

**Vol. 2 Issue 4 — November-December 2008**

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"There is no retirement for an artist, it's your way of living so there is no end to it" (Henry Moore)

## RESEARCH HIGHLIGHTS

**Renate Wickens,  
Fine Arts Cultural Studies Program**

By Viktoria Mirtchevsky

Harnessing image, sound and memory to find the greatest of atrocities in the seemingly innocuous present is the goal of *Reflections of the Unimaginable; a Multimedia Rendering of Three Cities Hosting the Holocaust*, a multimedia project by York professors Seth Feldman, Renate Wickens, and Don Sinclair, and their Ryerson University colleague, Professor Bruce Elder. Funded by a three year SSHRC Research Creation Grant, the project examines a contested sense of place existing in German and Austrian towns – Dauchau, Brandenburg and Mauthausen - that share the names of the Nazi concentration camps located in or near them. Each of the project participants is creating their own reflections of the towns using a different medium.

"We have two goals," says Feldman, the project's principal investigator. "The first, is to explore the interplay between images of the towns and public displays of language that use the town names, particularly in the form of text from signs, memorial plaques, and other markers that help produce a sense of place. Second, we are investigating whether different senses of place emerge when individuals create their own visions, each using a distinct medium."

The group credits the overall idea for *Reflections of the Unimaginable* to Wickens whose earlier research into a visual history of concentration camp albums led her to extended visits in the cities and towns immediately adjacent to the camps. "I began walking through the city of Dachau and the town of Mauthausen," she recalls "and seeing both visual and linguistic reflections of the camps." Since these initial explorations, Wickens has expanded

her reading of the streets by adapting historical concepts of flânerie to more contemporary applications. She acknowledges that both Dachau and Mauthausen are very different places. But both offer an assortment of unexpected secrets, shocks, and surprises which suggests the very real possibility that the past might be read through the visual culture of its public spaces.

On his part, Feldman will be producing a set of works entitled *Walks, D, M, and B* – for Dachau, Mauthausen and Brandenburg. Each walk will begin at the town's railway station and end at the concentration camp, all shot continuously on an HD digital camera. The microphone on the camera will point backwards rather than forward to enhance the subjectivity of perception. Added to the footage – as text across the screen – will be descriptions of these same walks made by camp survivors. The resulting real time projections – the walks range from one to six kilometres - are intended to transform the now tranquil landscapes with a sense of hesitancy, disorientation and uncertain duration. "What this is all saying, I think, is that we only have our subjective point of view and our own moment in the present with which to frame, find and hopefully not invent the past."

Sinclair's aim is to investigate this tension from a cyclist's perspective, exploring the town of Mauthausen and routes to, from and near the camp. He will process images collected during his own cycling trip to "reveal relationships between town inhabitants and visitors to the camp."

Elder, one of Canada's pre-eminent experimental filmmakers and theorists is making a film in the gardens

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near the village of Brandenburg, where one of the first euthanasia sites was located. He has also filmed gardens near Mauthausen, Sachsenhausen, and Dachau. The footage is being edited to include citations from writings on German gardens and an extended collage technique will be used to juxtapose a reading from Cardinal Galen's

sermon against euthanasia, with speeches by Nazi officials, and variations from the Brandenburg Concertos.

*Reflections of the Unimaginable; a Multimedia Rendering of Three Cities Hosting the Holocaust* is scheduled for completion in 2010.



(Image provided by Renate Wickens, October 2005)

**Carol Anderson,  
Department of Dance**

By Viktoria Mirtchevsky

While Canadian dance is rich in expression and history, Canada's dance literature lacks discourses about the art of choreography. *Choreographic Dialogues*, organized by Professor Carol Anderson from York's Department of Dance, addresses this gap. The project,

which was awarded York's Seminar for Advanced Research, brings together distinguished, practicing, Canadian choreographers, dance educators, historians, curators, professional dancers, and dance writers for an 8 part series of presentations and discussion. Its aim is to

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promote dialogue and more understanding of the dance artist's creative process including how the many facets of culture, tradition, aesthetics and personal artistry influence choreographic choices. The seminar will result in a written collection of dialogues about the art of choreography to be made available on the web sites of both the Department of Dance and *Dance Collection Danse*. Some of the dialogues will also be disseminated through the *Dance Current* magazine.

In *Choreographic Dialogues*, dance writers, historians, ethnographers, and others working in the area of dance studies have the opportunity to hear eminent Canadian dance artists speak about the realization of their visions and ideas in moving bodies. Commentaries will arise from both practical and experimental perspectives, and the choreographers' comments are expected to spark wide ranging discussions of the intersection between theory and practice, which is an important critical focus for both artists and scholars. Many of the seminar's participants are from the Greater Toronto Area. Speakers have been invited to illustrate their presentations with recordings of their creative works, still photographs, music, and live performances.

The first of the *Choreographic Dialogue* took place on September 25<sup>th</sup> with choreographer and dance artist, Susan Cash discussing her site-specific dance work and intercultural collaboration with Azerbaijani dancer/choreographer, Sashar Zarif. The second presentation was given on October 23<sup>rd</sup> by Lata Pada, a Bharatanatyam dancer and choreographer and the artistic director of Sampradaya Dance Creation. Pada discussed concepts of tradition and innovation in her choreographic work. The next *Choreographic Dialogues* will present BaKari Lindsay of the Collective of Black Artists (COBA), who will talk about contemporaneity and tradition within the Afro-Caribbean sources of his choreography. *Choreographic Dialogues* continues through the winter and early spring at York and at several downtown dance venues. Artists will include York dance professor Darcey Callison, Vancouver's Lola MacLaughlin, Santee Smith, the artistic director of Kahawi Dance Theatre, Laurence Lemieux and Bill Coleman.

As a follow up to the *Choreographic Dialogues* series, Anderson is planning a workshop/symposium on dance writing in Canada to be held at York in the summer of 2009.

## David Scadding, Department of Design

By Viktoria Mirtchevsky

Ephemera, the minor print-oriented transient documents of everyday life speak volumes about the needs, wishes and desires of the common folk, even though they are often seen by many as value-less waste. After the intended function of the piece it is usually discarded. But everyone is an Ephemera, a collector, a gatherer either consciously or unconsciously. That match book from your favourite restaurant that is saved as a mnemonic of a wonderful meal with good friends and stored in an old shoe box or the top drawer of your dresser is treasured for reasons other than the intended use of the matches. Ephemera, argues Associate Professor David Scadding from the Department of Design, contain a great deal of sociological, anthropological and cultural significance; just not universally understood value. Rather, people value ephemeral objects for personal, emotive reasons. Scadding's current research on ephemera culminates in an exhibit that runs from November 17<sup>th</sup> to December 16<sup>th</sup>.

Scadding believes that contemporary designers can learn from the craftsmanship, attention to detail, and multi-process printing of ephemeral objects of the past. His research on ephemera and the upcoming exhibit explore some of the meanings and social standards attached to ephemeral materials. His research will contribute to the establishment of an archive that will have the effect of positioning ephemera as a counter balance to the high design collections of the museums and public galleries. The archive will provide a valuable teaching resource of an eclectic mix of mid 1800s to mid 1900s functional communications material.

The exhibit is to be presented on the 4<sup>th</sup> floor of the TELL building inside glass display cases and will consist of Victorian valentines, packaging, bill heads, scraps, fruit crate labels, broadsides, and a selection of his real passion - cigar box labels.

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(Images provided by David Scadding)

**James McKernan,**  
**Department of Theatre**  
 By Viktoria Mirtchevsky

Theatre’s new Assistant Professor James McKernan has begun work on an innovative project that will document visually the technical process of set construction. There are very few resources, says McKernan, that provide information on how to build sets for those starting out in the theatre community. Set construction is learned primarily through apprenticeship. “The material that does exist,” argues McKernan, “provides information on various kinds of set construction in vague terms, or how to design sets, or what standard scenic pieces look like, but not on the techniques used in building or the particular considerations of builders when engineering a design.” This gap in the literature has

encouraged McKernan to engage with this line of research and to create a further resource for the discipline of scenic construction.

His plan is to work with a group of students in the summer of 2009 to document set construction using both video and still images. The information will be uploaded to an interactive website that allows other set builders, artisans and specialists to add to the available information.

The intent behind the web resource is to make the information more current and accessible than a book and to foster knowledge sharing among experts working in the field of set construction and theatre artisan skills.



(Images of Juno Awards set provided by James McKernan)

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## GRADUATE RESEARCH

Graduate student **Mike Cadó**, who also teaches for the Music Department, has recently released a new Jazz CD with his band *Nimmons 'n' Nine...Now: The Mike Cadó Tentet*. Its creation was inspired by the music of *Nimmons 'n' Nine*, a 1950's and 60's jazz ensemble. The CD features scores from the original ensemble along with new arrangements and compositions from members of the new group. The idea for *Nimmons 'n' Nine...Now* was born out of Cadó's research for his Master's Degree. While interviewing Phil Nimmons they became friends and Cadó ended up analyzing a lot of Nimmons' scores for his Master's research. That's when he came up with the idea of forming a band to play some of these compositions. At the beginning they intended only to commemorate the work of Nimmons, but with time the focus shifted and now the ensemble include original works. This unique mix of compositions on the CD creates a balance between the old and the new.

The Tentet includes York's Professor David Mott, baritone saxophone; Anthony Michelli, drums; and

Kelly Jefferson, tenor saxophone. Other non-York band mates include: John MacMurchy, clarinet; Andy Ballantyne, alto saxophone; Jason Logue, trumpet; William Carn, trombone; Andrew Downing, bass; and Tom Szczesniak, accordion. What gave the band the momentum to create the CD was an invitation in 2003 from Toronto's Jazz FM91 to perform in its *Sound of Jazz Concert Series*.

In addition to his work with *Nimmons 'n' Nine...Now*, Mike Cadó has a few other projects on the go. He leads his own blues combo, which has performed everything from Muddy Waters, Robert Johnson, B.B. King, Eric Clapton, Stevie Ray Vaughan and Robert Cray at blues and jazz festivals and events. He also leads *MC & Company*, a musical ensemble which performs at private and corporate functions. And in 2005, Cadó collaborated with jazz vocalist Sherie Marchall to create the CD *The Sweetest Sounds*, a unique interpretation of jazz standards and lesser-known compositions.

## RESEARCH OFFICER'S CORNER

Several reports on Canada's university research income have recently been published and distributed by RESEARCH Infosource Inc., a division of The Impact Group, a major consulting firm specializing in Strategic Planning, Policy Analysis & Development, Research & Evaluation, Communications & Marketing, and Training & Education. The Impact Group's publications are perceived to be authoritative sources of information about research and development in Canadian universities. Among their stat-based reports are: Canada's Top 50 Research Universities; Research Universities of the Year; Top 10 Universities by Growth; and Canada's Top 20 Research Communities.

For the second year in a row, York University has placed 23<sup>rd</sup> on the list of Canada's Top 50 (measured by research dollar totals). Number one on the list is, yes you guessed correctly, the U of T with \$854,759 of sponsored research income in 2007. York earned \$60,906. In 2007, U of T had 2,379 full time faculty members, York had 1,335. This works out to be \$359 per full time faculty member at the U. of T. and \$45 per faculty member at York.

These figures are, almost needless to say, skewed by the difficulties of collecting data about sponsored research income. For example, the grants that our Fine Arts faculty members receive from arts councils is never included in York's report on external funding. Only the grants that are processed through York's Research Accounting office get included. So, this fact is something to keep in mind if the Impact Group's report seems discouraging. To access several of the reports and data follow this link: <http://www.researchinfosource.com/top50.shtml>

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## Janine Marchessault, Department of Film

By Viktoria Mirtchevsky

Film's Associate Professor Janine Marchessault's appointment to the prestigious 5 year position of Canada Research Chair has recently been renewed. Among the many accomplishments receiving recognition is the *Visible City* Project and Archive which addresses urban art practices and such questions as: how do artists contribute to the creation of better cities and how are they reimagining citizenship in a world transformed by mass migration? Marchessault focuses in particular on place-based media art.

'Place based art' takes the place where it unfolds to be a central aspect of its aesthetic form. A new generation of artists has emerged who use new media technologies to explore "translocality," "connectivity" and "mobile networks" as configurations of place. As a program of research the Visible City Project is rooted in the notion that the trans-local is a pivotal element in some of the most innovative forms of urban art and so it focuses on artists whose work communicates across distances in collaborative and political ways.

Marchessault also recently received a SSHRC Research Development Grant for her project *Exploring the Culture of Suburbs: A Case Study of Willowdale, Ontario*, which challenges the assumption that suburbs are homogeneous, uniform places. The suburb of Willowdale in North York was selected because it is one of Toronto's oldest inner suburbs and because it is

known for both its cultural diversity and spatial complexity, being annexed to Highway 401 and as the last stop on the Finch subway line from the downtown.

The methodological framework that the study seeks to develop derives from the Toronto School of Communication and relies on the notion of 'cultural ecology' – culture as a dynamic part of an environment and shaped by interactions between humans and non-human aspects including built and natural elements, urban design, objects, histories and technologies. This approach takes into account the historical and phenomenological complexity of built spaces and uses a variety of audio-visual and new media technologies to carry out studies of individual and interconnected places, daily rhythms, forms of social interaction and patterns of movement across space, cultural events and objects, as well as interviews with appropriate stakeholders, community groups, and cultural policy makers. With this project, Marchessault hopes to lay the foundation for the initiation of a larger, comparative study of the cultures of suburbs in Canada, to recognize the specificities of these spaces, and to increase our understanding of metropolitan cultures in Canada. To see the Visible City website:

[http://www.visiblecity.ca/home/index.php?option=com\\_frontpage&Itemid=1](http://www.visiblecity.ca/home/index.php?option=com_frontpage&Itemid=1)

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The Faculty of Fine Arts prides itself on the research/creation work conducted by its faculty. We often highlight creation projects and other successful research that does not necessarily result in print publications. In this issue, however, we wanted also to highlight projects that have resulted in book or article publications. The following is a list of some recent publications (2007-2008) by our faculty:

- Patrick Alcedo – "Sacred Camp: Transgendering Faith in a Philippine Festival" (February 2007): *Journal of Southeast Asian Studies* v 38 no1 February 2007. p. 107-32
- Carol Anderson – "Unfold: a Portrait of Peggy Baker" (Dance Collection Danse, 2008)
- Heather Hermant – "Lineages, Geographies: A Review of the Canadian Festival of Spoken Word, Toronto", (11-14 October 2006): *Canadian Theatre Review* no130 Spring 2007. p. 116-19
- Sherry Johnson – "Dance in Canada: Contemporary Perspectives" (2008): *Ethnologies* v 30 no1 2008. p. 5-11

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- Dorothy De Val – “Instruments a claviers- expressivite et flexibilite sonore” (November 2007): *Music and Letters* v 88 no4 November 2007. p. 676-80
- Laura Levin – “Views and Reviews” (spring 2008): *Canadian Theatre Review* no134 Spring 2008. p. 68-70
- Laura Levin – “Ethno-Techno” (October 2007): *Theatre Journal* v 59 no3 October 2007. p. 523-4
- Laura Levin – “Views and Reviews” (Spring 2007): *Canadian Theatre Review* no130 Spring 2007. p. 108-9
- Marlis Schweitzer – “Assuming the whore Position: Theatrical Performance and Prostitution” (Spring 2008): *Canadian Theatre Review* no134 Spring 2008. p. 77-9
- Belarie Zatzman – “Fifty-One Suitcases: Traces of Hana Brady and the Terezin Children” (winter 2008): *Canadian Theatre Review* no133 Winter 2008. p. 28-37
- Vera Frenkel – “Pegi by Herself” (Winter 2007): *University of Toronto Quarterly* v 76 no1 Winter 2007. p. 562-4
- Anna Hudson – “Figure ground” (Winter 2007): *University of Toronto Quarterly* v 76 no1 Winter 2007. p. 597-9
- Roch Smith – “Interarts Exegesis” (March/April 2007): *American Book Review* v 28 no3 March/April 2007. p. 23-4

There will be no competition for the Gordon Fellowship for Research this year. The next competition will take place in January of 2010.

## UPCOMING GRANT OPPORTUNITIES

### Internal Grants

<b>For Travel</b>	<b>Deadlines</b>
Dean’s YUFA Travel Fund	3 weeks prior to departure
Ad Hoc Grant for Travel to conferences	December 15
SSHRC Grant in Aid of Travel	February 1
CUPE Contract Faculty Conference Travel Fund	March 1
Ad Hoc Grant for Travels	March 15
<b>For Research</b>	
Professional Development of Contract Faculty	December 1
Seminar in Advanced Research	January 9
YUFA Sabbatical Leave Fellowship	January 15
FFA Minor Research-Creation Grant	January 15
Specific Research Grant, non-Leave	February 1
Specific Research Grant, Leave	February 1
CUPE Contract Faculty Research Grants Fund	March 1
SSHRC Small Grant	March 31

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## External Grants

Agency: SSHRC, [www.sshrc-crsh.gc.ca](http://www.sshrc-crsh.gc.ca)

Program	Agency Deadlines
Strategic Knowledge Clusters	November 20
Major Collaborative Research Initiatives (MCRI)	January 31

Agency: Canada Council, [www.canadacouncil.ca](http://www.canadacouncil.ca)

Music Touring Grant	December 1
Theatre Touring and Special Initiatives Program	December 1
Assistance to visual Artists: Project Grants	December 1
Media Arts Commissioning Program	December 1
Opera/Music Theatre Program: Project Funding	December 1
International Touring Assistance in Music	December 1
Theatre Presenting Program: Festival Co-Production Assistance	December 1
Book Publishing Support: Author Promotion Tours	December 15
Travel Grants to Professionals in Visual Arts	January 1
Professional Choir Program	January 15
Commissioning of Canadian compositions	January 15
Residencies for Composers and Conductors	January 15
Grants to Dance Professionals	February 1
Professional Orchestra Program	February 1
Music Project Grants: Artists and Community collaboration Program	February 1
Assistance to culturally Diverse Curators for Residencies in the Visual Arts	February 1
Music Festival Programming Project Grants	February 15
Music Festival Travel Grants	February 15
Grants to Film and Video Artists	March 1
Grants to New Media and Audio Artists: Research and Production Grants	March 1
Grants to New Media and Audio Artists: New Media Residencies	March 1
Grants to Professional Musicians: Classical Music	March 1
Grants to Professional Musicians: Non-Classical Music	March 1
Aboriginal Peoples Music Program	March 1
Theatre Production Project Grants: Established Artists	March 1
Theatre Production Project Grants: Artists and Community collaboration Program	March 1
Multi-Year and Annual Operating Grants to Professional Theatre Organizations	March 1
Assistance to Contemporary Fine Craft Artists and curator: Project Grant	March 1

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Assistance to Contemporary Fine Craft Artists and curator: Long-Term Grants	March 1
Jean A. Chalmers Fund for the Crafts	March 1
Production Project Grants in Dance	March 15
New Music Program: Project Funding	March 15
Travel Grants for Inter-Arts Professionals	Any Time
Travel Grants to Media Arts	Any Time
Travel Grants for Professional Musicians	Any Time
Travel Grants to Theatre Artists	Any Time
Travel Assistance to Theatre Artistic Directors, Administrators and Presenters	Any Time

Agency: Ontario Arts Council, [www.arts.on.ca/index.aspx](http://www.arts.on.ca/index.aspx)

Exhibition Assistance	July 08 – February 09
Artists in Education	November 17
Chalmers Professional Development Grant	December 1
Popular Music	December 1
Visual and Media Arts Projects	December 15
Theatre Projects	February 2
Culturally Diverse Dance Training Projects	March 16
Media Arts Festivals Projects	March 16
Opera/Music Theatre	March 16
Orchestras	March 16
Touring and Collaborations	March 16
Theatre's Creator's Reserve	Any Time

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