

record in its own right capable of making statements far beyond the power of speech and writing. We must now examine more closely these visual media of record."

This PANS exhibition has in fact made statements far beyond the power of speech and writing. I would urge PANS to re-issue the catalogue, its document of record, to include more photographs, to register it with an ISBN number and Canadian Cataloguing in Publication Data to ensure that this piece of research becomes firmly locked into history: the history of women, the history of turn-of-the-century Nova Scotia and the history of the international Arts and Crafts Movement.

**Mary Sparling**

Mount Saint Vincent University Art Gallery

**Industrial Images/Industrial Imagination.** ROSEMARY DONEGAN for the Art Gallery of Hamilton. Mounted at the Vancouver Art Gallery, Vancouver, B.C. 18 September-8 November 1987. Catalogue to be published.

This exhibition, which originated in the Art Gallery of Hamilton, sets out to examine Canada's industrial past through the eyes of Canadian artists. The exhibit was shown in Vancouver and will be seen in Edmonton, Calgary, Winnipeg, and Halifax in 1988. It consists of paintings, prints, photographs, posters, and a variety of other works, including magazine covers. Most of the works date from the first half of the twentieth century, and are organized in the exhibition according to the regions and areas they depict. The information panels which introduce each section of the exhibition are good. While this geographical arrangement has merit, the physical layout of the Vancouver Art Gallery made it difficult for the viewer to follow the order of some of the displays. It is hoped that this will not be a problem when the exhibit is shown in other venues.

The first half of the twentieth century in Canada was characterized by rapid and widespread changes. Political and economic events especially the two world wars and the Depression radically affected Canadians. "Social history" was made, as women's roles changed, the labour movement grew, and higher education became more common. Technological changes permitted the switch from steam to electricity, along with improvements in virtually every area of manufacturing. The assembly line became commonplace, with its time and motion studies of workers, and small businesses often consolidated into national or international corporations. Both consumer culture and the mass media became well entrenched.

The development of Canada's industrial image was shaped by a number of factors, especially the artistic movements of the times, in particular abstract art, with its often highly charged political intent and new formal language. One can see the influences of Cubism, Expressionism, and Futurism, alongside some social realism and some more uniquely "Canadian" movements. Much of this art and artistic philosophy drew its inspiration from industry, whether from a formulation of the new role of art in the industrial world, or from the forms of this world. Throughout this period, and especially during the war years, government and industry were both active in commissioning promotional materials, ranging from in-house magazine covers to war effort posters, logos, and advertisements. Ms. Donegan notes, in her introductory brochure, that this funding facilitated artists' access to factories, an access which had previously been problematical.

There are a number of favourite recurring images among these artists, but perhaps the most important symbolic image is that of the factory smokestack, billowing clouds of smoke into the air. While the presence of this smoke intimates that the factory is in production, and thus is creating some level of prosperity, the quality of the smoke varies with the sensibilities of either the artist or the person/institution commissioning the work. It is fascinating to watch the clean, white prosperity-creating smoke issuing from the red brick turn-of-the-century factories' advertisements evolve into swirling dark smoke which occludes the sky and pours from the grim, grimy factories of later years. Though this smoke appalls our environmentally conscious sensibilities, it is here used symbolically to indicate prosperity or oppressiveness and forms an essential part of a palette which changes with time and viewpoint. Factory buildings are often seen as backdrops to people, usually showing the inhuman face of industry. For example, Lawren Harris' 1911 *The Eaton Manufacturing Building From the Ward* gives a grim vision of the human scale dwarfed by the looming, grey factory, while Leonard Hutchinson's ca. 1937 linocut *Canadian Homes and Gardens* makes a strong political comment, showing a rundown shack, complete with failing vegetable garden in the foreground, and a factory behind. Ernest Linder's 1927 series, *Steamroller of Progress*, *Release of the Giants*, and *Age of the Giants*, graphically shows some of the reservations which people had about this rapid change, with steamrollers rolling over idyllic lives, and scenes from a very uncertain science fiction future.

There is, however, another vision of Man the Worker, the glorious, well-muscled worker, who is in control of the machine. He is shown engaged in numerous occupations, including welding (Caven Atkins, *Arc Welders by Night*, 1942) and mining (Paul Rand, *The Coal Digger*, 1935). This kind of imagery, which is especially prevalent in art related to the war effort, reflects a widely held view about honest physical labour.

Women occasionally figure in this eulogizing genre, generally as munitions workers in wartime art. Essentially, however, the genre is dominated by male images. Indeed, the absence of women in the exhibition is notable, and although this is doubtless the result of a paucity of documentation, it does give a slightly distorted view of the times.

The labour movement, with its stirring speeches, heroic marches, and strong sentiment, is the subject for a surprising number of works. Man the Oppressed, rising up against his oppression, acts as a powerful image in many works, while many others show the organizational foundations of the movement, the meetings, and planning sessions. A number of photographs are presented, demonstrating the magnitude and strength of the movement, especially on such occasions as the 1945 Ford strike in Windsor, or the 1937 Oshawa strike. The faces of the men, captured by photographers of the period, show what it was to be in a union on strike in the early days of the labour movement; the men's resolve, solidarity and camaraderie is unmistakable in the photographs.

To archivists, this exhibition is of interest for the visual glimpses of what industry saw itself to be, as well as how it was seen by the artists and photographers of the time. The exhibition shows a broad range of perceptions, from the idea of Progress, to ideas of rights, and of oppression. Though Canada certainly has a number of very distinct regions, one can only infrequently catch glimpses of this, in B.C. loggers, Prairie skies and the like. Broader categories seemed to appear more clearly, and, since this art is not essentially a "regional art," it may be that some more conceptual grouping might be more appropriate to the subject matter.

Unfortunately, at the time of writing (November 1987) the catalogue was still unpublished, and no information was available as to when it might be released. It is hoped that it will be available shortly, before the exhibition moves on to other cities. The exhibition contains a great deal of valuable material and it gives viewers clear glimpses of a number of important aspects of recent history.

**Mary Heppner**  
Victoria