

xDX

We're excited to let everyone know what we've been doing since the May Workshop and what's coming up...

01/10/24

Volume 02



Samson-Dominion
Hairsetter Ten-Ten (c.1960s)
Glenn Moffatt

01

WORKSHOP II

Thanks to all the xDX Project partners, co-applicants, collaborators, and RAs who took part in Workshop II this past May in Ottawa and Gatineau. It was an energizing 3-day event held at Carleton University and the Canadian Museum of History. If you haven't already sent copies of your presentations (and are willing to share them), please do so, by either uploading directly to the Workshop II folder in Teams or emailing to Aviva. Minutes of the Workshop II meetings can also be found in the xDX Project Teams or here.

02

NEW HIRES

Armand Caloumenos is a second-year MA student in the Art and Architectural History program with specialization in Digital Humanities. He has a keen interest in design history and is carrying out a practicum placement in the AVRC this semester.

Dylan Chatelier is a fourth-year student in the History and Theory of Architecture program and has been working closely with Romy Poletti on the xDX collection data at Carleton.

Siah McTavish is joining us in January as the 2025 xDX-Public History placement student. They're a fourth-year undergraduate student in Visual Art and Art History at York University. In summer 2024, Siah worked as an assistant registrar at the Art Gallery of York University, contributing to research and exhibition development.

Shriya Mujumdar has joined the xDX Project as an undergraduate RA at York University. A fourth-year Design student, she will be responsible for the design and strategic alignment of the xDX Project's digital communications including the xDX websites and social media accounts.

Matt Piaskoski is a third-year student in Interactive Multimedia and Design program within the Bachelor of Information Technology. He has been working closely with Nancy at the AVRC to refine the backend of Collective Access.

Rosalind Sweeney-McCabe is a first-year MA Student in Art History and Visual Culture at York University. She joined the xDX Project in May and has played a critical role in cleaning and reconciliation activities at YU. Rosalind is already very familiar with the xDX collection, having interned at the ROM assisting with cataloguing of ROM's DX materials while an undergraduate student at McGill University.



Wearever Drip Coffee Pot
990 (1947) Jack S. Luck

CANADIAN MUSEUM OF HISTORY INTERNSHIP

This summer saw the first of two internships as part of the xDX Project (next summer's will be at the Archives of Ontario). MDes student and RA, Dhatri Gunupudi, worked with Joanne Stober at CMH from May to August. The internship involved a variety of projects and activities, including data reconciliation, developing a finding aid for archival material, and conducting site visits. The hybrid internship required working in the library and archives room, exploring the museum, and working remotely.

One of the primary projects was reconciling CMH's data sheet, which was a compilation and product of all the objects CMH received from the Design Exchange in Toronto. This project involved extensive work in cleaning data, importing it into the model, fact-checking it against the original Design Exchange spreadsheet, and reconciling the data using OpenRefine software. Dhatri collaborated with York University RA (and MA student), Rosalind Sweeney-McCabe, who was simultaneously cleaning and reconciling xDX data at the Royal Ontario Museum. Each institution's data was input into a model designed by LINCS and the xDX team. Dhatri and Rosalind also created a URI bank to track the identifiers being used. Materials, techniques and work types were sourced from Getty; people and groups from Liberty of Congress and VIAF; and Nomenclature for classifications.

Roo Chair (c. 1970)
Thomas Lamb



As part of the internship, there was an opportunity to examine the design collection artefacts. Joanne and Dhatri spent an afternoon viewing and identifying artefacts in the collection, noting prototypes, final models, similar items, sets, and intriguing artefacts. They took notes on potential themes for a future exhibit and considered how artefacts could support the themes and topics the museum wanted to explore. As a design student, Dhatri approached the artefacts from the perspective of their use cycles and ergonomics/human factors, contemplating how these aspects could be represented in an exhibit. Whether by creating an exhibit that resembles the post-war era, explaining the evolution of industrial design and designed objects, or paying homage to the Design Exchange itself, the main goal of the exhibit will be to demonstrate to the public Canadian industrial design history and to showcase the design process.

The second project at CMH focused on creating a finding aid for all xDX archival materials located in the library and archives room. The collection includes 16 archival boxes, containing information on the lives, projects, and affiliations of designers working during the post-war era, as well as related design firms and manufacturers. She created the finding aid at the file level, using a template provided by the museum.

However, upon further review of the material, it became evident that each file contained vastly different and specific information, ranging from correspondence letters to design briefs and from sketchbooks to photographs. The finding aid was adjusted to include details and summaries at the item level, aimed at making it easier for researchers to locate relevant items and information.

This project was linked to a supplementary research spreadsheet, a compilation of designers, design firms, and manufacturers from the post-war era. The spreadsheet, created by Stefanie St. Jean, was based on the personal information and biographies of designers and organisations provided to the museum by the Design Exchange. Dhatri was tasked with adding any relevant information from the archives to this spreadsheet and citing sources. In addition to adding biographies from the archives, other sources were consulted, including biographies from *Design in Canada: Fifty Years From Teakettles to Task Chairs*, by Rachel Gotlieb and Cora Golden, company profiles, and the Ontario Business Registry. This spreadsheet will be returned to CMH's team for fact-checking before being imported into KS, CMH's collections database and the xDX ResearchSpace. The project was crucial in starting to link archival material with objects in the collection, as there is provenance and biographical information in the archives that were relevant to designed objects within the collection.

04

COMPLETED ACTIVITIES

Artefacts on the Move...

In August 2024, the majority of the xDX artefacts housed in Carleton University's Azrieli Pavilion were moved to the Audio-Visual Resource Centre (AVRC) in the St. Patrick's Building. This move has provided a more secure yet accessible home for them. Also, as part of the reconfiguration of space in St. Pat's, glass cabinets were installed and a small exhibit of xDX artefacts was designed and installed by Romy Poletti and our new undergrad RA at Carleton, History and Theory of Architecture student Dylan Chatelier.

As part of the moving, re-boxing, and reorganizing of artefacts, several objects were transferred between Carleton and York, resulting in students at both universities having access to a greater range of object types. Now, the York Collection holds several more of the Fred and Glenn Moffatt artefacts and prototypes referenced in the Moffatt fonds. Carleton received three radios from York to add to its collection and General Electric and Lady Torcan Hairdryers were exchanged so that each is now in its proper case.

Collective Access

The new collections management system for AVRC in the School for Studies in Art and Culture saw an acceleration in development this summer, thanks to the work of co-op student, Matt Piaskoski. His efforts, not to mention those of Romy, Nancy Duff, and the staff of the AVRC, have meant that Collective Access will be operational this fall term, just in time for Michael's new course, "Arte/facts of Design History".

Clara Thomas Archives and Special Collections

Over the summer, Michael Moir and Matthew Alexander completed the first iteration of mapping the York xDX artefacts into the CTASC collection management system, AtOM. Michael and Matthew also processed and catalogued the Moffatt Fonds. The publication of the xDX artefacts and the Fred and Glenn Moffatt Fonds in the York University Libraries searchable catalogue is forthcoming.

Archival Data Modelling

Working with LINCS and CHIN, Rosalind and Aviva have designed the data model that will be used for the linking of archival materials with the artefact collections across all xDX partner institutions. Creating these connections between partners' archival records and collections will significantly enhance discoverability and future research capabilities.

Northern Electric Clock Radio 5702 (1953)
William J. Doig



05

ONGOING ACTIVITIES

Thanks to the hard work of all the xDX Project RAs, collection data from York, Carleton, ROM, and CMH has been cleaned and reconciled and sent off to LINCS for the first phase of processing and feedback. Moving forward, xDX RAs be integrating xDX archival data into the Archival Data Model developed by Rosalind and Aviva, as well as working on data model refinements to account for similar artefacts held by different partner institutions.

06

EVENTS

We were pleased to co-host the first event of the academic year! The talk by Dr. Magdalena Zdrodowska (Jagiellonian University, Poland) titled "Sound Amplification: Between Effectiveness and Aesthetics" focused on the technological and aesthetic history of the ear trumpet in the nineteenth century. It was co-sponsored by the xDX Project and the Science & Technology Studies Graduate Program. We look forward to more collaborations such as this in future!