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Future's Past:

Exploring the archival legacy of Expo67

A thesis submitted in partial satisfaction of the
requirements for the degree Master of Library & Information Science

by

Patricia Ciccone

2018

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2018

ABSTRACT OF THESIS

Future's Past:

Exploring the archival legacy of Expo67

by

Patricia Ciccone

Master of Library & Information Science

University of California, Los Angeles, 2018

Professor Shawn G. VanCour, Chair

This thesis addresses the dynamics and logics of public archival encounters in Canada. It examines the historical and national fantasies produced through the reactivation of archival records by focusing on four artistic interventions created for the 50th anniversary celebrations of Expo67 in Montreal. Informed by Svetlana Boym's twofold categorization of nostalgia, restorative and reflective, I frame these artistic interventions in relation to the archival and exhibition spaces that give shape to their production and examine how the affective impacts of nostalgia become mediated through them. Relying on field notes, observations, interviews and a variety of online sources, I perform discourse analyses of these artworks and question who gets to speak through these public archival interfaces. Concerned with the many ways power, national identity and affect intertwine in archives, this thesis looks at what nostalgia, as a critical tool and framework, can tell us about the way our collective memories are shaped.

The thesis of Patricia Ciccone is approved.

Michelle L. Caswell

Miriam Posner

Shawn G. VanCour, Committee Chair

University of California, Los Angeles

2018

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

Canada's archival heritage, like the federation itself, has been built on a unique duality, balancing and building on the foundation of both the public administrative and legal record and the societal and cultural role of documentary heritage. This foundation was predicated on a model of public responsibility and public funding for the Canadian documentary record in order to serve the public good. This unique role among Western nations of documenting Canada's collective memory from both public and private sources in all media is deemed by archival scholars as the "total archives" concept and practice.¹

In the summer of 2017, the city of Montréal was transformed into a living archive.

Posters, city safety signs and public programming events: all were using photographic records to simultaneously celebrate the 375th anniversary of the city while also acknowledging the 50th anniversary of the 1967 World Exposition, commonly known as Expo67. The World's Fair had been very important to Montréal as it transformed the young city into an emergent global power, both in its own self-produced narrative but also in the eyes of the world. In the years prior to the events of 1967, Montréal had just left an era called "La Grande Noirceur" (The Great Darkness), an era marked by religious and social conservatism as well as cultural void. The years leading to the Expo, then, felt like a new sort of excitement, a becoming-modern of a city that had just left the yoke of its patriarchal father. From 1962, the year the Expo was announced, to the actual event in 1967, the city transformed itself at an unprecedented pace. It was also a chance for Canada to show the world what one of its "newest" metropolitan cities, in one of its most politically and culturally problematic provinces, could accomplish and overcome just a few years after coming back from two long decades of ultra-conservatism.

¹ Laura A. Millar, "Discharging Our Debt: The Evolution of the Total Archives Concept in English Canada" *Archivaria* 46 (Autumn 1998):106.

The Expo definitely left a mark on the city's landscape² and the success of the Fair turned Montréal into a figurehead of modernity. Furthermore, the Expo's focus on new and immersive cinematic technologies, such as the first appearance of IMAX in a prototype form, also left its mark on Canada: many Canadian screen theory and communication scholars subsequently dedicated their scholarship to the richness of these new media that debuted at the Expo and around novel ways they were presented. The influence of the Expo was made ever more tangible for its 50th anniversary, with an array of scholars, public programming and research groups that have latched back onto the imaginary of the Fair, and have been trying to make sense of its impact on the socio-political landscape of Montréal. Research groups at prominent Canadian universities, like CinemaExpo67, a collaboration between York University in Toronto and Concordia University in Montréal, are working in partnerships with archivists, filmmakers and creative institutions to locate, restore and re-exhibit the films that created the complex imaginative landscape of the Expo. Other research groups, like the one associated with Concordia's Centre for Oral History and Digital Storytelling, have been asking more polemical questions around national identities and social belonging by looking at the Fair's history. A contested territory on many levels, Montréal sits on traditional and unceded Kanien'keha:ka (Mohawk) territory, is part of the province of Québec which has the contentious history of wanting to claim its independence from Canada, and is also considered one of Canada's most urban and economic center, the city is the perfect case study to exemplify the cultural and political tensions of Canada in the post 1960's era.

² Among them: the elaborate construction of the now mythical "imagined islands" to host the Fair, the planning of Habitat 67, the super modern apartment complex inaugurated during the Expo, but also with large infrastructural work in the city such as the planning of the Ville-Marie highway and of the subway system.

During my visit in June 2017, then, numerous visual reminders of various kinds that highlighted the architectural and technological exploits of the Expo were posted all over the city, in every metro station, at bus stops and on billboards. The typically unified visual representation and campaign, however, was disturbed by one particular image: that of a young woman of color, wearing the official “hostess” outfit of the Expo, and standing in front of the Biosphere (the American Pavilion), looking down.



Fig. 1: Promotional image for A la Recherche d'Expo67, Montréal contemporary art museum's summer exhibit, taken in June 2017.

This particular image is the promotional poster for “A la Recherche d'Expo67 (In Search of Expo67)” a contemporary art exhibit at Montréal’s public contemporary art museum, curated by Expo67 scholar Monika Kin Gagnon, that both celebrates and critiques the legacy of Expo. Gagnon is a well-known Expo scholar who is known for theorizing the tensions between Québec’s secularization, the influences of Marshall McLuhan’s catholic humanism and widely

popular media theories and the anti-war, sexual revolution climate that was at its height during those years. Her early writing about the Fair takes on the fertile and productive context of the Expo but also highlights the complexity of its representation in the public sphere, both during and after the Fair. Gagnon's own research is guided by a desire to cultivate the archives of her late father, Charles Gagnon, an artist who designed a multi-screen film for the Christian Pavilion, a film that would elicit many infuriated reactions from members of many religious communities because of its insinuation that religion was the cause of every major war in history.³ Since the death of her father in 2003, Gagnon has been thinking and writing about her father's legacy and her work has expanded in recent years to further question the politics of archival preservation and use.

As a co-curator for an exhibit focusing on the 50th anniversary of the Expo, she invited nineteen pan-Canadian artists, all with different practices, to partake in creative endeavors with the mandate that they engage creatively with the Expo's many legacies. While "the archives" was not the main theme of the exhibit, many artists directly took on the tensions between dominant discourses around the Expo and other localized knowledges and experiences of it that have often been ignored in dominant historical discourses. In an interview between Gagnon and Lesley Johnston, the co-curator of the exhibit, they mentioned how "the fragmented archives" that surround the historical legacy of the Expo was both a source of inspiration and of disorientation for the artists.⁴ The co-curators used the term "fragmented archives" to describe

³ Monika Kin Gagnon, "The Christian Pavilion at Expo67: Notes from Charles Gagnon's Archive" in *Expo67: Not Just a Souvenir*, ed. Rhina Richman and Johanne Sloan (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2010), 146-147.

⁴ "In Search of Expo67," Thinking Out Loud podcast, accessed March 22nd, 2018, <https://www.concordia.ca/events/conversation-series/thinking-out-loud/expo67/in-search-of-expo-67.html>.

not only the set of complex rules that govern archival access and use, but also to express the multiplicity of archival sites that constitute the Canadian archival system. Without proper training, artists and users alike can find themselves confronted only by the fragments of stories, by continually incomplete narratives.⁵

This thesis is based on observational work that I performed over the summer of 2017: while looking at all those different billboards, I could not help but wonder what historical and nostalgic fantasies were being shaped by these different installations and how archival records, as they pertained to the historically significant Expo67, were being deployed, sometimes in accord with and sometimes in opposition to the dominant narratives promoted by the nation-state. What elements dictated and transformed their messages and who was able to speak through these aesthetic interfaces? I have built my observations around a comparative analysis between four distinct publicly funded installations: on one side, two projects that use archival records to celebrate the Expo as a modernist project and expand its Canadian nation-building fantasy into the present, and the other, two artworks that questions the limit of those discourses while highlighting the absence of marginalized communities in the “fragmented” archives of the Expo. Exploring the discrepancies between these two archival forms, I question the use of archival records for state-sponsored installations and ask how memories and affect are being constantly reshaped with reactivation of a record.

Structure of the Thesis

To structure my investigation of these questions, I divided my thesis in two sections and a total of three chapters. In Part One, a chapter-long analysis of the socio-political functions of the

⁵ Ibid.

Expo, along with the explanation of my theoretical framework, will help me situate the historical legacy of the Expo, as well as the contemporary tools used to make sense of its legacy. I do so by focusing and analyzing different scholarships concerning the Expo: from the more traditional model that highlights the Fair's technological innovations, celebrates its consumerism, and partakes in triumphal analysis of its nation-building potential to the more critical model that allows complexities to emerge. As a contribution to this scholarship, I'm proposing an additional level, one that provides contemporary and affective readings of the Fair and that investigates how nostalgia plays a role in shaping them. In this chapter, I set up Svetlana Boym's twofold concepts of restorative and reflective nostalgia, a duality that frames and shapes the rest of the thesis. Furthermore, I believe that the Expo's complex material culture can stand as a facsimile of Canada's archival history as well as its site of investigation, and I explore how, as an event, Expo67 represents a perfect example of the limits and powers of archival potential.

In Part Two, which includes two chapters, I propose critical readings of four installation artworks that make use of archival records. Each chapter in this section deals with two artworks, which I dissect in order to highlight the relationship between archival use and collective memory. The first chapter starts with an installation created by the Musée McCord (a social history museum in Montréal), using twenty-four images of the Fair from its photography collection that highlight the Expo's contribution to the nation through its technological and architectural innovations. I argue that the museum participates in an historical intervention that is deeply partisan, and that reveals a restorative form of nostalgia, or "long[ing for] a home that no longer exists or has never existed."⁶ The second piece that I focus on in this chapter, a photographic installation similar in content to the one orchestrated by Musée McCord, was

⁶ Svetlana Boym, "Nostalgia and its Discontents," *The Hedgehog Review* (Summer 2007), 7.

outsourced to the private company Art Publix and displayed on Ile-St-Hélène, the site of the original fairgrounds. This installation drew negative press when it was discovered that many of the accompanying texts contained factual errors. These mistakes wouldn't be so jarring, however, if the installation were not on display at the same location that the original Fair took place, a location that is now haunted by the absence of these grandiose buildings, destroyed because of the lack funding for their preservation. This dissonance is a perfect example, I argue, of the risks that attend most projects of restorative nostalgia, whose imagined versions of the past rarely match their historical realities. In addition to Boym's work, throughout my analyses in this chapter, I draw on Pierre Nora's concept of "lieux de mémoire" (site of memory) along with Margaret Hedstrom's concept of the archival interface, arguing that each installation site represents a distinct site of memory whose physical context structures the way we interact with archival records and the forms of memory that are produced.

In the second chapter in this section, I focus on two installations that demonstrate critical, or "reflective," forms of nostalgia by exploring the limits of a national discourse that often excludes certain communities from different articulations of national-belonging. Here I look at art pieces by Cheryl Sim and Krista Belle Stewart, two artists participating in the Musée d'Art Contemporain (MAC) exhibit, that engage with the problem of representation in the archival legacy of the Expo as well as their quest to imagine alternative forms of national belonging by using their own personal archives. I read these two artworks in parallel to Michelle Caswell and Anne Gilliland's framework of the impossible archival imaginary and of the imagined records and by expanding on Boym's reflective nostalgia. Cheryl Sim's multiscreen music video entitled "Un jour, un jour" (a reference to the French title of the official theme song of the Expo "Hey friend, say friend!") mixes videographic and photographic

evidence of her immigrant parents' honeymoon to the 1967 Expo with a video of present-day Sim, in the hostess costume, and lip synching the lyrics to the song while looking at their photo album. The artist's Sino-Filipino's heritage is put at the forefront of the video with visual cues constantly reminding the viewer of the artist's and her parents' racialized bodies. While these images are not contrasted with anything within the artwork itself, Cheryl and her parents are the only individuals appearing in the video, and the decision to use a still from the video as the promotional material for the whole exhibit articulates a desire to insert the brown body of the artist within the more white-dominant imaginary of the Fair. The video work is situated in the first room of the exhibit and every visitor is invited to start their tour by listening to Sim's rendition of the song.

Bookending the exhibit, Krista Belle Stewart's site-specific installation made of a single archival image creates an interplay between the personal (a blurry still image from a film starring her mother, Seraphine, who was the subject of a documentary that was screened in the Indians of Canada Pavilion during Expo67) and the institutional (the lack of interest and lack of economic incentive in creating preservation policies for the large amount of documentaries produced by indigenous communities in Canada). Krista Belle Stewart is a well-known indigenous artist who works heavily with archival material. Her work centers on filling up "the gaps and the unknowns in indigenous histories"⁷ and given Canada's colonial tendencies to erase the presence of indigenous stories out of its history, along with the colonial legacy of events such as World's Fairs, her presence in this commemorative exhibit is even more crucial.

⁷ Kevin Griffin, "Krista Belle Stewart: the Gaps and Unknowns in Indigenous Histories," *Vancouver Sun*, January 30, 2015, <http://vancouver.sun.com/news/staff-blogs/krista-belle-stewart-the-gaps-and-unknowns-in-indigenous-histories>

Methods and Sources

During the summer of 2017, I visited Montréal to perform preliminary research on the 50th anniversary of the Expo. Throughout the whole week, I observed and took notes as I walked through the city. I added a comment in my notebook every time I saw a poster or a billboard for any event dedicated to the Expo. After a week of vicarious note-taking, I sat down and decided on the six different interventions that deserved further investigation. After observing these six chosen sites more thoroughly, I decided to focus on four of them: two outdoor installations and two additional installations run as part of one retrospective art exhibit. I made that decision based on two factors: ease of access to the site would allow me to return for additional inquiry, and similarity between the interventions: two of my chosen events ended up relying heavily on oral histories and the other was solely video based but I decided to focus on interventions that mostly used visual material. I took a copious amount of notes about the location of each installation, about who was financially responsible for them, and what they were depicting. I also took note about my own reaction to them. These observations are the primary material on which I base this research. I went back to Montréal in the Winter of 2018 to interview Cheryl Sims, one of the two artists showcased in my final chapter. This interview provided me with new insights into her art practice, but also helped me understand the sort of archival labor she performed before starting the production of her video.

Aside from that new material, I spend a lot of time looking at other print or digital sources. I relied heavily on online sources because of distance. I am lucky that the digital portal of the City of Montréal digitized many records of the Expo. On their website, they even provide a curated selection of images, along with a month-by-month history written by Yves Jasmin, the public relation director of the Expo. These blog posts provide a great insight into the

sort of nostalgia proposed by a prevalent archival institution. I was also able to find and consult the official guide to the Expo online, along with other ephemera due to the labor of a community of amateur historians online. In fact, one of my biggest source of information for this thesis was a Facebook group started by a well-known Quebecois historian, Roger La Roche. Along with scanned pictures of memorabilia and scans of newspaper clippings, members of this online group also shared personal photos and narratives about their experiences at the Fair. These stories served as a great counterpoint to the more institutionalized records found on the City of Montréal website. I also collected newspapers articles and press releases concerning the events celebrating the 50th anniversary of the Expo, a good amount of which have found their ways into the third chapter of this thesis.

Last but not least, I engage with scholarly literature from many different fields. Throughout my thesis, I work with many journal articles written by critical archival studies scholars and combine them to scholarships from various academic fields: cultural studies, art history, sociology and more. My thesis relies on the interplay between my analysis of my primary sources and my interpretation of these various theories.

Archival Framing

By framing this research from an archival perspective, I hope to respond to Michelle Caswell's call to bridge the gap between humanity-oriented scholarship and archival studies frameworks and concepts,⁸ and to write a truly interdisciplinary work of scholarship. I'm intrigued by what the field of critical archival studies can help us understand about the legacy of

⁸ Michelle Caswell, "'The Archive' Is Not an Archives: On Acknowledging the Intellectual Contributions of Archival Studies," *Reconstruction: Studies in Contemporary Culture* 16:1 (2016). Retrieved from <https://escholarship.org/uc/item/7bn4v1fk>

the Expo and more specifically, I apply critical archival studies to contemporary and public art projects that use archival material to help shed a light on the complex narratives of the Fair. Looking at Montréal-as-city as a site where archival records are conceptualized as narrative devices, my close readings of these public programs establish a new understanding of how archival records, collective memory, and state power intertwine in the creation of new discourses and stories that the nation tells itself about itself.

In choosing to focus on the Canadian context, I am also providing an extra layer, or a new starting point, through which to discuss this discursive reality. While philanthropy was at the center of the USA's sociocultural development, Canada has created its own public tradition when it comes to the financing of arts and culture, which includes archival institutions. While lacking in big names like Carnegie or Rockefeller, Canada's sociocultural landscape has long been financed by its government – at both the provincial and national level. This support extended to cultural, artistic and educational activities and institutions across Canada. Such financial and other resources supplied by government entities throughout Canada's history resulted in the development of key artistic institutions and infrastructures, such as the National Film Board, specialized art galleries, or Archives Canada, while also being in charge of preserving the cultural heritage they created. The government saw heritage preservation as foundational to the survival of the nation. That is to say that Canadian governments, at a national, provincial and municipal level, do not only preserve their administrative records but are tasked with acquiring, collecting and preserving cultural memory, so that when we talk about the specificities of Canadian cultural institutions we are not only engaging with the concept of territory or of national identity but also with a network of public policies that generate a very

specific archival and uniquely Canadian tradition.⁹

In his 1972 introduction to the *Archives: Mirror of Canada Past*, Wilfred I. Smith highlights and summarizes three particular tenets that would later become “basic obligation of every civilized community to preserve for posterity the records of its past.”¹⁰ This ideal could be realized, according to Smith, through three very easy steps. First, the Public Archives of Canada needed to emphasize its dual responsibility when acquiring and preserving both government records and the records of citizens who had contributed to the intellectual and cultural history of the country. Second, the archives should recognize the legitimacy of all media types. Maps, drawings, artworks and personal papers were seen as equally important as microfilm, 8mm home movies and educational films. For Smith, they all complemented Canada’s rich and nuanced past, as well as providing insightful materials to historians and researchers. And lastly, Smith proposed an integrated approach to record management and organization to ensure that the records’ historical values would be available to future publics once the administrative duties of the archivists had been done. These three tenets in aggregate created the “Total Archives”.

As idealistic and positive as the concept seems to be, this uniquely Canadian approach to archival management does have its fair amount of critiques. Terry Cook, for example, argued in his 1978 rebuttal of Smith, that the principle is infeasible within a modern archival structure. For Cook, this approach has meant that the Public Archives of Canada had been fractured into sub-units of archival repositories, each of them mostly focusing on specific media types and often

⁹ Millar, “Discharging Our Debt,” 104.

¹⁰ W.I. Smith, “Introduction,” *Archives: Mirror of Canada Past* (Toronto, 1972), pp. 9–10.

conflicting and competing over interests. This approach also threatened wholesome preservation since provenance is not kept and collections get fragmented into inorganic wholes and separated items often get lost.¹¹

These professional tensions also raised questions concerning the capacity of the public archives to acquire records that adequately and equitably documented all aspects of Canadian society, including minorities, underrepresented and marginalized communities. For example, certain communities might not trust national intuitions to preserve their memory properly. Furthermore, the appraisal of personal records, despite good intentions, will always-already be imbued with biases and opinions about the importance of the community and the creators it originated from. As the queer Canadian archival scholar Rebecca Sheffield argues “[While] Total Archives may have been created with good intentions, it is not a realistic strategy for capturing memories of minority groups, activist communities, marginalized populations, or social outcasts. Nor is it able to ensure the preservation of records that document the everyday lives of all Canadian citizens in an increasingly diverse society.”¹²

This idealized version of what archives could be did not last for too long, perhaps proving Terry Cook’s point about the unrealistic application of such a large project. Public Archives of Canada is now called Library and Archives Canada, a shift that came with its lot of managerial changes and funding cuts.¹³ While I won’t focus too much on the Total Archives in the rest of this thesis, providing this frame of reference seems important since my project questions the

¹¹ Millar, “Discharging Our Debt,” 138.

¹² Rebecka Sheffield, “Total archives: A Brief History,” accessed March 1st, 2018, <http://www.rebeckasheffield.com/total-archives/>.

¹³ Laura Millar, “Coming Up with Plan B: Considering the Future of Canadian Archives,” *Archivaria* 77 (Spring 2014):104.

unequal distribution of power that archival narratives coming from the nation-state often emit and is relevant to the discussion of another nation-making project that endeavored to demonstrate and then preserve pan-Canadian cultural identity and heritage, Expo67.

In conclusion, this thesis uses its cases and context to engage with archival ecologies that take form in the triangulation of power structures, national identities and artistic processes. The four installations chart the uncertain relationship between official institutions and representation, between dominant narrative and affect, but are also part of the larger socio-political project that is Canada. At stake in this case study is the viability and limits of national institutional archives of all sorts to mediate, via management and preservation, the always complex legitimacy of collective memories.

CHAPTER 2: THE CONTOURS OF A NATION'S PAST(S)

This chapter offers an overview of the sociocultural and sociopolitical functions of the 1967's World Fair and explores its subsequent effects on the development of a national discourse in Canada. By combining an analysis of ephemera on the World's Fair with secondary sources on the history of the Expo, and literature on global modernity, I map a certain intellectual trajectory about World's Fairs in general and the Expo in particular. I review critical scholarship that challenges original triumphalist narratives surrounding the Fair at the time it was held and add to that scholarship new theoretical perspectives influenced by recent work on affect and nostalgia and explore their role in the production of collective memories. By looking at the story of the Expo as a sort of prism through which the lights of power are refracted, reaching and affecting different strata of social life, this chapter initiates a meditation on the politics of national memory.



Fig. 2. Subway ad for Rêver le monde (Dreaming the World), the summer exhibit at Musée Stewart, Montréal's history museum. The image depicts three significant

structures that were constructed for the Expo: Habitat 67 (a state-of-the-art apartment building in Montréal's Old-Port), the biosphere (the American pavilion), and a Calder sculpture entitled "Terre des Hommes", along with an image of the moon landing. Inserted into the figure of a human, this poster, designed in 2017, is a throwback to the visual imaginary of the Fair. © Musée Stewart Museum, 2017.

Experiencing the Expo67: Then and Now

Walking around the Montréal subway in summer 2017, I found myself surrounded by an aura of nostalgia. Around me, all the ad spaces were filled with posters advertising public events related to concurrent anniversaries of the 375th of Montréal and of the 50th of the Expo. Featuring groovy, retro eye-catching and bold colors, bohemian typography, choice of images, and general aesthetics, these promotional posters throw us right back into the late 1960s. Upon reflection, the subway seems the perfect place to share these festive events: built simultaneously to the World's Fair in 1967, it became one of the first large scale social project finalized by a great new modern Montréal. This mixture of nostalgia and technological awe, then, is purposeful, reminding us of how interconnected these two events are in the origin story of post-darkness (Noirceur) Montréal. And at the bottom of each poster, small indications that these events are financed by the city of Montréal in collaboration with the Québec government are seen to further emphasize the role that the government played in both.

Montréal was awarded the rights to the 1967's international Expo in mid-1962, after the Soviet Nations decided that they would not be able to host the event. That meant that the city only had five years to conceive, organize and execute a world-class event that usually took twice as much time to plan. While many said it could not be done, a large array of financial resources, both from the national and provincial level, was added to the Fair's budget in order to ensure its completion. Betting on their already established plan for the Expo, a plan that was supposed to

take seven years to complete, the construction of the event started after a careful and thorough revision of the schedule.¹⁴ The novel conceit was to build a whole new island in the middle of the St-Lawrence river by enlarging and connecting two inhabitable plots of land that were already there and linking this newly created island to another series of small islands in order to create this utopic archipelago right next to the city.



Fig 3. A bird's eye view of the 1967's World Exposition. © Ville de Montréal. Gestion des archives. Îles Sainte-Hélène et Notre-Dame, sites d'Expo 67. - [1967] - photographie. VM94,D267-2

Even if the scale of the project was rather unthinkable, the Expo67 was ready on the scheduled opening day. With its 38 national pavilions, seven provincial pavilions and 24

¹⁴ Rhona Richman and Johanne Sloan, "Introduction: Dusting Off the Souvenir." in *Expo67: Not Just a Souvenir*, ed. Rhina Richman and Johanne Sloan (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2010), 3.

sponsored pavilions the Expo attracted more than 50 million paid admissions¹⁵ and had a significant impact on the economy of the burgeoning city.

The massive project involved multiple moving parts, and contributors were many. But the Expo was not only constructed out of the physical spaces of the national pavilions: the stories of World's Fairs are always much more complex than the magnificent sites they inhabit for a short while. As Belk identifies in *The Rise of Consumer Society*, World's Fairs had the twin goals and outcomes of acting as "...another important development in legitimizing consumer culture in both Europe and America."¹⁶

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| National pavilions: ¹⁷ | <p>Canadian Pavilion; Africa Place (countries represented: Cameroon; Chad; Democratic Republic of Congo; Gabon; Ghana; Ivory Coast; Kenya; Madagascar; Niger; Rwanda; Senegal; Tanzania; Uganda); Arab Countries (countries represented: Algeria; Kuwait; Morocco; United Arab Republic(Egypt)); Australia; Belgium; Britain; Burma; Ceylon; China; Cuba; Czechoslovakia; Ethiopia; European Community; France; Greece; Guyana – Barbados; Haiti; India; Iran; Israel; Italy; Japan; Korea; Mauritius; Mexico; Monaco; Netherlands; Scandinavia (countries represented: Denmark; Finland; Iceland; Norway; Sweden);Switzerland; Thailand; Trinidad and Tobago; Tunisia; Union of Soviet Socialist Republics Pavilion (USSR); United States of America Pavilion.</p> <p>¹ Atlantic Provinces (provinces represented: Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, Prince Edward Island and Newfoundland); Maine; New York State; Ontario: The fabric-roofed pavilion Québec; Vermont; Western Provinces (provinces represented: Alberta, British Columbia, Manitoba, and Saskatchewan).</p> |
|-----------------------------------|--|

¹⁵ "Expo67", The Canadian Encyclopedia. Accessed on May 30th, <http://www.thecanadianencyclopedia.ca/en/article/expo-67/>

¹⁶ Russell W. Belk, *Collecting in a Consumer Society* (New York: Routledge, 1995), 12.

¹⁷ Charles C. Milne, *Official Expo 1967 Guide Book* (Canadian Corporation for the 1967 World Exhibitions, 1966).

| | |
|-------------------------------------|---|
| Provincial pavilions: ¹⁸ | Atlantic Provinces (provinces represented: Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, Prince Edward Island and Newfoundland); Maine; New York State; Ontario: The fabric-roofed pavilion Québec; Vermont; Western Provinces (provinces represented: Alberta, British Columbia, Manitoba, and Saskatchewan). |
| Sponsored pavilions: ¹⁹ | Air Canada; Alcan Aquarium; Bell Telephone Pavilion; Walt Disney Imagineering Circle-Vision; Boy Scouts Pavilion; Brewers Pavilion; Canadian National Railway Pavilion; Canadian Pacific - Cominco Pavilion; Canadian Pulp and Paper Pavilion; Chatelaine Magazine House; Economic Progress Pavilion; Christian Pavilion; European Community Pavilion; Hospitality Pavilion; Indians of Canada; Judaism Pavilion; Kaleidoscope Pavilion; Kodak Pavilion; OEDC Pavilion; Olympic House; Place des Nations; Polymer Pavilion; Sermons from Science Pavilion; United Nations Pavilion. |

Table 1: A list of all the pavilions taken from the Official Expo 1967 Guide Book.

The first “modern” world exposition, now known as the Crystal Palace exposition because of the architectural space that was constructed to host the event, London’s Great Exhibition of 1851 was captured in a catalog composed of three 500-page volumes. The catalog was available for purchase as a souvenir for visitors to remember the consumer’s goods and innovations that were on display during the event. Further expositions refined that concept and innovated further by having companies not only display their ready-to-use (and buy) commodities but also providing them the possibility to use the Fair as demonstration grounds for their new items. Competing novelties from the worlds of film, television, communication, along with increasing participation of corporate sponsors, quickly became synonymous with world fairs, and consumption as spectacle became the norm.

The 1967 International and Universal Exposition held in Montréal was no different. The Fair’s main theme of Terre des Hommes, or Man and his World, a reference to the French novel

¹⁸ Milne, *Official Expo 1967 Guide Book*.

¹⁹ Milne, *Official Expo 1967 Guide Book*.

by Antoine de St-Exupery, *Le petit Prince*, highlighted the book's, and the Expo's, cosmic humanism: a humanistic point of view from an inhumane (read: technological) perspective. Displayed across the seven thematic pavilions spread out through the site,²⁰ the relationship between "man" and the technologies "he" had developed was at the forefront of the fair's self-created narrative. But what happens when this technological determinism collides with the complex global politics of the world? Or, as Rhona Richman and Johanne Sloan ask, following Michel Foucault's lead, "what kinds of subject were produced by the techno-humanist discourse of Expo 67?"²¹

For some countries, the race to demonstrate their modernity²² was synonymous with technology, while those less fortunate perhaps, could only ever hope that the technological and ethnographic gazes that represented them could offer somewhat of a positive light onto their lived realities. These opposing privileges dominated the narratives of the Fair, whether at the global level (between countries) or at the more local level (between national and local entities). In Expo67: Richman and Sloan offer this important contextual analysis of the complex sociopolitical ecosystem of the Expo:

If world's fairs have historically been sites of contradictory messages, ideals, and ideologies, it is all the more important to submit each fair to close scrutiny, and hence to determine what was distinctive about Expo 67. We cannot ignore that previous world's fairs coincided with chapters in the history of colonialism, and that forms of display, education, and entertainment were typically entwined with assertions of cultural superiority. By 1967, the geo-political map of the world had

²⁰ Man the Explorer; Man the Producer, Man the Creator, Man in the Community, Man the Provider, Labyrinth, Habitat 67

²¹ Rhona Richman and Johanne Sloan, "Introduction: Dusting Off the Souvenir," 5.

²² Throughout this text I will use the term modernity as the ensemble of particular socio-cultural norms, attitudes and practices that are understood to bring a society from traditional to modern. This term is often associated with theories of globalization, and while its use is highly debated amongst scholars, I believe that it useful to convey the story that "modern" World's Fairs aspire to tell.

dramatically changed, however, and Expo 67 could be regarded as a promotional opportunity for an emergent post-colonial consciousness with countries such as Algeria presenting themselves as newly independent entities on the world stage, and the “Africa Place” pavilion providing testimony to that continent’s ongoing national liberation struggles. The Cold War, meanwhile was in full throttle, but Cuba could gleefully advertise itself in the official Expo 67 guidebook as “the first socialist country of the Western Hemisphere” and Canadian soil provided a less-than-hysterical setting for the inevitable showdown between the American and Soviet pavilions, and their competing world views. It is also significant that the summer months of 1967 would achieve renown both as the “summer of love” and as a time of violent racial clashes in the United States, which is to say that Expo 67 coincided with the rise of youth and counterculture movements, feminism, civil rights activism, and anti-war protests.²³

The Expo67, then, can be understood as a site where the sociopolitical complexities of the era experienced an airing-out. And Canada’s self-imposed role as the host nation was promoting itself as an inclusive nation, where discord could happen at the same time as social solidarity and progress. But Montréal at the time was by no means the apolitical site that the fair had made it to be. In fact, Montréal had its own ongoing political struggles, the least of which was it related to the rest of Québec, and to the rest of (Anglophone) Canada. After many years of being kept in the dark by a reactionary provincial government, Montréal was starting its own modernization process. Rapid changes in the fabric of the society were met with protectionism politics, as Québécois were asserting their own national identity in the margins of Canada’s.²⁴ This political climate later led to acts of terrorism, political kidnapping, and even the death of a

²³ Richman, Sloan, “Introduction,” 6.

²⁴ In his memoirs, René Lévesque, the founder of the separatist movement in Québec, highlights the tension between the pan-national ideals of Canada and the more progressive, yet protectionist, dreams of the French-speaking Canadians in Québec. After a successful bid to nationalize hydro-electricity as part of the pan-national Liberal Party, Lévesque decided to start his own political party to secure, through sovereignty, the future of Québec’s singular culture. However, after a failed referendum for sovereignty in 1980, separatism in Québec never reached the same level of optimism. See: René Lévesque, *Memoirs*. (McClelland and Stewart, 1995).

liberal elected official.²⁵ Also fighting for recognition, indigenous and First Nations communities were rallying, demonstration, and agitating to recuperate stolen lands and to gain legal and financial power.²⁶

This flattening out of social inequalities and political realities that Canada was trying to promote during the Expo, then, was only a matter of appearances. However, amidst this complex ecosystem, the Expo is forever inscribed as a unifying event in the dominant Canadian national imaginary. Indeed, the Expo quickly became associated with a certain ideal of the nation, or rather, it became the idealized site where the nation could enact the imaginary process of becoming a homogenous and harmonious monoculture community. But looking at all these underlining complexities makes it look less than ideal of an event to be transformed into a straight-forward dominant narrative about national harmony and excellence. For that reason, many stories simply had to be forgotten.

In his book *Imagining Nations*, Geoffrey Cubbit argues that “being national is the condition of our times”²⁷ but that this condition is much more easily evoked than defined. For the scholar, the nation “serves sometimes as virtual equivalent of ‘people’, sometimes of ‘country’, sometimes of state, it designated now a community, now an environment, now a component in a

²⁵ The death of Pierre Laporte, a Liberal minister of labour who strangled himself while trying to escape from the basement where a militia-like separatist group, Front de Libération du Québec, was holding him captive, changed the face of the debate forever. The series of events that led to his kidnapping and death is known as the October Crisis. See Claude Trudel, *De la crise d’octobre au printemps érable: Parcours d’un citoyen engagé (1960-2012)*. (Québec-Amérique, 2015).

²⁶ See Gwilym Lucas Eades, *Maps and Memes: Redrawing Culture, Place, and Identity in Indigenous Communities*. (McGill-Queen's University Press, 2015); Wanda A. Wuttunee, *In Business for Ourselves: Northern Entrepreneurs: Fifteen Case Studies of Successful Small Northern Businesses*. (McGill-Queen's University Press, 1992).

²⁷ Geoffrey, Cubbit. *Imagining Nations* (Manchester University Press, 1998), 1.

global political system.”²⁸ Following this logic and Benedict Anderson’s in *Imagined Communities*, where the category of “imagination” becomes crucial to the analysis of nationalism, Expo 67 transforms into a playground and test lab for the constructed “national imagination”. Not to say the concrete and felt reality of the national approach to the Expo 67 are not real, but rather, that looking at the memorialization process the Expo will allow us to see how nations create their own discourses about themselves, and how nostalgic discourses often perpetuate a specific power dynamic. Who gets to be part of this nation-building narrative and who is excluded also become an important part of our understanding of how memories, on the one hand, and a lack, or loss, of them (amnesia) are big part in the process of power-making and nation-building.

Nostalgia and the Nation

In order to read these discourses effectively, I propose to turn to the affective dimensions of memory and memory-making. By doing so, I seek a better understanding of the different discourses that the public display and arrangement of archival images and visual records encourages. This decision follows Svetlana Boym’s suggestion that nation and nostalgia, a social emotional reaction she subdivides between a reflective and a restorative type, go hand in hand. In *Nostalgia and Its Discontents*, Boym traces down the history of the word nostalgia and pluralizes its meaning by offering a reading that transcends its usual individualistic tone. She says “the word “nostalgia” comes from two Greek roots, *nostos* meaning “return home” and *algia* “longing.” I would define it as a longing for a home that no longer exists or has never existed. Nostalgia is a sentiment of loss and displacement, but it is also a romance with one’s own

²⁸ Cubbit, *Imagining Nations*, 1.

fantasy.”²⁹ For the author, “nostalgia is about the relationship between individual biography and the biography of groups or nations, between personal and collective memory.” Her reading results in a new understanding of nostalgia as not merely an expression of personal longing but as a new relationship between subjects and time, a relation that redefines the division of personal and universal.³⁰ The author proposes two terms to describe this revisited etymology: restorative and reflective. She argues that “restorative nostalgia does not think of itself as nostalgia, but rather as truth and tradition. Reflective nostalgia dwells on the ambivalences of human longing and belonging and does not shy away from the contradictions of modernity. Restorative nostalgia protects the absolute truth, while reflective nostalgia calls it into doubt.”³¹ For Boym, then, “restorative nostalgia is at the core of recent national and religious revival” while reflective nostalgia “does not follow a single plot but explores ways of inhabiting many places at once and imagining different time zones.”³² This typology, Boym argues, allows us “to distinguish between national memory that is based on a single version of national identity, on the one hand, and social memory, which consists of collective frameworks that mark but do not define individual memory, on the other hand.”³³

In her dissertation project entitled “Your Nostalgia is Killing Me: Activism, Affect and the Archives of HIV/AIDS”, Marika Cifor argues that intrinsically linked to the work that

²⁹ Svetlana Boym, “Nostalgia and its Discontents,” *The Hedgehog Review* (Summer 2007), 7.

³⁰ Boym, “Nostalgia and its Discontents,” 8.

³¹ Boym, “Nostalgia and its Discontents,” 13.

³² Boym, “Nostalgia and its Discontents,” 13.

³³ Boym, “Nostalgia and its Discontents,” 14.

archives do, nostalgia can have a productive potential when looking at larger cultural heritage.³⁴

Citing Svetlana Boym, Cifor argues that it's the inherently social aspect of nostalgia, combined by its individualized affect, that make it the perfect vector through which collective memory and social needs can be constructed.³⁵

For Marika Cifor, a critical look at nostalgia combined with archival studies allows us to ask new and different questions:

A critical nostalgia proves a unique lens from which to explore contemporary issues of identity, politics, and history. Nostalgia...offers a particular way of "shaping and directing historical consciousness". They assert that nostalgia is unique in the sensory depth in which it correlates place, time and desire heightening awareness of time, places and possibilities that "are at once integral to who we are and definitively alien to us." Nostalgia allows for "a negotiation between continuity and discontinuity: it insists on the bond between our present selves and a certain fragment of the past, but also on the force of our separation from what we have lost." Engaging with nostalgia offers the promise of a deeper, and more critical and ethical engagement with archival stakeholders, memory, temporality, and affect in archival studies, offering possibilities for transforming theory and practice.

She continues, "collective memory is comprised of feelings and experiences, both personal and shared. It evokes a sense of a shared past of experiences. This is a shared history that cannot be reduced to a history that simply records places or years, rather it is crucially felt."³⁶ Nostalgia, then, is not solely as a personal affect but as a structuring and productive force that drives our idea of the nation and helps build and sustain cultural heritage and identities. In the archives, the past is both present as a material trace, but is no longer fully accessible, making

³⁴ Marika Cifor, "'Your Nostalgia is Killing Me': Activism, Affect and the Archives of HIV/AIDS" PhD diss., University of California, Los Angeles, 2017), 13. Retrieved from <https://escholarship.org/uc/item/2312c9bb>

³⁵ Cifor, "'Your Nostalgia is Killing Me': Activism, Affect and the Archives of HIV/AIDS," 13.

³⁶ Cifor, "'Your Nostalgia is Killing Me': Activism, Affect and the Archives of HIV/AIDS," 112.

records powerful triggers for nostalgia on personal and collective levels.

Since the publication of Terry Cook and Joan M. Schwartz's "Archives, Records and Power: The Making of Modernity"³⁷ in *Archival Science* in 2002, an identifiable shift has occurred in the way some critical archival studies scholars talk about archives. If that work had already been started by some scholars,³⁸ Cook and Schwartz's insights reconciled archival theory with discursive interrogations by critical thinkers such as Foucault³⁹ and Derrida⁴⁰ in order to reconsider time and history as fluid, always in-process and as constructed. Questioning the archive as a stable and neutral institution, this framework has been guiding the work of a new generation of scholars eager to engage with questions of race and gender in archives, or to talk about the post-colonial legacy of certain archival projects, for example.⁴¹ Furthermore, within this framework, the physical and conceptual space of the archive itself is put under criticism for being an unexamined space where knowledge and subjects are created through unequal power relations.⁴² Hence, critical archival scholars not only rethink the researchers' relation to certain

³⁷ Schwartz, Joan M., and Terry Cook. "Archives, Records, and Power: The Making of Modern Memory." *Archival Science* 2 (2002): 1–19.

³⁸ Eric Ketelaar, "Tacit Narratives: the Meanings of Archives" in *Archival Science* 1 (2001).

³⁹ Michel Foucault, *L'Archéologie Du Savoir* (Paris: Gallimard, 1969).

⁴⁰ Jacques Derrida, *Mal D'archive: Une Impression Freudienne*. Paris: Galilée, 1995.

⁴¹ Marika Cifor, "Affecting Archives: Introducing Affect Studies to Archival Discourse," *Archival Science* 16(1) (2016): 7-31; Jamie Lee, "Be/longing in the Archival Body: Eros and the "Endearing" Value of Material Lives," *Arch Sci* (2016) 16: 33; Jacqueline Z. Wilson and Frank Golding, "Latent Scrutiny: Personal Archives as Perpetual Mementos of the Official Gaze." *Archival Science* 16:1 (2015): 93-109.

⁴² Michelle Caswell, Marika Cifor, and Mario H. Ramirez, "'To Suddenly Discover Yourself Existing': Uncovering the Affective Impact of Community Archives." *The American Archivist* 79 (Spring/ Summer 2016): 56-81; Punzalan, Ricardo. "'All the Things We Cannot Articulate': Colonial Leprosy Archives and Community Commemoration." In *Community Archives: The Shaping of Memory*, ed. Jeannette A. Bastian and Ben Alexander. London: Facet, 2009.

histories and discourses, but also the way inequalities are built right into the architecture, the rules, the statements of archival institutions.

Since many critical archival scholars argue that archivists are mediators of histories⁴³ as opposed to neutral agents, then, value-making processes need to be highlighted by their practices rather than obscured. This also means, as Verne Harris has argued, that since history can never truly be represented as a whole,⁴⁴ the role of the archivists and of archival institutions is to present their records in a space that contextualizes the power hierarchies that shape these “slivers” of history. In this intellectual ecosystem, then, collective memory becomes linked to the multiple ways social groupings share and construct knowledge between themselves as a way to generate a certain sense of historical belonging. The concept of “collective” or “social” memory has gained in legitimacy over the last thirty years. This rise can be noted in fields like history, sociology, anthropology, psychology and cultural studies, as well as in the field of archival studies. This rise gave way to new methods for analyzing the power relations that hide behind the creation and circulation of history, spaces and subjects. Some of the scholarly work done around this concept includes work that argue for the demystification between social, public and collective memory;⁴⁵ about the importance of individual experiences within the larger social and

⁴³ Tom Nesmith, “Seeing Archives: Postmodernism and the Changing Intellectual Place of Archives,” *Am Arch* 65 (2002):24–41; Verne Harris, “The Archival Sliver: Power, Memory, and Archives in South Africa.” in *Archival Science* 2, No. 1(2002): 63-86.

⁴⁴ Verne Harris, “The Archival Sliver: Power, Memory, and Archives in South Africa.”

⁴⁵ Barbie Zelizer, “Reading the Past Against the Grain: The Shape of Memory Studies.” *Critical Studies in Mass Communication* (12:1995), 214-39.

collective histories;⁴⁶ the way memory shapes small and large histories⁴⁷ and, closer to archival studies, how collective memory can shape narratives of nationalism.⁴⁸ Archival records can thus be read as important subjects and sites for the study of collective memory and nostalgia since they allow for both reactive and progressive ideals to be formed.

Hence, I position this research as a critical articulation of the nostalgic impulses towards Expo67. I argue that this nostalgia is produced through the reactivation of records in public spaces and engages the viewers in two types of articulations: reflective and restorative. By looking at the affective production and responses to public nostalgia, this thesis will constitute one of the first account on the legacy of Expo67 that takes into consideration the way that archival discourses have framed an impossible future for Montréal. I contend that by looking at the two public programs and the two contemporary art pieces I chose, I can locate and draw attention to the contradictions inherent in the legacy of the World's Fair. The four examples I use in the next section all provide an interesting counterpoint onto which questions of biases, neutrality, equality and power can be generated.

In the next chapter, the two public billboards-as-artwork I will focus on are both located in highly frequented parts of the city. These two areas could not, however, be more different: one installation is near the city's financial center and a prestigious university while the other is part of a large public park archipelago that welcomes tourists and locals alike all year long. Looking at how these billboards articulate their restorative nostalgia, I will question their association to

⁴⁶ Zelizer, "Reading the Past Against the Grain: The Shape of Memory Studies."

⁴⁷ Cubbit, *Imagining Nations*; Pierre Nora, *Lieux de Memoire* (Gallimard, 1984); Zelizer, "Reading the Past Against the Grain: The Shape of Memory Studies."

⁴⁸ Edward Said, *Orientalism* (Penguin, 2003); Benedict Andersen, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (Verso, 1983).

national-belonging and memory. In the final chapter, two artworks located inside Montréal's contemporary museum will help me look at what happens when nostalgia is articulated critically, as reflective nostalgia, to project potential futures, but is met with absences in the present.

CHAPTER 3: ARCHIVAL INTERFACES/ARCHIVAL ENCOUNTERS: SEEING ARCHIVAL RECORDS IN PUBLIC

One question suggested in the introductory overview of the Expo's complex rearticulation of national cultural memory concerns the possibility for archival projects using records from national archival institutions to ever fully preserve the "memory of the nation." My aim in the remainder of the thesis is to enable a better consideration of "the politics of the contemporary encounter with the archive."⁴⁹ These two chapters present new complex sites of encounters between records, memory and subjects, and create new ways of "historicizing national memory"⁵⁰ by expanding and opening new seemingly democratic fields of consumption. These new encounters, their rationales and their display, require a new set of political considerations. While these abstract considerations might seem irrelevant, I argue that records ultimately give the concrete form to memory and that their use, imbued with nostalgia, ultimately guide the way publics engage with their discourse. By rearticulating different stories from the Expo67, the projects I focus on all propose to rewrite a part of our collective history.

This first chapter seeks to untangle the objectives and discourses of two public art installations displayed in Montréal during the summer of 2017. Celebrating the 50th anniversary of the Fair, both interventions were composed of a series of photographic records, and both focus on the commemoration of the architectural wonders created for the Fair. The photos were mounted on large iron or metallic frames and displayed in two distinct public spaces: on the sidewalk of a busy street in downtown Montréal and on the walking path in Parc Jean-Drapeau on Ile St-Hélène. While Montréal is known as being a progressive city when it comes to public

⁴⁹ Patrick Joyce, "The Politics of the Liberal Archive" in *History of the Human Sciences* (12:2, 1999), 46.

⁵⁰ Joyce, "The Politics of the Liberal Archive", 46.

arts, this chapter is an attempt to complicate this assertion by articulating how, through the use of a specific type of photographic records, and their manipulation, these two photo exhibits illustrate what Svetlana Boym describes as restorative nostalgia: a desire to “rebuild the lost home”,⁵¹ to view the past with an eye toward recreating it⁵². By performing a sort of transhistorical reconstruction of the Expo in the way they do, these public installations propose, I argue, something that is not about the potential of memory and history to create new futures, but rather about the capacity of heritage and tradition to coerce the present. What their propositions are exactly is what this chapter will try to clarify.

In order to do this, I’m very interested in examining the liminal spaces where these two exhibits are located. In the first case, I’m intrigued by the correlation between the highly corporate McGill College street, where Musée McCord chose to display its “Musée a ciel ouvert” (open-sky museum) exhibit on the Expo67, and the performance of memory. In the second case, I hope to better understand how the public-private partnership group that operates, develops, maintains and animates the Parc Jean-Drapeau⁵³ decided to use the private company Art Publix to create their public programming that commemorates the pavilions that are now absent from the island because of budget cuts. In this chapter then, I’m interested in the entanglement between nostalgia, archival material and financial practices and ideologies. By framing this chapter’s investigation as an economic one, I want to question how different forms

⁵¹ Svetlana Boym, “Nostalgia”, Atlas of Transformation. Accessed on March 22nd. <http://monumenttotransformation.org/atlas-of-transformation/html/n/nostalgia/nostalgia-svetlana-boym.html>

⁵² Svetlana Boym, “Nostalgia and its Discontents,” The Hedgehog Review (Summer 2007), 8.

⁵³ “About Us,” Parc Jean-Drapeau, Accessed on March 13th, 2018, <http://www.parcjeandrapeau.com/en/about-the-societe-du-parc-jean-drapeau/>

of power (financial and national) operate in the mitigation of history. Following Eric Ketelaar's proposition that records are dynamic objects, constantly in motion and always shifting with each new use and contextualization, this section will try to illustrate how these celebratory "activations" are used to construct a certain meaning and reposit these records within a rather reactive "semantic genealogy". Ketelaar argues that "every activation of the archive not only adds a branch to (...) the semantic genealogy of the record and the archive. Every activation also changes the significance of earlier activations.... Current uses of these records affect retrospectively all earlier meanings, or to put it differently: we can no longer read the record as our predecessors have read that record."⁵⁴ From this perspective, understanding the dynamics and the logics of public archival use and display is an essential part of my project.

I will, then, read these billboards and installations as literal sites of memory, as sites where memory is enacted and where records take on their meaning. By mobilizing "national memory" around a public space that produces and defines "particular interactions and mutual articulation of social relations, social processes, experiences and understanding, in a situation of co-presence",⁵⁵ these public photographic projects become agent of a national memory and identity. My main argument here is that archival use, in these specific cases, contributes to the formation of a national memory that convey the position of power that it enacts. It regulates possible fields of actions of subject⁵⁶ that is based in the relationship between the individual and the specific object and mediates the possibility of allegiance and belonging to the past as an

⁵⁴ Eric Ketelaar, "Tacit Narratives: The Meaning of Archives," *Archival Science* 1: 131–141, 2001, 138.

⁵⁵ Doreen Massey, *Space, Place and Gender* (Minnesota: University of Minnesota Press, 1994), 120.

⁵⁶ Michel Foucault, "The Subject and Power." *Critical Inquiry* 8, no. 4 (1982): 777-95. Retrieved from <http://www.jstor.org/stable/1343197>.

“imagined national community”⁵⁷ by making this allegiance accessible only through the representation they chose to expose. By invoking distinct forms of civic and cultural subjectivity in the public sphere, these different billboards constitute the principal "sites of memory" of the nation at large, but also encapsulate the maximum meaning within a minimum of signs.⁵⁸ This interplay, in my case studies, is extended to each subject, visitor, or observer but in such a way that their own subjectivity as national subject becomes linked to the collective memory that each power dynamics chose to foreground.

Art, Publics, and Memory

As part of a research project around art and space (entitled *l'Art et le site*), Suzanne Paquet, the research chair for public art at the Université de Montréal, proposes this commentary on the role of public spaces in cities:

Certainly inseparable from the city, public spaces often appear as a geographic entity, material and located, corresponding more or less to public places and traffic areas. However, we shouldn't lose sight of their political qualities, associated to the idea of the public sphere, where debates can take place in a larger and more fluid mediated space than urban space. (...) Following Hannah Arendt: “everything that appears in public can be seen and heard by all and enjoys the biggest publicity of all.”⁵⁹

Along with fellow research assistants, the project looks at various public art displays across the province of Québec in order to rethink public space in the era of the image. Their reflections can help us understand just how visual records, once transposed to the public sphere,

⁵⁷ Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities*.

⁵⁸ Pierre Nora, *Les Lieux de Mémoire* (Paris: Gallimard. 1984), xxxv.

⁵⁹ Suzanne Paquet, “L’Art et le Site: Habiter l’Espace Public à l’Ere de l’Image”. Translated from <https://artetsite.net/apropos/lart-et-le-site-habiter-lespace-a-lere-de-limage/>.

can delimitate what the national imaginary can produce and how this imaginary provides certain affiliated thoughts about the space.

For many decades now, many thinkers have seen art as an essential condition to making the city more livable as well as allowing for city life to be more homogenous and less conflictual. Henri Lefebvre, one of the first philosophers to theorize art in public space, describes public spaces as “spaces of representation (...) as sites of passion and action, (...) of lived situations (...) penetrated by imagination and symbolism.”⁶⁰ These spaces of representation, often synonymous with residents and artists, are the exact opposite of representations of space, often associated with experts and planners and their rigid thoughts⁶¹. Similarly, Michel de Certeau suggests that daily and ordinary practices in urban spaces can be conceived as little artworks, created and played in reaction against the representations imposed by economic system that makes all of us a consumer. As art historian Daniel Fiset argues, public space and public art constitutes a sort of heterotopia:⁶² a delimited space, as Foucault conceptualize, where utopia can occur. Many are those who today, follow this train of thought in order to exemplify that art and artworks are a nice solution to many urban problems. However, this approach has also been co-opted by public authorities who use art to make certain spaces more attractive, hence more favorable for real estate development.

So what does the inscription of archival records celebrating architectural ingenuity of years past, sponsored by public-private partnerships between private entities and the city of

⁶⁰ Henri Lefebvre, *The Production of Space*. (Oxford/Cambridge: Blackwell, 1991), 9.

⁶¹ Lefebvre, *The Production of Space*, 10.

⁶² Daniel Fiset, “Le Réaménagement du Square Viger et l’Agora de Charles Daudelin : Vers la Restauration d’un Espace Public Contesté,” *La Revue L’Argot* (University of Montréal, 2010), 4.

Montréal, actually articulate when placed in the public sphere? To answer that question, I want to expand on Margaret Hedstrom's concept of the archival interfaces in order to include access points such as these billboards. In her article, Hedstrom explores the concept of archival interfaces as "critical nodes in the representation of archives and as a means through which archivists enable, but also constrain, the interpretation of the past."⁶³ For the author, "the interface is a site where power is negotiated and exercised."⁶⁴ While her article focuses on the role of the archivist in the mediation between the evidentiary nature of the record and the reading made by a user and "describes a tangible set of structures and tools that place archival documents in a context and provide an interpretative framework,"⁶⁵ it is also useful to determine other sites of encounters where the records are inscribed with a new descriptive language by its users and readers. In other words, I want to see how these two exhibits provide a new context for the records and how these new frameworks make use of the records in order to (re)establish a dominant state narrative within the public sphere. I argue that these photographic billboards, then, are rendered as interfaces where memory is enacted, where records take new meanings and where the reader's interpretation of the record is shaped through the contextual space (e.g., downtown, or in a public park) of the encounter. Transposed in the public sphere, the archival interface, the encounter of a reader with an (un)marked archival records, can take many shapes or forms. However, I demonstrate that some contexts facilitate the transfer of narratives while others spaces amplify the failures of remembrance.

⁶³ Margaret Hedstrom, "Archives, Memory, and Interfaces with the Past," *Archival Science* 2: 2002, 22.

⁶⁴ Hedstrom, "Archives, Memory, and Interfaces with the Past," 22.

⁶⁵ Hedstrom, "Archives, Memory, and Interfaces with the Past," 22.

These two exhibits then, can be read as new objects, as “conversation and an arena for participation,”⁶⁶ where individuals can experience and interact with the archival record, Montréal’s history and current urban culture. It is not enough, anymore, to arrange and describe records when they are obtained, but a constant revision and interrogation, a constant renegotiation, of their meanings is necessary. Following Derrida’s writings, Eric Ketelaar argues that every interpretation of the archive is an enrichment, an extension of the archive. That is why the archive is never closed. It opens out of the future⁶⁷. “The record is a repository of meanings”⁶⁸ that members of communities not only draw from to create their own communal identities, but also, one that they modify and amplify through each use and reuse. Through every use, members of a given group are “pluralizing” their archive, contributing along the way to the expansion of their own collective memory.⁶⁹ The fact that these two projects used historical records representing architectural novelties to celebrate the Expo aligns with the interpretation of the archival record that seek to include “the social and technical processes of the records’ inscription, transmission, contextualization, and interpretation which account for its existence, characteristics, and continuing history.”⁷⁰ However, this expanded view of what constitutes “the record” is only a starting point for the investigation of the social, historical, and technical

⁶⁶ Isto Huvila, “Participatory Archive: Towards Decentralised Curation, Radical User Orientation, and Broader Contextualisation of Records Management,” *Archival Science* 8, no. 1 (March 2008): 27.

⁶⁷ Jacques Derrida, *Archive Fever* (Chicago, University of Chicago Press, 1996), 68.

⁶⁸ Eric Ketelaar, “Cultivating Archives: Meanings and Identities,” *Archival Science* 12, no. 1 (March 2012): 23.

⁶⁹ Sue McKemmish, “Placing Records Continuum Theory and Practice,” *Archival Science* (1: 2001), 335.

⁷⁰ Tom Nesmith, “Still Fuzzy, but More Accurate: Some Thoughts on the ‘Ghosts’ of Archival Theory,” *Archivaria* 47 (Spring 1999): 146.

processes, meanings, and contexts of creation and uses.⁷¹ Looking at where and who is responsible for this reactivation gives us further information about the types of human experiences and developments that occur between historical, cultural and social moments.

Musée McCord

The Musée McCord's mission is to represent the social history of Montréal. This means that it often favors and preserves cultural artefacts that help situate Montréal within its own context as a city, but also within its larger socio-political environment, as an urban hub within a larger country. The museum as the distinctive feature of being one of the few English-driven museum in the city; this is often emphasized by their constant insertion of Montréal within the history of Canada as a country, rather than offering a separate provincial history. This distinction, far from being insignificant, actually drives the sort of social history that is made prevalent within the museum space. With a focus on labour history that often omits class and race wars, or with its large collection of factory owners' papers (mostly rich, white, Anglophones), the museum offers, what seems at time, an alternative version of Montréal.

Another staple of the Musée McCord is its wide-ranging and diverse summer programming. Over the years, the museum has programmed weekly music concerts in its courtyard, free educational tours of its vaults, or even created some audio guides to roam along with in the city. Surprisingly, the programming for the 50th anniversary of the Expo, felt rather restrained: the museum decided to rent out the display iron frames on the adjacent McGill College street and proposed a somewhat traditional photo retrospective from one of its

⁷¹ Kathy Carbone, "Artists in the Archive: An Exploratory Study of the Artist-in-Residence program at the City of Portland Archives & Records Center," *Archivaria* 79 (2015): 51

collection. Compared to what the museum had previously prepared for the summer, this choice was rather surprising.

The promotional material for Expo 67: Incontournable (Expo67: The Place To Be) claimed that the twenty-four color photographs installation “will take you back to the hustle and bustle on the islands at that time as well as the spectacular architecture of many pavilions.”⁷² Taking from the Jean-Louis Frund fond, a native of Lac Saint-Jean (a small Québécois city, about 6 hours north of Montréal), the photos made public were created by Frund when he was invited to document “the bold colours and architecture of the pavilions and the buoyant mood of the crowds who flocked to St. Helen and Notre-Dame Islands in the summer of 1967.”⁷³ The twenty-four shots, chosen among more than a thousand photographs, are part of the museum’s collection and were acquired through the donation by the artist.⁷⁴ Lining up a busy sidewalk in downtown Montréal, an area visited by office workers, students and tourists alike, the installation’s emphasis seemed to be on some of the most well-known images from the Expo: pictures of international pavilions taking from artistic angles and pictures that documented the dominant nature of the architecture, from a low-angle shot of Canadian pavilion looming over the viewers, to an image showcasing the futuristic interiors of the thematic pavilion “L’Homme dans la Cité” (Man in the cities) or an aerial view of l’Ile Notre-Dame.

⁷² “Expo 67: The Place to Be”, *The Montrealer*. Accessed on March 1st.
<https://theMontrealeronline.com/2017/06/expo-67-the-place-to-be-mcgill-college-avenue/>

⁷³ “Expo 67: The Place to Be”, *The Montrealer*.

⁷⁴ “Expo 67: The Place to Be”, *The Montrealer*.



Fig. 4. Photographs of the Expo 67: The Place to Be installation along McGill College street in Montréal. Different archival photographs were shown on each side of the frame with very little information aside from the name of the structure and date of exposure. © Musée McCord Museum, 2017.

In *Lieux de Mémoire*, Pierre Nora argues that “history now writes itself under the pressure of collective memories.”⁷⁵ These memories are looking to “compensate the historical uprooting of the social and the anxiety for the future by the valorization of a past that was, until then, never truly lived.”⁷⁶ These mnemonic inscriptions often take the form of site, a transfiguration he calls “lieux de mémoire” (site of memory). For Nora, “a site of memory in all the sense of the words, can go from the most material and concrete object, geographically situated, to the most abstract and intellectually constructed object.”⁷⁷ They can be monuments,

⁷⁵ Pierre Nora, *Les Lieux de Mémoire: Entre Mémoire et Histoire* (Paris: Gallimard. 1984). Translated by author.

⁷⁶ Pierre Nora, “La Mémoire Collective,” in *La Nouvelle Histoire*, ed. Jacques Le Goff (Paris, Retz-CEPL, 1978). Translated by author.

⁷⁷ Pierre Nora, *Les Lieux de Mémoire: Entre Mémoire et Histoire* (Paris: Gallimard. 1984), xvii. Translated by author.

historic characters, a museum, an archive, as well as a symbol, a monetary device, an event, an institution. However, these “lieux de mémoires”, whether topographic or conceptual, can easily become “mémoires des lieux” (memories of the site), where certain enacted discourses propel the memory-making processes to align with certain articulations. In the case of the Musée McCord’s public exhibit, the choice photographic records are used to emphasize a discourse that favors the globalized modernism of the Expo. However, my concerns are situated around the space where those images and discourses are displayed: in the middle of the financial district, a new meaning for the record appears. Looking at these billboards through the lens of restorative nostalgia, and by encountering them amidst the frenzy of downtown Montreal, their meanings seem to gear towards a certain truth, a certain narrative that favors not new understandings of the legacy of the Expo, but rather a desire for a status quo, a reiteration of the powers that made the Expo possible.

While these public frames are usually rented by different provincial art organizations and adorned with artistic photographs, the decision of the Musée McCord to rent out the space to propose a rather traditional imagery of Expo demonstrates a certain lack of desire, or motivation, to provide any external narratives or outlooks into the Expo’s complex social reality. As a social history museum, and one that often offers critical commentaries and contextualization for their exhibits, this lack of additional information is problematic. The nostalgic myth enacted by the use of these records, which links us to the past through their evidentiary nature but also projects us in the present (and maybe even the future), is that of Montréal’s modernization: a moment in history where national identity was synonymous with financial growth rather than social and political considerations.

Eric Ketelaar argues in his essay *Tacit Narratives* that “collecting information constitutes individuals.”⁷⁸ Such reification can be linked to Derrida's argument that archives not merely serve to preserve an achievable content of the past, but that life itself and its relation to the future are determined by the technique of archiving: “The archivization produces as much as it records the event. A photograph is not just a recording: it constitutes the event.”⁷⁹ Similarly, as James Scott argues in *Seeing Like a State*, “modern nation-states do not merely describes observe, and map; they strive to shape a people and landscape that will fit their techniques of observation... there are virtually no other facts for the state than those that are contained in documents.”⁸⁰

This focus on architecture, on national pavilions, then, proposes a nostalgic look back at the era but refuses to see the ruins left by the Fair. It seeks to reconstruct the glamour of the past, in the present, without trying to understand the multiple contested histories and coexisting temporalities that the Expo generated.

Artpublix

The first installation I visited during my research trip in Montréal was the Artpublix exhibit on Ile St-Helene. One of the host island during the Expo, l’Ile St-Hélène is now a popular tourist destination and is the site of a controversial privately-owned natural amphitheater project⁸¹. The chosen archival records were displayed on metallic structures and spread across

⁷⁸ Ketelaar, “Tacit Narratives,” 134.

⁷⁹ Ketelaar, “Tacit Narratives,” 134.

⁸⁰ James C. Scott, *Seeing Like a State. How Certain Schemes to Improve the Human Condition Have Failed* (Yale University Press, New Haven and London 1998) 82-83.

⁸¹ Marc-Andre Garignan, “Un Réaménagement du Parc Jean-Drapeau Sans Consultation Ni Vision d'Ensemble,” *Radio-Canada*, March 29th, 2017. Accessed April 25th, 2018. <https://ici.radio->

the walking path on the island. Similar in content to the Expo67: The Place to Be exhibit, the archival images selected by Artpublix had been digitally altered, combined with and made into optical illusions, a throwback, perhaps, to the destabilizing forces made famous by many of the immersive cinematic innovations of the Fair. Created by Artpublix, the installation was commissioned by the public-private partnership group (Société du Parc Jean-Drapeau or SPJD) that manages the Island. On their website, Artpublix describes itself as an organization dedicated to create photo-exhibit for different public institutions. However, after a late delivery from Artpublix, and not even a week after the installation of the images all over the park, Expo67 historian Roger La Roche quickly noticed the many factual and formatting errors on the posters,⁸² such as the misidentification of the Kaleidoscope Pavilion as the USSR Pavilion (See Fig. 5). Not mincing his words, La Roche commented: “Imagine the incompetence of a society that is not able to identify its own photos. Not only was it a bad job, it is insulting to the archival specialists and to Montréalers.”⁸³

After a week of negotiation with Artpublix, Geneviève Boyer, the head of communication for the SPJD, confirmed that Artpublix wouldn't be able to deliver the modifications in time. She continues: “Since they are not able to guarantee that everything will be corrected within the deadlines, and according to the terms, we decided to remove the

canada.ca/nouvelle/1025105/reamenagement-parc-jean-drapeau-arbres-canopee-consultation-vision-amphitheatre-evenko-village-evenementiel

⁸² Frederic T. Muckle, “Expo67: Une Exposition Truffée d’Erreurs,” *Journal de Montreal*, August 2nd, 2017. Accessed on May 2nd, 2018. <http://www.journaldeMontréal.com/2017/08/02/expo-67-une-exposition-truffee-derreurs>. Translation by author.

⁸³ Muckle, “Expo67: Une Exposition Truffée d’Erreurs.”

exhibit.”⁸⁴ Boyer affirms that the park would not pay for the artwork and would charge Artpublix for the disassembly expenses.



Fig. 5: Image of the Kaleidoscope pavilion that Artpublix wrongly identified as the USSR pavilion. © Journal de Montreal.

I was lucky enough to see the exhibit during its short run. The contrast between the slick modified images and the actual site, a once beautiful public park area slowly being transformed into a concrete terrain by the private company who now owns the space, felt less like a celebration and more like a funeral. And while I did not notice the many factual errors, accepting the information as it was given to me as accurate, I did find myself perplexed by the surroundings. On one side of the framed images, the bike lane and the walking paths proposed a

⁸⁴ Olivier Robichaud “L’Oeuvre sur Expo 67 Disparaîtra à Cause des Erreurs,” Huffington Post – Quebec, August 3rd, 2017. Accessed March 17th, 2018. https://Quebec.huffingtonpost.ca/2017/08/03/oeuvre-sur-expo-67-disparaitra-a-cause-des-erreurs_a_23063634/

bucolic public space available to all. On the other, the fences around the construction sites, covered with the name of the private company that now manages this area of the park, introduced a new rationale to the space. In my notes, I describe this ordeal by using various synonyms: *difference, dissonance, contradiction*.⁸⁵

Furthermore, Artpublix decided to transform these photographic records. While some of these transformations are subtle and demand a particular attention of the onlooker to even notice them, the subtle coloration work performed on a photograph of the (wrongly identified) Kaleidoscope pavilion photographs for example, some totally transformed the images. Before the company took down the page for this project on their website, one could read that they were inspired by the many immersive technologies of the Expo and hoped to transform these 2D images into immersive visual illusions: by transforming the images into autostereograms, by juxtaposing slightly different images of the same pavilion on top of one another, or simply by deconstructing a photograph into geometrical forms to recreate the modernist art of the Fair. These interventions at once change the records and demand the attention of the on-looker but the lack of attention given to factual information by Artpublix proposes a conflicting look at the convergence of historical legacy and visual re-embodiement. The distinction between the finely transformed images and the lack of care giving to the inscriptions on the posters reveals a desire to use archival records as a means to provide affective resonance, to stimulate the on-looker's nostalgic impulses, rather than to provide actual information and evidences about the event that once was.

If, as Hedstrom argues, “archival exhibits (...) are highly-mediated creations that are

⁸⁵ Personal observations, July 2017.

influenced by funders or sponsors' interests and by archivists' views of what is valuable or interesting,”⁸⁶ I wonder what this archival focus on the bygone architectural accomplishments juxtaposed with the impoverished public area truly represents. Surely, any selective processes can only represent but “a tiny portion of the archives, chosen from a larger body of archival material which itself is only a small percentage of the documents that once existed,”⁸⁷ however the selection process can still provide some clue into the discursive encounter it wishes to create. The triumphalist nature of these images, the imposing quality of these utopic architectural propositions, and their constant reactivations that serve a national rhetoric that valorizes progress over social and affective experiences, attest their value as records. By preserving some important aspects of our collective past, their use-value is located in their capacity to both represent this precise narrative of progress, so dear to the nation, while also being able to circumvent many of the current anxieties about the state of the country.

As Ketelaar argues “by putting some records...on a pedestal, we alter their context and meaning, we infuse new meaning into the record, to what is left of the series and the fonds, we add new narratives to the archive and its constituent parts.”⁸⁸ But these artifacts of memory and forgetfulness “do not always signify and symbolize the shared visions of a nation's past: quite the opposite, they may convey the struggles to appropriate the past.”⁸⁹ The disconnect between the original Expo event, the factual errors of the used records, and the context in which they were

⁸⁶ Hedstrom, “Archives, Memory, and Interfaces with the Past,” 41.

⁸⁷ Ibid, 41.

⁸⁸ Ketelaar, “Tacit Narratives,” 136.

⁸⁹ François Hartog, «Temps et Histoire. Comment écrire l'Histoire de France?», in *Annales-Histoire Sciences sociales*, N° 6, 1995, 1231.

displayed, creates a complicated encounter with the past. And this interplay between past, present and future, as Pierre Nora argues, is what constitutes the bases of the collective memory of a nation. In this sense, the failures of the Artpublic exhibit allows us to look right into a fragmented history and to begin to see the limits of the dominant and national discourse.

Conclusion

As Hedstrom suggests in the concluding paragraphs of her article, archival interfaces, when done properly, provide to those who want to engage with archival records, the capacity to determine not only the variable values of a certain record, but also the varying degree to which its meaning-making capacities are being activated by its use. By attempting to conciliate memory and a precise political message through visual interventions and encounters, the two exhibits reactivate archival records in the public sphere and by doing so, pluralized⁹⁰ the meaning of the records. But if these two installations showed a desire to engage with a certain triumphal narrative by using archival material that can activate easily activate a sense of national pride, only one of the two contexts allowed this narrative to follow its full potential.

As Elizabeth Jelin argues commemorative dates and “anniversaries are instances in which a nation's memories are produced and activated; they are the public occasions in which social and political figures can activate the diverse meanings that are ascribed to the past.”⁹¹ To celebrate the legacy of the Expo, fifty years after the original event, can surely demonstrate the fissures in the dominant narrative of progress. If the chosen location for the Musée McCord

⁹⁰ Sue McKemish, “Placing Records Continuum Theory and Practice,” 335.

⁹¹ Elizabeth Jelin, “Los Sentidos de la Conmemoración,” in *Las Conmemoraciones: Las Disputas en las Fechas «in-felices»* ed. Buenos Aires, Siglo xxi, 2002, pp. 245-251.

exhibit worked to activate a particular form of nostalgia, I argue that the Artpublix installation failed to produce the same effect. By juxtaposing the polished images from the Fair with the slow destruction of public space, Artpublix “makes us take responsibility for our nostalgic tales.”⁹²

In the next chapter, I focus on installations that engage with histories of the Expo67 from the point of view of marginalized groups. If this chapter focused on more “restorative” interventions, I argue that the following reflective articulations are fundamental to a true and complex comprehension of the Fair. The two artworks I chose as my case studies, created for the 50th anniversary of the Expo by two artists from marginalized communities, both emphasize the failures and the limits of the “official” archival institutions to apply value to their presences and experiences at the Fair. Proposing an imagined alternative to the photographic records talked about in this chapter, the two art pieces question the myth of national unity and inclusivity that the archival institutions pretend to engage in and demonstrate what goes missing when archival projects don’t focus on the future.

⁹² Svetlana Boym, “Nostalgia and its Discontents,” 8.

CHAPTER 4: QUESTING FOR REPRESENTATION: *A LA RECHERCHE D'EXPO67* AND THE NEW HOPES OF ARCHIVAL FUTURES

This chapter examines how seeing the Expo67 as a nation-building project had at the time and continues to have archival repercussions on marginalized communities. I argue that many of these communities saw their participation and stories underestimated as they did not fit the pan-Canadian narratives of the fair. Using the *A la Recherche d'Expo67* exhibit as a case study, I explore how artists are using fragments found in the archives to reconstitute their own personal and affective narrative point-of-view around the Expo. If, as I have said in previous chapters, the memory of the fair is perpetuated through an imagined modernity that mostly serves the status quo and institutionalized purposes, what can be said about the role of the missing marginalized voices in this constructed narrative? This whole exhibit, and particularly the two artworks I chose to examine, complement Boym's argument that "reflective nostalgia is concerned with historical and individual time, with the irrevocability of the past and human finitude. Reflection means new flexibility, not the reestablishment of stasis. The focus here is not on the recovery of what is perceived to be an absolute truth, but on the meditation on history and the passage of time."⁹³

Jennifer VanderBurgh is right when she says that ephemerality is often a question of value: "that which is valued tend to be saved, while everything else is left to entropy, deterioration and other forms of degradation and loss."⁹⁴ Monika Kin Gagnon, the lead researcher and co-curator of *A la Recherche d'Expo* exhibit at the Musée d'Art Contemporain

⁹³ Svetlana Boym, "Nostalgia and its Discontents," 15.

⁹⁴ Jennifer VanderBurgh, "Against Ephemerality: The CBS's Archival Turn, 1989-96," in *Cinephemera* ed. Zoe Druick and Gerda Cammaer (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2014), 210.

(MAC) knows this all too well. For more than a decade, she has been fighting against both physical decay and institutional resistance to preserve the memory of her late father, Charles Gagnon, a filmmaker whose immersive film *The Eighth Day*, caused major drama when it premiered at the Christian Pavilion during the Expo. The multimedia production amazed fans of new technological thrills but its positioning of religion as the cause of most wars and human suffering shocked many observers who contested the pavilion and its depiction of religion.⁹⁵ The filmic material was later left to decay in the archives from which Monika Kin Gagnon was only able to partially reconstitute its narrative using the various fragments that she able to find in diverse archival records in multiple archives.⁹⁶

It is with that in mind that Gagnon decided to get involved with the MAC's exhibit curator Lesley Johnston to collectively reimagine and offer new perspectives on the legacy of the Expo by using its fragmented and scattered archive in a similar fashion. The summer-long exhibit (from June 21st 2017 to October 1st 2017, roughly covering the original calendar of the Expo) presented the work of nineteen Canadian artists and offered a rather diversified and inclusive series of voices, from local and pan-national artists, as well as exhibits in four different languages. Out of these nineteen artists, sixteen proposed new artworks and while there was no official theme for the exhibit, most of these sixteen artists engaged critically with archival records, highlighting losses and absences while simultaneously celebrating the creative legacy of the fair. In this manner, the challenges posed to the underlying logics and narratives by the exhibit are both critical and celebratory.

⁹⁵ Gagnon, "The Christian Pavilion at Expo67", 143.

⁹⁶ Gagnon, "The Christian Pavilion at Expo67", 145.

This chapter will focus on the opening and closing artworks from the exhibit: Cheryl Sim's video installation *Un jour, un jour (One day, one day)* and Krista Belle Stewart's collage *Indian Memento*. I chose these two artists because their works give voices to two communities that have historically been erased from the legacy of the Expo: the immigrants, more specifically the Sino-Filipino immigrants, in the case of Sims, and the indigenous nations for Stewart. In their respective pieces, these two artists also highlight the value that affect has on remembrance. In *Un jour, un jour*, Sim rediscovers and reassembles her family's photo album in a multi-screen video work that imitates the multi-screens and immersive environments often associated with the Expo, while Krista Stewart Belle closes the exhibit with a subtle single image tribute to her mother, who was interviewed as part of the First Nations of Canada Pavilion, but whose voice remains absent from the archives. These artworks represent the distinctive medial disorder prominent in the Expo's archives by offering counter narratives: a video installation in search of its story and a still-image seeking for its lost voice.

In order to provide a critical reading of these two artworks, I apply Michelle Caswell and Anne Gilliland's framework of the impossible archival imaginary (Sim) and of the imagined records (Stewart), as articulated in their article, "Records and their imaginaries: imagining the impossible, making possible the imagined."⁹⁷ Imaginary, in this case, is a concept invoked not simply to talk about absences, but rather it is presented as a productive force in sense that the processes of imagination do not solely serve to represent absences as much as they participate actively in articulating these absences and holding responsible the institutional power that help to create them. Sim and Stewart use the imaginary to actively remake the social through an

⁹⁷ Anne Gilliland and Michelle Caswell, "Records and Their Imaginaries: Imagining the Impossible, Making Possible the Imagined".

imagined archival narrative. In such a way, the imaginary in these works becomes the structure of what is possible and the impossible archive represents the voices that are missing. Impossible archival imaginaries, the two scholars argue, “are archivally impossible in the sense that they will never result in actualized records in any traditional sense, although they may exist in some kind of co-constitutive relationship with actualized records.”⁹⁸ These imaginaries can “provide a trajectory to the future out of a particular perspective on the past and may build upon either actual or imagined documentation and narratives.”⁹⁹ Sim’s work is particularly well-suited to talk about impossible archival imaginaries, as her futuristic alter-ego digs into an old photo album in order to reestablish her family’s modest history within the larger legacy of the Expo by presenting their story as a time-travelling one.

As for imagined records, Caswell and Gilliland, quoting archival scholar Lucia Duranti, note that:

...records, which are the preoccupation of archival theory and practice, are classically and formally understood as the by-products, essence or other forms of documentation of actions or acts that are evaluated, valued and employed according to legal, administrative and historical constructions of evidence (i.e., they are probative, dispositive, narrative or supporting with regard to an action or act).¹⁰⁰

⁹⁸ Gilliland and Caswell, “Records and Their Imaginaries: Imagining the Impossible, Making Possible the Imagined,” 61.

⁹⁹ Ibid, 61.

¹⁰⁰ Ibid, 71.

Imagined records, on the other hand, suggest evidence of affective responses and are often created in reaction to the absences of desired documentation by so-called official (read: legal, administrative and historical) archival institutions.¹⁰¹ Stewart's work, in particular, engages with these complex relationships and power dynamics between governmental institutions and indigenous memories by showcasing blurry photographs of the rare indigenous subjects found in the Canadian archives, blown-up until these images do not exhibit any specific characteristics, yet allowing them to take substantial space on the walls of art galleries.

But before I turn to these two artworks, I begin this chapter by highlighting some of the other contributions to the exhibit in order to demonstrate what sort of archival research was performed by some of the other artists. Art practices centering around archival records are often historicized by looking at the archival turn in visual arts that happened during the 1960s. Previously understood to be a documentation of an artist's work, as something external to the creative process, archival records slowly became part of the material or conceptual components of artwork.¹⁰² This brief overview proposes to look at how different artists perform different artistic interventions by looking closely at archival records, and their institutions. I argue that such undertakings can help develop a critical view of the world while simultaneously inciting action.

A la recherche d'Expo

One of the most talked about work during the *A la recherche d'Expo* exhibit was the

¹⁰¹ Ibid, 71.

¹⁰² Anne Benichou, "Les Usages Citoyens des Espaces urbains : Entre Actualités, Archives et Oeuvres." *Archivaria*, 67 (2009): 115-142.

restoration of *La Vie Polaire* (Polar Life) and its concurrent three-screen reconstitution.¹⁰³

Directed by Graeme Ferguson, who is attributed with being one of the co-inventors of IMAX technology, the original film made use of the spatial complexity of an early IMAX prototype¹⁰⁴ and was screened in a room with a rotating sitting area, where spectators could lounge and find themselves immersed in the eleven screens on which the film was simultaneously projected. Telling the story of a group of urban ethnographers going into the northern communities across the world (most of the film focuses on Canada's indigenous communities, but the filmmakers also go to Lapland, Siberia and Alaska), the film uncritically embodied the colonial discourses implicit to the larger theme of the Expo (and of world's fairs in general). Often mediated through modern technologies, these stories of foreign and/or distant land were fundamental to the imagined globalism implicit to the fair.

This time, however, the restoration of the film does not have the same technical complexity: exhibited in the basement screening room, this three screens projection of *La Vie Polaire* showcases how difficult it is to restore old films, and that is if they are preserved and catalogued properly. Even with the financial support, a quadripartite collaboration between the Cinémathèque Québécoise, the National Film Board of Canada, the CINEMAexpo67 research group and the city of Montréal, the project was almost never completed. After finding the unidentified eleven interpositive reels of the original film, Stephanie Cote, an archivist for the

¹⁰³ Jerome Delgado, "Cinquante Ans Après l'Expo, de Nouveaux Regards," *Le Devoir*, June 21st, 2017. Accessed on January 25, 2018. <https://www.ledevoir.com/culture/arts-visuels/501757/50-ans-apres-l-expo-de-nouveaux-regards>.

¹⁰⁴ "La Vie Polaire/Polar Life", Les Archives de Montreal. Accessed February 5th, 2018. <http://archivesdeMontréal.com/2014/10/27/la-vie-polaire-polar-life-cinema-expo67-a-la-cinematheque-Québécoise/>

Cinémathèque, wasn't even certain that the necessary tools to salvage the reels even existed.¹⁰⁵ This straightforward success story (lost, found and restored) surrounding the restoration of *La Vie Polaire* plays out as a sort of archival fairy tale: overcoming the difficult limits of archival labor and coming into the world into its own, but not without exemplifying, at the most basic level, the complex relationship between archival institutions, archival practices, money and technology.

Also present in the exhibit was David K. Ross' beautiful homage to affective memories of the Expo, "Souveraine comme l'amour" (Sovereign like love). This piece plays into a very different emotional register than does the restoration of *La Vie Polaire*. Ross, an artist and an architect, worked with the architectural record of the Expo67 site, found at the Canadian Centre for Architecture in Montréal, to map out the trajectory of the monorail, the popular and futuristic mode of mass transportation during the Expo, and to recreate its route using a drone camera. The emblematic itinerary is now empty, and Ross' piece juxtaposes archival memories with physical absence. But the monorail was not simply a straightforward way to get from one section of the fair to another: the route offered many vantage points, picture-ready curves and turns.

However, after not finding any personal photos of these "points of interests" in the architectural records he looked at, Ross explained, in an interview with co-curator Monika Kin Gagnon for Concordia University's "Thinking Out Loud" podcast,¹⁰⁶ that he chose drone vision to anchor his project in the contemporary and to give a view onto the site through a technology

¹⁰⁵ Daniel Lemay, "La Vie Polaire: du Grand Nord au Grand Ecran," La Presse, October 10, 2014. Accessed February 1st, 2018. <http://www.lapresse.ca/cinema/nouvelles/201410/10/01-4808200-la-vie-polaire-du-grand-nord-au-grand-ecran.php>

¹⁰⁶ "Come Fly With Me," Thinking Out Loud podcast, accessed January 22nd, 2018, <https://www.concordia.ca/events/conversation-series/thinking-out-loud/expo67/come-fly-with-me>.

that has as much commercial appeal as Super8 (the commercial technology of choice on the site of the Expo in 1967) did back then. If fifty years later, the equivalence between the archival records (maps, drawings, and scale models) and the site is no more, Ross' work seeks to recreate the now-empty affective trajectory that more than a million visitors used during the original Expo. David K. Ross' critical and medial conception of urban memory and site-specific history proposes a resistance to a contemporary urbanization model that is amnesiac while resisting the urge to stay frozen into an understanding of the urban space only through heritage.¹⁰⁷

The final piece I will discuss in this brief thematic introduction is Duane Linklater's "Earth Mother Hair, Indian Hair, and Earth Mother Eyes, Indian Eyes, Animal Eyes". A reproduction of indigenous artist Norval Morrisseau's *Earth Mother and her Children*, a wood panel painting exploring "Anishinaabe's world view and a biocentrist solution for caring for our world"¹⁰⁸ that was meant to be displayed on the exterior of the Indians of Canada Pavilion. Linklater's piece examines the "institutionalization and historicization of indigenous bodies and artworks in the archives."¹⁰⁹ The wood painting was originally massively censored, leaving Morrisseau disillusioned by the whole project of the Expo.¹¹⁰ Using archival records from the archives of the gallery that represented Morrisseau, Linklater was able to (re)produce the original uncensored artwork. The project, then, becomes one that addresses "cultural loss and recovery as

¹⁰⁷ Benichou, "Les Usages Citoyens des Espaces Urbains : Entre Actualités, Archives et Oeuvres," 119.

¹⁰⁸ Carmen Robertson, *Mythologizing Norval Morrisseau: Art and the Colonial Narrative in the Canadian Media* (Winnipeg: University of Manitoba Press), 80.

¹⁰⁹ "Duane Linklater," Canadian Art. Accessed February 5th, 2018, <https://canadianart.ca/artists/duane-linklater/>.

¹¹⁰ Robertson, *Mythologizing Norval Morrisseau*, 80.

well as authenticity, appropriation and authorship.”¹¹¹ This constant struggle, this uneven fight between the indigenous populations and institutional power in Canada, Linklater reminds us, is still experienced, witnessed and imposed today.¹¹²

A la recherche d'Expo proposes a critical reading of the fleeting, obsolete, or forgotten nature of our interactions with archival records, at times highlighting the economic obstacles, at other times, using documented institutional obstructions to propose criticisms. If these three pieces serve to exemplify the type of archival interventions that have been performed by artists for the exhibit, Sim and Stewart's negotiations with the archives are offering an even deeper critique of memory and archival institutions. Questioning the lack of productive space left in the archives for personal, ephemeral and affective records amidst the larger imaginary of the Fair, both artists propose very intimate counter narratives. In a series of interviews conducted for Concordia's podcast "Thinking Out Loud," Gagnon explained how important it was for her to not give too much instruction as to what and how artists could contribute while simultaneously framing their contributions around the theme of the Expo.¹¹³ Her goal was to help the artists get involved with what she describes as the "fragmented archives" of the Expo, and to let these encounters with archival records be the start a creative fire.

If the two public programs explored in Chapter Two kept the records in the realm of the historical past, the next two artists decided to confront the institutional history that have kept their communities out of the official story of the Expo by putting affect and personal narratives at the forefront of their works. But these two pieces do even more. Not only do they highlight the

¹¹¹ "Duane Linklater," Canadian Art.

¹¹² "Duane Linklater," Canadian Art.

¹¹³ "In Search of Expo67," Thinking Out Loud podcast.

contradictions imminent in the world-building discourse of the Expo (world building for whom? Who is able to participate in such a project? Who gets to speak?), they also use the archives as a potential site of transgression, where imaginary, affect and subversive power can transform the future. Marika Cifor argues in “Affecting Relations: Introducing Affect Theory to Archival Discourse” that “recognizing and positioning affective value as an appraisal criterion calls on archivists and scholars to carefully consider the affect of records themselves in relation to their creators, subjects, users, larger communities and systems of power.”¹¹⁴ Once affective relations are recognized as core elements of how “we form, sustain and break social relations, differences and individual and collective identities”¹¹⁵ then maybe archives can participate in their valuations. These two works, I argue, perform evaluative work of their chosen archival material and insist that they be recognized as valuable additions to a potentially more inclusive and complete national collection.

¹¹⁴ Marika Cifor, “Affecting Relations: Introducing Affect Theory to Archival Discourse,” *Arch Sci* (16: 2016), 14.

¹¹⁵ Cifor, “Affecting Relations,” 8.

Un jour, un jour



Fig 6: Image of the display of “Un Jour, un jour” at the Musée d’art Contemporain de Montréal. © CINEMAexpo67, 2017.

Cheryl Sim’s piece *Un jour, un jour* was not only the piece that welcomes every museum visitor into the exhibit, it was also the one that served as an invitation to the event itself. On display all over the city in the summer of 2017, the image of the artist, who plays her own alter-ego in the piece, disturbed the dominant narrative that the other billboards promoting the Expo’s 50th anniversary all seemed geared toward. The ambiguous temporality of the image, when put alongside a series of historical images all over the city, played in Sim’s favor. Sim and Gagnon had many discussions about the implication of choosing her racialized image as the main promotional image for the event,¹¹⁶ but ultimately decided that this type of strategic

¹¹⁶ Cheryl Sim, Personal Conversation, January 16th, 2018.

representation was what the exhibit, and Sim's work, was truly about. Questioning who gets to participate in the celebration of Canadian history, of Canadian modernity, of Canadian nation-building, Sim's work thinks through archival legacy, collective memory and national belonging.

The piece is a technically simple three-screen video installation, displayed on a hexagonal bench. The images on each screen, sometimes in synch, sometimes out of synch, alternate between waves, photos from a family scrapbook and images of the artist dressed in an Expo hostess outfit, posing in front of the remaining structure on the Expo island. The narrative is simple: Sim's alter ego discovers an old scrapbook on the grounds of the Fair, featuring pictures of her parents' visit to the Expo during their honeymoon, thus allowing her to discover a whole new, previously unknown and alternate Expo history. If the visitor chooses to do so, they can sit on the bench, and listen to an electropop cover of the Expo67 theme song performed by the artist synchronized to the video.

Michelle Caswell defines the archival imaginary as:

...the dynamic way in which communities creatively and collectively re-envision the future through archival interventions in representations of the shared past. Through the archival imaginary, the past becomes a lens to the future; the future is rooted in that which preceded it. Through the archival imaginary, the future can be conceived through kernels of what was possible in the past.¹¹⁷

Sim echoes that feeling in a conversation we had around her piece in Montréal in January of 2018.¹¹⁸ For the artist, mixing past and future was not only meant to present a contemporary

¹¹⁷ Michelle Caswell, "Inventing New Archival Imaginaries: Theoretical Foundations for Identity-based Community Archives." In: Daniel D, Levi A (ed) *Identity Palimpsests: Ethnic Archiving in the U.S. and Canada*, ed. Daniel D. and Levi A. (Sacramento: Litwin Books), 35–55.

¹¹⁸ Cheryl Sim, Personal Conversation, January 16th, 2018.

narrative for women of color, but to imply a critique of the linear and dominant narratives of the archives. By adding new temporal layers to the archives, through her temporally-ambiguous alter ego interaction with the past aside concomitant images of her parents at the Fair, Sim not only complicates the viewers' relationship to their own social memory but also highlights the limits of archival institutions. By recasting historical events using both “real” and “imagined” images, Sims forces the viewer to wonder if the protagonist of the video was truly a part of the historical event and therefore present in the state-sponsored archives. By juxtaposing this imaginary cultural icon (part hostess, part immigrant) with the imaginary of a culturally constructed narrative (that of the nation-state), Sim’s project plays with this double-entendre of memory-making as fiction-making, but also as an aspirational form of future-making. The video, then, becomes a sort of fantastical work in which the artist randomly finds images reflecting herself and her community. Cheryl Sim’s work is situated at the crossroad of these two realities: her work repositions immigrant narratives within a Canadian history of progress. It uses forgotten historical records and creates new ones, in order to recreate event that probably did occur but were never preserved as part of the larger nation’s history.

As I hope to have convinced the reader by now, archival records are often associated with a dominant viewpoint and with the reinforcing of that viewpoint to a structural and ideological narrative. During our interview, Sim mentioned how aware she has been of the way state-sponsored archival narratives affect those who are excluded from them. Sim told me how her father’s own archival impulse was to juxtapose their own personal honeymoon photos with “actual postcards from the pavilions they visited,”¹¹⁹ as if their personal memories, their personal

¹¹⁹ Cheryl Sim, Personal Conversation, January 16th, 2018.

visual archives, were not legitimate enough to validate their experience at the Fair. However, for Sim, it is precisely the photos of her parents that got her interested in the Expo itself, rather than the state-sponsored representation of the Fair, and it was the private, familial records in the form of photographs that pushed Sim to create this character. Her artwork would therefore show her father that they, in fact, had been part of the official history all along, and that no one would contest the veracity of their images if she could reaffirm that her racialized body could be considered part of the Expo history.

In “To Suddenly Discover Yourself Existing”: Uncovering the Impact of Community Archives, authors Michelle Caswell, Marika Cifor and Mario Ramirez establish a clear theoretical framework “for understanding several levels through which representational belonging operates in community archives.”¹²⁰ Representational belonging “denotes the ways in which community archives can empower people who have been marginalized by mainstream media and memory institutions to have the autonomy and authority to establish, enact, and reflect on their presence in ways that are complex, meaningful, substantive, and positive to them in a variety of symbolic contexts.”¹²¹ For the authors “three levels of impact—epistemological, ontological, and social—together undergird our conception of representational belonging.”¹²² They go on to clearly explain how these three levels function within the archives:

On an epistemological level, community archives provide empirical evidence for

¹²⁰ Michelle Caswell, Cifor, M. & Ramirez, M.H. “‘To Suddenly Discover Yourself Existing’: Uncovering the Affective Impact of Community Archives,” *The American Archivist* (79(1):2016), 32.

¹²¹ Michelle Caswell, Gabiola, J., Zavala, J. et al. “Imagining Transformative Spaces: the Personal–Political Sites of Community Archives,” *Archival Science* (18:2018), 76.
<https://doi.org/10.1007/s10502-018-9286-7>

¹²² Caswell, Cifor, Ramirez, “‘To Suddenly Discover Yourself Existing’: Uncovering the Affective Impact of Community Archives,” p.32.

a community to assert its existence in the past. Epistemology, or the theory of how we know what we know, aptly describes the ways in which community archives enable communities to establish their histories through material artifacts. By collecting materials that document the previously unknown history of a community, community archives assert we were here. This epistemological impact also has an ontological effect. Ontology, or the study of the nature of being, examines how people exist in the world. On an ontological level, community archives affirm I am here. They reflect and assert identities in the present, allowing individuals “to suddenly see themselves existing” in ways they could not and did not previously. This epistemological and ontological impact, in turn, has a social impact. On a social level, community archives assert you belong here to members of the communities they serve. At the social level, our research showed how one community archives enabled both academics and their students to feel a sense of belonging and inclusion with each other through interaction with the archives.¹²³

While their research centers around a very particular type of archives, the community archives, this framework applies perfectly to Sim’s story. For Sim, the ontological nature of the existence of her personal records allowed her to question the social narratives of state-sponsored institutional archives. When not finding anything that could testify to her and her family’s history in the state-sponsored archives, she decided to create her own narrative using what she knew to be true about the Expo: it is the place her parents went to start their new life together in Canada.

Sim told me that when someone inherits a memory, like the photo album she received from her parents, it transforms and transposes that memory into a site of potentiality for the present and the future.¹²⁴ Sim’s piece is not only about the affect she found in her family’s personal history but it also serves as an appeal for the reinterpretation of national belonging. By inserting herself in the history of one of the most nationalistic events in Québec’s recent history,

¹²³ Caswell, Cifor, Ramirez, ““‘To Suddenly Discover Yourself Existing’: Uncovering the Affective Impact of Community Archives,” 32.

¹²⁴ Cheryl Sim, Personal Conversation, January 16th, 2018.

Sim questions the lack of representation in local, national archives, but also the neutrality and validity its state-sponsored archives.

Indian Memento



Fig. 7: Photograph of Indian Memento as displayed at the Musée d'art Contemporain de Montréal. © CINEMAexpo67, 2017.

Part of an ongoing multimedia series entitled *Seraphine*, in which Krista Belle Stewart examines her relationship to her own mother's representation in state-sponsored archives, "Indian Memento", the final artwork of this series, closes the *A la Recherche d'Expo* on a somber, yet productive note. As the concluding meditation on her mother's portrayal in the archives, *Indian Memento*, a collage of sixteen spectral reproduction of a still image taken from a 16mm film featuring her mother, engages in the complexity of material and aesthetic legacies of

colonial encounters and decolonization through archival footage.¹²⁵ For this piece, Stewart undertook a search for any trace of an image of her mother that supposedly existed in a documentary on the Indians of Canada Pavilion. The freeze frame upon which this vinyl installation is based appears in the National Film Board of Canada film entitled *Indian Memento, 1967*. Taken from a home movie video that was uploaded to YouTube recently, it remains one of the few existing moving image documents of the pavilion's interior. Her mother had previously been the subject of a CBC documentary entitled *Seraphine: Her Own Story, 1967*,¹²⁶ and this original CBC film, the only one still accessible in the archives, depicts a younger Seraphine, a nursing student, who later became the first Indigenous public health nurse in British Columbia. The films highlights, through an ethnographic gaze, the life and tribulations of its subject.

The CBC documentary representations of her mother, now in the archives, is an ethnographic portrait, closer to the rules of colonial discourse than to the emancipative laws of disclosure. This divide is further complicated by what J.J Ghaddar argues is that “one consequence of colonialism, then, is Indigenous people’s lack of control over how their information, histories, and cultural knowledge are used and interpreted.”¹²⁷ By searching and searching for another story about her mother, Stewart is trying to give nuances her mother’s story, to give another side of her to the world. Ultimately, the series at large asks: “Can archival documents be diverted from their intended service to ethnographic practice, cultural regulation or

¹²⁵ “Bodies of Fact: The Archive from Witness to Voice,” Haus der Kulturen der Welt. Accessed on January 17th, 2018. https://www.hkw.de/en/programm/projekte/veranstaltung/p_133688.php

¹²⁶ “Krista Belle Stewart,” CinemaExpo67. Accessed January 26th, 2018. <http://cinemaexpo67.ca/expo-bellestewart/>

¹²⁷ J.J. Ghaddar, "The Spectre in the Archive: Truth, Reconciliation, and Indigenous Archival Memory." *Archivaria* [Online], 82 (2016): 22.

national narratives?”¹²⁸ Throughout this chapter, I read Stewart’s intervention into the archives as a starting point to the opening up of a new space of existence, as a demand for reparation and restoration of a past stolen from her and her community.

As Crystal Fraser and Zoe Todd argue in their work on decolonizing archival practices: [t]o decolonize the archives requires an erasure or negation of the colonial realities of the archives themselves. Given the inherent colonial realities of the archives or institutions, any effort to decolonize or Indigenise the archives in Canada can therefore only ever be partial.¹²⁹

This sentiment is echoed by many critical archival studies scholars and indigenous studies scholars alike. Attempts to decolonize the archives would demand an overhauling of the whole system – something to which many interested in dismantling powerful systems of oppression within such institutions would not be averse.

In another film of the Seraphine series, *Seraphine, Seraphine* (2015), Krista Belle Stewart intermixes documentary footage of her mother from the 1967 CBC film with documentary video evidence of her mother during the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada (TRC), a 2015 commission organized by the parties of the Indian Residential Schools Settlement Agreement, providing victims an opportunity to share their experiences during public and private meetings across the country.¹³⁰ The combination of these two colonial evidence, however, are not simply revisionist history; one film does not enhance or supersede the other. Instead, Stewart

¹²⁸ “Bodies of Fact: The Archive from Witness to Voice,” Haus der Kulturen der Welt.

¹²⁹ Crystal Fraser and Zoe Todd, “Decolonial Sensibilities: Indigenous Research and Engaging with Archives in Contemporary Colonial Canada”, *L’internationale: Decolonising Practices*. Accessed on January 27th, 2018. http://www.internationaleonline.org/research/decolonising_practices/54_decolonial_sensibilities_i

¹³⁰ “Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada,” Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada. Accessed May 10th, 2018. <http://www.trc.ca/websites/trcinstitution/index.php?p=905>.

assiduously implicates the viewer in the mutability of narrative construction. As a manifestation of this mutability, Stewart reconfigures *Seraphine, Seraphine* for different exhibitions. Knowing about Seraphine, Seraphine provides important contextual information for understanding “Indian Memento”. “Indian Memento” is the final artwork in this series, and the artwork displayed at the MAC, and it serves as a reminder of the ultimate failure of the state to recognize and preserve any other identity for the indigenous population than the ethnographic gaze onto the “out of reserve” Indian as a victim.

In the case of Stewart’s work, then, Caswell and Gilliland’s critique of Duranti’s conception of the record as being only “the by-products, essence or other forms of documentation of actions or acts that are evaluated, valued and employed according to legal, administrative and historical constructions of evidence (i.e., they are probative, dispositive, narrative or supporting with regard to an action or act)”¹³¹ becomes powerful and key. In Stewart’s work the “evidence” related to her mother, to the frailty that she saw her mother exhibit and the strength that she knew could only be mustered for the short period of the commission, is not of evidentiary nature. These state-sponsored sites of evidence ask for its marginalized subjects to fit within these two narratives, one of frailty and one of strength, to be part of the memory of the nation.

In her award-winning essay on the spectral legacy on Indigenous memory, J.J Ghaddar asks this poignant rhetorical question:

What is at stake in this simultaneous gathering and destruction of records, and on what basis are some things to be remembered and recognized while others are forgotten or given over to a “painless oblivion”? In other words, what is at stake in this tension between a longing for recognition, on the one hand, and a longing for oblivion, on the other? And what can this tension tell us about desire and fear

¹³¹ Gilliland and Caswell, “Records and Their Imaginaries: Imagining the Impossible, Making Possible the Imagined,” 71.

in the politics of memory and the archive? Here, I have in mind Bergland, for whom hegemonies, like ghosts, “are built on history, memory, fear, and desire... Because the politics of the national, the racial, the classed, and the gendered are the politics of memory and false memory, they are also, necessarily, the politics of spectrality.” I would like to place this thought alongside a statement made by the TRC regarding the IAP case: “The loss of these documents would be a blow to Canada’s national memory of a significant historic injustice, could contribute to the possibility that future generations would never know of the abuses in residential schools, and could contribute to the argument of those who would assert that this never happened.” For both Bergland and the TRC, memory and the nation are inextricably intertwined. But what of oblivion? Like memory, oblivion is actively produced, and is no less imbricated in the politics of the national and racial, in fear and desire.¹³²

Ultimately, her essay argues that, historically, the incorporation of records by or about Indigenous people into the national settler archival repositories¹³³ has been crucial for the constitution of a settler historical *archival memory* (at the expense of an Indigenous one), which transforms Canadian national shame and guilt into national glory and honor.¹³⁴ By conceptualizing the Canadian national archival memory “as a haunted site of fear and desire, national guilt and national triumph,”¹³⁵ she shows how the hidden histories and ongoing legacies of colonial violence are brought to the fore through these court cases.¹³⁶

Gilliland and Caswell have also recently noted that attempts “to break out (of) standard epistemological constraints by suggesting both new imagined forms of archival evidence and new relationships between archival evidence and the construction of knowledge, and how to

¹³² Ghaddar, "The Spectre in the Archive: Truth, Reconciliation, and Indigenous Archival Memory," 13.

¹³³ Ibid, 23.

¹³⁴ Ibid, 23.

¹³⁵ Ibid, 23.

¹³⁶ Ibid, 5.

locate and uncover them”¹³⁷ is often the concern of feminist, queer, racialized and marginalized scholars and communities. However, the focus of this shift, for them, should not be placed on imagining documents that do not exist but that instead we ought to “imagine new possibilities in their absence.”¹³⁸ In the case of indigenous population in Canada, “the imagined record serves to instantiate the possibility of a justice that has not yet arrived.”¹³⁹ In her Seraphine series, Krista Belle Stewart imagines a record that would be capable of representing and transcending the complexity of her mother’s life, an allegory, maybe, for the plague of colonialism suffered by the indigenous community in Canada. Can we find in the archives a life worth living between the governmental erasure and governmental defense of itself and its motives? If the archival legacy of Canada were not so riddled by its colonial structure, then maybe there would have been a place where her mother’s story could have lived in an official capacity. The imagined records created by Stewart both confront as predominantly affective instances have the potential to be discursive initiators and ultimately deploy new possibilities to articulate futurism. That the Expo becomes a site of both presence and absence for Stewart denotes the ambiguity that the state-sponsored archives – those that have kept so many records representing other important elements related to the Expo, and hence, to Canadian national identity – have in relation to its indigenous population.

¹³⁷ Gilliland and Caswell, “Records and Their Imaginaries: Imagining the Impossible, Making Possible the Imagined,” 69.

¹³⁸ Ibid, 69

¹³⁹ Ibid, 65.

Conclusion

Throughout this chapter, I've argued, that these artworks become sites where archives can be rearticulated and conceptualized in favor of those from marginalized positions, where tentatively rewritten history to include communities that lived within the proscriptive local of the governmental archival structure becomes a project of the future rather than an historicizing. As artists, both Sim and Stewart perform what Flinn, Stevens, and Shepherd assert as "... the endeavor by individuals and social groups to document their history, particularly if that history has been generally subordinated or marginalized, is political and subversive. These 'recast' histories and their making challenge and seek to undermine both the distortions and omissions of orthodox historical narratives, as well as the archive and heritage collections that sustain them."¹⁴⁰ The artists create a response to archival absences (in the case of Sim) or to archival ruins (in the case of Stewart) and combat oblivion by recasting their history, their family history as part of the official story of the Expo. They do so not only because the stories are of personal interest to them, but rather, because their omission represents the larger failure of mainstream society to correctly represent diverse cultural inputs. They create their own flexible history and input into the larger official story of the expo. These two pieces, I argue, follow what Joan Schwartz and Terry Cook suggest: "by treating records and archives as contested sites of power, we can bring new sensibilities to understanding records and archives as dynamic technologies of rule which actually create the histories and social realities they ostensibly only describe."¹⁴¹

Similarly, Caswell, Cifor and Ramirez also conclude their research by taking about the

¹⁴⁰ Andrew Flinn, Mary Stevens, and Elizabeth Shepherd, "Whose Memories, Whose Archives? Independent Community Archives, Autonomy, and the Mainstream," *Archival Science* 9 (2009), 3-4.

¹⁴¹ Schwartz and Cook, "Archives, Records, and Power: The Making of Modern Memory." 7.

dynamics of archival work and archival institutions by affirming that more than simply held for the evidential value, records also have affective value.¹⁴² By doing their own uncovering work, the two artists not simply create new records but establish new rules for what is to come, and position affective value at the forefront of their research. As I argued throughout this chapter, Cheryl Sim works to uncover valuable photographic record that was until then not accessible to the public, while Stewart's piece testifies and adds important information to a record that was not properly kept, or not seen as valuable at the time of preservation. These two artworks propose different approaches to the past and pluralize our nostalgic tales of the Fair but, as examples of reflective nostalgia, they also demand that we to take full responsibility of our collective futures.

¹⁴² Caswell, Cifor, Ramirez, "To Suddenly Discover Yourself Existing': Uncovering the Affective Impact of Community Archives," 35.

CHAPTER 5: CONCLUSION

The premise of my thesis is simple: to situate the use of archival records in public displays and installations in Montréal during the 50th anniversary of Expo67. The goal was to examine their critical potential for affecting changes to collective and national memories. In order to build theories and concepts around archival uses, I have separated them in two distinct categories. First, a series of publicly funded installation pieces were analyzed through a contextual lens. Secondly, I examined the political implications of archival absences through the artworks of two artists. These cases are used to engage in a theoretical understanding of the ecologies of memories that are formed at the triangulation of power, nations and archives. They also serve to critique and question the implicit national archival mandate of “documenting Canada’s collective memory from both public and private sources,”¹⁴³ a mandate that, in its most idealized form, proposes representation of all, for all. However, as this thesis demonstrates, many marginal voices get erased by this process. Through personal observations, sets of various print and digital sources and scholarly literature from different academic fields, I painted a comparative portrait of the always complex processes of collective memories. I proposed that understanding the different mobilizations and modalities of nostalgia could help us adjust the scale, and provide a much more accurate account of the legacy of the Fair.

The thesis begins a larger project of exploring how cities and countries critically engage in their own processes of memory-making and how archival records are used to help articulate different types of memories. I developed my argument by combining primary sources such as personal observations and interviews, ephemera about the Expo, press releases, and newspaper articles. Simultaneously, I engage with scholarly literature from many different fields.

¹⁴³ Millar, “Discharging Our Debt: The Evolution of the Total Archives Concept in English Canada,” 106.

Throughout the thesis, I rely heavily on the interplay that is created when one puts together analyses of primary and secondary sources and theoretical interpretation. I situate my contribution and influences in the fields of archival studies, cultural studies, art history, urban studies and critical race theories.

My entry point for Section I was an historical account of the sociocultural and sociopolitical climates of Expo67. I approached the topic by elaborating the intellectual lineage of scholarship about the Expo. At first, I proposed that traditional approaches to the Expo often relied on celebrating its economic, technologic and nationalist structures. Secondly, I shared accounts that propose a more critical look at the entanglements between these three categories. Finally, I outlined my own intervention in this intellectual lineage by proposing to move away from these historical perspectives and into the affective and cultural realms of experiences. By introducing nostalgia and affect to this topic, I forged a new path through which one could articulate questions of national, historical and social relevance.

While I set my sight on three vastly different types of users (archivists working at a social history museum, a private advertising company hired by a private-public park management team, and contemporary artists), my thesis proposes an interesting exploration on the way that Canadian archival institutions preserve the memory of the nation. All three user-types proposed their own imagined ideal of how the nation could present its memory: from the performative narratives of progress of the Musée McCord and Artpublix installations to the more critical take on preserving alternative and affective memories of Sim and Stewart. These propositions, I argue, mapped perfectly onto the framework of restorative and reflective nostalgia proposed by Svetlana Boym.

In the second portion of the thesis, I analyzed two public photography installations and

their contexts. I argued that the use of photographic records depicting the grandiose modern architecture and pavilions of the Fair, in public spaces, articulated a form of restorative nostalgia. This form of nostalgia played hand in hand with the mission of the nation to preserve and present itself as a great power. However, I showed two different instances of how this can take form. In one case, Musée McCord, the dominant narrative of the Expo is preserved: the implicit meaning of the photographic record is echoed by the location where one finds the display: in downtown Montreal, amidst the high-rises and the malls. This artistic intervention in the middle of downtown juxtaposes perfectly onto the premise of restorative nostalgia: the fantasies of the past that they represent have strong ties to a unique and conservative truth in the present. In the second case, of the installation in the public park on the privately managed Ile Sainte-Helene, failures to represent the archival material properly brings forth a dissonance that activates restorative nostalgia differently, it inadvertently starts the process of demanding us to “take responsibility for our nostalgic tales.”¹⁴⁴ I concluded that contexts complicated the relationship between use and evidence and that it is necessary to contextualize any archival reactivation.

In the second part, I highlighted some issues and concerns as they pertain to the field of critical archival studies. By looking at the work of two artists who discovered “absences” in the “official” records of the Expo, I articulated new strategies for more inclusive archives. Engaging with these artworks through the framework developed by Michelle Caswell and Anne Gilliland in their seminal article “Records and Their Imaginaries: Imagining the Impossible, Making Possible the Imagined”, I argued that the nation-run archival system as failed to preserve the memories of racialized and marginalized communities. However, the two artworks propose optimistic apertures into the future. In the first installation, Cheryl Sim, the daughter of two Sino-

¹⁴⁴ Svetlana Boym, “Nostalgia and its Discontents,” 8.

Filipino immigrants, proposes to look at the affective charge she found in her parent's photo-album and questions the reasons why the nation-state chose not to include these voices inside of its dominant narrative. In the second, Krista Belle Stewart looks at the remains of indigenous voices within the archives of the Expo and explores how the ethnographic gaze they are subject to is not enough to represent the complexity of the life of indigenous communities in Canada. Her work questions the limits of the settler's colonial archives, and demands new archival strategies for the documentation and preservation of indigenous narratives.

While the works created by these two artists critique and question dominant forms of remembrance, forms that rely heavily on records found in the institutional archives, they also propose new narratives and stories through the use of personal records and personal experiences. For the artists, if the dominant narratives do not allow you see to a representation of yourself, then you should create those images and share them. Sim argues for the fundamental importance of sharing and preserving family histories. She does so by articulating her dismay at the absences she found when looking for representation of immigrants in archival repository. For Stewart, the search for her mother in the colonial archives of Canada led her to a problematic realization: her mother's life was divided between discipline and death, between an ethnographic gaze that controlled her and a series of outrageous national policies that forced her to fight. Stewart's goals for her artistic intervention into the archives is to give her mother's life, an allegory for indigenous communities everywhere, more complexity and more freedom.

This thesis has examined the critical and affective potential of record reactivations through four different artistic interventions. By starting this thesis with a brief overview of the Total Archives project, I demonstrated that archival records and archives are intrinsically and deeply linked to the creation of a national imaginary in Canada. Yet, throughout this thesis, I

propose a critical take on the reactivation of records by acknowledging that archival records, while providing a tangible connection with the past, can be better understood when we are confronted with them in the present. To look at how and what is preserved and to see what gets reactivated and how is to look at how the nation sees itself. The four archival interventions I describe in this thesis all offer different propositions for the reactivation of records. I argued that these reactivations engage with two different types of nostalgia that propose two very different understandings of the legacy of the Expo. Hence, it is nostalgia that produced and reproduced, that infuses and constrains, the contemporary understanding of the legacy of the Expo, a legacy, I argue, intrinsically linked to the legacy of the nation. By looking at how the city of Montreal transformed itself during the 50th anniversary of the Expo67, I argue, ultimately, that it is nostalgia, as a longing for the past or as a proposition for new imagined futures, that plays the biggest role in our holistic interpretation of our nation's past, present and future.

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