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ISSUE 2 / FEBRUARY 2020

President's message

A new year brings renewal and we anticipate that 2020 will bring exciting new developments to the RCA. Our new five-year strategic plan will help us identify areas of our operations which are redundant while also articulating achievable goals, given our scope and mandate. This will include new initiatives in advocacy, programming, marketing, and fundraising. During this process, our membership will be surveyed for their valued insights. Our new Office Manager, artist/administrator Taylor Boileau Davidson has begun her many tasks which include translating and formatting the newsletter, maintaining our member database, processing membership payments, answering telephone and e-mail inquiries, liaising with the media, supporting the grant application process, co-organizing the AGA, and working closely with our Executive Committee. While these are the necessary—and unseen—activities of the RCA Office, they each require labour, rent, materials, and electricity to achieve. We've cut expenses by relocating to Ottawa but we can't live on inspiration alone! We have been an artist-run organization since 1880 but it's critical that you support us through your annual contribution so we can continue.

Robert Tombs RCA
President

Membership reminder: Your 2020 contribution is due

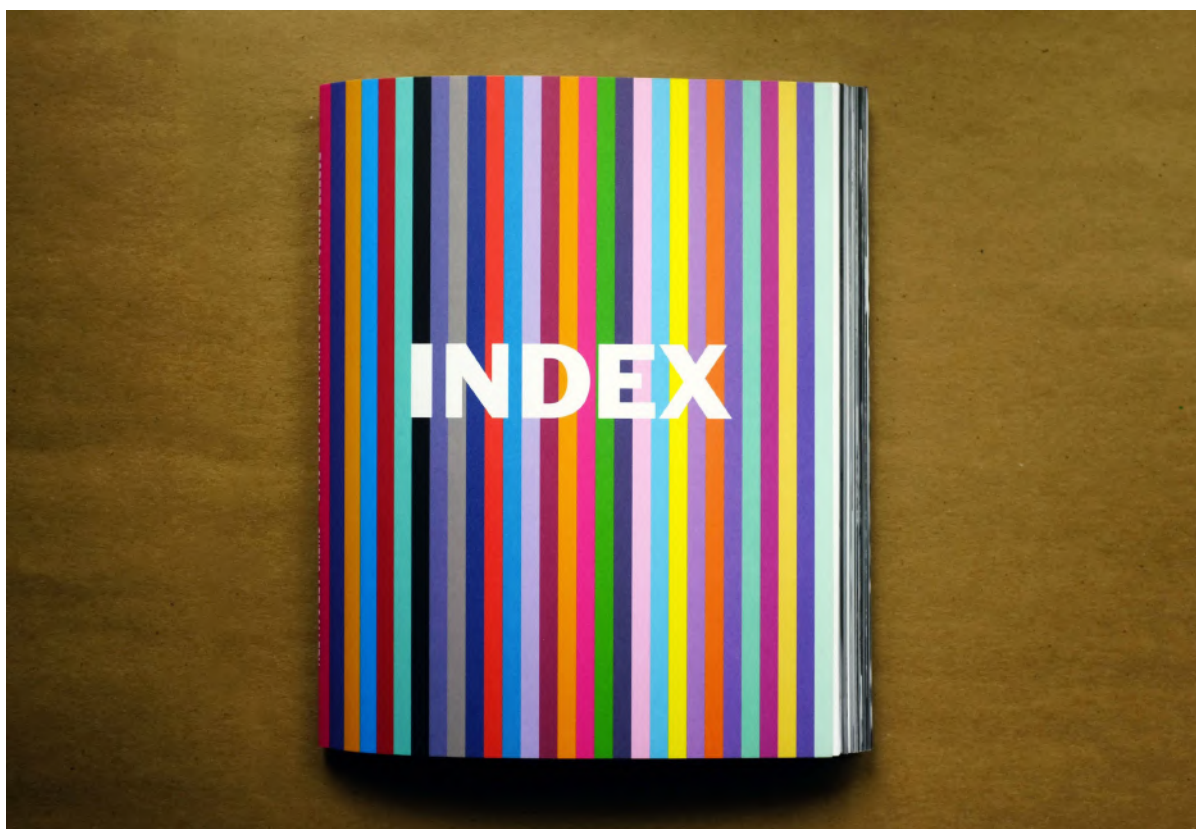
This is a reminder to send in your 2020 contribution of \$200.00, either electronically or by mail. As we receive no operational funds from any level of government, it's critical that you support us in our mission to serve you better. Better yet, please consider becoming a life-time member by sending us \$3,000, either on-line or by snail mail.

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Help Send Our Artists' Books to Stockholm!

We have received 26 expressions of interest from RCA members to participate in a book show at this important international event taking place in Stockholm April 22–26, 2020. You can help send our members' books to Stockholm by donating to our Indiegogo page.

[https://www.indiegogo.com/projects/help-send-our-artists-books-to-stockholm/x/8030387?create_edit=true#/
create edit=true#/](https://www.indiegogo.com/projects/help-send-our-artists-books-to-stockholm/x/8030387?create_edit=true#/)



Robert Tombs: Index. Graphic Works 1985–2015. Published by Owens Art Gallery, 2015

Susan Benson wins Order of Canada

We are pleased to announce that Susan Benson RCA was awarded the Order of Canada on June 27, 2019. Her Order of Canada citation reads as follows: "Susan Benson's infinite scope of imagination has dazzled stages worldwide. A leading set and costume designer, her celebrated designs have been featured, remounted and recreated, in major theatre, dance and opera companies around the world. Following her illustrious 35-year career with the Stratford Festival, she was a devoted teacher and mentor to the next generation of designers in the Canadian theatre community. In retirement on Salt Spring Island, she has renewed her passion of painting and successfully exhibits her inspiring artwork."

Susan informs us that Firefly Books has recently published *Susan Benson: Art, Design and Craft Onstage*, by Patricia Flood.

<https://susanbenensonart.com/susan-benson-art-design-and-craft-on-stage/>

GOVERNOR GENERAL'S AWARDS IN VISUAL AND MEDIA ARTS

We are pleased to announce that our member, Anna Torma RCA, has won a Governor General's Award in Visual and Media Arts. Torma is a visual artist working in textile. She was born in Tarnaörs, Hungary, in 1952 and graduated with a degree in Textile Art and Design from the Hungarian University of Applied Arts in 1979. She has been an exhibiting artist since then and has produced mainly large-scale hand-embroidered wall hangings and collages. Anna's work draws inspiration from folk art, anatomical sketches, gardens and graffiti, methodically composing fantastical stories.

Anna has exhibited her work internationally and is represented in many public, private and corporate collections, including the Museum of Arts and Design, in New York City, the Art Gallery of Nova Scotia, in Halifax, and the Beaverbrook Art Gallery, in Fredericton. She was a 2014 recipient of the Lieutenant Governor's Award for High Achievement in Visual Arts. Anna immigrated to Canada in 1988 and has lived and worked in Baie Verte, New Brunswick, since 2002.

Her citation reads as follows: "Throughout her career, Anna Torma has drawn upon her life-changing experiences of emigration and conflicting responses to concepts of national identity, alongside a passion for documenting family and domestic life as an act of humility, love, and humour. Her congested surfaces are studies of the human body, erotic energy, and fantastic creatures; they are places of memory and of imagination. And they are expressions of the joyous act of making by hand—of coming to terms with the world through art.

Torma has dedicated her professional life to an astonishingly singular studio practice that has emerged from an early, deep understanding of embroidery traditions and their place in global, contemporary visual culture." <https://www.annatorma.com>

Deanna Bowen wins a Governor General's Visual and Media Arts Award

One of our 2019 Passages II symposium speakers, Deanna Bowen, has been awarded with a Governor General's Visual and Media Arts Award. We are thrilled that she has also accepted our invitation to participate in *Objekt: A Reading Room* at Supermarket: Stockholm Independent Artist Fair in Stockholm in April 2020. Congratulations Deanna!

Her GG citation reads as follows: "Deanna Bowen is an interdisciplinary artist born in 1969 who makes use of a repertoire of artistic gestures in order to define the Black body and trace its presence and movement in place and time. A descendant of two Alabama and Kentucky born Black Prairie pioneer families from Amber Valley and Campsie, Alberta, her family history has been the central pivot of her auto-ethnographic interdisciplinary works since the early 1990s. In recent years, her work has involved close examination of her family's migration and their connections to Vancouver's Hogan's Alley and Black Strathcona, the "All-Black" towns of Oklahoma, the Kansas Exoduster migrations and the Ku Klux Klan in Canada and the US.

The artistic products of her research have been presented at the Art Museum at the University of Toronto, the Contemporary Art Gallery and Western Front in Vancouver, the Kitchener Waterloo Art Gallery and Mercer Union, a centre for Contemporary Art in Toronto. Deanna has also

in Toronto, Ontario." <https://en.ggarts.ca/deanna-bowen>

Allan Stein work included in exhibit at the Thomas Fisher Rare Book Library

Allan Stein RCA's illustrated, hand-printed, limited-edition book of poems, *The Golden Lilies* by PK Page is included in the exhibition *Strength in Numbers: The CanLit Community*. This work, along with sketches, proofs and wood engraving blocks are featured together in one of the exhibition showcases. The Fisher Library curators invoke CanLit as follows: "As Graeme Gibson once remarked, the notion that writers function best in isolation is nonsense – rather, there is "strength in numbers." The writers, of course, are paramount, but the community includes so many others: editors, publishers, illustrators, marketers and booksellers are just a sampling of the individuals that make up the broad network of Canadian publishing. Drawing on the library's rich archival material, this exhibition will explore how CanLit and Canadian publishing have been shaped by our diverse community." The exhibition is curated by the Fisher Library's Natalya Rattan and John Shoesmith. <https://fisher.library.utoronto.ca/exhibition/current>



A wood engraving by Alan Stein from *The Golden Lilies* by PK Page. Published by the Church Street Press, 2009

Gary Pearson on Susan Rothenberg

New York (January 9 – February 29, 2020) will appear in the June 2020 issue of *Border Crossings*. In his review, he writes that “the painting titled *Stone Angel* is, for want of a better analogy, the existential core of the exhibition; inflecting all other drawings and paintings with its calm, self-contained, and paradoxically introspective yet assertive symbolic mystery. And mysterious it is, as are a number of other works in the show; each seeming to embody a kind of catharsis that characterises the subject, and the expressive tenor of the composition and audience experience.” Pearson has written about this artist before, specifically an exhibition review in *Border Crossings*, issue February – April, 2009.

While Gary Pearson is in the first place a visual artist, he has maintained an active arts writing career since the mid-'80s. His published writing has included numerous exhibition reviews and essays, conference papers, exhibition catalogue and curatorial essays, and he is a frequent contributor to *Sculpture* magazine, and *Border Crossings*. Examples of his writing can be seen at <https://bordercrossingsmag.com/articles/author/gary-pearson>.



Susan Rothenberg, Main Gallery, Sperone Westwater, New York, 2020. Photo by Robert Vinas, Jr. for Sperone Westwater, New York

Ginette Caron's lettrism: 'Made in Milan' and spread all over the world

Il Viaggio della Parola (The Voyage of the Word) is an operation of conservation, restoration and relocation of the holy scriptures recovered from the Holy See Pavilion at Universal Expo Milan 2015 to worldwide permanent destinations.

“Not by bread alone” and “Give us today our daily bread” are two biblical episodes chosen by the Holy See to interpret the theme Feeding the Planet, Energy for Life at Universal Expo Milan 2015.

letters. Translated into 13 languages and mounted at a certain distance on the white pavilion, the 25 scriptural texts could only be read through their cast shadows.

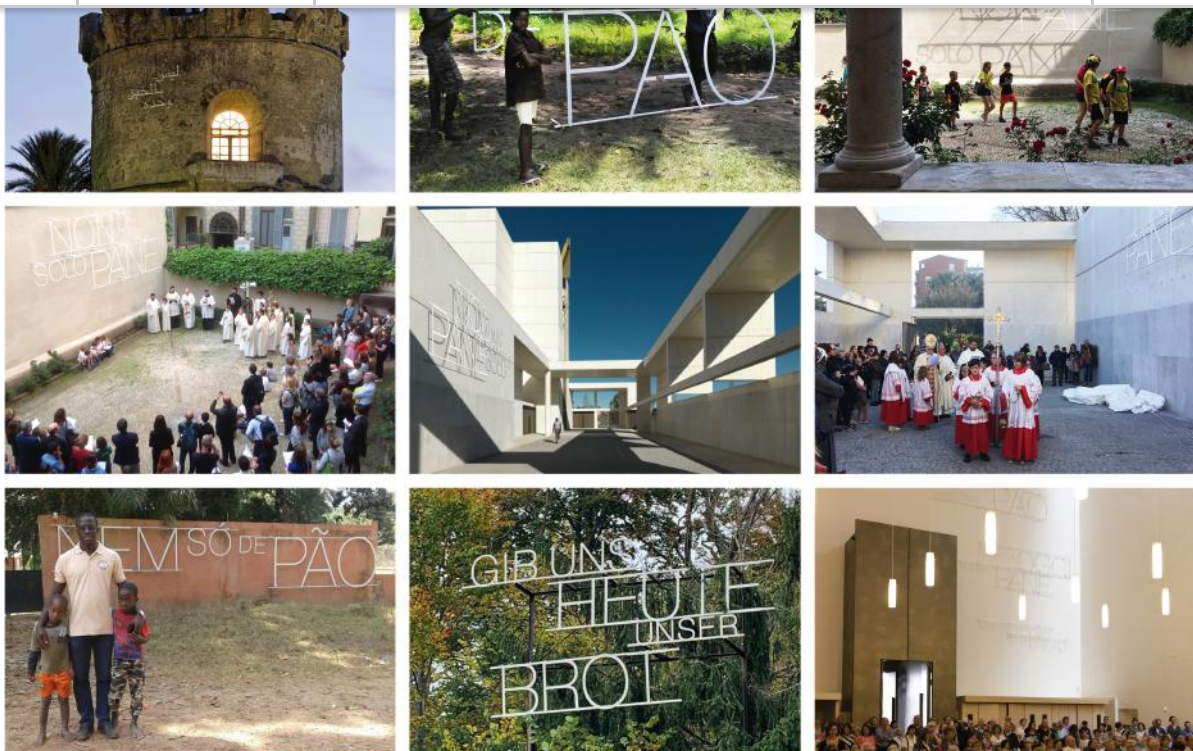
At the closure of Expo, Ginette decided to spread the messages of the Holy See by relocating them to places that uphold universal human values: a church, a mission, a foster home, a ghetto torn apart from degradation, a park of sculptures in a mountain ...

Il Viaggio della Parola, aside from Italy, is now in Guinea-Bissau, China, Germany and soon, will be part of the Contemporary Art Collection at the Vatican Museums in Rome. The project is promoted by the Pontifical Council for Culture. The Pavilion and *Il Viaggio della Parola* have won six design awards to date, in Italy, Canada and elsewhere around the world.

Only five writings are now available: 2 French, 2 Russian, 1 Polish. www.ilviaggiodellaparola.it
www.ginettecaron.it



The Holy See Pavilion, Universal Exhibition Expo Milan 2015

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Il Viaggio della Parola relocations worldwide of the holy scriptures from the Holy See Pavilion at the Universal Exhibition Expo Milan 2015

***Vie des Arts* special offer**

Vie des Arts is pleased to offer RCA members 25% off an annual subscription to the magazine which publishes quarterly (\$24 instead of \$32). The subscriber must prove her/his membership when registering with SODEP (contact: 514-397-8670 or subscription@sodep.qc.ca).

Founded in 1956, *Vie des Arts* was the first visual arts journal to be published in Canada. Focused on art information, analysis and criticism, *Vie des Arts* gives priority to art in Quebec and Canada while also taking note of important art events from abroad. Published primarily in French but including some English texts, it develops its content around current art and art news. As an educational tool for an audience that it wants to help develop, the magazine offers thematic issues in order to express a contemporary relevance.

RCA membership nominations deadline: March 30, 2020

Nominate an accomplished artist, designer or craftsman for election to the RCA! Nomination documents must be received by our office no later than March 30, 2020:

[Nomination Procedure Form](#)

[Nominee Information Form](#)

[Nomination Recommendation Form](#)



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