

Personae: Indigenous and Canadian Portraits 1861–2020

Within the territory of ‘the image’, scholars have long sought to define that which constitutes meaning, authenticity, and value. This includes the emergence, post-internet, of the scholarly field of image studies¹ in which art historians and theorists have begun to look beyond the traditional subjects of painting, drawing, photography, and printmaking to the vast array of ‘non-art’ images generated by areas such as popular culture, science, and technology. Following the tenets of this new field, and multi-disciplinarity in general, a ‘portrait’ might be expressed in many, sometimes unexpected formats. Though *Personae* is here comprised of only photography and drawing, the meanings of these works have shifted now that ‘art’ has converged with ‘information’ in the new media space.

In spite of the scope suggested by this exhibition’s title, *Personae*’s ambition is not to become an encyclopaedic chapter defining Canada’s contribution to the history of portrait images, though Canadians have produced widely acknowledged works in this domain. It would be more appropriately described as an internet-based curatorial snapshot with 20 photographs and two drawings by ten artists—a sampler conceived as the first exhibition of the proposed Portrait Gallery of Canada—in a format more suitable in scale to the rhythms of the web. Still, *Personae* recalls some of the attributes of national observation that have been made by photographers such as August Sander and Robert Frank. Sander began his monumental series, *People of the 20th Century*, in 1911. In this series, created in the spirit of the German *Neue Sachlichkeit* (New Objectivity) movement—admittedly unsettling in consideration of how physiognomy was being used to classify racialized human ‘types’—he documented subjects from a wide swath of German society, organizing them into seven discrete sections: The Farmer; The Skilled Tradesman; Women; Classes and Professions; The Artists; The City; and The Last People. However, owing to Sander’s disinterest in promoting the so-called values of racial purity, militarism, and obedience, his project did not meet with the approval of Nazi authorities and, in 1936, copies of the introduction to *People of the Twentieth Century* were seized and the printing plates destroyed. Similarly, Robert Frank, a Swiss national, published *Les Américains* in Paris in 1957, as his ground-breaking though dramatically-alienating photo essay of post-nuclear United States couldn’t initially find the support of a US publisher.

This essay will neither attempt to subsume all the disparate elements of citizen singularity into a blender theory of nationality, nor deconstruct mass

media's intoxication with the image, but rather, argue for the individual as the constituent of primary importance, and accept relative approximations of them as indicators of a sort. *Personae* comprises works by accomplished Canadian artists Stephen Stober, Christine Fitzgerald, Wally Dion, Ruth Kaplan, Herbert Taylor, Karen Stentafor, Arnaud Maggs, Thaddeus Holownia, Peter Krausz, William Notman, and even includes one by this essay's author, artist/curator, Robert Tombs. Given its title, the exhibition is by necessity inclusive, and necessarily incomplete. The plural of the Latin *persona*, *personae* suggests the multiple faces of 'self' that are presented to, or perceived by others yet ... how is one to define self?

More photographs will be taken every few minutes in 2020 than were taken throughout the entire nineteenth century.² In this year alone we will take 1.4 trillion photos, predominantly by mobile phone, while approximately 3.8 trillion photos have been taken since Daguerre eloquently recorded Boulevard du Temple 182 years ago. Whether editing from this citizen archive is a curator's nightmare, or art's opportunity, this exhibition's photographs and drawings—as images—contain facsimiles of time and space so convincing as *mise en scènes* that viewers will likely not read this didactic text. Furthermore, the assembly of still images into a *montage* such as this exhibition proposes suggest aspects of the film editor's art where notions of veracity become inevitable casualties of an accumulated narrative. An image, a photograph, a drawing, even this text, can only approximate complex emotions and perceptions, whether standing alone, or combined, even if conveyed convincingly.

While Susan Sontag has written that "there is no way to suppress the tendency inherent in all photographs to accord value to their subjects,"³ revealing 'true' value is another matter. In the Portrait Gallery's initial project to identify Canadianess, it is perhaps ironic that the earliest photograph selected was *Unidentified woman, Montreal, QC* (1861), a salted-paper print by William Notman (1826–1891). It is a pre-Confederation image, taken a mere 22 years after the accepted date of the invention of photography, 1839. It functions here as a kind of dusty mirror from the ruins of Time, as if asking: 'Am I your ancestor?' If you aren't of Anglo-Scottish descent, she likely isn't. *Unidentified woman's* immaculately-parted hair and MacGregor plaid dress proudly assert that she has achieved bourgeois status. While the grayscale rendering of this image suggest that her high-neckline day dress was constructed of an essential black and white fabric, the original MacGregor sett was woven with black and red yarn with the pattern emerging in other colours, including mauve and bright purple, after the first aniline dyes were created in 1856. Should we consider *Unidentified woman* a feminist pioneer as she projects her 'self' through time and a haze of anonymity? Was she deemed to have been a woman unworthy of identification? Or is her lack of identity merely a bookkeeping error by a distracted studio assistant?

One-hundred and fifty-six years later, Christine Fitzgerald's three platinum/palladium print contributions to *Personae*, selected from her five-image suite *Portraits in Time*, presents members of a distinguished Mohawk family: *Kaniehtí:io Horn* (2017); *Dr. Kahente Horn-Miller* (2019), and their mother, *Kahentínétha' Horn* (2019). Fitzgerald met Kaniehtí:io Horn while travelling on the icebreaker, *mv Polar Prince*, on the St. Lawrence River in 2017 during the Canada c3 Expedition artists' residency sponsored by the Students on Ice Foundation, hence *Kaniehtí:io Horn* was the first portrait of her series.⁴ Fitzgerald has said it was Kaniehtí:io who first broached the subject of Edward Curtis and his epic, though controversial early twentieth-century photogravure publishing project, *The North American Indian*. She travelled on the ship with a deck of cards, each with a reproduced Curtis portrait, and discussed with Fitzgerald what she liked and didn't like, about the individual images.

To create this series, Fitzgerald chose the wet plate collodion technique, a mid-nineteenth-century technology, to capture disarming contemporary images. In this process, plates of aluminum or glass are hand-coated with collodion by the photographer, and then emersed in silver nitrate, creating a light-sensitive emulsion. They are then placed—while still wet—into a modified film holder and soon after, loaded into a view camera and exposed. The process is challenging and prone to error as photographic plates often retain traces of fingerprints, scratches and other imperfections. With the low-tech wet collodion process conferring a kind of accidental pictorialism, Fitzgerald makes a virtue out of necessity. Her painterly, people-centred record of the present day is comprised of 'named' subjects facing the camera squarely, in contemporary dress, each a remarkable post-colonial collaborative portrait.

During the mid-to-late-nineteenth century, photographers would travel to different communities and make wet plate collodion portraits of residents, using portable darkrooms, before moving on as part of the rural peddler tradition. A widely-published and perhaps somewhat extravagant example of such a travelling darkroom is seen in American photographer Timothy O'Sullivan's albumen print, *Sand Dunes, Carson Desert, Nevada, 1867*. In the image, he portrayed, against the backdrop of the Carson Desert, his transformed, mule-drawn military ambulance which was fitted out with "boxes of glass plates and a wagon full of chemicals."⁵ It was taken while he was attached, as a photographer, to the Geological Exploration of the Fortieth Parallel, the first US government survey of the American West.

Drawing inspiration from the itinerant photographer tradition, in 2013 Karen Stentaford created the Photomatic Travelling Tintype Studio, using at various times either a converted ice-fishing tent, or a custom-made trunk in the back of her SUV, as her darkroom. These mobile units allowed her to connect more directly with the communities in which she works. Photomatic began on World

Wet Plate Day 2013, held on May 4 that year, an annual day which celebrates the work of revivalists who practice wet plate collodion photography. Stentaforð, together with photographer and welder Christie Lawrence, made 74 portraits in downtown Sackville, New Brunswick, charging five dollars per tintype. The idea was to make the event accessible to as many people as possible, while still recovering the costs of materials. Later in 2013, while an artist-in-residence at sím in Reykjavík, Iceland, Stentaforð developed a protocol, based on an exchange, in which the time and knowledge of a posing subject was traded for a one-of-a-kind, handmade tintype portrait. In this collaboration—between sitter and photographer—she makes two tintypes, one for the participant and one for her archive. Since then, she has set up various versions of her Photomatic Travelling Tintype Studio, in New Brunswick, Nova Scotia, Prince Edward Island, Newfoundland, Maine, Vermont, and Iceland again.⁶

One of the first plates of the Photomatic series, *Alex* (2013), documents a fellow Canadian artist that Stentaforð first met during her residency at sím in Reykjavík, while *Inga* (2014) is a record of a friend that the photographer has known since 2005. She created *Vivian* during a 2019 artist's residency stay at the Beaverbrook Art Gallery in Fredericton, New Brunswick. *Vivian*, the tintype, was inspired by the William Orpen painting *Mona Dunn* (1915) from the Beaverbrook's collection. Stentaforð's community-based tintype archive, which now comprises over two-hundred plates, represents an eloquent selection of time-based, tonally-magnificent portraits of community.

Toronto photographer Stephen Stober has contributed three images to *Personae*, two using the square format of a Rolleiflex 6006 single lens camera, and Plus-x film, a discontinued general-purpose mid-speed black and white film designed to give sharp, fine-grained images that became popular with photojournalists, and street and portrait photographers alike. *Portrait of a Hasidic Rabbi, Toronto* (1990) is an image from his series on the Hasidic sect of Judaism that he was working on at the time. In pursuing his subject, he discovered a *yeshiva* or rabbinical college on Bathurst Street in Toronto, the Congregation Kahal Avreichim (The Boat Shul), so named because of the premises' former function as a boat showroom. He had to seek permission from the Chief Rabbi at the yeshiva who, after a lengthy interview, granted him full access to go in with his miscellany of lighting and camera equipment, and photograph any of the members of his congregation who agreed to pose for him. Stober was there shooting for about a week. Draped in black with his hands clasped together and staring intently into the camera with an all-knowing gaze, Stober's subject assumes a confident stance. The photographer later found out from the Rabbi's wife, who lived in Israel, that his subject was a minor media celebrity who had even been interviewed by *Playboy* on the state of American moral values of the day!

In Stober's *Portrait of Gordon Kushner, Professor Royal Conservatory of Music* (1997), he captures the character of the preeminent pianist, conductor, teacher and former Principal and Vice-Principal of the Royal Conservatory of Music from 1978 to 1991. This portrait was shot on location as part of a series of portraits Stober was commissioned to create for the Conservatory's marketing department. Over the course of several days, many of the school's well-known teachers and students entered his makeshift 'studio', a large, old room filled with natural light and high ceilings. Stober recalls, "Kushner was taking direction from me and maybe subconsciously, I was thinking of Yousuf Karsh at the time because this portrait has come to be known as my 'homage to Karsh'."⁷ With a well-positioned, diffused lighting source and directional ambient window light pouring out onto his face, it exudes great detail and emotion, from the angle of the subject's gaze off-camera to the fantastically-sculpted musician's hands.

Stober moves far from the familiarity of Toronto locations for his third contribution to *Personae*, offering a difficult image. In *Self portrait, National Olympic Stadium, Phnom Penh, Cambodia* (2014), an iPhone selfie, Stober self-identifies as an itinerant witness reflected in a deteriorating mirror high atop the National Olympic Stadium in Phnom Penh.⁸ During the Cambodian Civil War (1970–75), the stadium was used as a killing field where thousands of local residents who did not adhere to the Marxist ideology of the Khmer Rouge were rounded up and executed. The cracks, fissures, and de-foiling of the mirror that frames Stober within a stadium view could be read as a metaphor for the shattering of any normative state of being. Visits to Holocaust, genocide and slavery historic sites have emerged in recent years, driven in part by travel bloggers who have drawn attention to designated UNESCO World Heritage Sites such as Auschwitz Birkenau German Nazi Concentration and Extermination Camp (1940–1945) in Poland, and the proposed Former M-13 Prison / Tuol Sleng Genocide Museum in Cambodia.

Thaddeus Holownia's portrait series, *Headlighting 1974–1978*, on the theme of internal combustion engine vehicles and their drivers, has become increasingly provocative at the 'end of oil'. It was Allan Fleming, the distinguished Canadian graphic designer, who first suggested to the fledging photographer, when he presented his portfolio to Fleming at University of Toronto Press in 1974, that he might consider using a view camera. Holownia freely admits that this meeting changed his life.⁹ Shortly thereafter he began his *Headlighting* series that originated in Toronto but overflowed into the US Midwest. On his US road trip with friend, tour guide and 'key grip' Lee Wright, he was outfitted with a camera manufactured by the Gundlach Manhattan Optical Co, sold as the Korona Banquet camera, circa 1926. The format was 8 × 20. As the camera had a lens with no shutter, exposures were made by lifting the lens cap and exposing a photographic paper negative which he used in lieu of film. Holownia has written that "exposures were calculated by feeling the light, and ranged from two to 25

seconds.”¹⁰ Though the lens barely covered the 20-inch width of the negative, the combination of the odd optical quality and the paper negative’s interpretation of the tonality produced a certain uniqueness of character which he came to love.

In one print, an unidentified man leans back against the door of a 1967 Oldsmobile Toronado two-door coupe. Posing with arms and legs spread wide as if a brace against Holownia’s long exposure, the image is a powerful display of personal and acquisitional muscle. A second image of the untitled series portrays a bearded driver with one leg up on the step plate of his 1969 White Western Star cab and tanker, parked at Canada West Indies Molasses Company Limited’s tank farm in Toronto. As images created in the spirit of New Objectivity movement, Holownia presents his found subjects ‘as is’ in assorted urban settings, while announcing his career as an observer of the anecdotal.

In his 1935 essay “The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction,” Walter Benjamin wrote presciently:

For the first time in the process of pictorial reproduction, photography freed the hand of the most important artistic functions which henceforth devolved only upon the eye looking into a lens. Since the eye perceives more swiftly than the hand can draw, the process of pictorial reproduction was accelerated so enormously that it could keep pace with speech.¹¹

Peter Krausz’s hand-wrought drawing *Michael J.* (2012) invokes art’s “ancient craft of the Beautiful.”¹² Its profile view recalls a style of portraiture which was frequently adopted in the fifteenth century by Italian artists including Piero di Cosimo, Piero della Francesca, and Filippo Lippi. This type of flattening of the picture plane, likely derived from the shallow relief depictions of potentates on ancient coins, gained new currency during the Renaissance. *Michael J.* is part of a series of large-scale drawings of Krausz’s family members and friends executed with *conté* crayon and eraser on Mylar. As a support, Mylar offers a smooth, translucent polyester film surface to draw on. With less ‘tooth’ than most drawing surfaces, Krausz marks, smudges and repeatedly erases light-infused Mylar in order to build up a subtle tonality, claiming “it works very nicely if you want to get the skin texture.”¹³ A 1969 graduate of the Fine Arts Institute, Bucharest, Romania, Krausz here converts his many hours of art academy study, which included Perspective Drawing, Anatomy, Mural Painting, Art History—and Marxism-Leninism even—into a visceral portrait that exhibits a precise rendering of character. Multi-media artist Krausz may draw like an angel but also works in other media including painting, printmaking, installation and photography.¹⁴

His silver gelatin photograph, *Montreal, the '70s (window shopping)* (c. 1970), functions as a sign of a different order. In portraying an unknown (and unaware) gentleman on St. Lawrence Boulevard, the artist has created a photograph that has value as a record of history, site, and character. Krausz, now as *flâneur*—the observer of street-life invented by Baudelaire and repositioned by Benjamin¹⁵

—again frames a gentleman in the *Quattrocento's* severe profile style, while summoning street photography's *ethos* of chance encounters and unscripted events. Frozen in time as a consumer, his subject is gazing through a showcase window, assessing its contents. A neon sign in the background beckons, in Montreal's 1970 English: "Novelties," "Souvenirs," "Magic."

Another work of art's ancient craft is Wally Dion's remarkable graphite drawing, *The Sleep of Reason Produces Monsters* (2020), which borrows its title, and some of its imagery, from an aquatint of the same name by the Spanish painter and printmaker Francisco Goya. Created between 1797 and 1799 for the *Diario de Madrid*, Goya's version is the 43rd of 80 aquatints making up the satirical etching suite *Los Caprichos*. It is thought that the artist depicted himself experiencing a nightmare as he lamented the degradation of Spanish society. Dion's own nightmare borrows Goya's bats and owls, symbols of ignorance and folly, but also includes wolves circling a braided Indigenous woman, drawn from his model, Cree healer Rachel Yahyahkeekoot. As an artist of Saulteaux ancestry who is concerned with issues of identity and power, Dion, like many Indigenous people across the country, experiences daily frustration with the state of Reconciliation in Canada. Dion's complex unity of a penetrating concept and exquisite craft creates a surreal commentary invoking the essence of the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples adopted in 2007. The declaration, now operational to varying extents in 148 countries including Canada, recognizes "the urgent need to respect and promote the inherent rights of Indigenous peoples." Goya's nightmare characterized Spain as a demented, corrupt state. His epigraph for *Capricho No. 43* reads: "Fantasy abandoned by reason produces impossible monsters."¹⁶ Created within the tradition of free speech and non-violent protest, Dion's nightmare echoes Goya's. He writes that "*The Sleep of Reason*" is about the "awakening of people through protest, disruption," and advocates for "push back against oppression."¹⁷

Ruth Kaplan has contributed three deeply-felt photographs of emerging Canadians to *Personae*, including two images that are titled *Resident, Refugee Shelter, Toronto* (2018). They are from a series about residents of a downtown Toronto refugee shelter. In exploring the lives of some of its residents, and the atmosphere of the house itself as a conduit for the transient figures who pass through it, she creates images in which we gain a sense of the vulnerability that each asylum-seeker experiences. The bureaucratic asylum-seeking process can take years and is rife with red tape, anxiety and the inherent destabilization that accompanies one's passage. Establishing some sense of normalcy with her refugee subjects has been a very important dimension of Kaplan's project from the beginning. She is interested in how refugees internalize these challenges, while also trying to transcend often traumatic personal histories, in striving to create a new life.

The women in these photographs allowed Kaplan to spend time with them in order to build trust before photographing. While the woman on the balcony, *B*, is from Eritrea and is interested in pursuing law studies, the woman alone in her room, *E*, is from Azerbaijan, where she was an ER doctor and hopes to continue working in her field, in Canada. She arrived at the shelter with one of her sons; when her status will be more stable, the other family members will emigrate. Kaplan stays in touch with the women, and reports that both *B* and *E* have since left the shelter and now reside in their own places.

After Roxham Road (2019) is from an ongoing series about asylum-seekers who have entered Canada through Quebec's unofficial Roxham Road border crossing, near Plattsburgh, New York. These sisters are from a Nigerian family who, after entering Canada, lived first in Montreal and then moved to Toronto, where they established their own accommodations and await their immigration hearings. This photograph was their first encounter with Kaplan and made at their last place in Montreal, a few days before they decamped for Ontario. As a mutually-supportive group, members of the family help each other focus on both daily tasks and their desired future. The children enjoy the social contact of school, and have started to make friends, play sports, take French lessons on Zoom, and are not seemingly impacted by the instability of the situation to the extent that their parents are. The parents, in turn, strive to create an atmosphere of well-being and normalcy. Kaplan has described her relationship with the new mirrorless medium-format portable professional cameras as a return to "the joy and simplicity"¹⁸ of photography, something which also allows her to reduce her footprint as a technological intruder.

Herbert Taylor (1928–2009) is represented by *Portrait of a farmer with his son on his shoulders at Yamachiche, Quebec* (1957), which empathetically foregrounds the essence of a primary familial relationship. The title geolocates the subjects as being on a farm in Yamachiche, on the north shore of the St. Lawrence River, near Trois-Rivières. The image was most likely exposed with direct positive film and a twin-lens reflex camera's square format and is among the holdings of the National Film Board of Canada fonds, Library and Archives Canada. Taylor was a photographer and filmmaker with the National Film Board of Canada (NFB) who, over a long career, also worked for Crawley Films, Grenada TV, UNESCO, CJON-TV, and Spaulding Taylor Hall Films, which he formed with Tom Spaulding. The NFB has long been known for its many award-winning film productions, in documentary, animated and feature film categories. Unknown to many people however is the existence of the NFB's Still Photography Division, a unit which was mandated by the federal government to document and promote Canada. The Division, which sometimes commissioned Taylor, created approximately 250,000 still images of people, places, and activities across Canada which propagated a nationalist rhetoric, at home and for international audiences,

when they were disseminated in serial layouts with prescribed texts, as Photostories¹⁹, and in other printed matter, filmstrips, and exhibitions.

Arnaud Maggs (1926–2012) is represented here by two images selected by his partner, the sculptor Spring Hurlbut. Maggs's silver gelatin diptych, *Leonard Cohen* (1977), was created at the time of Cohen's 1977 record, *Death of a Ladies' Man*, an album which was co-written and produced by Phil Spector. *Rolling Stone* headlined its review of the album with: "Leonard Cohen's doo-wop Nightmare" and observed, "Too much of the record sounds like the world's most flamboyant extrovert producing and arranging the world's most fatalist introvert."²⁰ One can only surmise whether Cohen's dishevelled appearance here had any relation to his mid-1970s lifestyle. Of the recording sessions with Spector, Cohen later said, "It wasn't safe. It was mayhem, but it was part of the times. It was rather drug-driven."²¹

Having had multiple careers, beginning in the late 1940s—as a lettering artist, graphic designer, illustrator and commercial photographer—Maggs arrived finally at fine art photography having become dissatisfied with the restrictions of freelance work. His graduation to the white museum wall was expressed first in his wholly new composite *64 Portrait Studies* (1976–78) in which Maggs arranged, in *quasi* 'Most Wanted' style, rows of thirty-two subjects photographed frontally and in profile. In assembling this and other typologies, including *Leonard Cohen*, Maggs claimed as kindred spirits the German photographers Hilla and Bernd Becher. The Bechers' large-format frontal studies began with the documentation of disappearing German industrial architecture in the late 1950s. Their aesthetic was inherited in large part from the New Objectivity movement, in particular from August Sander's interwar portrait chronicle of German social position. Maggs developed his own style of intellectualized objectivity, applying it to the external identities of friends and known personages including Cohen, Joseph Beuys, Chris Burden, Yousuf Karsh and André Kertész.

Maggs's *After Nadar, Pierrot the Archivist* (2012), his last work, at first conjurs up *Two Comedians* (1966), the final painting of American artist Edward Hopper (1882–1967). In both works, as *memento mori*, the artists portray themselves as Pierrot, the Sad Clown of seventeenth-century *commedia dell'arte* tradition, as if making their final stage exits. Maggs's image more directly borrows from notable mid-nineteenth-century French photographer Nadar's 1854 salted paper print, *Pierrot the Photographer*, created with his brother Adrien Tournachon. The subject of Nadar and Tournachon's image is the mime Charles Deburau from the Théâtre des Funambules, who had been invited to pose for a series of "têtes d'expression."²² In Nadar's image, Deburau is shown alongside a camera which he seems to be operating. His left hand directs the photographer to look at the lens while, with his right, he is taking out a film plate. But is the photographer the subject, or is he the method? In *After Nadar, Pierrot the Archivist*, Maggs

situates himself in a similar self-referential loop. Maggs, now in full costume, and with whiteface even, quotes Nadar while pondering an earlier self-portrait beside a tower of archival storage boxes, underscoring at once his extraordinary photographic ambition, the performative dimension of his work, and the ultimate sadness of arriving at the end of his life as an artist.

This essay's author's own photographic contribution to *Personae* is the 20 × 24-inch chromogenic print self-portrait, *Portrait of the Artist as Aubrey Beardasley (apologies to Frederick Evans)* (1985), the first image of a series titled *The History of Photography*. In 1991, writer Michael Parke-Taylor wrote that this series was "an alternate history that 'depicts history', stimulating enquiry into the authoritative power of photographic images."²³ While its inclusion in *Personae* might be considered self-serving, it is provided here merely to underscore the idea that images are fictions purporting to be facts. This last series example, *The History of Photography*, which employed titles and assorted strategies to challenge the assumed truths of photographic images, brings us finally to naming. *Personae*'s image titles refer to individuals in a number of ways including the artist's occasional impulse to obfuscate. Some subjects are unidentified without explanation while others are referred to as "unidentified woman," "farmer with his son," "resident," "Hasidic Rabbi," "self portrait," "artist," by first name only, by first name and last initial, by full name, or as someone else. Such varying approaches raise issues of authorial intent. The artist's tool kit confers power in different ways using skills or specialized technology which suggest inherent privilege, and assume access, but to what extent have subjects been complicit? In *Personae*, though copyright permission was received for each image, ethical issues that arise concerning the identity of subjects may still lie in wait. As an example of the importance now given to rectifying past disrespect for the subject's own agency in the process of being documented, Project Naming was conceived by Nunavut Sivuniksavut and began as a collaboration between that organization, the Government of Nunavut and the Library and Archives Canada to identify unknown individuals in photographic images. The importance of naming in images will continue to be discussed in the wider world, even as the internet has made the proliferation of unidentified images of individuals ever-more prevalent.

Personae: Indigeneous and Canadian Portraits 1861–2020 is an exhibition of portraits by artists Wally Dion, Christine Fitzgerald, Thaddeus Holownia, Ruth Kaplan, Peter Krausz, Arnaud Maggs, William Notman, Karen Stentafor, Stephen Stober, Herbert Taylor, and Robert Tombs. Any landscape where language, identity and territory are contested to the extent that they are in Canada provides numerous pitfalls to any curator who attempts to assemble a representative group portrait. *Personae*, while negotiating the proverbial tightrope of national portrayal, is ultimately an exhibition of work by ten artists who are each engaged, in various ways, with identity, history, processes, and thematic caprices. The viewer will hopefully be mindful that 'art' is a stage, and its performances here, whether

graphic or photographic, are things that should be examined through a critical lens, and indeed questioned. Moving beyond this myriad of motivations and techniques, still unanswered is an essential question: who can say what a Canadian is? After all, we are a people who define themselves by what we are not.²⁴

–Robert Tombs, *guest curator*

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Notes

1. The convergence of media that became inevitable with the world-wide penetration of the internet is discussed in James Elkins, *The Domain of Images*, Cornell University Press, 2001.
2. Hobbs, Amy, "How Many Photos Have Ever Been Taken?" March 10, 2012, <https://fstoppers.com/other/stats-how-many-photos-have-ever-been-taken-5173>.
3. Susan Sontag, quoted in "Freak Show," *The New York Review of Books*, November 15, 1973. <https://www.nybooks.com/articles/1073/11/15/freak-show/>
4. The suite of five images, *Portraits in Time*, features sisters Kaniehti'io Horn, Waneek Horn-Miller, Dr. Kahente Horn-Miller, Dr. Ojistoh Horn, and their mother, Kahentínétha' Horn.
5. "Timothy O'Sullivan, Explorer," The Civil War podcast, November 26, 2012. <http://www.civilwarpodcast.com/2012/11/timothy-osullivan-explorer/>
6. From e-mail correspondence with Karen Stentafor, September 4, 2020.
7. From e-mail correspondence with Stephen Stober, August 24, 2020.
8. Stephen Stober has noted that there have never been an Olympic Games held in Cambodia. From e-mail correspondence with Stober, August 25, 2020.
9. From a phone call with Thaddeus Holownia, August 28, 2020.
10. *Ibid.*
11. Walter Benjamin, quoted in *Illuminations*, edited by Hannah Arendt, translated by Harry Zohn, from the 1935 Benjamin essay "The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction," New York: Schocken Books, 1969, unpaginated.
12. Paul Valery, quoted by Walter Benjamin in *Illuminations*, edited by Hannah Arendt, translated by Harry Zohn, from the 1935 Benjamin essay, "The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction," New York: Schocken Books, 1969, unpaginated.
13. From e-mail correspondence with Peter Krausz, August 25, 2020.
14. *Ibid.*
15. Bijan Stephen, "In Praise of the Flâneur," *The Paris Review*, October 17, 2013. <https://www.theparisreview.org/blog/author/bstephen/>
16. Jensen, Robin M., Vrudney, Kimberly J. (2009). *Visual Theology: Forming and Transforming the Community Through the Arts*. Collegeville: Liturgical Press, 2009, 39.
17. From e-mail correspondence with Wally Dion, August 27, 2020.
18. From e-mail correspondence with Ruth Kaplan, August 26, 2020.
19. Carol Payne has critically examined the NFB's Photostories in *The Official Picture: The National Film Board of Canada's Still Photography Division and the Image of Canada, 1941-1971*, Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2013
20. Richard Gehr in "Leonard Cohen dead at 82," <https://www.rollingstone.com/music/music-news/leonard-cohen-dead-at-82-113302/>

21. *Ibid.*

22. Félix Nadar and Adrien Tournachon, *Pierrot the photographer*, salted paper print, 1872, Musée d'Orsay, Paris, France. https://www.musee-orsay.fr/en/collections/works-in-focus/search/commentaire.html?no_cache=1&zoom=1&tx_damzoom_pi1%5BshowUid%5D=1791

23. Michael Parke-Taylor, "Double Identity and the History of Photography," *Robert Tombs: The History of Photography*, Sackville: Owens Art Gallery, 1991, 5.

24. "In Greg Curnoe's artist's book, *Blue Book #8*, published by Art Metropole in 1989, Curnoe defined himself negatively, noting 797 times what he was not, ending with "I AM NOT USUALLY PARANOID, GOD'S GIFT TO WOMEN, ILLITERATE, REFUNDABLE, UNDER WARRANTY, COOL, APPALLED, WISE, ALWAYS TRUTHFUL." <https://aci-iac.ca/art-books/greg-curnoe/significance-and-critical-issues>