

Ian Carr-Harris 1971-1977



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A Fraser Elliott Foundation Canadian Contemporary Exhibition

Ian Carr-Harris 1971-1977

Philip Monk

Art Gallery of Ontario
Musée des beaux-arts de l'Ontario

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Cover

Ian Carr-Harris (Canadian, b. 1941)
La plume de ma tante 1974
Painted wood table with china
demi-tasse
106.0 x 88.0 x 57.5 cm
Carmen Lamanna Gallery

Acknowledgements

This exhibition is an outcome of a process I began many years ago, before my tenure at the Art Gallery of Ontario, and thus Ian Carr-Harris and his dealer Carmen Lamanna of the Carmen Lamanna Gallery have been involved in its permutations throughout. I wish to thank both for their patience in finally seeing it through in this form. The catalogue was, as ever, beautifully designed by Bruce Mau. Joyce Mason edited it. At the Art Gallery of Ontario, I would like to thank Maia-Mari Sutnik, Head of Photographic Services and her staff; Alan Terakawa, Head of Publications and Design; Bernie Oldcorn, Manager of Technical Services and his staff; and Anna Hudson, from the Summer Experience 88 Program. My secretary, Edie St. Lawrence, was indispensable in all aspects of the production of the exhibition.

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Preface

Approaching Ian Carr-Harris's production from 1971-1977, we could historically constitute that body of work in one of two ways. We could situate it in its historical context – a context presumed to be set and to have a determined meaning, from which we could derive Ian Carr-Harris's position, significance and historical influence. Alternatively, we can take the reception or, the same thing, the lack of reception of the work as the basis for its historical consideration, for the problem of its reception constitutes its historical actuality. There is no context for the work that is not made in the present.

Writing in 1983, I said of Carr-Harris's 1973 exhibition that it "may pass as historical in the transition of Canadian sculpture from formal self-referentiality to reference outside itself. It certainly has to be recovered historically, to be regained as an event." The present exhibition and this catalogue continue that "recovery" and must take as their focus the problem of writing history – that is, a *construction* of history. While, on the one hand, we might try to situate the works' context, on the other, the sense that we make of it must be constituted from the present and from what the works themselves present. This double consideration will be kept in mind throughout the catalogue, which itself is written with both words and images – words and images, the means by which Ian Carr-Harris presented his "recreations of reality."

This approach is appropriate in that these works by Carr-Harris take as their subject the very constitution of history and reality as a means of establishing identities. It sets itself the problems the works put in place for themselves. Whether we approach these works now or then they are part of our interpretative process. Carr-Harris describes his work as "open-ended descriptions or situations and sometimes it's best to describe a situation by reference to something." He goes on to say, "they're kind of like phrases, or sentiments almost out of context perhaps, but because the context is usually hinted at through the sentence or phrase, one can build up a picture of what is being dealt with." Even now, we are placed in those situations, under those conditions. We too have to build up a picture of what is being dealt with. In that "all of [his] work involves reference to real living situations that are constructions, human constructions," we are implicated by our aesthetic response as much as we are responsible for our historical re-constructions. We build a meaning for these works, primarily and firstly, from the conditions they present. That the conditions they present parallel the procedures here makes them exemplary objects (and events) to contemplate.

These constructions by Carr-Harris have the character of a proposition, although the artist maintains that the language used is not meant to convey a message but to

embody attitudes. More than logical constructions, these “propositions” make viewing into a wager. And what takes place between art and viewer is a confrontation. That confrontation is not the pleasure of the purely aesthetic, because the outcome of this is a judgement, a judgement that exceeds the aesthetic because it is existential and ethical. As Carr-Harris says, “I am interested in the way people structure their identity,” and it is a questioning for him that appears in the form of the experience of art.

History, Sexuality, Otherness

Introduction

For works of such discreet bearing, for instance, as Ian Carr-Harris's 1973 tables, many of which seem to pose elegant problems in the logic of naming or reference, we hardly expect to be solicited by such a title as appears here: "History, Sexuality, Otherness." It would seem that these tables, so domestic in function and appearance, conspire against everything that could be construed as pertinent to these discourses. Yet, if we are attentive to the demands these works make of us, we find that they begin to seduce us in ways we are not prepared to admit. Rather than addressing fundamental issues of knowledge to which we could attach a "true" or "false" judgement, these works take advantage of certain aporias of rationality to return us to something very particular – our own physicality.

That return is something of a shock and disturbance since it is attained in the experience of situations that we usually find commonplace, or unquestioned, and that are "structures" inherent within historical knowledge or social existence. In the situations presented by Ian Carr-Harris's works, clichés, even as types of condensed rationality, are the reification of a social gesture.

We experience these works as both familiar and other. Their titles, such as *Fred* or *Nancy Higginson, 1949-*, point out that ambivalence as they label something unfamiliar but present objects physically in our space, their own identity secured: they are *named* as such. The otherness that surfaces within the familiar is the means by which something presents itself in all its particularity. That otherness shakes us into recognizing both the identity of what we approach and the "reality" of how we see or misperceive it. Otherness is always bound to sexuality, which accounts for the force of denial of both that other and the like in ourselves. This work, only too intentionally, awkwardly directs the complicity we would like to deny: we do not care to carry the erotic into our judgements, especially when they pertain to ethics.

Ian Carr-Harris's works offer neat historico-logical problems for analysis. But this approach explains only one aspect of the work, as if, conceived away from the presence of the artworks, writing could deny their physicality. The split between writing and physicality only marks out what appears of interest to the artist, namely the division and relation between physicality and intellect. The struggle *this* writing maintains with the work, however, must constantly address the physicality which breaches the logical and historical structures analyzed.



Figures 1 and 2

Fred 1972

painted wood, glass, letraset, paper

144.5 x 61.5 x 57.3 cm

Art Gallery of Ontario

Purchase, 1985

Reality and Identity in the Work of Art

My concern started with an interest in real things, what really happens in society, what we really do think about things, and what our involvements really are. Even when that reality is self-delusion.¹

Ian Carr-Harris's first work was produced in a particular climate of art: conceptual art's opening to the world after the severe reductions of minimalism. Theories resulting from minimalism continued to exert their influence, both determining conceptualism and structuring Carr-Harris's work. The temporality of the viewer's situation and the potentially disturbing physicality of sculpture's presence in Ian Carr-Harris's work, for instance, were the legacy of minimalism. What arose from those fundamental reductions of minimalism in part was a recognition of the language structuring of art as well as the introduction of photography into the discourses of art and sculpture. Language and photography inflected all conceptualism and Ian Carr-Harris's work which would have been seen as a variant. More importantly, however, the reintroduction of a notion of the world beyond the architectonic reductions of "primary structures" allowed an irruption of content (even if the ordering and presentation found their logic in minimalism) pursued by artists in a host of objective and, at times, personal ways. In an information society, language and photography were seen to be the least mediated and most accessible ways of introducing some form of real content. And yet while Carr-Harris took advantage of their consequences for art, and in fact produced work of this appearance, he remained a sculptor. If photography and text were integral to this work, they did not lead away from sculpture; sculpture only changed its ground and reference to the here and now that were the domain of culture during the late 1960s and early 1970s. For Ian Carr-Harris, sculpture was to be the means to explore how identities are constructed as subjects in the world. Consequent upon that investigation were the questions: What is real? and, How do we know it? Perhaps we should reverse this order, for it is the latter epistemological conceits that ground his work in the general concerns of conceptualism, while the "ontological" demands of the issue of identity aligned itself to the social dimension introduced by the concurrent development of feminist theory, amongst other discourses, during the 1970s.

The type of content Ian Carr-Harris brought to bear in the re-opening that conceptual art allowed derived from his study of history and therefore determined the nature of his art in an original way. That content was presented through sculpture, as if his tables, replacing the traditional base of sculpture, were the means of that staging, as if



Figures 3 and 4

Nancy Higginson, 1949- 1971

painted wood, typed index cards, black and white
photograph

135.3 x 47.0 x 51.0 cm

Carmen Lamanna Gallery

sculpture was completely reduced to that representational task, taking over from painting in picturing both history and reality. Sculpture, however, was not to be theorized or formalized in a division of form and content: neither were to be particularly valued in themselves.² Rather, an historical consciousness informed both within the structure of experience. This historical consciousness, however, was not to be separated from the practice and experience of sculpture proper, both of which situated the type of event sculpture was to be. These works do not elevate History from histories, nor displace it to a dimension beyond and irrelevant to the commonplace here and now. Through its very physicality and the lingering anthropomorphical traces of statuary, sculpture was to effect these histories. And so we come to those eccentric structures, oddly titled by the proper names *Fred*, 1972 (figs. 1,2), and *Nancy Higginson*, 1949-, 1972 (figs. 3,4).

What do these names, which also appear in the pieces, designate? Primarily, these names designate the pieces themselves, they title them; but, as proper names, theoretically they refer outside themselves, to whomever those individuals might be. A rigid designation may not be necessary as these individuals may not be available for us to know, or they might be fictitious. What we actually have before us are the works themselves, which the names now make into types, indeed into portraits.

Both these sculptures assume common forms, a table in the case of *Fred* and a cabinet in *Nancy Higginson*, 1949-. Domestic in scale, almost banal in appearance, they initially present their information through texts. The text to *Fred*, printed in letraset on frosted, ribbed glass, the verso to the name on the front, is ordinary: "But now Fred has a small truck he bought from a relative for \$350 and he's delivering groceries for a supermarket and small moving jobs." Initially we might wonder who Fred is, but all the pertinent information is presented here: the simple narrative defines him to a degree, to which the construction of the table now develops an association, an evocation to which the ribbed glass and institutional beige of old banks or credit unions lends context, so that together, as a sculpture, they give a sense of Fred as a real person. We do not need a proper referent. Whatever reality or physicality Fred had has been displaced to this sculpture before us.

If the table functions as a base for the immaterial text much in the way a pedestal supports the message of statuary, what precisely makes *Fred* a sculpture? The text itself figures in the sculptural relation, a text which had its source in a newspaper. For Ian Carr-Harris that name alone took on a fascinating obduracy that he linked to the physicality of sculpture. Beyond that immediate appeal, journalism's tight grammatical structure, which could be parsed without anything left over from its precise facts, could be seen as equivalent to a conceptualizing sculptural language. Measurable in space and time, these facts ("Nov. 26, 1966/all had dark hair all weighed about 100 lbs"; figs. 5-7) precisely defined an event.³ While associated with the information aesthetic of conceptualism, the newspaper was also seen by Carr-Harris as a means of establishing a sense of reality. Through the properties that were evident in newspaper reporting linked to the working practice of sculpture, one could understand things in the world —



Figures 5-7

Nov. 25, 1966 1971

wood, framed lettraset text, rope

254.0 x 42.0 cm

Carmen Lamanna Gallery

whether persons or events, activities or identities.

Nancy Higginson, 1949- provided Ian Carr-Harris another strategy for establishing a sense of reality, by means of the artist's personal contacts — here, a friend. In this portrait, the artist was not only attempting to place this person in time as a historically constituted type, like “Fred,” but he also wanted a sense of the identity of this person, of her eccentric individuality. We are a bit surprised therefore that the dark brown cabinet, that is imposing only in its unassuming solitude, opens to reveal a life recorded on index cards. Opposite to what we would expect, this is no clinical examination; rather, the cabinet is personalized in much the way *Fred* was. The work differs from *Fred* in more tentatively building up or evoking a portrait of the person through the recorded conversation or “confessions” transcribed on index cards. Everything is not given at once in an assured narrative tone as happens in *Fred*. That tentativeness is not corrected by the addition of a photographic image of the woman that we discover behind the index cards; her image provides another mode of description that contributes to, but does not totally realize, our understanding. Neither of these modes of perception and/or description alone can be relied upon to build our understanding of Nancy Higginson. Neither grounds the other as we pass from the more immediate mimetic attractions of photography to the drawn out, interpretative process of reading. (And if this is true for the viewer, so too for the subject: an individual identity must be built up hesitantly moment by moment.)

The scientific clarity or exact summary we expect from index cards is belied by Nancy Higginson's meandering narrative, while the two perspectives opened by image and text interweave, complementing *and* undermining each other's authority. The modes by which we perceive and understand are intertwined, and our perception often is predicated on language. (Even photography does not escape the overdetermination of language, and words are riddled with our complicity and prejudices — clichés being the embodied “logical” form.) In language we discover the categories by which we begin to “recognize” or “define” an individual subject.

Carr-Harris's works then are not merely portraits in which a subject is clearly identified through a simple presentation; they study the structure of sociality embedded in our common experiences, language being the commonplace carrier and transmitter of those patterns.

Ian Carr-Harris

great majority of ordinary people for whom structures are a contingent question of survival rather than of theoretical debate.

Ian Carr-Harris was a student at art college in the late sixties when Donald Judd was articulating the Minimalist position in opposition to artists like Anthony Caro. In a famous essay by Michael Fried in 1967, the “theatrical” implications of Minimalism were clearly identified as a threat to the modernist concern for the essential nature of discrete experience. Fried was suggesting that the “literal” or theatrical nature of Minimalism’s concept of experience, while an accurate account of the durational nature of general experience, was inadequate to deal with the peculiar awareness, the sense of implosion within a single moment of intuitive clarity of “presentness” which he maintained was the singular experience with which a work of art should be concerned.

Fried’s criticism was, of course, a restatement of the idealist insistence on the essentially critical position that a subject occupied in relation to an object, and that the value of the object, and hence its definition as art, lay precisely in the degree to which this moral connection was manifested.

Carr-Harris took this critique and the broader context of what was, in effect, an historic discussion on the validity of sculpture as the basis for certain decisions on the possibilities that sculpture presented for the examination of his own attempts to understand experience. Fried’s justifications for moral and pictorial idealism confirmed his own growing conviction that the nature of experience was in fact “indiscrete,” that the essential relationship between people and phenomena was situational and inescapably “durational,” as the Minimalists argued, and that this was so however much we and Michael Fried might wish otherwise. And this latter point “however much we might wish otherwise” was for Carr-Harris a crucial aspect of the conditions surrounding a work of art.*

No work of art – no experience of any kind – could be valid without admitting the extent of its own circumstance, and that circumstance included most specifically the relationship between the audience and the work. For Carr-Harris, Fried’s moral framework was a denial of this experience rather than an investigation of it, but the Minimalist aesthetic of primary form and its restriction to considerations of abstract structural problems failed to address the reason why those structural problems had importance. What was interesting, however, was the implication of the Minimalist position for the use of language and the characteristics of organized experience that language implied. This was an inherent aspect of Minimalism, and quickly became the premise for the Conceptual movement of the 70s, but Carr-Harris’s concern for the relationship between people and structures had developed independently



I am the Queen
of England
I like to sing
and dance
And if you don't
like what I do
I'll punch you
in the pants
I am the Queen
of England
I like to sing
and dance

Figure 8

I am the Queen of England 1973

framed tinted photograph, letraset

47.2 x 47.2 cm

Collection of Carmen Lamanna

during his earlier study of history at Queen's. What pre-eminently interested him was not so much the often obscure question of structural origins; rather, it was the manner in which we function within the structures which define our existence and over which typically as individuals we have no extensive control, but on which, nevertheless, we have ideas and degrees of influence.

Clearly, then, the relationship between the work of art and its audience was a paradigm for the normal working relationships of ordinary existence. It was obvious that a natural strategy for any work would be to recognize the active and extensive dialectic it held in its relationship with the viewer. These two basic and related conditions – the situational nature of experience and the dialectic potential of the relationship – led Carr-Harris to the conclusion that the most viable mode for addressing questions of experience lay in precisely the direction that Fried had rejected: that is, through a development of the theatrical implications of sculpture.

Why sculpture? Like its more useful alter ego statuary, sculpture is of all the arts one which most directly confronts the nature of our physicality and reflects the intimate complexities of the human recognition of the divisions between the self and the non-self. Sculpture, whether statuary or installation, is an insertion of the material embodiment of human constructs into the real space of normal existence. Unlike painting's speculation into a universe of experience beyond the space, experience and time occupied by the viewer, and unlike architecture's construction of a containment for experience, sculpture addresses the mirror recognition of the nervous expectancy of human identity.

As a surrogate of human identity, sculpture by virtue of its shared occupation of our space and by virtue of its intentionality as a mental construct was, Carr-Harris felt, not an "obdurate object" as the Minimalists had suggested, but a vulnerable situation or event in the same manner in which any human experience is based on the constant construction of situation in order to protect the self against intrusion.

Sculpture, then, through its concern with human equivalence, was essentially theatrical, and the power of theatre's involvement with its audience to include the viewer as a participant in the investigation of ethics must in one way or another be acknowledged.** For Carr-Harris, the aggressive syntax of theatre – its natural ability to confront the audience and force a reply from the viewer – was the single most valuable aspect to be gained from this connection.

Given these basic premises, Carr-Harris proceeded to consider the implications involved. Pivotal among these was the question concerning the limits of rational experience. With theatre as a model, he accepted the power of argument (an entity which skirts the boundaries of reason) in the conviction that experience is as much a reflection on circumstance – and thus of conscious desire and calculated expectation – as it might be of supra-rational interjection.

Consequently, if sculpture was seen as a paradigm of experience, it was not merely metaphor – could not in fact be metaphor (though it might legitimately make use of metaphor) – but an actual event, or performance, within the experience it suggested. The work is thus a part of the reality it also discusses, and this inherent ambiguity – distinct on the one hand from art's traditional metaphysical transcendence and on the other from the continuity of

normal reality – furnishes Carr-Harris with the means of extending the investigation of experience vertically into time and the dimension of argument, and horizontally into space and the dimension of presence.

This particular nexus in the work is important enough to require special consideration, since it is one of the most significant formal concerns it addresses. Its premise derives, as we have indicated, from the ambiguous reality occupied by the work, but it derives as well from the larger issue of translational equivalence basic to our attempts to make our reality coherent, as well as from our recognition – as part of this translation – that ambiguities and incoherences are a necessary part of any translation, warping even the most coherent reconstructions of reality. Thus, while the work must reflect an acceptance of the physicality – the constituents of construction – of its own existence, it must also construct a syntax or context, and while it utilizes a carefully constructed vocabulary and grammar to do so, it cannot by virtue of the situational nature of experience be limited by its means. Our desire to know is confronted instead by the limitations and extensions of our own expectations.

This concept can be most easily understood by referring to the nature of memory, a consistent strategy in the work. If human experience is situational, it can only be so with the use of memory to guide it and reflect on it. Since our experience does not exist in the present, but in the past and the future, the situation we confront “durationally” is a function of desire and expectation. Desire is our attempt to reconstruct situations as we would like them to have been; expectation is our ambivalence over the consequences. The work reflects these ambiguities through its inherent physical intimacy with the viewer on the one hand, and on the other, through its almost photographic – or filmic – and frankly theatrical appeal to the viewer’s past and future definitions of their circumstance in the present.

To a considerable degree, then, Carr-Harris’s work states categorically that “reality” can be usefully considered a construct – a fiction if you like – for the specific purpose of constructing a coherent reality, and that this “coherent reality” is multi-dimensional and continuous – a contingency of socialized but individual memory. A work of art – and in particular a work of sculpture – performs not as a moral definition for a singular persuasion (though it will inevitably reflect the artist’s perceptions of the issues), but as a reflector for the viewer’s “systolic” act of reconstituting identity through every moment of existence. The implications of this position set Carr-Harris in sympathy, but apart from, current post-structuralist interest in discovering the nature of structural relations, (an extension of Lévi-Strauss’s ambitious failure) and connects him with the

*This discussion is as old as Plato’s dismissal of art in general as a distortion of the ideal state of ideation, but the problem of sculpture is more specifically raised in Leonardo da Vinci’s “Paragone” and in Baudelaire’s 1846 essay “Why sculpture is boring.”

**This concern with human equivalence is, perhaps, what separates sculpture from furniture or other objects in the real world. A chair, for example, shares powerful associations with human experience that must be acknowledged as placing its status as an “obdurate object” somewhat in doubt, but it does not pretend to be a surrogate for human value construction.



Two men confirming that they shaped
events, rose above the common herd.



Two men confirming that they shaped
events, found love & affection

Figure 9

Two men confirming 1973

framed tinted photographs, letraset

58.4 x 43.2 each

Art Gallery of Ontario

Gift from the Peggy Lownsbrough Fund, 1985

“Two Men Confirming”

A few pages back a text made an irruption into the writing of this catalogue, its circularity flagged only by the repetition indicated in the structure of the text to *I am the Queen of England*, 1973 (fig. 8) which illustrated it. In its original appearance, this third person history (subject: Ian Carr-Harris) had no signature.⁴ Its authorship hinted at by its location in the area reserved for an artist's piece by Ian Carr-Harris that corresponded to the other artists' contributions in the catalogue, its strategy signalled perhaps only by the title of the exhibition, *Fiction*, the reader concluded that the artist had assumed the role of historian of his own work, but under protocols deemed inappropriate to the circumstance. It was neither an artist's statement, because spoken without the sincerity of an “I”, nor an objective history, because unauthorized by the proper procedures of historical writing (the description “he” was a disguised enunciation of an “I”). It had access to an intention unavailable to the historian and was perhaps tailored the history of the earlier work by interpreting it in light of later work and thought (from 1982), establishing a narrative direction for it.⁵ And yet it is a perfectly appropriate history, in describing work and intention, to which I would be willing to put my signature, I who am writing this catalogue. A signature could settle the objectivity of assertion, guaranteeing either the “I” (P.M.) or “he” (I.C.H.), because the reality of the affairs under consideration (a history, *the history*) would not be disputed. But that presumes that reality – or history – is stable and that our concern lies only with *who* has the right to authorize a particular narrative which in itself would not be questioned. As little as the absence of a signature or the vacillation in personal pronouns of sentences highlight the whole construction of history precisely *as* a construction. So it is not a matter of setting two histories against one another, as if the artist's was the *petite* to the critic's *grande histoire*. Writing, in general, by asserting a particular reality contingent to its constructions both establishes that reality and our position in relation to it. Something analogous to history writing's narrative sentence constructions and logic of reference then may be taken up by the artwork. Any particular sculpture would discover the relations of structure between *position* and *proposition*. The “logic” of Carr-Harris's sculpture ensures that the two are always in a dialectical relation.

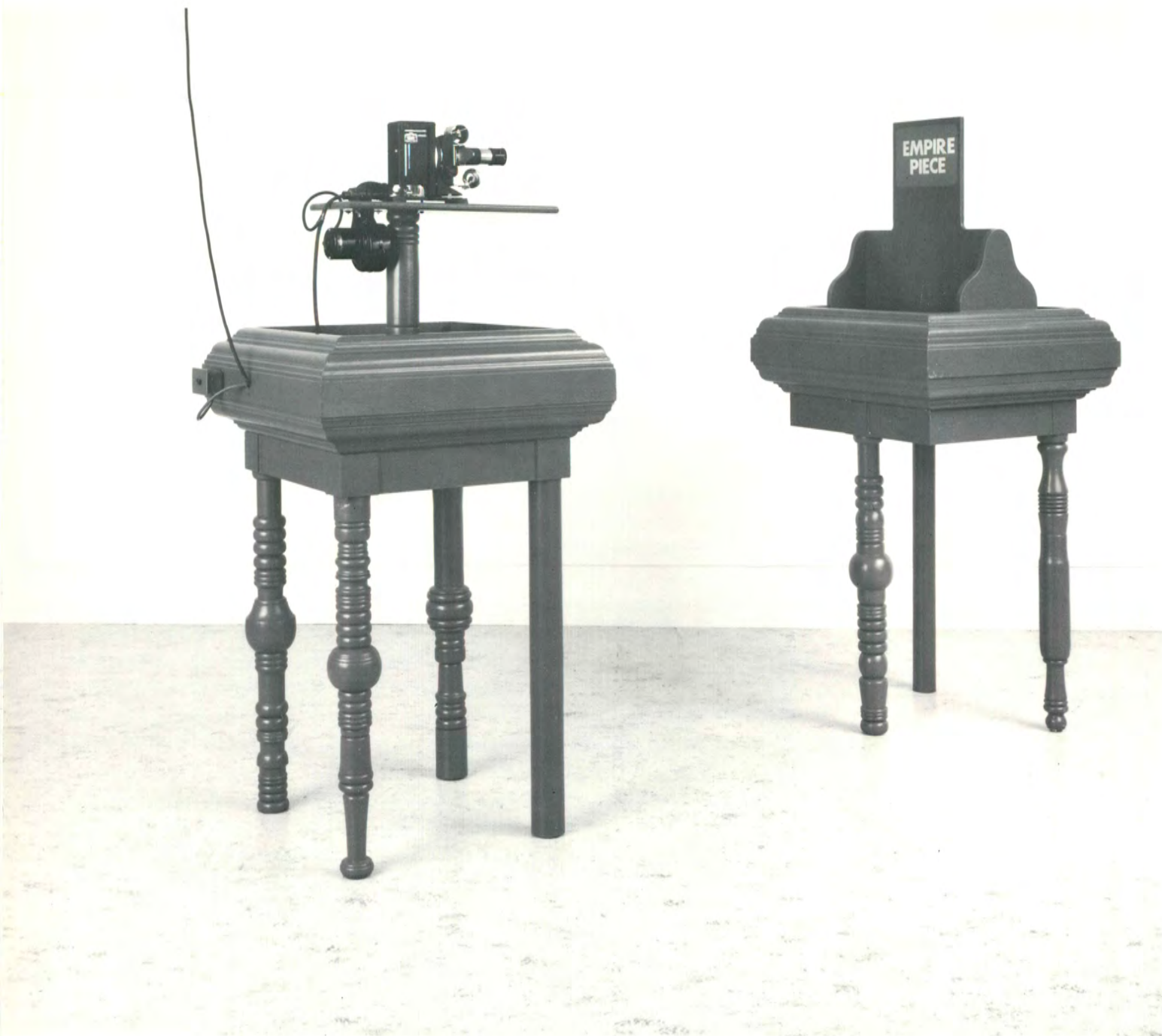


Figure 10

Empire Piece 1971

National Gallery of Canada/Musée des beaux-arts du
Canada

Re: Writing History

I saw artmaking as a kind of writing of history, as a kind of extension of the project of history using a different set of vocabulary, a different grammar, but a syntax that really seemed identical – the syntax of thinking historically.⁶

The forms which the subjects of history and reality take in art – history painting and realism – were not genres one could fully claim for oneself as an artist in the early 1970s. Issues of realism had migrated into the reality of materials subsumed under the category the “art of the real.” History had been displaced to a social semiotics. When Ian Carr-Harris took up these themes they had to be addressed in the terms of the times. The material physicality of encounter was one of these terms, but that encounter in Carr-Harris’s art was to be posed through an historical consciousness. This consisted of traditional questions learned from his study of history, “questions such as what constitutes justice; what are the dilemmas facing a person wanting to understand how to live; how do historical conditions come to exist, that is, how is history made and who makes it; how do we live against the conditions that have been constructed for us; and what is the reality of the existence we live through?” These questions were not to be addressed discursively, of course; rather they were to be isolated as moments in our experience and given the character, according to the artist, of question or exclamation marks. Even though Carr-Harris might pose problems of history through logical models, his aim was not at all methodological; his concern with social conditions and ultimately ethics would frame the situations presented in his art.

Ian Carr-Harris’s realism attended to the commonplace, the little histories of everyday experience, “stories” shot through, all the same, with a social sense that embodied an historical period. Not for him, for instance, the example of nineteenth century History Painting with its ideal representations of imperial state power. His presentations assumed a more modest genre, but they were forms, nonetheless, that could take on grand themes. It was the lack of diverse perspectives passing between background and foreground of historical conditions, issuing from differing actors and asserting contrary values, that Carr-Harris’s sculpture contested. Thus “taking on” the grand themes of history should also be read in its agonistic sense.

The perspectives the works display derive from two points of view or positions: writing history and receiving it. In the works from 1973 these perspectives are defined on table tops, as if each table presented a diorama of historical circumstance, in which events were enacted for our consideration and understanding.

Some of the works exhibited in 1973 stand out as signifiers, in a more obvious sense, of those historical themes, either because they represent historical personages, such as in *Two men confirming*, 1973 (fig. 9), or because they depict certain historical configurations.⁷ *Pink Empire*, 1972 (fig. 11), and the earlier *Empire Piece*, 1971 (fig. 10), take as their theme “empire” – *Pink Empire* by displaying a map of the Roman Empire, *Empire Piece* by projecting its title. These redundancies as well as the displacement of the correct term “Roman” to “Pink” perhaps ironically point to the absurdity of the subsumption of manifest particularities under one designation.⁸ What remain central to the irony or redundancy are the issues of *reference* that the titles invoke. As Carr-Harris has indicated for *Empire Piece*, whose slide-projected text replaced an earlier similarly projected map in the development of the piece: “I was much more interested in the language – the actual word ‘empire,’ for instance, carries with it much more force. . . . It occurred to me, starting with that piece, the power language has for its reference.”⁹ Reference was the hinge by which he would be able to bring sculpture and history together and a bridge between the temporal and spatial dislocations that its terms impose between a here and there and a now and then.

The redundant descriptiveness of titles to *Pink Empire* and *Empire Piece* emphasizes that reference has two directions: the word, at first, naturally points towards its historical referent; but the circular structure of the title describing what is depicted in the piece brings us back to the closed circuit of presentation. As with *Empire Piece*’s exaggeratedly turned legs and heavy moulding, the elaborate projection of its title overly dramatizes the presentation. That two-fold motion – referring out and immediately returning to the present situation – provides the basic pattern of many of these works. In any one piece we find two, seemingly separate, structures that ultimately coincide with each other: presentation and reference. Reference initially is defined as the work’s content and presentation merely the means of displaying it. But the nature of presentation cannot be separated from the construction of content, which in turn has to be perceived as more than simply what the work presents. Both are finally realized in the physical engagement of the viewer who is the pivot and focal point of this work. The turn or return to the viewer is the constant motion.

Other works are more complex in their historical reference. Less redundant than *Empire Piece* or *Pink Empire* because of the narrative construction of their content, they situate the viewer with respect to historical knowledge. The content of *A section of Julius Caesar’s left thigh*, 1973 (figs. 12 and 13), and *The expression*, 1973 (figs. 14-16), takes form in well-shaped phrases. These phrases are grammatical and make sense; we understand the references to historical figures and events; but something is wrong, out of place.

In both cases these phrases are only part of the presentation. In one, the text “A section of Julius Caesar’s left thigh as it appeared when he mounted his horse to cross the Rubicon” accompanies a plaster cast of a section of thigh, complete with embedded human hair. In the other, two texts, “The expression on Lord Castlereagh’s face

when he learned of his death in 1822” and “Blood from a superficial wound suffered by Alexander at the Battle of the River Issus,” stand respectively beside a drawing of a face and a substance resembling a pool of dried blood, each on separate tables. The object or image provides the immediate referent of each sentence since the phrase appears as a label in the manner of an old-fashioned museum display. But these references would not make sense without our knowledge of the historical referents: for example, the historical personage Julius Caesar and certain events he precipitated. Since we do not have access to historical evidence (as the thigh purports to be), the means by which we claim our knowledge are narratives, certain verbal constructions that must follow a particular protocol in order to be taken as the truth. That the phrases taken alone may not trouble us means that such historical remarks can be accepted as true without the need of any supplementary evidence.

Yet what disturbs those protocols is exactly something that has the status of evidence here. The plaster cast gives tangible, physical evidence as the referential object of the phrase. The label points to it directly. But as “a section of *Julius Caesar's* left thigh” it is an impossible index. Similarly in *The expression*, against the evidence of the drawing, an unreal situation is depicted: learning of one’s own death; whereas the other table only indicates that our situation as viewers does not have the same status as an actual witness: this cannot be the blood of Alexander for us who were not present at the Battle of the River Issus. The evidence we have in front of us in these two works is a substitute for that which we actually lack in order to know with assurance those persons or events. We accept an inherited verbal construction on faith, a “faith” exemplified in the treatment of the “objects” of *The section...* and *The expression* as fetishistic relics.¹⁰

These constructions place us in a double position or under contradictions of thought: literal or figural aporias. We feel out of place, not being able to situate exactly the referents or ourselves in the equation. What initially operates referentially is experienced to be an impossibility of reference, and so content folds over on itself and, in that folding, returns the viewer to the present place and time he or she inhabits. The impossibility always returns upon the viewer who becomes the locus of the contradiction, split between a here and elsewhere, between a now and then presented by the situation. Through the resolution of our place in this process we come to an understanding of the conditions by which we begin to know, historically.

This incursion into the logic of reference always returns us as viewers to our place in front of these works. The referential evidence that, for instance, the plaster cast physically embodies maintains a presence *here* for us, stubbornly asserting itself against these verbal constructions. These works use the logic of reference to undermine reference. They use a universal grammatical construction to underwrite the contingent. In that they dislodge the universal and assert the particular in its place, the logic of these works is similar to the historical practice carried out in *Fred and Nancy Higginson, 1949-*. The value system implied in the reversals of historical hierarchies and in the

return to the viewer is nowhere stated in any of these works: it has to be enacted instead by the viewer to have any meaning. In aligning such propositions as the works propose to their own positions, the viewers assume the syntax Carr-Harris suggests his works share with history writing. Thus, by utilizing tropes of history, Carr-Harris returns the viewer through his or her own experience to the common place of work and viewing.

Another group of works from 1973 takes up the theme of both writing and reception of history, but not from the point of view of the history makers such as Julius Caesar or Alexander the Great. As recipients of histories that are not written from their point of view, these various classes or underclasses do not have the power of that construction, but, nonetheless, can come under history's – or political science's, sociology's or anthropology's – classificatory effects. These works, photographs with overlaid captioning text, framed and hung on the wall, though no less sculptural for Ian Carr-Harris, nonetheless operate differently from the tables.¹¹

We can immediately compare two seemingly similar historical subjects, *A section of Julius Caesar's left thigh* and *Two men confirming*. In *A section . . .* the reference initially goes elsewhere in search of its referent. In *Two men confirming*, although the personages are figures of the order of Julius Caesar, we are not asked to situate them in place and time, and thereby fix our coordinates. The images of Augustus Caesar and Louis XIV are representations of power that have their identity one with the other across two images and within language. And yet the identity which the text rhetorically tries to maintain does not measure up to these assured imperial representations. In this slippage we begin to understand that the way in which something is known, its identity established, and thus reality confirmed has something to do with power – or images of power. While the first half of each sentence is identical, the assertion of the second phrase of each cannot necessarily be confirmed. By this inconsistency, this lack of identity within their parts, the affirmative character of each sentence is implicitly denied. The whole is seen to be a construction of history (i.e., a construction of statements) from above, from the position of power of those images. It lacks the judgement from below, a consent that would confirm the assertions, establishing the identity of “rose above the common herd” with “found love and affection.” (*I am the Queen of England*, on the other hand, incorporates that “critique” from below within itself in the popular ditty.) Further, this lack of identity may indicate that the two are of a different order, that the conditions of one cannot be applied to the other, that the values inherent in the language of “rose above the common herd” cannot be applied to those of “found love and affection.”

In general, these framed works support a comparison across images, a comparison always coordinated by language. What we take to be descriptions are actually power relations operating through means of classification, underpinned by language. The sets of images in *Wendy Sage, being compared* (fig. 18), *Mussurongo types* (fig. 19), and *A man illustrating* (fig. 20) emphasize the fact that description and demonstration are not value free but socially loaded, and that they are constructed from positions of power

to maintain some authority or advantage.¹²

Demonstrations and descriptions presumably refer back to original events. They are the means by which an event is represented or (experimentally) repeated. The “event” is both the object of history writing and the subject of the presentation of these works. But since sculpture cannot be that historical episode it recreates, it must reserve a special status for itself. While the sculptural act as a whole was to register for Ian Carr-Harris “a nervous engagement with the notion of event,” it was also to constitute an event itself. The artist’s aim in this series of works was to isolate episodes in order that, in these events, beliefs might be registered in action, and that we might be able to analyze not only the “statements” the works present but our responses as well. Thus a third term comprises content and presentation that has the character of an event and that we could call “situation.” Situation is nothing which can be located in the work itself: the work constructs possibilities but demands that viewers enact its different responses. A situation then embodies at once the description of an event (the content of the artwork), the event of the work’s showing, and the response of the viewer.

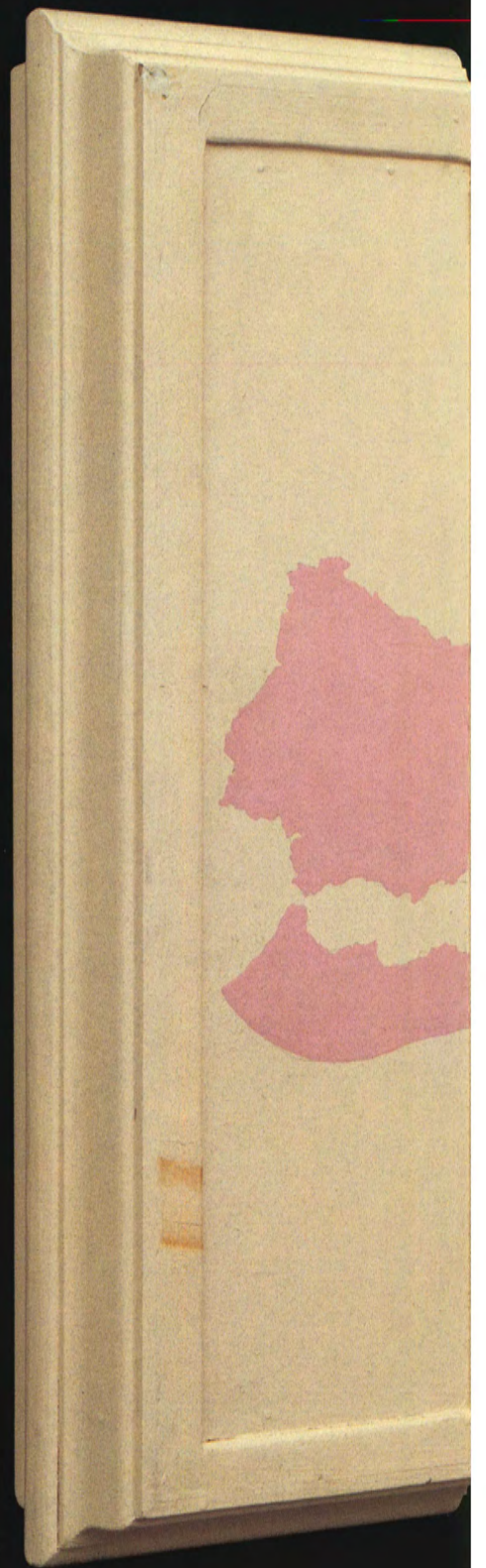
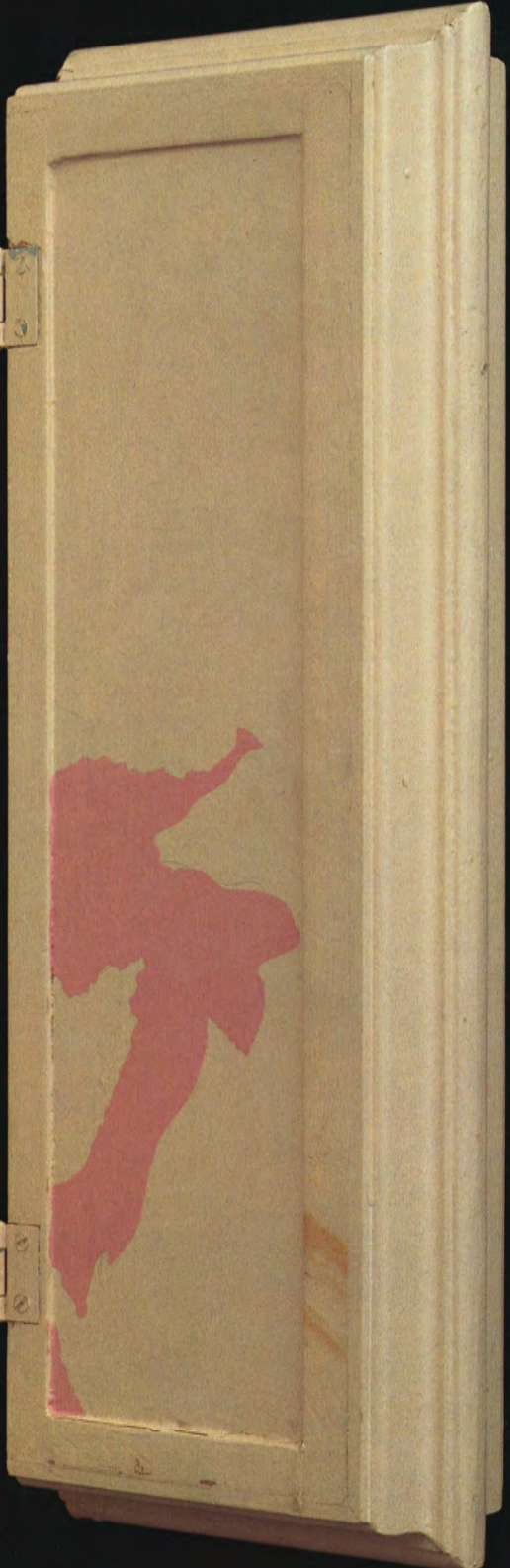
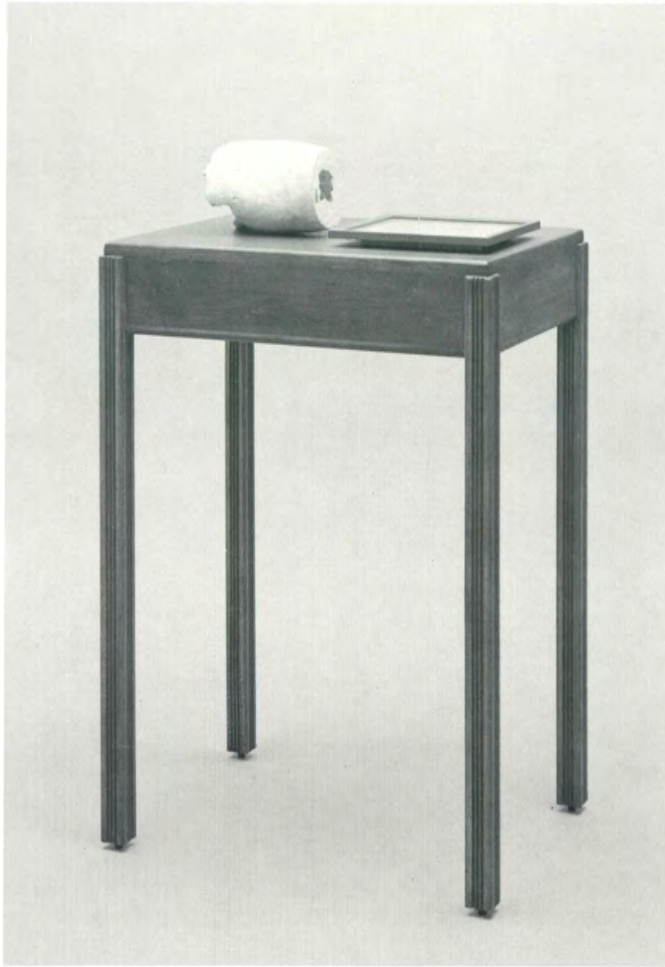


Figure 11
Pink Empire 1972
painted wood, graphite, metal
56.0 x 73.0 x 9.0 cm
Carmen Lamanna Gallery

PINK EMPIRE





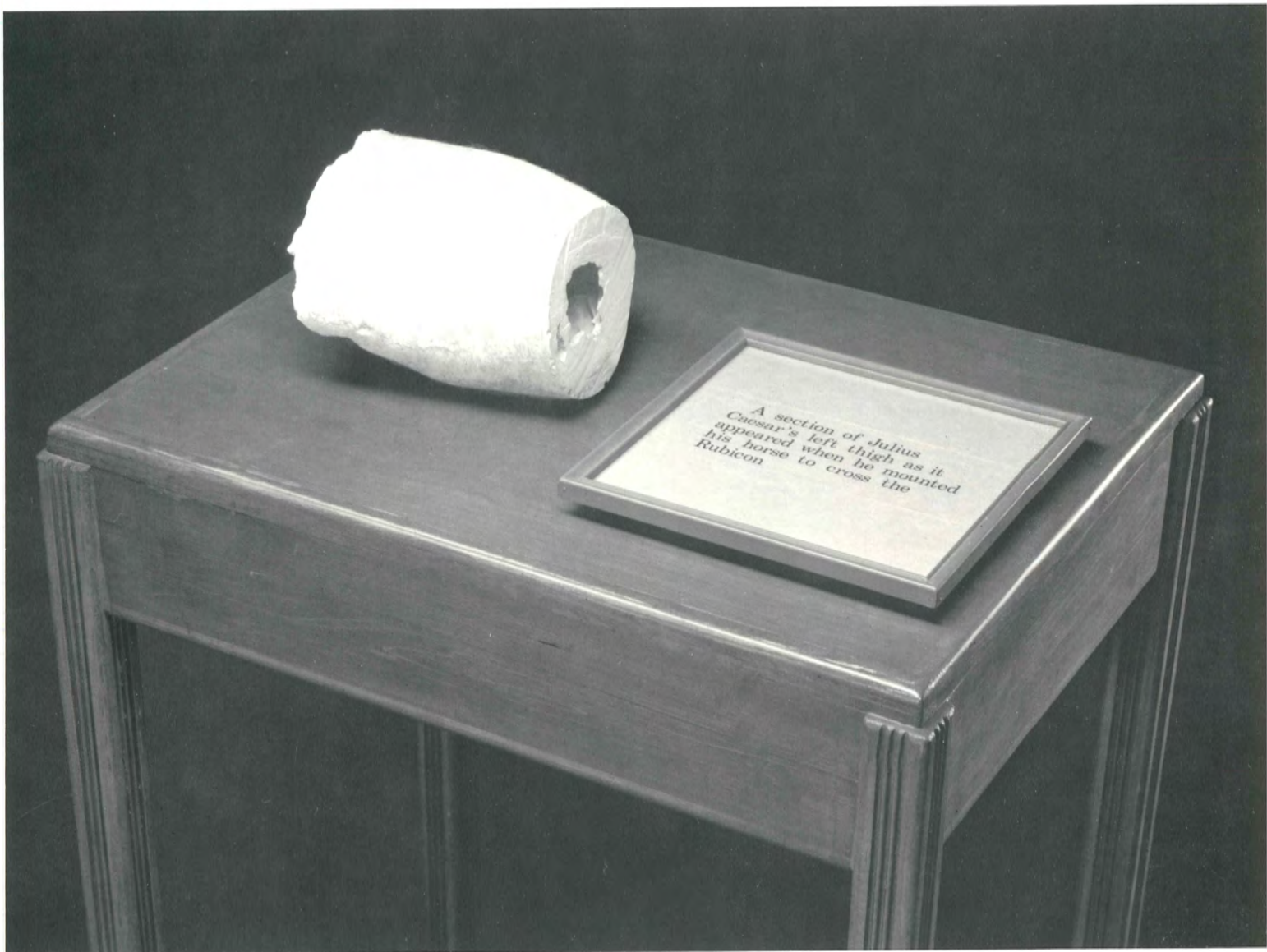
Figures 12 and 13

A section of Julius Caesar's left thigh 1973

stained wood table, hair, plaster, framed text

122.0 x 72.0 x 53.0 cm

National Gallery of Canada/Musée des Beaux-Arts du
Canada







Figures 14-16

The expression 1973

stained wood table, framed letraset text, paint

127.0 x 125.1 x 34.3 cm

The Queen's Silver Jubilee Art Collection, on loan to the
Art Gallery of Ontario, 1977



Figure 17

Quick! he said 1973

stained wood table, framed black and white photograph,

letraset

138.5 x 54.5 x 54.5 cm

Collection of Carmen Lamanna



Figure 18

Wendy Sage, being compared 1973

framed black and white photographs, leterset

31.0 x 61.7 cm

Collection of Carmen Lamanna

Field Museum of Natural History

Anthropology, Vol. XXI, Plate LXX



MUSSURONGO TYPES, MALANGE, NORTHWEST ANGOLA

Fig. 1. Girl. Fig. 2. Man

Field Museum of Natural History

Anthropology, Vol. XXI, Plate LXXI

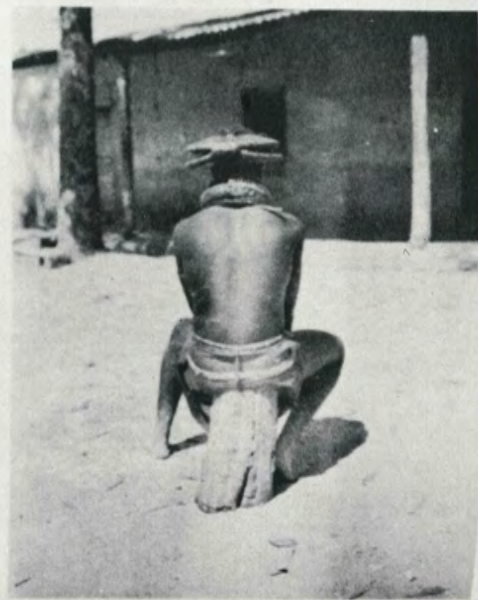
mussurongo types

Field Museum of Natural History

Anthropology, Vol. XXI, Plate LXII



1



2

VAHENEKA GIRL AT HUILA
Fig. 1. Front view. Fig. 2. Back view

Field Museum of Natural History

Anthropology, Vol. XXI, Plate LXIII

girl at Huila

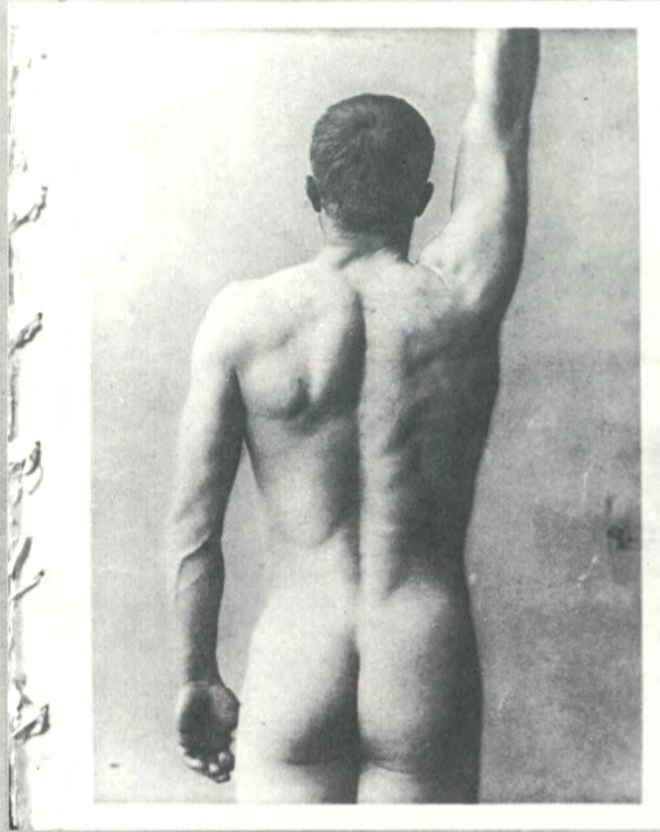
Figure 19

Mussurongo types 1973

framed coloured photographs, letraset

36.2 x 43.3 each

Collection of Carmen Lamanna



A man illustrating the muscles of his
back

J. B. Jones



Lynn, demonstrating that her work
is never done

Figure 20

A man illustrating 1973

framed tinted photographs, letraset

60.8 x 60.8 cm each

Collection of Carmen Lamanna





Figures 21-23

The victim displayed 1973

stained wood table, framed black and white photograph,
letraset

132.5 x 54.5 x 54.5 cm

Carmen Lamanna Gallery

Inmixing of Otherness

While a member of the group of works from 1973, *The victim* (figs. 21-23) provides a bridge to the next set, exhibited in 1975. If this earlier work asserted a presence and demanded some return of recognition, the decision or judgement arrived at pertained to value: our understanding or assertion of historical perspectives. Although what we come to experience is a value correlative to a particular historical consciousness, this value was demonstrated outside our will or desire. If we can take value to mean a relation of how we *stand to* something, that “standing to” can assume both ethical and physical connotations. But we may presume that the ethical will not actually include anything of the physical or empirical and that the two responses will remain separate in our actions. *The victim* shows us that we cannot clearly maintain that distinction, and it accomplishes this by implicating us in a way we do not control or perhaps approve.

The source of the image is a mass-media magazine. Usually in a newspaper or magazine the image is pinned down by a caption: the text determines the connotation of the image. Here the image floats away from its original anchoring, and the text that we do not know is replaced by another: “The victim displayed a handsome pair of legs.” This text seems more appropriate to the realm of the erotic novel; it is not what we expect, neither an objective report nor editorial indignation at this scene of an execution in an African republic. (The image is further divorced from its context by being rephotographed slightly out of focus, subtly raising issues of transmission and translation.) That very equivocation tends to displace the image to the aesthetic realm, where the appropriate judgement may be made: description and evaluation come together in display. But it is a statement that may reveal a truth about the image all the same, not necessarily the truth of the image and the “objective” reasons for publishing it (its source and intention), but the “truth” of its reception: how it is received and read. The separation between image and text is duplicated in our reception, for we experience both an attraction and a repulsion in the intermingling of emotions about sex and death while expecting from ourselves an automatic moral rejection of the action depicted. This ethical stance is denied in the place we expect to find it – in the caption that reveals a truth that we would like to deny: our attraction.

The mechanisms of mimetic attraction draw us into the work where we both recognize and deny that pleasure. “*The Violin Lesson*” by Balthus, 1974 (figs. 24-26) continues that dialectic. But with “*The Violin Lesson*” by Balthus, exhibited in 1975, we are securely within the context of art. Here, we are not faced by problems of translation of reality to image, as we were with *The victim*, with all the consequences that

must bear. We are within a domain of the already represented: namely the art of painting (with its own established codes), and more particularly within a genre that has been constructed for a response – that of eroticism. It does not matter for the moment whether or not we morally condemn the painting displayed, *The Violin Lesson* (actually *The Guitar Lesson*) by the minor French painter Balthus, both reactions are appropriate within the genre.

This work similarly displays an image and a text. Printed on the table top, the text directs us not only to a reproduction of the painting but to a relationship and, by so doing, makes us move around the piece. Yet what the text establishes (“*The Violin Lesson*” by Balthus, and the relationship between Painting and the Photograph contained in the hidden drawer, now exposed to the judgement of the General Public) is not just a relationship between this painting and that photograph, or painting and photography in general, but between something visible and something hidden. This exposure is pursued in the atmosphere of mock nineteenth century theatrics, as if what was hidden was simply a secret brought out to the light of day, and what was already visible had no secrets, and, finally, as if a consensus, a judgement of the general public, could be held.

A judgement is called for nonetheless. We are directed around the table in order to establish a relationship between painting and this photograph. That relationship is not immediately evident: if it was, a comparison of the two could have been made on the table top. The relationship to be judged, therefore, must appear not through a juxtaposition, but in the means of exposure. In that case, we cannot simply use the photograph as a judgement on the painting, as if it revealed the secret truth of the Balthus painting: that erotic art/pornography is dangerous; that the consequences of the imagery of the Balthus could lead to the real results of the Chinese torture scene. We cannot use one image to judge or denounce the other as if we could adopt a moral position outside the effects of their images. The effects consist of our responses. And since, once again, what is uncovered in the relationship is our response, we not only judge, but are included in a judgement.¹³

What was secure within the context of art – our “connoisseurship” of the Balthus painting – is denied and shaken by the photograph, or more precisely by the relationship the photograph sets up. That relationship substitutes for and informs the general relation between work and viewer. It mimics the interruption the works themselves make in our viewing. Carr-Harris’s works have entertained, provoked, enticed, and surprised. They presented situations, not just to be observed, but to be acted upon. While some tables framed “events” upon their surfaces, other objects such as *Fred and Nancy Higginson, 1949*- asserted a physicality that needed to be recognized as an *other* in our space. That physicality was to engage our own as an equivalence. And, having brought that equivalence to bear, bringing our bodies to risk in the equation, in the address to an other, the role of ethics cannot be denied. It enters as a consequence. Many of these works already implied the issue of justice in historical circumstance.

But a work such as “*The Violin Lesson*” by *Balthus* assures that the surprise we experience, in the relationship disclosed, is as if *we* are taken in our physicality – to which we have to adduce an ethical response.

A work like “*The Violin Lesson*” by *Balthus* marks a subtle change in Ian Carr-Harris’s common use of tables. While many of the other works such as *Fred* make us move around them, the movement we experience is not transformed into a potential emotional disturbance. Complications of presence brought about by various referential strategies could be intellectually – and physically – resolved; but with “*The Violin Lesson*” by *Balthus* we experience a complication of ethics: the split that occurs is driven deep within the physical.

Exhibited together with “*The Violin Lesson*” by *Balthus*, *A Thing of Beauty*, 1974 (figs. 30-32) fully establishes a new regime of display. While retaining the basic structure of the tables (as a support to display relationships between images and texts), *A Thing of Beauty* introduced a temporal element – the one-and-a-half minute duration of the 16 mm colour film. All sculpture has to be experienced durationally, and all our experience is durational, but this procedure creates specific limits to viewing. By setting out those constraints (we are not free to come and go but must wait for the projectionist to rewind, thread and run the film) the work has more the characteristics of performance, although the notion of performance was always implicit within the event structure of the earlier work. A performance is something that is *staged*. It is not just an event that occurs on a scale from accidental to determined. It incorporates artifice within its structure, and, by building its effects into the display, it more directly elicits a response within a determinable framework.

For all their familiarity, the sculptures up to this point had an alienating, and therefore alluring, quality. They were adjusted slightly to put them on the edge of the ordinary. The bridge between the familiar and the unfamiliar is exactly sculpture’s physicality. None of this work, therefore, was to be divorced from sculptural properties despite their adjusted equivalency to furniture. Physicality in Carr-Harris’s work does not necessarily engage sculpture’s formal properties, although they are not absent. The physicality is theatricalized and, through theatricalization, the commonplace maintains its particularity while being defamiliarized. We discover that particularity precisely through this defamiliarization. This process involves taking something familiar and establishing what is real about it; but that reality is achieved only through the artificial means of presentation: staging, framing, placement, etc.¹⁴

A Thing of Beauty and especially the more recent pieces from 1977 include devices of theatrical presentation. These installations, as they may now be called, also opened into the space of presentation (the space of our experience) as the locus of their meaning. Theatricalization was one avenue to direct our attention to situations that applied to us. In the work that follows Ian Carr-Harris had merely to create tableaux, phrasing the situations in gestures we all make.



"The Viola Lesson" by
Balthus, and the relationship
between painting and the
photograph contained
in the hidden drawer, now
exposed to the judgement
of the General Public.



Figures 24-26

"The Violin Lesson" by Balthus 1974

Painted wood, photographs, letraset

139.7 x 83.2 x 62.2 cm

Collection of the Canada Council Art Bank/Collection

de la Banque d'oeuvres d'art du Conseil des arts du

Canada





Figures 27 and 28

La plume de ma tante 1974

painted wood table with china demi-tasse

106.0 x 88.0 x 57.5 cm

Carmen Lamanna Gallery



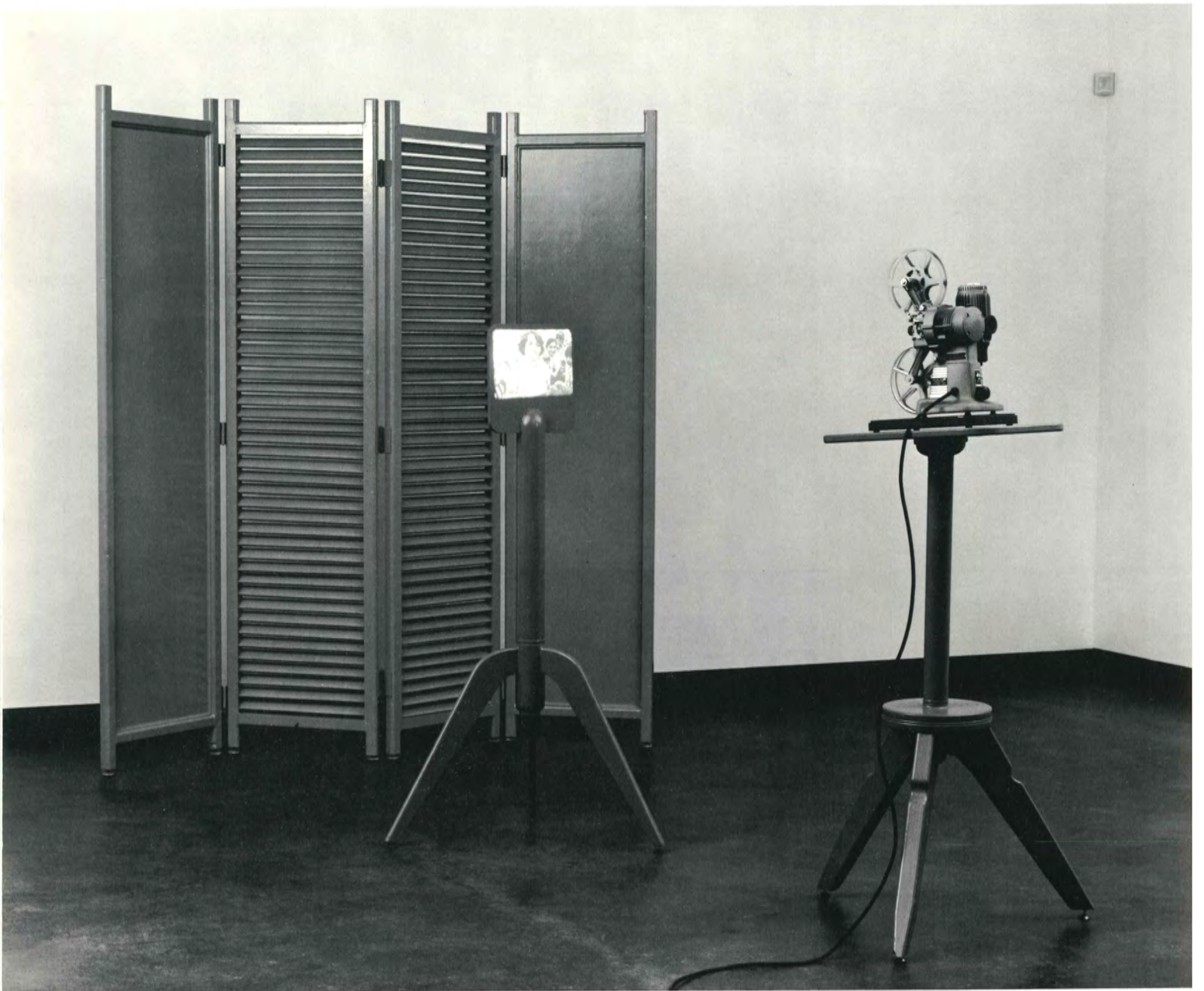
Figure 29

About relating elegance and aesthetics 1974

painted wood, glass, letraset

6.2 x 121.9 x 91.4 cm

Collection of the Canada Council Art Bank/Collection
de la Banque d'oeuvres d'art du Conseil des arts du
Canada





Figures 30-32

A Thing of Beauty 1974

painted wood, 16 mm projector, 1-1/2 minute colour
film

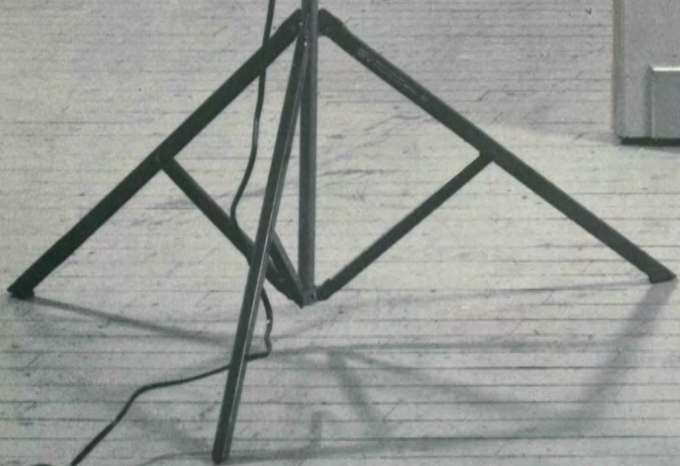
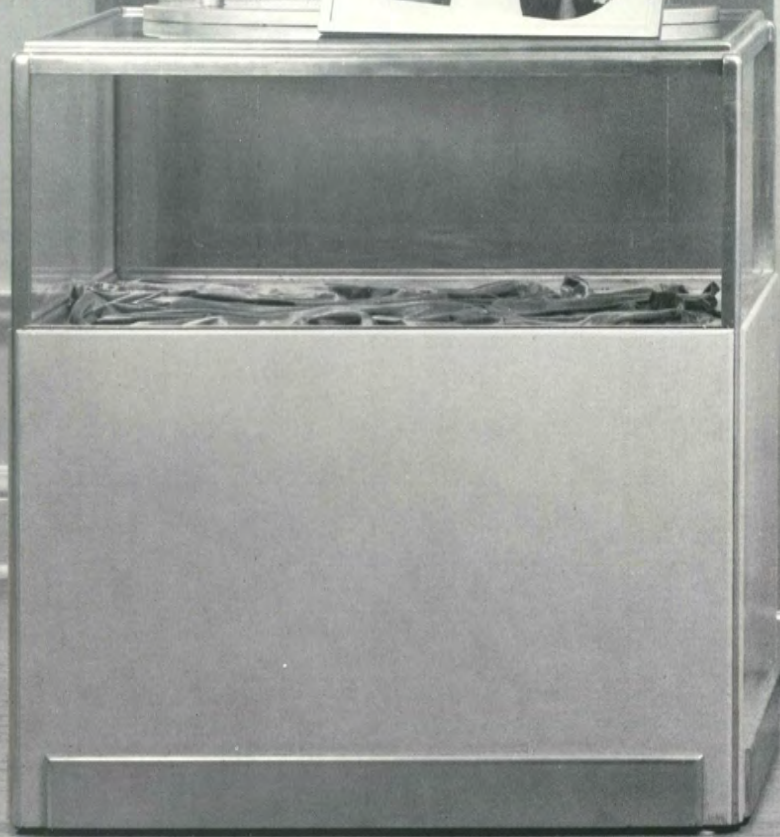
screen: 228.0 x 22.0 cm

stand: 152.5 x 81.5 cm

stand with projector: 170.5 x 72.0 cm

Carmen Lamanna Gallery

if you know what I mean



Social Structures

I am interested in the way people structure their identity. That structure is varying in its significance. Sometimes it is significant for its delusions and sometimes simply for the delight in the phenomena it gives rise to. You could say I really like things as they are, even when I feel they have to be changed, I respect the fact that they have set up their own aesthetic. One has to be sympathetic to that first before one can become antagonistic to it.¹⁵

Throughout this essay I have pursued the logic of presentation as a means by which the situation of Ian Carr-Harris's works enact themselves. The texts of his works themselves follow models of logic in order to problematize these situations. In fact, different groups of these works circumscribe distinct philosophical territories. For instance, asserting identities, *Fred* and *Nancy Higginson*, 1949- pertain to ontology. The 1973 table works raise broad issues of epistemology, whether generally about knowledge (how do we know things with certainty, etc.) or as one of its regional discourses – the philosophy of history. With the works from 1974 it becomes obvious that the situations that arise edge into ethics. And the whole experience of all these works is framed within aesthetic judgement.

While the artist necessarily imposes a certain logic on the construction of his works and the critic asserts another logic of interpretation, these structures nonetheless are not the immediate or visible experience of the work. The third “term” here is the viewer, whose experience is mediated by the body, which follows another logic, which we could call “erotics.” This logic is more immediately tied up with what the viewer brings to the situation, emotional rather than reasoned responses, responses that also consciously or unconsciously carry with them social regulations and constraints.

We could define erotics as a place where body, imagination, and the “other” come together in presentation; and inasmuch as an other appears, or rather an other is part of an appearance in which we situate ourselves, an ethics of erotics should come into play. In general one could assign an erotic function to aesthetic perception; but, if we were to examine the dimensions through which the erotic arises in Ian Carr-Harris's works perception would be only one factor. The materials, forms, and colours Carr-Harris uses, for example, are banal, somewhat heavy and repressive rather than seductive. These works carry with them the unglamorous aura of institutions; yet, in this way, they are remarkably fetishistic.

Figure 33
If you know what I mean 1977
painted wood, glass, cast metal letters,
photograph, dress, light
193.0 x 127.0 x 368.0 cm
Carmen Lamanna Gallery



Figure 34
If you know what I mean 1977

Carr-Harris gives us things and situations themselves in all their fetishistic reality. (A moment as well as a thing can become a fetish in its desired repetition). But in *If you know what I mean*, 1977 (figs. 33 and 34) and *But she taught me more*, 1977 (figs. 36 and 37), the artist proffers the traditional fetish: the female body presented in its absence, through the trace of clothing. In the latter the clothing is a thing of fascination, while in the former it is an object of abjection or rejection. The skirt in *But she taught me more* even spins on an electric motor for our viewing, but we must move to the other side to complete the text: “with a slight but ironic lift of the hem.”

With its own lighting as part of its sculptural base, *But she taught me more* carries its staging within itself. This self-staging could be taken as a requisite for definition of a fetish; and, with the display of the lower half of a mannequin the work operates traditionally to cut out part of the body as its object choice. The skirt with its silky sheen likewise functions traditionally: “pieces of underclothing, which are so often chosen as a fetish, crystalize the moment of undressing, the last moment in which the woman could be recognized as phallic.” This fetishistic substitution disavows the reality hidden by the skirt: “the boy refused to take cognizance of the fact of his having perceived that a woman does not possess a penis.” For “the fetish is a substitute for the woman’s (the mother’s) penis that the little boy once believed in and – for obvious reasons familiar to us – does not want to give up.”¹⁶

Disavowal is a type of misrecognition and, in so disavowing, one defines the other. But, in this work, the highlighting that we are defining as fetishistic also designates only that which is significant in the gesture as the subject of the text – the lifting of the hem. And, in that irony, the subject (the “she”) turns around that fetishistic misrecognition by controlling its mechanisms. Irony is self-recognition in communication to an other – here both the speaker of the text and the receiver of the work: the spectator. But irony is also the admission of these constraints in place.

If you know what I mean is even more pointed in its constraints, initially moulding the viewer into a particular function – not a viewer, but a buyer. The whole apparatus of sales promotion – from advertising to retailing – is included in the display. By taking display as its formal subject, the fetish now assumes the form of the commodity, and the work operates as if the whole presentation is a commodity and spectacle. This reverses the self-directing mechanism of *If you know what I mean*. It is instead an attempt to fashion the other by drawing him or her into another mechanism that creates desire and identity simultaneously. This mode of display directly addresses the individual; it presents a mass produced object and frames it in such a way that we can identify with it through a purchase that satisfies our desire.¹⁷

Other aspects of *If you know what I mean* draw and direct our attention such as its title, repeated in the work itself where it has a commanding look. That off-hand phrase operates as an indicator, a switch, identifying assumed social standards of right and wrong behaviour or appearance. As it functions within the piece, the phrase therefore has two addressees, one included and one excluded. While the phrase coalesces the

thing judged and the judging, it does so without naming. We have to unravel one from the other by supplying the content of that judgement. What are offered to us as the elements of the display must be played out in a narrative pattern. What is the subject or object of the expression: an activity? an appearance? an indiscretion? We are given two evidences that logically and spatially descend from the phrase “if you know what I mean.” First, there is the photograph which identifies or enacts the situation of the expression, the moment of confidence and exclusion: two women in conversation seem to refer to another woman with her back to us. (The photographic mode also signifies advertising). Second, there is the dress in the display case, which presumably is the dress from the woman with her back turned in the photograph, and which we now take to be the subject of the conversation.

In a 1979 interview Ian Carr-Harris discussed this dress as being:

an intrinsic part of the cabinet it is in. Together they form a single expressive unit. However, more to the point, this expressive unit places the work as a whole in a relationship with folk myth attempts to describe or come to grips with sexuality and society’s attempts to give it structure.

The work has a very female presence, because attempts to structure sexuality in our civilization ultimately come down to attempts to structure women Women have a sort of desperateness – it takes a lot of energy maintaining a status that has been delegated to you, because you never know if you’re doing it right – not really. The rules might be changed and you might not know it. So women ironically become high commodity users – after all they’ve always been elevated into art objects. So it seemed natural to structure the work using elements from commercial sales techniques – advertising and counter display. It succeeds for me, anyway, because it seems to exude the desperate complacency arising from women’s status as real people caught in a dilemma of definition.¹⁸

This dilemma is not posed in a vacuum. There are readymade answers. Unfortunately the artifice of their social construction maintains the woman as a spectacle (which in this case is negatively defined by the statement). Even though the work indicates women achieve self-definition in commodities and are defined as commodities themselves, it leaves the factors of those definitions open for our judgement. Woman as a subject is positioned; but as *this* subject is posed for us, we can choose how we respond to the defining gesture and condensed judgement of the title. For the viewer the dress remains empty. It is not just a question, however, of what is socially imposed on the subject or what is posed for us in this display, but of what *we* implicitly impose upon the other in the reception of that defining phrase. Thus the work offers us, through the distance implied in the title carried over into our relation to the work as viewers, an ironic detachment which is noticeably absent in the verbal gesture itself.¹⁹ The gesture ultimately is an exclusionary act that defines an other. The irony of the gesture of *But she taught me more* – the “slight but ironic lift of the hem,” on the other hand, is

an inclusive act: it includes us, while maintaining a place for self-definition.

In posing the definition of a woman through her object status, one bases that definition on the exchange of sexuality. If indeed women's sexuality is the scandal on which society rests, it surfaces through all questions of identity, including the type of sculpture Ian Carr-Harris pursued. With its frank physicality, sculpture was always thought of as an other, an other with its own identity that we as spectators participated in defining.²⁰ Specifically, absolute otherness (which is also an other lacking a history, a being maintained in its otherness by a denial of that history) was posed in terms of women's sexuality, a place where the issues of identity and physicality found their logical (for our society) form. With these 1977 works Ian Carr-Harris reached the radical (for a man) question of identity by addressing what has since come to be known as the "other" through a societal definition based on women's sexuality. And with that conclusion, in a sense, this phase of the work had to come to an end in order to pursue, from 1978 on, other narratives and representations of social constructions.



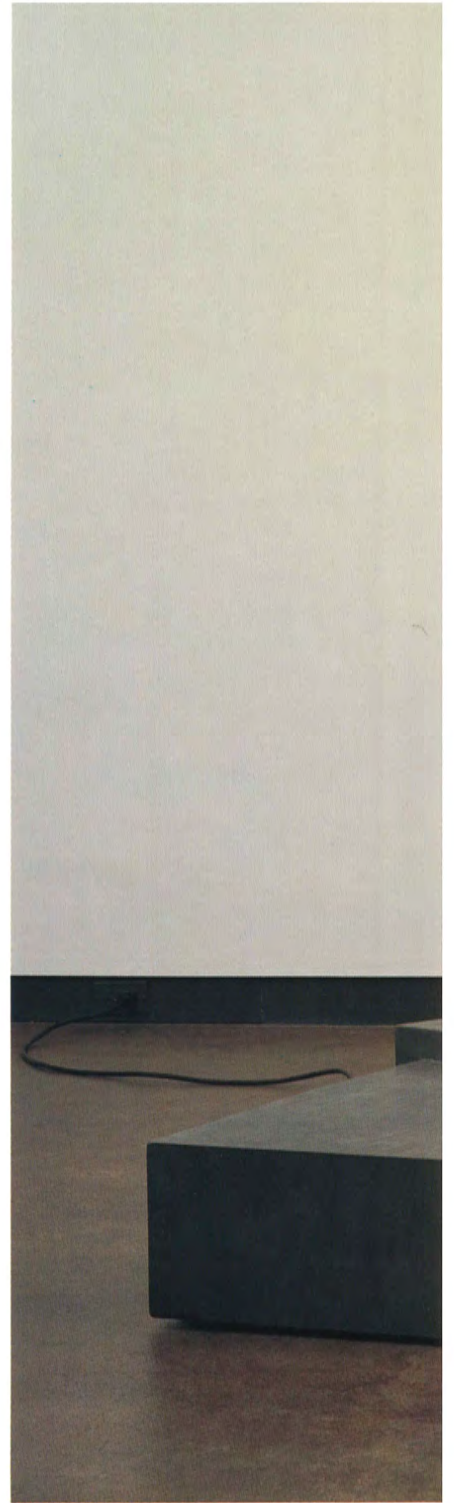
Figure 35

Whatever you do 1977

framed black and white photograph, leterset

79.0 x 79.0 cm

Carmen Lamanna Gallery





Figures 36 and 37

But she taught me more 1977

metal, painted wood, fibreglass mannequin, clothing,
spotlights, motor

162.0 x 262.0 x 154.0 cm

Carmen Lamanna Gallery



Figure 38

Installation view, Carmen Lamanna Gallery

September 22 – October 11, 1973



Staging Language, Presenting Events, Representing History

Ian Carr-Harris, September 1973

Ian Carr-Harris's 1973 exhibition may pass as historical in the transition of Canadian sculpture from formal self-referentiality to reference outside itself. It certainly has to be recovered historically, to be regained as an event. That recovery is appropriate since history and event were so much the subject and presentation of that work. To recover that event is to treat this article as a review, as if no critical hindsight had been gained since. Through this critical experiment, a formal division disturbs the continuity of themes before and after this cut into a career, and even the proximity of the artist's name to this work. This cut into a continuity gives the work an undue presence while at the same time denying that presence: it too is split.

This reviewing is not an attempt to re-present the works – to let them stand in their particular presence. The works themselves were divided in presentation. An exhibition is a form of presentation; its space is not an empty vehicle. The works took into themselves this format and framing. They staged a presentation. What are these tables but stages for the presentation of information that are events themselves. What the works stage is language. What they stage are language-events. By their means of presentation they are “here” in the space of the gallery, but within their frames they represent something else. They are bifurcated as a presence and a reference, a here and an elsewhere, a now and a past, a history and an event.

Seeing the exhibition in 1973, the sculptural context and spatial presence might have been more obvious than it is to us now. Through documentation we tend to read the work and see the language as information. Looking now, we might too readily read the image-text conjunction alone and forget its presentation. Thus we might reject the work as a dated conceptualism or a simplistic semiotics. Then, the sculpture was familiar, as exaggerated and elevated as the tables might be. Minimalism and Duchamp would give us ready reference and access. Then, it might have been that what is most conventional, language, defamiliarized the work, alienated it from us. Now, it is the reverse: language thoroughly familiarizes us with the work. It completely dominates the image and effaces the literality of the sculpture. Semiotics has made language transparent; we forget the quirkiness of its formulations and presentations, as we have forgotten these works.

What do we make of these tables? The relationship between image and text enacted there is not simple. The tables are theatrical and utilitarian at the same time – staging language and providing a base for its presentation or representation. But as a whole (table and text), the work is a theatricalization of language and situation, and of our

situation there. Frames function like tables. There is reason for both being together in this exhibition, the one on the floor, the other on the wall, as well on the tables. Tables and frames separate language from a particular context of use by throwing a spotlight on it or making it into a snapshot, so to speak. They act to turn language (or image) into a quotation. As a quotation, it is not secondary to an original use or presence. Its cutting does not signal it merely as a representation. It can be observed (as a representation) or taken over and acted upon (made performative by use). By that cutting out, which defines a representation or a quotation, these devices of presentation lend the quotation a density that makes it into an event that has its own space and situation. Moreover, we are part of it: the stubborn case of its presentation and our presence there. Language here has the force of a demonstration which can also serve as an example.

The 1973 exhibition at the Carmen Lamanna Gallery then has the force of a demonstration, but it also acts as the space of a classification. The gallery space itself becomes a table of classification. Six tables and five wall-works date from that year; two others are from 1972. Although different in the nature of construction and installation, each work partakes of the same type of presentation. Each table and wall-work offers a different formal set-up. Possible variations of image and text in presentation are given, each in a separate work. Thus the space of the exhibition serves as that formal classification with each work as a logical variant. But beyond that formal differentiation, each is a demonstration of language — a case of language where image (or reference) initially is secondary. The illustration, however, has the power to cause a division within language and between the initial identity of language and image.

Whenever language appears here there is no meaning to any particular statement: the semantic content is provided by an illustration or a reference. Language here is to be acted upon by means of this reference. That is, the sentence or phrase is not a logical proposition with attributable truth-value, a linguistic entity, nor a means of communication of a message. By being taken up and acted upon, a difference appears, an identity is split such that there is a temporalizing and a spatializing that asserts the work as a whole as sculptural.

This is the function of the overlaying or juxtaposing of text and image, of doubling the frames and the instances of the “examples” they contain, or of splitting a presence with a language reference. We never find a simple or natural relation between language and image. If we do so, we have not put the sculpture to work; we have not separated out the relative weights, relations, and registers within each sentence and in relation to an image. We have not made these works into sculptures.

“*Quick! he said, grabbing me.*” This statement appears without quotation marks in a frame standing on a table and overlays a photograph that seems to illustrate that “event”: a man awkwardly grabs a woman’s arm. That awkwardness arises as much from the man and woman standing with their backs to us (to the camera), the man grasping the woman’s left arm with his left hand, as from the fact that they seem staged to illustrate the statement, rather than the statement referring back to or narrating an

actual event. Already there is a vacillation between documenting and narrating. Which – text or photograph, event or representation – is secondary? Which illustrates the other? In being separated from the continuity of a narrative or an event, by the quoting procedures of table and frame, language and photograph, this is an event in itself. But it is an event marked by discontinuities.

Within the continuity of this narrative and the grammatical unity of the sentence, we find different forces, registers, and functions that serve to dissolve a sure and natural illustrative connection between image and text. Divided into the three parts of its syntax, we have a quotation that is reported speech, a narration, and a representation of action, respectively. Just as we find divisions within this sentence and between it and the image, so too, we are split in front of the work. There is no simple position for us corresponding to the subject-predicate, subject-object structure of a proposition. We stand in front of the table, held at a distance by that ribbon of text that passes over the image and intercedes between us and it. It is not a script that refers or points us to the subject matter as in a medieval painting. We stand in front of that particular table, separated from the other works on display, cut out from that space by the framing and quoting devices, and we find ourselves divided in front of the presence of this work that is itself divided. The event is uncertain; it is delayed, split in itself. We duplicate that split in registering the forces and divisions within the work. Each time a viewer takes up the “he” or “me,” a deferred presence duplicates that awkward standing in front of the work, facing those backs as in the Magritte painting of a man facing a mirror and seeing the reflection of his back.

This division between language and image, between work and event, is repeated on the walls. On the floor, tables and frames are nested, like Chinese boxes. On the wall, divisions occur by doubling: there are two frames. Nearly identical, they repeat something that has to be discerned as different. They do not simply illustrate or demonstrate: their differences must be forced apart. Take the piece whose two texts, one per frame, read: “*A man illustrating the muscles of his back; Lynn, demonstrating that her work is never done.*”

At first sight there seems an identity between image and text in these two frames. In the first, a photograph of a page ripped from a book, a man illustrates the muscles of his back. This description here “proves” the identity of the two. In the other, a black and white photograph with flesh tones touched in, a nude woman, “Lynn,” standing against a wall, demonstrates that her work is never done. The sentence constructions are nearly the same: parts could be substituted, subject for subject, verb for verb, predicate for predicate: man/Lynn; illustrating/demonstrating; the muscles of his back/that her work is never done. Yet, there are differences between “a man” and “Lynn,” between “illustrating” and “demonstrating,” between “the muscles of his back” and “that her work is never done,” even though they can be substituted for each other in the sentences. It was evident when the phrase “that her work is never done” did not describe its image in the way that “the muscles of his back” did. With the phrase “a man illustrat-

ing the muscles of his back” there is an adequacy between image and text – a pure illustrative relationship. The body is constructed, serves as a representation, for that purpose of illustration. It is an object; the man is a general type – he occupies the space of a pure example. But “Lynn” is a proper name; “demonstrating” has the force of an action rather than a representation; and “that her work is never done” is not a predication, but a social relation in the world, indicating a social construction of the body. The stereotype of that phrase is dissolved in an actual social relation, shown under the name, not type, “Lynn.” No longer illustrative, it passes between an action and a relation of power. Its action is disguised and divided. Here on the wall, sculpture is displaced: to the social real. This work stands to sculpture as a metalanguage, illustrating the relations between bodies, classification, and power.

Thus the difference between illustrating and demonstrating initiates a whole series of works illustrating *and* demonstrating types – classifications that are social relations at the same time. In *Wendy Sage, being compared* two individuals, two names, are compared. To what end? Both are individuals; both are named by proper names; but both are marked differently by these proper names and one is measured by the other. One is an individual shown in all her particularity. Even though we do not know her or whether the label is lying, her name, “Wendy Sage,” is stubbornly attached to her. The other is a name of a star, a name that passes into circulation detached from that body. That name belongs to the construction of a type, an apotheosis of singularity which is a stereotype and a measure – the movie star. Our relation to that name is to a connotative series, not to its denoted individuality.

While in Western culture proper names ensure our proper individuality, in anthropological documentation one individual can stand as representative of a type. We find this quoted in *Mussurongo types*, two pages photographed from an anthropology journal. There, on one hand, two men stand for Mussurongo types, and on the other, one girl, photographed front and back, represents Huila. What we would take as a record of a particular event or individual – the photograph as snapshot – serves to classify a type. The apparatus of the lens is one more grid of classification, of mastery. Classification is power as much as it is a form of knowledge.

Just as anthropology determines the limits of Western culture by distinguishing inside and outside (rational and primitive), so designations of high and low within a culture become marks of power as well as grids of specification. Those who have power, have the power to classify and the power to specify – that is, the power of reality. One work juxtaposes high and low, marking this event as a difference of forces more than an accepted opposition. Like *Wendy Sage, being compared, I am the Queen of England* sets official construction in an elaborate painting of Elizabeth I to the popular expression of a ditty: “I am the Queen of England/I like to sing and dance/And if you don’t like what I do/I’ll punch you in the pants.” The rhyme begins to repeat itself, and this repetition enables its multiple use, whereas the singularity of the painting ensures its individual ownership.

The low and the outside – workers, primitives, children and women – are generalized into types. The inner elite are unique types – movie stars, heads of state, Kings and Queens. These are and are not specific individuals (after all the King of France as a name was occupied by different individuals over time) as much as unique types. They are those who have the power to impose this distinction upon themselves. The two extremes of typification can be compared across the exhibition in *Mussurongo types* and *Two men confirming*. If the photograph has given a power to depict, being the subject of a painting or a sculpture meant, in the past, the power to be depicted. Here, then, are two historical figures, Augustus Caesar and Louis XIV, in two representations of themselves (likenesses) that are, at the same time, representations of their power. As they are taken from photographs in art history books, they stand as examples of art – Roman Imperial, French Baroque; but through the power of their regimes, their names as well have passed into styles. Moreover, according to the great man theory of history, they are the names behind historical events. Thus the texts, one to each:

*Two men confirming that they shaped
events, rose above the common herd.
Two men confirming that they shaped
events, found love and affection.*

According to the force of their desires they shaped history, “rose above the common herd,” and by the same measure of their acts “found love and affection.” What confirms? Their poses, this record of their power, confirm that they shaped events and shaped this image. We do not find testament from the other side. Only the identity of the first part of the statements suggests the possibility of the truth of identity of “rose above the common herd” and “found love and affection.”

These men are not named in this work, except through a general description that we take to apply to them by contingency. In others, names of historical personages, and not images, serve to construct the work and to decompose its assured presence as a sculptural object at the same time. On one table, a plaster cast of a man’s thigh is set against a frame that contains the statement: “A section of Julius Caesar’s left thigh as it appeared when he mounted his horse to cross the Rubicon.” We are referred to an historical figure (Julius Caesar) and an historical event (his crossing of the Rubicon). Within that historical event we are directed to a dramatic moment (the mounting of his horse before...) and given the evidence of the plaster cast (a section of Julius Caesar’s left thigh as it appeared when he mounted his horse to cross the Rubicon).

References such as recorded events (biographical, historical), dates, and proper names all appear in the statement in the work. But of course, this physical evidence, the section of the thigh, is an impossible reference. Since it is a cast whose imprint is unique and contingent to what imprinted it, it is an index which is a type of reference. But it is not a reference according to the statement whose proper referent would be Julius

Caesar. While the language reference refers us to another time and place, or to another book, this thigh *dislocates* this piece. As an index, it is here; as a reference, it is connected to an elsewhere. A mere name disturbs. But this thigh is no conceptual disturbance; it is actually there in front of us.

By cutting into the continuity of Ian Carr-Harris's work, this dislocation has turned against me. Initially I thought to take this exhibition as an episode and example of my thesis on reference in Canadian art. With all its logical problems and theoretical shortcomings, I thought of reference as the possibility of a vehicle, a relay or tie to the real. A reference refers outside itself; that is its potential. This sculpture from the early seventies seemed on that way. But we find here, instead, that reference (by name or description, language or photograph) is only one form of classification, a classification of types more than particular things, not a tie to those things themselves. How could I think to attach the sculptural object to a particular thing or event by means of a reference? Unless it was statuary, which it is not. Nonetheless, the original security of sculpture or statuary is not certain here. Language and photography infiltrate this sculpture's objecthood, so that its presence (and singular statuary reference) is no longer simple. Not only has it been split by language, it has been complicated by reference. Reference directs us from one place to another. An original place and presence is deferred by this division of place. Though we are in that place, we too register that division. Even in its failure, then, reference contributes to the critique of presence, a presence maintained by modernist and phenomenological formalisms alike. The failure of the referential value of the proper name falls back upon Carr-Harris's sculpture and denies its self-presence and self-proximity and any proper analogue of our presence to its.

This sculpture is an object that is a presentation, representation, and reference all at the same time — or rather, at deferred moments. Language and photography are those means of reference that seem to undermine the self-contained, existential presence of the sculpture, both by the fact that they are other than sculpture and by the fact that they are referential — that is, they point away from it. Another figure intervenes in this situation, to make it a situation: the body of the viewer, which bound to the work is of the order of an event, with its own history and contingency.

We are tied to that situation for a duration, as with minimalist sculpture. Our presence there, however, is not as secure as minimalist temporalization made it out to be. As we stand as an "I" to this work, so we should note that the personal pronoun is both conventional and existential; it has a proper use each time it is used in speech. The particularity and contingency of our situation there could give the work's reference, or reference in general, a reality. But, by the evidence of this work, we have not found reference to be secure: it is split. Initially pointing away, it returns to the sculpture and returns us to our space in front of it. This is both an event and a structure of identity, but identity is split in this temporal movement. Both presence and reference are divided; presence is delayed as much as references are cut off and events deferred. Splitting that space may undermine that sculpture's presence as well as our own, but

splitting produces a spatializing and temporalizing that could only be considered as sculptural. Remaining sculpture under these terms undermines sculpture's original presence and identity, as well as our own and the artist's. We should remember, however, that we too are a disturbance to that sculpture's presence. We are the possibility of a relay to its references. As reference points away from and returns to the sculpture, it points to us: we may be its referent.

There are no titles to these works. They are referred to simply by abbreviating the text to its first few words. Neither does the artist stand to these works. He is detached from them if we accept the logical consequences of this use of reference. Neither the work nor the exhibition can be secured under the name of the artist. This name abbreviates to an "I" in another language, "ICH," but it too is split in doubling: "Carr-Harris." Announced by this name, the exhibition cannot take place under it. As much as the exhibition is referred to a space ("Carmen Lamanna Gallery, Toronto") and a time ("September 22 – October 11, 1973"), it cannot be classified and take a place. Paradoxically, it cannot take place.

This essay first appeared in *Vanguard*, 12:9 (November 1983), pp. 18-21.

NOTES TO HISTORY, SEXUALITY, OTHERNESS

1. John Murchie, "Ian Carr-Harris," *Criteria*, 4:1 (Spring 1978), pp. 8. See also Mayo Graham, *Another Dimension* (Ottawa: National Gallery of Canada, 1970); and Ann Pollock, *Confrontations* (Vancouver: Vancouver Art Gallery, 1979) for interviews pertinent to works in this exhibition.

2. "...I have never really been that interested in the formal aspects of artmaking. A formally beautiful painting or a formally interesting sculpture is always delightful to me, I am not blind to visual interplay. It's just that I personally have never been interested in pursuing that in my work, except as it is necessary to produce a competent object. A competent object obviously requires a certain commitment to its logical structure. But I'm subserving that structure to the intellectual structure that refers to the way we think about things, the way people interact, rather than the introspective reactions that they have towards natural or visual phenomena. I have therefore been interested in the way people challenge each other. I'm interested in making an embodiment of that and discussing it not verbally, of course, but discussing it as art. The concrete objects which are made refer to those things. And that involvement is so general that it hasn't changed at all. What may have changed is the way I have of achieving them. It has a lot to do with presentation. Art is a matter of both presentation and content. The presentation of an idea often has a lot to do with defining that idea, and I've recently been investigating a broader range of presentation methods that in themselves refer to social structures." Murchie, p. 8. "A final note about the matter of content (a professional art term): my work is about the general implications for our perception and conception of things; or (the same thing only easier to relate with), the specific decisions and definitions we use in attempting to cope with our daily lives. What may appear to be specific content in my work is specific simply as a matter of form, not content." Graham, p. 21.

3. Another work drawn from newspaper sources was *The fully clothed body*, 1973 which consisted of the following framed text: "The fully clothed body of Shirley A, 20, of Longeuil was found at the rear of an apartment building one street down from her own Oct. 3."

4. Text by Ian Carr-Harris, Elke Town, *Fiction* (Toronto: Art Gallery of Ontario, 1982), n.p.

5. "Narrative sentences... give descriptions of events under which the events could not have been witnessed, since they make essential reference to events later in time than the event they are about, and hence cognitively inaccessible to observers." Arthur C. Danto, *Narration and Knowledge* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1985), p. xii.

6. Unacknowledged quotations by Ian Carr-Harris are from conversations with the author, 18 and 27 May 1988.

7. See "Staging Language, Presenting Events, Representing History," pp. 63-69, for an earlier view of this exhibition that pursued the logic of the problems of reception to its consequences.

8. Carr-Harris has said of *Pink Empire* that "it has that kind of arbitrary definition that an empire has.... Empires are particularly interesting to me... everything is much more at stake, and it is also much more ridiculous – the absurdity is enhanced by the power that is in that situation." *Empire Piece* "was conceived with the idea of gross grandiloquence in mind – the kind of overblown self-importance for which the Romans were known and loved. It makes use of very heavy mouldings... which have no real reason for being there... and the legs are extremely heavy and elaborately turned, and they're all different. I didn't want it to be identified with furniture so much as with arbitrary shape,

although it works as furniture of course, in an odd sense.” Ian Carr-Harris quoted in Graham, pp. 14, 15.

9. Graham, p. 14.

10. “My work has always dealt with the intimate relations between the physical and intellectual world: physicality and conceptual awareness. I’m primarily interested in the interconnections of those two dichotomous states.

“Caesar’s thigh attempted to bridge a lot of those states we encounter when we read and form definitions, and encounter other people and form definitions as a result of that. In simple terms, the work consisted of a table on which was placed a plaster cast of a male thigh. The male thigh included the body hair from the person the cast was taken from. And doing so, therefore, leapt between references to classical statuary and to the physicality of a real person. Then the title, of course, completes that whole cycle of reference and places it firmly in the world of historical knowledge. Historical knowledge being for me – at the time, anyway – a prime example of what we know but never experience, part of the world we inhabit but don’t actually touch, because we weren’t there when Caesar crossed the Rubicon. We only have it on faith, as with most things.” Merike Weiler, “Interview with Ian Carr-Harris,” *The Art Post* (June/July 1984), pp. 28-29.

11. On the sculptural nature of this work, see Carr-Harris’s comments on *I am the Queen of England*: “With the hint of infinite repetition in the rhyme, with the use of photographic documentation, and with the use of a title which is simply the first line of the work itself, the piece occupies a position somewhere outside the two dimensional physical restrictions and approaches sculpture, and beyond sculpture, on theatre, and beyond theatre, on normal reality, perceived now from a position of detached involvement.” Ian Carr-Harris, *Parachute* 1 (Oct./Dec. 1975), p. 30.

12. For a fuller discussion of these works see “Staging Language, Presenting Events, Representing History, pp. 63-69.”

13. The photograph, a French photographer’s record of Chinese torture, has its source in Georges Bataille’s *Les larmes de l’Eros* (Paris: Jean-Jacques Pauvert, 1961).

14. “Throughout all my activities there is an interest in analysing ordinary structures into basic elements, and in my work especially, an interest in the implications of this within the context of art. Or more simply, an interest in details and the assumptions underlying concepts; details which allow us to see things not intended or not ‘significant.’ Insignificant things offer room for manoeuvre and definition beyond the limits of their original context, and it is within the analytical and expressive power of art to objectify these elements into persuasive conceptual and sensual language, using in the process simply the ordinary elements of normal reality.” Ian Carr-Harris, “Ian Carr-Harris,” *Parachute*, p. 30.

15. Murchie, p. 7.

16. Sigmund Freud, “Fetishism,” *On Sexuality* (Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1977), pp. 352, 354-55.

17. The same play between categories that can be both universal and particular or contingent, which we find in such a piece as *Nov. 26, 1966*, also appears in the relation between an individual and mass produced commodities.

18. The text elided from Pollock is: “Women (and I’m not talking so much in terms of current developments in society’s awareness of problems arising from this) have largely operated in our tradi-

tional culture as a power vacuum. Generally they have been outside the power structure and consequently have developed a kind of parallel internalized structure. Most male structures are associated with social and political power and less so with individual need. Women, much more than men, are simply human beings out on a limb, as it were, out on society's limb trying to survive as real people – not as centres of power. If you are in a vacuum you have a different perspective than if you're trying to fill a vacuum."

19. "The phrase which forms the title is central to the process of social definition and therefore to popular morality. The phrase is used as a presumptive – it presumes that the person addressed *does* not know what is meant, and if not, then he or she can be eliminated automatically from consideration, or defined as hostile. So it's a key device operating directly on people's relationship with society – how they are perceived and defined. By using the phrase to title the work, the distance it implies is carried over into the definition of the relationship between the work and the audience, and the somewhat ironic detachment resulting from this extension is important for maintaining the elements of abstraction (or if you prefer, analytical structures) which give the work a particular tension – a quality neither of reality nor explicitly of fantasy..." Ian Carr-Harris in Pollock.

20. "Sculpture offered a kind of clumsiness, a kind of clunkiness, a kind of physicality; and let's think of that as linked to perhaps a deep suspicion, on a quite different level, a very personal level, of sexuality as ideal and the body as a transcendental seductive object. With sculpture I found kindred sense to my own sense, my own rather amorphous sense, that the idea of the body or the idea of sexuality, and by extension identity, had a transcendental quality was a deeply misleading and ultimately self-destructive understanding. The frankness of engagement of sculpture seemed to me similar to what in a sense I was beginning to get an understanding of in reading about women's experience of sexuality and physicality that seemed to me quite different from men's." Author's interview with the artist.

Principle Exhibitions 1972 - 1977

1972

Carmen Lamanna Gallery
September 16 - October 5, 1972
(Group Exhibition)
Empire Piece 1971
Nancy Higginson, 1949- 1971
November 25, 1966 1971
Names 1972
Fred 1972

1973

Carmen Lamanna Gallery
September 22 - October 11, 1973
The fully clothed body 1972
Pink Empire 1972
A section of Julius Caesar's left thigh 1973
The expression 1973
Quick! he said 1973
The victim displayed 1973
Come a bit closer 1973
I thought I'd better not 1973
Two men confirming 1973
Mussurongo types 1973
Wendy Sage, being compared 1973
A man illustrating 1973
I am the Queen of England 1973

1975

Carmen Lamanna Gallery
April 26 - May 15, 1975
"The Violin Lesson" by Balthus 1974
A Thing of Beauty 1974
About relating elegance and aesthetics 1974
La plume de ma tante 1975
The Cameraman and the Farmer 1975
My own Diorama 1975

1976

Carmen Lamanna Gallery
January 10-29, 1976
It's simply a matter of the Right Decision 1976
The question of a performance 1976

1977

Carmen Lamanna Gallery
November 19 - December 8, 1977
If you know what I mean 1977
But she taught me more 1977
and the fritters were sublime 1977
It's just a bit of fluff 1977

Chronology

1941	Born in Victoria, British Columbia	1981	Carmen Lamanna Gallery
1959-63	Studied Modern History, Queen's University	1982	Yajima/Galerie, Montreal
1963-64	Studied Library Science, University of Toronto		Dalhousie Art Gallery, Dalhousie University, Halifax
1967-71	Studied Sculpture, Ontario College of Art		The Gallery, Scarborough College, University of Toronto
1970-71	Member of the Board of Directors, A Space	1983	49th Parallel, New York
1972-	Director of Library Services, Ontario College of Art	1984	Carmen Lamanna Gallery
1975-	Instructor in contemporary art theory and practice, Ontario College of Art	1985	Carmen Lamanna Gallery
1976-	Member of the Royal Canadian Academy	1986	Carmen Lamanna Gallery
1981-82	Member of Board of Directors, A Space	1987	Carmen Lamanna Gallery
1983-87	Member of the Board of Directors, The Power Plant		London Regional Art Gallery, London, Ontario
1988-	Chairman, Department of Experimental Art, Ontario College of Art	1988	Carmen Lamanna Gallery
	Solo Exhibitions		Selected Group Exhibitions
1971	A Space, Toronto	1970	Nightingale Gallery, Toronto
1972	Nova Scotia College of Art and Design, Halifax		<i>Concept 70</i> , Nightingale Gallery, Toronto
	Carmen Lamanna Gallery, Toronto	1974	<i>Investigations</i> , Mount Allison University, Sackville, N.B.
1973	Carmen Lamanna Gallery		<i>Contemporary Ontario Art</i> , Art Gallery of Ontario
1975	Carmen Lamanna Gallery	1975	<i>9e Biennale de Paris</i> , Musée d'art moderne, Paris
1977	Carmen Lamanna Gallery	1976	<i>Forum '76</i> , Montreal Museum of Fine Art
1979	Carmen Lamanna Gallery		Galerie Media, Montreal
	Carmen Lamanna Gallery	1977	<i>Another Dimension</i> , National Gallery of Canada
			<i>Transparent Things</i> , Canada Council travelling exhibition

- 1978 *Kanadische Künstler*, Kunsthalle,
Basel, Switzerland
- 1979 *Confrontations*, Vancouver Art
Gallery
- 1980 11th International Sculpture
Conference, Washington, D.C.
- 1981 *Canada in Birmingham*, Ikon
Gallery, Birmingham, U.K.
Realism: structure & illusion,
Macdonald Stewart Art Centre,
University of Guelph
- 1982 *Drawings by Contemporary Sculp-
tors*, Surrey Art Gallery, Surrey, B.C.
Fiction, Art Gallery of Ontario.
- 1983 *From Object to Reference*, Carmen
Lamanna Gallery, Toronto – curated
by Philip Monk
- 1984 *41st Biennale*, Venice
Vestiges of Empire, Camden Art
Centre, London, U.K.
- 1985 *Aurora Borealis*, Montreal
- 1986 *Luminous Sites*, Western Front and
Video Inn, Vancouver
- 1987 *Toronto: A Play of History/Jeu
d'Histoire*, The Power Plant, Toronto
documenta 8, Museum
Friedericianum, Kassel, West
Germany

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tors*, Surrey Art Gallery, Surrey, B.C.
Fiction, Art Gallery of Ontario.
- 1983 *From Object to Reference*, Carmen
Lamanna Gallery, Toronto – curated
by Philip Monk
- 1984 *41st Biennale*, Venice
Vestiges of Empire, Camden Art
Centre, London, U.K.
- 1985 *Aurora Borealis*, Montreal
- 1986 *Luminous Sites*, Western Front and
Video Inn, Vancouver
- 1987 *Toronto: A Play of History/Jeu
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Exhibition List

- 1 *Nancy Higginson, 1949- 1971*
Painted wood, typed index cards, black and white photograph
135.3 x 47.0 x 51.0 cm
Carmen Lamanna Gallery
- 2 *Nov. 25, 1966 1971*
Wood, framed leterset text, rope
254.0 x 42.0 cm
Carmen Lamanna Gallery
- 3 *Fred 1972*
Painted wood, glass, leterset, paper
144.5 x 61.5 x 57.3 cm
Art Gallery of Ontario, Purchase, 1985
- 4 *Pink Empire 1972*
Painted wood, graphite, metal
56.0 x 73.0 x 9.0 cm
Carmen Lamanna Gallery
- 5 *A section of Julius Caesar's left thigh 1973*
Stained wood table, hair, plaster, framed text
122.0 x 72.0 x 53.0 cm
National Gallery of Canada/Musée des beaux-arts du Canada
- 6 *The expression 1973*
Stained wood table, framed leterset text, paint
127.0 x 125.1 x 34.3 cm
The Queen's Silver Jubilee Art Collection, on loan to the Art Gallery of Ontario, 1977
- 7 *Quick! he said 1973*
Stained wood table, framed black and white photograph, leterset
138.5 x 54.5 x 54.5 cm
Collection of Carmen Lamanna
- 8 *The victim displayed 1973*
Stained wood table, framed black and white photograph and leterset text
132.5 x 54.5 x 54.5 cm
Carmen Lamanna Gallery
- 9 *Two men confirming 1973*
Framed tinted photographs, leterset
58.4 x 43.2 each
Art Gallery of Ontario, Gift from the Peggy Lownsbrough Fund, 1985
- 10 *Mussurongo types 1973*
Framed coloured photographs, leterset
36.2 x 43.3 each
Collection of Carmen Lamanna
- 11 *Wendy Sage, being compared 1973*
Framed black and white photographs, leterset
31.0 x 61.7 cm
Collection of Carmen Lamanna
- 12 *A man illustrating 1973*
Framed tinted photographs, leterset
60.8 x 60.8 cm each
Collection of Carmen Lamanna
- 13 *I am the Queen of England 1973*
Framed tinted photograph, leterset
47.2 x 47.2 cm
Collection of Carmen Lamanna
- 14 *La plume de ma tante 1974*
Painted wood table with china demi-tasse
106.0 x 88.0 x 57.5 cm
Carmen Lamanna Gallery

- 15 *About relating elegance and aesthetics* 1974
 Painted wood, glass, leterset
 76.2 x 121.9 x 91.4 cm
 Collection of the Canada Council Art Bank/
 Collection de la Banque d'oeuvres d'art du
 Conseil des arts du Canada
- 16 *"The Violin Lesson" by Balthus* 1974
 Painted wood, photographs, leterset
 139.7 x 83.2 x 62.2 cm
 Collection of the Canada Council Art Bank/
 Collection de la Banque d'oeuvres d'art du
 Conseil des arts du Canada
- 17 *A Thing of Beauty* 1974
 Painted wood, 16 mm projector, 1-1/2 minute
 colour film
 Screen: 228.0 x 22.0 cm; stand:
 152.5 x 81.5 cm; stand with projector:
 170.5 x 72.0 cm
 Carmen Lamanna Gallery
- 18 *If you know what I mean* 1977
 Painted wood, glass, cast metal letters,
 photograph, dress, light
 193.0 x 127.0 x 368.0 cm
 Carmen Lamanna Gallery
- 19 *But she taught me more* 1977
 Metal, painted wood, fibreglass mannequin,
 clothing, spotlights, motor
 162.0 x 262.0 x 154.0 cm
 Carmen Lamanna Gallery
- 20 *Whatever you do* 1977
 Framed black and white photograph, leterset
 79.0 x 79.0 cm
 Carmen Lamanna Gallery

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