

Anna Hudson & Jeff Thomas

Bridging Art and Audience:

Storytelling in the Presence of Historical Canadian Art

Anna Hudson Jeff's going to start us off. I'm tempted just to preface that by saying we've all been trying to define the word "curator" and find another word for "curator", and we talked about "storyteller", Jeff and I, but we're a little concerned about the cultural associations that "storyteller" might hold. We've talked about "collaborator" or "facilitator", but we hope we come to some clarification about what we mean by that in the process of our talk. So, Jeff, why don't you kick us off?

Jeff Thomas Okay. I wanted to start by... because Anna and I have been talking about this endlessly now for three days, since we've first had this chance to come back after having collaborated on a project for the AGO, entitled *No Escapin' This*, and we haven't had a chance to talk since the intervention ended, and to really kind of feel out what's happened since then: where we've been, what we've done, and what we accomplished, and what are still some of the lingering questions that we have from that project.

Being here today—and I'm very happy to be here—and to hear the presentations so far in terms of curatorial practice, what it is, and to, I guess, take you on a bit of a short journey on how I became a curator. I wanted to do this because it's really out of respect for the people that have influenced me. I know there's been a lot of quotes in the papers as to thinkers who have laid the groundwork for a lot of issues that are being talked about today. The first slide here shows the person that had the greatest influence on my life and who really set me off in terms of the pursuit of understanding, in terms of art work, historical photographs, museum collections, anthropology. Her name is Emily General.

She's the sister of my grandmother's partner, Burt General. They had a farm on the Six Nations reserve, and as a young boy, I used to travel from Buffalo, NY with my grandmother to stay on the reserve for weekends and vacations. And it was at that time, in this house, when the old-timers would get together and tell stories about life on the Six Nations reserve. I used to sit and listen to them and how they described and how they talked about their experiences. What was interesting, as well, and what I came to realize just yesterday, was that in the adjacent room, in the dining room, I used to look at these artifacts that were there. They were pounding mortars, old rifles, bow and arrows, and things like that.

Emily General was an activist. She was one of the originators of what's known as the Indian Defense League. She was one of the people who was standing up for the continuation of the traditional chiefs' council at Six Nations when the Canadian government was trying to impose the elective system. She was also one of the people that originated what was called the "Indian Pageant" on the Six Nations reserve in the 1940s, and this was a theatre company that was organized, and they actually retold Iroquoian stories through theatre, and all of the artifacts that they used in their plays were in the dining room, and there was a particular way that they were arranged that really fascinated me. So you have to imagine having the stories being told in one room in a kitchen around an old woodstove. There was no electricity, there was no running water. And it was just this experience of listening to people talk about their experiences.

What was important about that, as well, was how they said through their stories that my responsibility as the next generation was to tell my own story, not to tell theirs, but to be aware of our history and how does that evolve. Looking at Aboriginal cultures

not as stagnant or caught in the past, but as living and vibrant and moving forward. So, for me, this journey of coming into curatorial work, of being an artist, a photo-based artist, as well, was all about the exploration, that journey, and it's really falling into that area of self-determination, what is that, and about access to collections and our past and our history, and about moving forward, which... I'm going backwards there, it's kind of ironic.

One of the things that was very important in the stories that were being told was about the use of corn, and how corn had an influence on Iroquoian cultures, and the fact that it gave them more leisure time to develop ceremonies and to elaborate on different aspects of our culture. But what was most important, and one of the things that Burt General had given me before he passed away, is that he actually showed us—my brother, my brother's family, and my family—how to braid corn in traditional Iroquoian way. And I didn't really understand why it was so important for him to do that at that point in our lives, but what I realized and what I came to realize when I was working in this area was about braiding and what that means. It's about the past, the present, and the future, and these were the symbols that I took away from it. So this was how our culture and our way of looking at the world was passed on to me. So, very simply, here, this photograph was a result of that activity of showing us how to braid corn.

As a young boy, one day, I was listening to the old-timers' conversations, and it was the first time that I heard the word "anthropologist", and I was probably around nine or ten years old. From their conversations I had an idea about what an anthropologist was, but I didn't really know. But in my mind, in hearing the elders talk about the responsibility of the young children—the next generation, to our culture—I set out on a journey to find out exactly what was an anthropologist. And this led to the curatorial work

that I've done, working with collections at the National Archives, Canadian Museum of Civilization, the AGO, and other institutions as well.

They had said... they were talking about their father and that they were wondering out loud about what happened to all that information that the anthropologist from Ottawa had collected from their father. And on the wall in the dining room was a photograph of their father, and it was... he was a very old man at that time. He had coveralls on and he was standing next to stalks of corn. And I asked Emily why that photograph had been taken, and she talked about how well the corn had grown that year, and looking at the symbolism and reading it now, as an adult and looking back, I realize how important these incidents were in my life and how they led to this journey, because what happened is that I was invited to curate a show for the Canadian Museum of Civilization in 1997, and it was really based on my initial research of looking at their collections and finding these very vibrant, documentary-work photographs that were taken by anthropologists. So, as I was going through the collection, I came across a series of glass plate negatives and on one of them was titled "Albert General". I took it out, put it on a light table, and this is the photograph that came up, looking at it in a negative form. And what I realized at that point, that this was the man that I had seen on the wall in Burt and Emily's house.

So this really was the way that I came into this work. It was the personal approach. It was about the history and about responsibility and making those connections, and also thinking about audience. I lived in Winnipeg for five years, and I had stopped making photographs because I was concerned about the way that my work was being presented in art galleries, that I was kind of looked at as the Indian photographer of Indians. This was in

Toronto in the early 1980s, and I had a very hard time with that, so I decided to stop exhibiting my work.

I moved to Winnipeg and I started doing research as a way to regenerate my practice after three years, and [*referring to slide*] this is a view from the third-floor Research window at the Manitoba Museum. And what I found interesting, and this was really... set me off on a journey that led to my meeting with Anna, was that this overlooks Main Street. People that aren't familiar with Winnipeg and Main Street, it's a very kind of desolate, urban landscape that's populated primarily by Aboriginal people. This is a series of bars and drop-in centres, Salvation Army, pawnshops, and things like this. It's really seen as an eyesore in Winnipeg, but it's populated by Aboriginal people, and what fascinated me about this particular place were the collections that were inside of the Museum that really represented the strength and vitality of Aboriginal cultures, and the disconnect between those collections and the people on the street.

So the question for me was how do you make that connection? How do you make a collection work for Aboriginal people today? And so this was really what I left Winnipeg with, the idea of how do you do that. Also while I was there, I became familiar with the work of a painter by the name of Edmund Morris, and Edmund Morris had been commissioned in the early part of the twentieth century to travel across the prairies, making portraits of Aboriginal leaders who had signed treaties with the Canadian government, and he had also been a photographer as well, so it was a unique experience to have the paintings and the photographs of the people he had encountered. I left Winnipeg with this information about Edmund Morris, and it wouldn't be until many years later that, when Anna and I had met, that we had actually... Edmund Morris had come up and we found this kind of convergence

of information.

Anna Hudson This is actually a good place to stop, because this is exactly where I was when I met Jeff, which was working as a curator in the Canadian Department at the AGO, and this is the Canadian Art Club gallery space in the Canadian Wing, the permanent collection of Canadian historical art at the AGO. So obviously I'd come out of an art history background and ended up in this public institution, and for the first time had to imagine what it meant to be accountable to my public, and that I was a public figure and that I had a responsibility that I wasn't sure that I was... I wasn't sure my background was going to prepare me for that, and indeed I don't think it does. Jan, when you talked about "persistence", the word "persistence", I think that in the history in Canadian art as it's written and published there's definitely a persistence of a colonial past, and that obviously postmodernity has made us suspicious of authority and singularity, and we're interested in multiple viewpoints, but it wasn't, I think, until I found a collaborator in Jeff when we were walking through the Canadian Wing and I think Jeff very frankly stated, "I don't see any of my people on the wall," and I said, "Well, there's one, but it's in the vaults—I don't know what to do with it." It was an Edmund Morris, two pastel portraits of treaty chiefs from the early part of the twentieth century.

We had talked a lot in the Canadian Department about the need to get outside the walls of the institution and really feeling irrelevant as an historical curator. What possible relevance could the canon have, particularly when it seemed to re-inscribe a colonial history? And so I was really looking for a way out, and I think ultimately a crisis was that this canon wasn't speaking to me either. It didn't seem to represent who I felt I was. But I think it was a very different process of learning to trust in the personal, whereas Jeff came

from that way. I had to learn it, unlearn the discipline a bit... and I'll pass it back to you.

Jeff Thomas Okay, so basically we started talking about this history and kind of walking through the galleries. There were actually paintings in the gallery, but none of them were made by Aboriginal artists, so that was the dilemma.

Anna Hudson Right.

Jeff Thomas And so... what does all that mean, and how does it make one feel in terms of coming into a space like that? Or why would I go to a space like that, as an Aboriginal person? So these were a lot of the questions that were coming up.

Anna Hudson Right, and we talked a lot about who's coming into the galleries, who are we reaching... we're reaching a very select audience.

Jeff Thomas And given Toronto's large Aboriginal population, was the AGO... could it be a place or a focal point for that? So this is actually Edmund Morris at work, painting an Ojibwe chief in Northern Ontario, and this was really where the dialogue began to take place, because we wanted to play on this idea of representation and who is responsible for that. And certainly one of the important issues is self-representation. So how do we go about doing that? And the first step, of course, is to look at what's been done in the past. So this is one of the portraits that you came up with from the collection.

Anna Hudson Right. This is Chief Nepahpenais from 1910.

Jeff Thomas And then finding out that this was Edmund Morris, and I probably gave you a big hug at that point and said, "Yeah, we've got something to do here." So it was like, okay, now we have a functional idea that we can begin playing around with.

Anna Hudson Didn't I ask you, "Really? You like it?"

Jeff Thomas Yeah.

Anna Hudson And you said, "Yeah, I do." "Isn't it painful?" "No, it's not."

Jeff Thomas Yeah. *[audience laughter]*

And then I hugged you, wasn't it?

Anna Hudson Oh, yeah.

Jeff Thomas Somewhere in there... *[all laughing]*

So, really, this is where things started to look at... and the question was, "Well, how do we bring this to life, then?"

Anna Hudson Right.

Jeff Thomas And this was really where the dialogue started in terms of, okay, so what does this mean in terms of... well, the first image is a chief, and that all chiefs are men, and the reality today is very different in that they are also women now, and here's Edmund Morris posed with the man that we had just seen... I forgot his name now...

Anna Hudson Nepahpenais.

Jeff Thomas Nepahpenais. Who was a Cree from Saskatchewan. So here they are posed together and kind of, in a way, Anna and myself, with this dialogue, kind of the awkwardness of this first meeting and that...

Anna Hudson Right.

Jeff Thomas ...had that kind of symbolism there going on with that and what we were working with. So this is Madeleine Dion Stout *[referring to slide]*, and she's a friend of mine, and she's a Cree from Alberta. And when we had this idea for the project, I thought, "Well, who

would we present as an influential figure in the Aboriginal community who's seen as a role model and as a leader in the community?" And so, Madeleine Dion Stout was the person that I had wanted to photograph for a long time, so the intervention gave me an opportunity to go and to say to Madeleine, "This is what we want to do." So it was kind of a play on the Edmund Morris there. This is where the portrait was actually taken, and it was done within the context of graffiti as well, because... and with the title *No Escapin' This*, which became the title for the intervention.

And it was really about keeping things in context, about how we see Aboriginal today, and how... what do we want to present in a gallery space that calls attention to that? And so this was where the process... how it ended up in the actual space.

Anna Hudson Right. So this is a seamless narrative of historical Canadian art, a narrative that's one of progress, and then this interrupts it because right in this spot you're between the formation of the Royal Canadian Academy, at approximately the turn of the century, and the Group of Seven, and Edmund Morris was working just prior to the Group of Seven, and all of a sudden there's a graffiti wall, there's the outside of the gallery coming in, there's an information kiosk essentially, in which we recorded me explaining that this space was going to change from that first slide that you saw, which was a Homer Watson painting—he was President of the Canadian Art Club—to this image, which looked out of step chronologically, and an interruption of a flow, and I think, in some respects, within the institution, was considered somewhat of an aggressive act. But it was important to finally get some excitement in this process, that there was this collaboration, we were actually enabling community to happen.

The graffiti wall was through my colleague, Richard Hill, through

7th Generation Image Makers, which is... with Native Child and Family Services of Toronto, and it says “No Escapin’ This”. But it was a great pleasure to mix up Canadian historical art, and, just to jump a little bit, in thinking back and preparing for today, and thinking about what I’ve learned from Jeff, and then investigating North American and African writers and what they’ve said about their practice, and that indigenous writers in North America and Africa raise a central question, as Jeff’s been telling me all along: who do I write for? And I would just put “curate” instead of “write”, and we might just as easily ask, then, for whom do I curate? This question has everything to do with the language of curatorial practice and its cultural exclusions. And I wondered, is it possible to weave different or distinct languages and their attendant cultural forms, or the aesthetic that they have, together into a kind of metalanguage that would represent a kind of broadened aesthetic? And was the collaboration then, with Jeff, about a new curatorial language? And that it would release Canadian historical art from the airless cultural vacuum that I felt that it was in and that I couldn’t stand to be in, that it was claustrophobic. So thus in place we might have, instead of a kind of global monoculture—you know, the canon’s really monoculture—that we might achieve a kind of transdiscursive language.

Jeff Thomas And I think, too, at this point, I think I probably asked you, “Is it possible to remove that wall?”

Anna Hudson Yes.

Jeff Thomas And it was really something to find out that we could actually do that. That’s how this came about in terms of the collaboration, so another person was added to the project, Richard Hill, and then all of a sudden we were able to begin looking at actually bringing the graffiti wall into the exhibition space and using that as this kind of performative space that it was becoming, and that was im-

portant, as well, because I think that the other thing was that we didn't want to just replicate the journey that the Canadian wing was, in terms of passing by the walls and looking at the images on the wall, and that was the experience. We had to interrupt that somehow.

Anna Hudson Right.

Jeff Thomas And we found... So, here with the computer kiosk, we were... this is where Anna began taking all this information together and putting it together as a presentation through the computer kiosk, where we talked about Edmund Morris, we talked about Madeleine Dion Stout, we actually had interviews that were on there as well. So there was... people that wanted to know more—which was one of the questions that had come from a lot of exhibitions I've worked on, is that people always wanted to know more—so how do we provide that information in a way that's concise and direct and that they can relate to? So this was a way to do that, and this was one of the questions that came up, too, was audience, that we were looking at, and I think, in terms of looking at how long somebody actually spends looking at a painting in the Canadian Wing, which is, like, what?

Anna Hudson Right, they graze... yeah, yeah, they graze.

Jeff Thomas A second or something, yeah, and how do we actually get people to stop and come over and to look at this?

Anna Hudson I think another really important point for me—and you, I think—was that obviously there's a problem with the canon, and obviously there was a problem with the permanent collection story... the narrative of Canadian art that was being told, but it couldn't be so earnest as to say, "My, we must address the Aboriginal population of Toronto, we have to address First Peoples," and go out there and try to do it. I mean, it just can't happen like that. It has

to have an aesthetic connection to it, or there has to be a different level to it. And I was interested, again, in how writers have talked about this, and Momaday, a Native American writer, said that he gets asked a lot—and funny, I never did, you know—“Who do I curate for?”, I never got asked that, but... interesting that it’s coming from other cultural sectors, that they don’t question that where I was—but Momaday finds his answer in another writer and says, “I don’t write for myself. That would be self-serving. I don’t write for a public because that would be pandering. I write for the thing that is trying to be born.” This puts a new spin, then, on the pressure many curators and institutions feel to engage community, and there’s so much... that word is such a buzzword now. But it’s a public performance, clearly, so one’s keeping in balance all of these issues, but one still curates for the thing that needs to be born, or the thing that needs to emerge.

Jeff Thomas

And the question of audience, coming back to that again, was trying to determine whether or not they were actually stopping and taking advantage of the site, and it was at that point where we felt that, when the computer took a rest and there was nothing happening, that we needed something else to call attention to it. So we kind of went back to it again and looked at it and decided that we were going to add a voice to it, that would say, “Hey you!” And out of nowhere this voice came out, kind of calling people over, and so I wondered how effective that was, and I remember one time I was going to the AGO and I stopped outside and one of the security guards came up to me and said... “You know,” she says, “we hear that voice all the time in here, and people actually go up and they sit down and they look at it based on that.” So it was very interesting, once again, and to emphasize here the collaboration, because this was very important in terms of what you were looking at, in terms of: how do we get people to stop?

Anna Hudson And we thought it was funny.

Jeff Thomas It was funny, yeah. It was a little difficult to do, but it was effective. And so now we knew that... at least, I knew from the security guards that people were actually stopping and taking advantage of it, but the question, I think, that as we looked at this project and how important it was... what was important to me was, who was I doing this for? For the AGO? Was I doing it to make them look better in terms of community relations? A lot of questions were coming up, and I thought, "Well, if Aboriginal people aren't accessing this information, then I'm not doing my job." So this was kind of where we left off with the project, what do we do next? And how... what's the responsibility of the institution to ensure that people are... first, aware that this intervention actually exists, which they didn't do at that point, and it was only by chance that people would find it.

So these were important questions that were coming up, and I should probably mention at this point, since we're winding down here, that I'll talk briefly about how I began to use this information. I was invited three years ago to curate an exhibition on residential schools and it was based all on historical photographs from various collections. What was interesting about this project and, I think, in terms of being a curator and looking at social responsibility and audience, this was an opportunity for me, that I was asked by the Aboriginal Healing Foundation, which is Aboriginal-run and which disseminates federal money to Aboriginal communities who are suffering from the effects of the residential schools to institute healing programs in their communities. Their wanting an exhibition was based on public consultation, where Aboriginal youth were asking questions about residential schools and they wanted to know what they were. And once again, this comes back to colonialism, about oppression and about invis-

ibility. And that that history was rendered... was taken away. And people didn't know, they couldn't see themselves in relationship to this new landscape that they were suddenly thrust into, and there was all this pain that accompanied it. And the problem was—is—that there was the intergenerational impact of residential schools, so there had been all this learned behaviour in the schools and it was being passed down from generation to generation. My role was to make that visible, so I began research and putting this exhibition together which was based on walking through the exhibition as a story, of leaving the community, of having photographs of positive... photographs of people in the communities, and then about the juncture of where the disconnect came between the families and the children, and what happened in those schools. The dilemma was that there were no photographs that showed Aboriginal children being abused, so how do you address that issue? So what I did was, I used text from the Department of Indian Affairs in the late 19th century that really talked about “savages” and about the need to Christianize and to educate them and to take them out of their savagery. And how do you do that? You take the children out of the communities. So this was the way that I addressed that invisible... or the lack of photographs that documented that. It was a partnership with the National Archives of Canada, and it was a part of the process. And what I learned working on *No Escapin' This* was how to negotiate these various institutions and everybody's idea of... like the National Archives, having to kind of step back and not take a position on residential schools.

The Aboriginal Healing Foundation wanted this hard-hitting exhibition that really called attention to it, and my role as the curator was to not sensationalize and to abuse the communities all over again. How do you go about doing that? What was interesting is that the Aboriginal Healing Foundation wanted to have a travel-

ing component that would travel right across Canada. It would be the exact copy of the exhibition, and it would go to right across Canada. It's still on tour, in fact, and now there's a website as well, and it was all about communication, about how do we reach Aboriginal communities? And so, in my mind, the realization of what I had seen when I looked outside the Museum of Man, the Manitoba Museum window in Winnipeg, and going back... and that's where we had the show in February. And when we had the opening—and I do public tours for all the openings and that—is that we had a ceremony and we had a drum group there and we had dignitaries outside, and we marched into the auditorium. And it was at that point when I walked in and virtually the whole audience was Aboriginal people, and this was the first time that I had actually seen something like that happen, and it was really hard to contain myself, because it was at that point that I realized that here something had come full circle for me as a curator, of looking out that window, wondering how to do something, and then all of a sudden, here it was, taking place in the same place.

And so when I was there for the opening, I went back up to the third floor and actually photographed... made that photograph from the window, because now it had come full circle. And this was the process, this was about coming into institutions and accessing collections, and how do we go about doing that?

Anna Hudson There were a couple of things that happened to me along the way until now, and one was.... A couple points I want to make. I had worked on a show called *Woman as Goddess*, it was Robert Markle and Joyce Weiland—and I'd got as far as thinking about those artists in conversation and that the exhibition strategy was putting those two people who seem to be so different, or have opposing points of view about gender and sexuality, in a conversation. What I forgot was that the conversation I was also hav-

ing was with my public, or with the audience, and as a result, I had a lot of—particularly from women—wanting to interject into that conversation. They were hearing a closed conversation between the two artists that I’d set up, and they had lots to say about their own memories of being young, about their own memories of puberty, about their own memories of their own experience in terms of gender, and that was, I think, something that I didn’t anticipate. And I had forgotten something that I’d really learned with *No Escapin’ This*, which is the need to imagine the possible different responses that people are having to works of art apart from oneself.

And I was compelled by what Gerald Vizenor has to say, and he said, “We can’t hear the text”—and again I replace that with “the curatorial project”—“except in our own interior voice.” He describes this phenomenon as the “shadows of language”, which we know in the visual arts is the associative power or resonance of images, but that those resonances have distinguishing cultural shapes.

“I don’t write to read or explain,” says Vizenor. “I write to somebody I think is listening.” So I curate to somebody who I think is looking. It’s in a kind of language game with me. It’s a play in the shadows, a richness of language, and it’s more than a discussion. The storyteller—or if I imagine myself as a teller, then, something that I hadn’t imagined before—plays in these shadows and anticipates their complexity. The audience is imagined in terms of their socially and culturally determined levels of accessibility. Each level produces a set of shadow stories and curators might likewise reach into these unexploited public relationships and plumb the shared cultural forms of the community.

So, like the storyteller that Walter Benjamin talks about, the curator “takes what”—and he uses “he”—“takes what he tells from

experience—his own or that reported by others. And he in turn makes it the experience of those who are listening to his tale.”

And that stories that are wrought collaboratively inevitably speak more broadly, and that perhaps if we imagine curating as narration or—I’m going to use the word “storytelling”—it’s at its best when it’s a total theatre, when every possible aspect of that performance is exploited. And there’s a big kind of conclusion, I suppose, that Jeff and I came to, and we thought, “That’s it! That’s what we share, that’s what we share. We don’t share a cultural background, but we enjoy very much curating together. There’s something... what is it, what is it?” And it’s the idea of the artwork, then, it’s the catalyst, so that we move the focus, and I suppose this is only really acceptable in an historical practice, much more complicated in contemporary practice, but if the historical art object is shifted so that our focus is on the aesthetic event or this total theatre.

Do you want to say a few words about that, and then... or did I just take it right out of your...

Jeff Thomas Yeah, you just... that’s it, Anna’s said it all now. *[laughter]*

Anna Hudson Well, okay—

Jeff Thomas What I will say about that is that we were talking a lot about this in our conversation, about the object itself and how important that was, and what I probably can say in the end here is that, in coming back to listening to my elders tell stories, it wasn’t about the object itself but it was about where that led us to, and what did it open up? And how did it, I guess, in a way create an atmosphere that was comfortable to let your imagination roam again? This was one of the things that was taken away from Aboriginal children when they were sent to these schools, is that they were no longer taught—no longer allowed to imagine and to think and to

have that sense of cultural continuity. So to be sitting on a reserve or around a table with elders, that was home, that was place, that was security, that was a power position. And so this was a thing that I thought was important to bring into the exhibition space as well: how do we bring this into the gallery and create a space where that can happen?

And finally, the exhibition that I curated for the Canadian Museum of Civilization was titled *Emergence from the Shadow: First Peoples' Photographic Perspectives*, and it started out historical-based, based on the photographs that anthropologists had produced between the years 1912 and 1949, and what I realized during the curatorial process is that the photographs just couldn't emerge from their slumber without a community. So I invited six Aboriginal artists to take part in the exhibition as well. What I did as a curator was to set up the dynamic of using a historical photograph to introduce each of their works, so to build on that relationship of continuity.

And this last slide here, it's called *Are You My Sister?* The photograph on the right-hand side was taken by the anthropologist Frederick Waugh in 1914 at the Six Nations reserve, and the photograph on the left was taken by Shelley Niro, a Mohawk artist based in Brantford, Ontario. During the studio visit, I showed Shelley this particular photograph, and I said this was what I was interested in using, and she said, "Well, I have a photograph that you can use." So she came back with her portfolio and showed me this photograph here, and what we were talking about at that point, and I was saying that I was interested about how the past influences the future, and Shelley said, "Well, it also goes the other way," as to how the present influences the past.

So this set the thesis for the exhibition. This photograph was used as the introduction to the photograph because it really was about

that connection and that flow, and that the past wasn't just located in the past by itself as something that we kind of study and then let go of. It influences our lives today, and so this is the impact and this is the relationship that I work with in terms of historical collections.

Anna Hudson It's amazing that it's taken me this long to allow myself to look at historical works imaginatively, and that the discipline of art history takes that sense of imagination away, and that I think the historical exhibition succeeds when it allows the artwork to put us back in touch with details and relationships presumed forgotten and allows us to see ourselves in a different way in the present. So the curatorial project of historical work then is a means by which we may relive, re-evaluate, and reconstruct our history, and I think that means my history too, and it's taken me, as I say, a tremendous amount of time to realize that I in fact have to reconstruct mine as well, that the canon obviously doesn't do it.

Is there any bits or pieces...? That's where we're at, we said, this is where we're at with our thinking along this line, but always that the exhibition is a dynamic process.

Jeff Thomas And what do we do next?

Anna Hudson What do we do next?

Jeff Thomas We don't know. And that's where we'll end.

Anna Hudson We need your help on that.

*Anna Hudson
& Jeff Thomas* Thank you.

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