wended its way through three buildings and many subsequent administrators, has been realized in the current structure. The entrance ramp and Great Hall, with its sacral references and liminal transition, impart an air of solemnity that prepares the visitor for insular communion within the precinct of the temple. By contrast, Douglas Cardinal's Museum of Civilization, across the river in Hull, bonds with the natural topography and expresses a tradition that finds sanctity in the land, not in standing apart from it.

This is a provocative book that does not reason in straight lines. Ord's complex thinking is also demonstrated by the intricacies of his personal website, which not only promotes his publications and muses about his critics, but comments on news events such as the massacre at Columbine High School.<sup>6</sup> This Toronto-based author and critic has brought the same intellectual pixilation to bear upon his account of the National Gallery. Robert Fulford has described the result as "a book that's opinionated, pretentious, richly informative and highly readable [from an] industrious, thoughtful [historian who is] just crazy enough to be interesting."<sup>7</sup>

To his credit Ord also has a book of essays on contemporary art and art museums, entitled *Navigating without a Compass*, published in 2000, and has edited a war diary with Les Chater entitled *Behind the Fence: Life as a POW in Japan, 1942–45: The Diaries of Les Chater*. Ord also joins Susan Feathers and Carol Sherman for *Yoga in a Muskoka Chair: A Guide for Everyone*, and has two novels on his own account, *Tommy's Farm* (1998) and *Oscar and Jeannie* (2002). This ability to rove easily from one frame of reference to another is the loom upon which the account of the National Gallery is woven.<sup>8</sup> It is rare to find a writer so entirely at home in such a diverse collection of genres.

Ord's pièce de résistance in the matter of the National Gallery goes beyond the book, however. Having spent September 1996 to May 1998 ensconced as a National Gallery fellow, and a total of eight years bringing this book to completion, it is not surprising that he takes a proprietary interest in the welfare of his foster offspring. His horror at the use of the sacred precinct as a back-drop in an automobile commercial is palpable. As he observes with fastidious exactitude, this offensive event aired first on CBC *Newsworld*, on 16 October 2003. Ord recalls that the only car in the gallery during his tenure was John Scott's *Apocalypse #2*, engraved with the entire text of the Book of Revelation.<sup>9</sup> It occupied the rotunda at the rear, near the gallery library, because the Great Hall had to be available to rent for charity functions, parties, and affairs of state, at \$5000 a day. But commodifica-

tion had reached its apogee. For Ord the ultimate admission of shame lay in the fact that such a patently recognizable venue was not even identified.

In 1982 the Federal Cultural Policy Review Committee, under Louis Applebaum and Jacques Hebert, had declared "the cultural sphere, embracing as it does artistic and intellectual activity, has as one of its central functions the critical scrutiny of all other spheres including the political." Ord's objection is that this critical scrutiny has been co-opted.

### Notes

1. Douglas Ord, *The National Gallery of Canada: Ideas, Art, Architecture* (Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2003), repeatedly draws upon the ideas of Walter Benjamin. See pp. 202, 203, 332, 346, 364, and 378; and Walter Benjamin, "The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction," *Illuminations*, ed. Hannah Arendt, trans. Harry Zohn (New York, 1968); Carol Duncan, *Civilizing Rituals: Inside Public Art Museums* (New York, 1995); and Mircea Eliade, *Images and Symbols: Studies in Religious Symbolism* (London, 1961).
2. Douglas Ord, "The National Gallery as Automotive Showroom," *flick* 29 (Oct. 2003).
3. Ord, *National Gallery*, ix.
4. Briefly published as Charles Hill, "To Found a National Gallery: The Royal Canadian Academy of Arts 1880–1913," *National Gallery of Canada Journal* 36 (6 Mar. 1980): 2–8.
5. Rebecca Sisler, *Passionate Spirits: A History of the Royal Canadian Academy of Arts, 1880–1980* (Toronto: Clarke, Irwin, 1980).
6. "Lear's Shadow," <http://home.eol.ca/~dord/#Columbine>.
7. Robert Fulford, "Turning the Absurd into an Art Form: Canada's National Gallery Has a History Filled with Bizarre Decisions," *National Post*, 9 Sept. 2003, reproduced on Ord's website.
8. Douglas Ord, "Kawamata's Sheds," *Parachute* 65 (Jan.–Mar. 1992); "The Coyote and the Beer Can (Is There Any Hope for Wildlife Art?)," *C magazine* 35 (Fall 1992): 29–35; "Which John? Visions of the Apocalypse at the National Gallery," *C magazine* 48 (Jan.–Mar. 1996): 18–24; "Circle of History," *Canadian Art* 14 (Fall 1997): 38–40; "The Best Looking Man," *Canadian Art* 15 (Spring 1998): 64–70.
9. Ord, "Which John?"

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**Young, Brian. *Respectable Burial: Montreal's Mount Royal Cemetery*. Kingston and Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2003. Pp. Ivi, 230. Colour photographs by Geoffrey James. Illustrations, maps. \$49.95 (hardcover).**

Though dubbed "rural cemeteries" both for their original siting beyond city limits and for their massaged landscapes in the English romantic tradition, cemeteries such as Montreal's Mount Royal, opened in 1852, were, as Brian Young notes, very much "a product of urban society." This handsome commissioned history reveals how the evolving social tensions of a growing metropolis have been reflected in its residents' engagement with death and commemoration.

Young traces three phases in Mount Royal's evolution. The rural cemetery phase lasted 50 years but established some strong continuities that outlived it. The genealogy of the rural cemetery concept from Paris's Père Lachaise of 1804, down through British and American prototypes, has been traced elsewhere. One of the most fascinating themes elaborated here is the long-standing tension that persisted between private property and popular use as public space. The elite sensitivities of Mount Royal's trustees conflicted with their Christian duty to provide for the destitute and promote the moral refinement of the masses. The old Protestant burial ground of 1799 had become an informal recreation ground for the working classes of a city lacking public open space. Mount Royal's regulations therefore emulated those of the prototype rural cemetery, Mount Auburn outside Boston (1831), in limiting access. Sunday was reserved for card-carrying plot-owners, and relatives of the poor in the Free Ground gained admittance only with a special pass. These rules were not enforced until 1863 when growing sensitivity to incidents of unseemly conduct closed the gates, and in 1876 Sunday interments were banned, despite objections by the working classes. The opening of adjacent Mount Royal Park the same year was welcomed as an "alternative site for leisure activities," but it, too, was designed as an "extension of the gardens of genteel families already living on the mountain," with access limited to carriage drives (79). Social fissures gaped starkly during the funeral processions of Guibord, Chiniquy, Hackett, and Joe Beef, but more enduringly in conflicts over whether mounds of earth would be left to mark the graves of the poor. (The compromise was to limit their height to eight inches, but they were banned from later sections where in-ground posts delimited graves.)

The second phase arrived with the professionalization of cemetery management. In Montreal this coincided with the career of Ormiston Roy from 1898 to 1958, first as superintendent and later as landscape architect. This trained horticulturalist and second-generation employee immediately began implementing the prevailing innovations of American cemeterians. Smoothing the rocky, forested vistas of the Victorian romantics, reducing the array of statuary, and limiting the size of the "unsightly" monuments that reminded of death, Roy favoured the lawn plan and flower beds that would eventually evolve in the 20th century into the memorial garden, with bronze plaques flush to the earth. Young traces Roy's espousal of the lawn-plan concept to an 1899 conference meeting with Ossian Cole Simonds, superintendent of Chicago's Graceland Cemetery. Roy was able to implement the plan most fully at a satellite facility at the eastern tip of Montreal Island, Hawthorn-Dale Cemetery of 1910. There perpetual care was compulsory, and the professionals exercised control over monuments and plantings, "a harmonious whole predominating over individual tastes" (119).

In 1902 Roy introduced to Mount Royal Canada's first—and for decades, its only—crematorium. A technological solution to pollution concerns and a victory of science and efficiency over nature and theology, the crematory also enabled cemeterians

to regain control over "corpse and ceremony" from funeral directors. Opposition from the more conservative trustees was silenced by generous subsidy from Montreal's alcohol and tobacco fortunes in the persons of John H. R. Molson and Sir W. C. Macdonald, the first a Unitarian, the second a free-thinker.

Though this second phase was characterized by technology, efficiency, and professionalism, there were important continuities from the earlier period. The exclusivity of Mount Royal Cemetery as a preserve of the city's Protestant elite was assured by the opening of Hawthorn-Dale, where cheaper lots and streetcar service rapidly displaced more modest clients to a closely regulated environment. At Mount Royal, automobiles, banned in 1911, were permitted to enter in the 1930s to tour Roy's peony displays, but drivers were discouraged from exiting their vehicles, and the grounds were not opened for general Sunday access until 1959, a year after Roy's death. Though burial grounds were in many respects the precursors of urban public parks, those operated by private, not-for-profit companies such as Mount Royal could ensure that the privileges of property were respected in death as in life.

This profound social conservatism came to overshadow the symbols of secular modernity in the age of Quebec's Quiet Revolution. With Montreal's Protestant population in decline, asserting anglophone entitlement in a highly visible location angered both environmentalists and Quebec nationalists during the 1970s. The cemetery's clear-cutting of a wooded crag and vandalism by separatists were two incidents that defined the new challenges. In the 1980s Mount Royal also faced competition from the burgeoning multinational death-care industry. A new executive director, Merle Christopher, moved Mount Royal toward vertical integration, transparency, and inclusiveness, ushering in a third period that, Young argues, in many respects brought Mount Royal full circle. Mount Royal began selling monuments and memorial plaques, and in the 1990s used the proceeds from selling an undeveloped part of Hawthorn-Dale for a city park to purchase a funeral home in a multi-ethnic neighbourhood and to build new crematorium and funeral facilities, including casket and urn showrooms, at the two cemeteries.

The trustees also admitted violating environmental laws and hired a landscape architect and a public relations director to work with environmentalists and non-anglophone communities. Birdwatching and walking tours were promoted, bilingual signs installed, and terraced burial gardens developed for a growing Orthodox and Asian clientele. A new emphasis on local history reintegrated the cemetery with the broader community, supported financially by a Friends group. History and memory, Young tells us, have regained their place of honour at Mount Royal. Statuary art and a romantic view of nature have returned, and Victorian monuments once regretted are viewed as a significant historical resource. By espousing the "new respectability emanating from the effective use of heritage and the environment" (193), this staid institution has adapted to the social realities of a changing Montreal.

Readers might expect a more detailed analysis of monuments in a book about commemoration, but the subject reaches beyond the bounds of an institutional history: until recent decades the provision of monuments was not a service Mount Royal provided. Much of what is said about funerary practices and mourning customs is conveyed through captions to the many wonderful period photographs, such as the white children's hearse, wheels and horses mired deep in mud (92). Young introduces us briefly to these subjects as to other urban trades, sidelines to broader businesses, that serviced the "rural cemetery" before the days of vertical integration, most notably the founders of the iron railings long since banished by the power mower. Both a social and a business history, this volume has much to commend it. It is also a shining example of the fine products an academic press can realize with the incentive of a healthy private subvention.

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**Lewis, Robert. *Manufacturing Montreal: The Making of an Industrial Landscape, 1850 to 1930*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2000. Pp. xvii, 336.**

Dans *Manufacturing Montreal*, Robert Lewis s'attaque d'abord et avant tout à une certaine conception du développement de la géographie industrielle des villes nord-américaines. Plus précisément, il remet en question les notions suivantes : d'abord, que le processus de déconcentration industrielle ne décolle qu'après la Première Guerre mondiale; ensuite, que ce processus ne touche que les grandes entreprises; enfin, que la suburbanisation de la fin du 19<sup>e</sup> siècle et des premières décennies du suivant est presque exclusivement l'affaire des classes aisées. Selon Lewis, la déconcentration industrielle commence dès le milieu du 19<sup>e</sup> siècle et concerne des entreprises de toutes tailles. De plus, ce déplacement est, selon les cas, suivi ou précédé par une première vague de suburbanisation ouvrière. C'est qu'en opposant sur ces questions centre et périphérie selon leurs frontières politiques, les principaux observateurs du milieu du 20<sup>e</sup> siècle et les chercheurs qui les ont suivis en sont venus à attribuer à la ville centre – quartiers anciens et banlieues annexées confondus – une cohérence et une unité qu'elle n'a pas. C'est du moins ce que suggère un petit nombre d'études fragmentaires et localisées que Lewis entend compléter et appuyer dans *Manufacturing Montreal*.

Il y propose une étude détaillée de l'évolution de la géographie industrielle de Montréal entre 1850 et 1929. Par cette étude, il espère démontrer que le développement des districts manufacturiers centraux et suburbains de la ville dépend d'un ensemble complexe de facteurs liés, entre autres, aux trajectoires particulières des différentes entreprises touchées, ainsi qu'aux dynamiques foncières et politiques changeantes dans lesquelles elles évoluent.

Pour arriver à ses fins, le géographe a utilisé un ensemble varié

de sources primaires : revues et journaux industriels, répertoires municipaux, rapports gouvernementaux, recensements, dépliants publicitaires et rôles d'évaluation. Cet ensemble documentaire lui a permis de dresser un tableau à la fois riche et vivant de l'évolution de la géographie manufacturière montréalaise. Les rôles d'évaluation lui ont d'ailleurs permis de dégager des portraits détaillés du paysage industriel de la ville pour les années 1861, 1890 et 1929. L'ouvrage est découpé selon ces dates, la première partie couvrant la période qui s'étend du milieu du 19<sup>e</sup> siècle à 1890, la seconde, la période qui va de cette même date à 1929. Chacune de ces parties de *Manufacturing Montreal* est centrée sur un cycle de croissance industrielle et est organisée, en gros, de la même façon. L'auteur commence par offrir un portrait général du contexte montréalais durant cette période, puis se penche sur les trois grandes zones de développement industriel de la ville : la zone centrale et sa périphérie immédiate (*outer core*), les districts de l'est, dominés initialement par Sainte-Marie et Hochelaga, et ceux de l'ouest, qui s'organisent rapidement autour des infrastructures du canal de Lachine. L'analyse générale des différents districts est doublée par une série d'études de cas plus détaillées sur des secteurs manufacturiers jugés exemplaires selon les districts et les périodes. De plus, dans le cas des districts suburbains, quelques pages sont consacrées au développement des quartiers ouvriers qui précède ou suit l'implantation d'entreprises.

La réflexion générale de Lewis est structurée par quatre aspects du processus de déconcentration industrielle à Montréal. D'abord, et c'est là le cœur de l'ouvrage, il démontre clairement que ce redéploiement spatial fut rendu possible dès le milieu du 19<sup>e</sup> siècle par les progrès technologiques dans la production et le transport, ainsi que par des transformations de l'organisation du travail et de la main-d'œuvre. Il met en évidence l'inégalité de ces progrès selon les secteurs manufacturiers, mais aussi en ce qui concerne les firmes prises individuellement. Ensuite, le géographe met en évidence le fait qu'à mesure que la déconcentration progresse, l'espace industriel se spécialise. Dès lors, on observe que certains secteurs en viennent rapidement à dominer leur parc industriel. De plus, contredisant le schéma simpliste voulant que la déconcentration ne soit l'affaire que d'un petit nombre de grandes firmes relativement autonomes, Lewis observe qu'autour de ces entreprises de pointe se forment des réseaux constitués d'une pléiade de petites et moyennes entreprises avec lesquelles se forment des liens d'interdépendance. Parallèlement, il illustre comment le processus de déconcentration industrielle crée les conditions de sa propre accélération. Chefs d'entreprises, promoteurs et membres des élites locales contribuent à faire des districts suburbains des milieux de plus en plus favorables aux activités industrielles, par le développement d'infrastructures urbaines et métropolitaines, ainsi que par la planification de quartiers ouvriers. Enfin, Lewis insiste sur le fait que ses observations, malgré les spécificités du cas montréalais, peuvent être étendues à l'échelle nord-américaine. Sa démonstration à cet égard, tout en étant convaincante, bénéficierait certainement d'études supplémentaires du même type.