Loren R. Lerner and Mary F. Williamson. *Art and Architecture in Canada: A Bibliography and Guide to the Literature to 1981* / *Art et architecture au Canada: bibliographie et guide de la documentation jusqu'en 1981*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1991, 2 vols.; \$250.00 (cloth). ISBN 0-8020-5856-6.

Scholars and students of the history of Canadian art and architecture have anticipated the publication of this guide to the literature for some years; the wait has been worth it. In an undertaking so vast in a rich and varied field, especially as the editors sought to go beyond the traditional limitations of the subject, the potential for criticism is almost as vast as the undertaking itself. The editors have successfully set out their objectives and established clearly the limitations they have imposed to make their project feasible. The editors' preface and the exemplary guides for use of each volume are essential reading for any casual or serious user; to try to use this bibliography without knowledge of how the editors see it being used will lead to frustration on the one hand and missed opportunities on the other.

The project 'to provide a reference guide to the most significant contributions to the literature of art and architecture in Canada and abroad from 1825 to 1981' (p. xiv) in English and French was undertaken to fill an immense deficiency; there was simply no published comprehensive reference bibliography for art and architectural historians to use to advance their studies in a systematic, efficient, and effective manner. Numerous scholars, museum curators, students, art dealers, and collectors (the declared audience) have had to retrace the same paths, often without guidance, to find the ephemeral literature and documentation pertaining to their particular subject of inquiry. This publication of 9,555 citations (selected from many times more), by making the early stage of research less cumbersome and time-consuming, will allow the redirection of some of these energies to more in-depth research and analysis in both established and new areas of inquiry. One of the most laudable goals set out for the project, and I think achieved with a great degree of success, was to introduce 'many topics from our cultural past that receive scant attention from writers today,' setting 'the stage for the crucial work of study, analysis and interpretation' (p. xix). By focussing attention on these sorts of topics the editors have assured their study in the future by simply leading students to a selection of literature, which in turn will open other avenues of investigation.

It would be a mistake to assume that this guide is a complete bibliography of the subjects. The citations are necessarily a selection, a selection conditioned by the *adolescent* state of the disciplines in Canada, the broadening of their purview internationally, and the sheer volume of written literature. This guide is very much a creation of a particular place and time, deliberately avoiding 'a centrist point of view' (p. xxi) and acknowledging the multicultural character of Canadian society. The foresight of the editors, however, has assured that the guide opens to the future and, significantly, '... extends beyond Canada's borders, to the United

States in particular. "Canadian" and "American" art often overlap and distinctions sometimes blur' (p. xxii).

The guide comes in two, by any measure, substantial volumes printed on acid-free paper: the first contains the entries (citations in traditional bibliographic form accompanied by abstracts), the second the extensive indexes. The subject headings used in the first volume are based upon the RILA subject headings which have had to be extended to accommodate particularities of Canada's national history and the bilingual format of the guide. Under each of the subject headings the citations are arranged chronologically by date of publication. If the cited work also exists in the other language, it is noted and a full citation and abstract will be found elsewhere in the sequence. A cross-reference to the other citation would have been helpful. Bilingual publications have bilingual citations. Many exhibitions tour to centres across the country; the full itineraries are listed when the catalogues are cited. Much of the cited literature – interviews, published reviews of work, artists' statements, etc. – is located in the seventy periodicals the editors identified as key sources. They, too, are included with thorough abstracts describing publication histories, contents, and other observations of use to the researcher who may be forced to go to the periodicals in search of documentation not included in the guide. As the editors suggest, 'browsing' through the first volume can be informative and illuminating, revealing as it does the contemporary reception of art and architecture in Canada, the unfolding of critical attitudes, and the formation of historical perspectives. What is also clear because of its evident absence is the need to encourage cross-cultural dialogue between art and architectural historians in Quebec and the rest of Canada. This bilingual publication will make dialogue more likely to occur.

The author and subject indexes in the second volume are an effective and comprehensive means of access to the contents of the first volume from the grossest level to the most minute detail included in the abstracts. It is in this volume, however, where the designer missed an opportunity to save users frustration. Long, sometimes multi-columned, major subject index entries run with only the slightest typographic distinction from preceding and following entries. Alphabetic headers on each page would have been an invaluable aid, as would some more emphatic typographic distinction of the main entries.

The abstract provided with each citation summarizes, in the language of the cited work, the contents of the item without any critical assessment. The abstracts were produced over a number of years by numerous research assistants who are acknowledged along with a roster of experts who advised the editors. To name some would be unfair to those left out; suffice it to say that they have all spent years doing primary research, searching out the sorts of material gathered together here without the benefits of similar guidance. To call upon experts was especially prudent in the non-traditional areas (e.g. photography and native arts) where the literature is widely scattered and occurs in periodicals and other sources that would not normally be surveyed by conventional art and architectural historians. Some of the experts had produced bibliographies which the editors freely relied upon (e.g. Jean Blodgett for Inuit art).

The abstracts vary widely in their length and comprehensiveness. Of course, the abstracted writings similarly vary. In the instance of exhibition catalogues, artists are only listed by name in the abstract if there are ten or less included in the exhibit. On the whole, however, the abstracts give good insights to the researcher, flagging proper names of artists and movements, noting the presence of interviews, statements, letters, diaries, etc., all of which help to assist the user in determining whether to seek out the cited work for further examination.

As the editors are careful to point out, much of the literature is in ephemeral form. The literature of art has assumed many of the qualities of the objects it studies: rarity, restricted access, high cost of acquisition. Exhibition catalogues are most often produced on a modest scale, in short print runs, and poorly distributed, if at all. Even if they find their way to a library they may not be catalogued (because they are too slight) nor shelved where they can be easily consulted. The editors have diligently surveyed the principal art libraries for material to include in the guide (Ottawa: National Gallery of Canada; Montreal: Concordia University; Toronto: Art Gallery of Ontario, among others). Literature that could be consulted only in one location is not included. This seems to me a weakness; should not such a guide point especially to the written literature most likely not to surface in spite of diligent searches of the conventional sources? Theses had to be deposited at the National Library of Canada to warrant inclusion in the guide; all those that have to be consulted at the originating university are excluded. Checklists prepared to accompany exhibitions are excluded because they lack any statement by the artist or assessment of the art by the exhibition organizer. Articles and reviews in newspapers are not included. While it is easy to understand the need to make decisions like these on a global basis, it does tend to treat the whole period from 1825 to 1981 as one undifferentiated entity without regard to the types of publications available and their relative significance. Newspaper reviews of the Upper Canada Agricultural Society's art exhibitions were often the only on-the-spot commentaries published, but they are excluded because newspaper writing is excluded generally.

The very decision of what to include and exclude will shape the writing of the history of art and architecture in Canada for decades to come. In making the selection, the editors 'dealt fairly selectively with the large body of literature that is focussed on a small number of artists and three or four art centres ... have combed the literature of art for evidence of activity outside the major centres. ... made a point of looking for documentation of exhibitions of the work of artists who have moved to Canada from abroad and who still follow old-country traditions; of native artists working today; and of schools, societies and exhibitions that sprang up in Canadian cities in the wake of the Arts and Crafts movement in England ... of the many women artists ... of little known architects and their modest designs for buildings that are typical rather than monumental ...' (p. xxi).

The test for research tools like this one is in their use, on a day-to-day basis. Only egos are stroked by checking whether our own contributions to the literature are cited and abstracted; that is hardly enough. It is possible to set up hypothetical research problems and track the guide's successes and failures. By fortu-

nate coincidence I was able to consult with a researcher using the guide extensively and comprehensively in one of the subject areas declared to be of special interest to the editors: women artists. In following through in excess of 150 citations, the references proved to be accurate and the abstracts reflected the contents. By systematically using the artist and subject indexes it was possible to consolidate a body of documentation of substance and range. It was also possible to obtain insights into the potential of exclusion inherent in the selective strategy used by the editors. In the entry for the periodical *Canadian Review of Music and Art*, Edna Taçon is noted, but Ethel Seath and Paraskeva Clark are not, although similar articles dealing with the omitted artists occur in the periodical. Pegi Nicol MacLeod's 'The Passionate Snow of Yesteryear' in the *Canadian Forum* (1936) is missed, although it is both art criticism (another topic of declared interest of the editors) and by a woman artist who served as art critic for the *Forum*. *Canadian Forum* carried a series of articles on Canadian artists written by the critic Graham McInnes; several women (Jori Smith, Marian Scott, and Pegi Nicol) were included in the series, but the references are not cited in the guide. The numerous writings of woman journalist and art critic Jehanne B. Salinger are omitted entirely. A key article, 'Canadian Women of Brush and Chisel' in *The Chatelaine* (1930), by Blodwen Davies, is not cited. *Maclean's* and *Saturday Night*, both of which carried Women's Sections, often featured articles on artists like Mary Riter Hamilton, Marion Long, and Katrina S. Buell; these in particular are not cited. Marion Long's article 'Developing a National Art' in the *Canadian Home Journal* (1921) does not receive notice. A landmark sequence of articles by Frank Underhill, Paraskeva Clark, and Elizabeth Wyn Wood, debating the social and political role of the artist in Canadian society, finds no mention. It is true that bibliographies in such cited catalogues as *Painting in the Thirties* (bilingual, entries 592 English, 589 French) include the references to these last mentioned articles; nevertheless, they are of sufficient significance to warrant inclusion.

These *lacunae* are mentioned not as criticism, but simply as a demonstration of the need to treat the guide as a means of entrance to a written literature that the editors acknowledge is far more extensive than they could contemplate including in the published bibliography and guide. The success of their undertaking is immeasurable, and their contribution to the study of the history of Canadian art and architecture will stand the test of time.

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Jacques Michon, dir. *Éditeurs transatlantiques: Études sur les éditions de l'Arbre, Lucien Parizeau, Fernand Pilon, Serge Brousseau, Mangin, B.D. Simpson*. Sherbrooke et Montréal: Éditions Ex Libris et Éditions Triptyque, 1991. 244p. 19,95\$ (papier). ISBN 2-921061-04-X et 2-89031-128-7.

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