

# **msvu art gallery**

Mount Saint Vincent University



**Annual Report 2018 – 2019**

# msvu art gallery

Mount Saint Vincent University  
Halifax, Nova Scotia  
B3M 2J6

## 2018-2019 Annual Report

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Cover image: Christiane Poulin, *Reflections* 2018



## DIRECTOR'S REPORT

It is a strange thing to report on the activities of a year most of which you missed. Perhaps the most notable element of this report is that, for the first time since 1995, it isn't drafted by Ingrid Jenkner, Art Gallery Director. Since July 1994, Ingrid stewarded the MSVU art collection, led the team that kept gallery operations running, and directed a curatorial program that is renowned across Canada. In November 2018, she began her well-deserved retirement. In December, I came into the picture. To say it has been a year of change is an understatement. Ingrid is to be thanked for no less than cultivating a staff that could navigate the turnover so steadfastly.

Were Ingrid drafting this report, I'm sure she would remark on the past year of exhibitions, public programs, and notable moments in the life of the MSVU art collection. But the contents of this report going forward attest to those details, and in that form they are better conveyed.

I can attest, since my arrival, to the successful mounting of Jenn E. Norton's *Slipstream*, and James R Shirley's *Landscapes from the Soul*: a collection of works selected by Ingrid, interpreted in her absence by the artist himself. We ended 2018-2019 with Skawennati's *Teiakwanahstahsontéhrha' | We Extend the Rafters*, a children's exhibition that brought a youthful life to our space. Each of these projects brought in MSVU classes and the broader public alike. In collections, we welcomed a new member to the acquisitions committee, Virginia Stephen, and said thank you to long serving member Susan Gibson Garvey.

Off the floor and inside the gallery offices, we've been talking about our future: about how to keep pushing forward towards a fully accessible gallery that offers a fully accessible visitor experience; about how we raise funds to ensure the resources necessary to keep our outreach initiatives and public programs as vibrant as our exhibition program; and about how we, as a staff, connect with the University and help foster meaningful relationships between the campus community and our public gallery space. We see, in our near future, a blossoming of our community ties and a push forward towards the work of artists who encourage the same.

I thank the Art Gallery staff—David Dahms, Claire Dykhuis, Robyn MacKinnon, Kelsey McLaughlin, and Traci Steylen—for their help in familiarizing me with this organization and its history of good work. Likewise, thank you to Dean of Arts and Sciences Brook Taylor, Academic Vice President and Provost Elizabeth Church, and the entire community here on the Mount who have been so welcoming. I look forward to the many new colleagues and collaborations to come.

With many thanks and all the best,

Laura Ritchie



Director, Art Gallery

## EXHIBITIONS

### Material Remains

Organized by MSVU Art Gallery

Ingrid Jenkner, Curator

26 May – 30 September 2018

Drawn from the MSVU Collection, these works of art incorporated household textiles such as bedding, a tea towel, table linens and discarded clothing. The domestic references were embedded in works whose imagery also engaged with gender politics and world events.

The various artists shared a collage approach to composition, and their works displayed techniques ranging from assemblage, dying, printing and hooking to embroidery, appliqué, stuffing and stitching. Frances Dorsey, Nancy Edell, Svava Juliusson, Leslie Sampson and Anna Torma were the contributing artists. Dorsey's *Shot through the Heart* was a recently acquired fabric assemblage that had not previously been exhibited.



Frances Dorsey, *Shot Through the Heart* 2010 (detail)



### Jane Kidd: Curious

Organized by Kelowna Art Gallery

Liz Wylie, Curator

23 June – 26 August 2018

Kidd is one of Canada's preeminent artists working in textile. She lives in Salt Spring Island. The exhibition encompassed the tapestry series *Curiosities*, *Wonderland*, *Land Sentence* and *Possession*. In nightmarish visions of genetic modification, *Curiosities* depicted parts of various organisms spliced together to form alluring chimeras. The shaped weavings of *Land Sentence* were based on satellite photographs of environmental devastation, executed in the toxic palette of the computer screen. Kidd's commitment to handwork in realizing these images of technology run amok was remarkably apt.

A catalogue with an essay by Amy Gogarty accompanied the exhibition, together with a tapestry fragment for tactile exploration.



Jane Kidd, *Curiosities Series: Pairing #4* 2016

## **"It just brings me closer": Reflections on Memorial Tattoos**

5 May – 29 Oct 2018

This exhibition of photographs was part of a larger study on the meaning and purpose of commemorative tattoos. The photographs represented the initial part of research conducted by the psychology professors Jennifer Buckle and Sonya Corbin Dwyer, Psychology Program, Grenfell Campus, Memorial University of Newfoundland. The study involved twenty-two volunteer participants from Newfoundland. Photographs by Dean Peckfor, Curators

The curators comment:

"Tattoos have become a popular means for people to honour and pay tribute to deceased loved ones. While the research on memorial tattoos is very limited, particularly from a psychological perspective, results suggest they are a way that people can express and process their loss and make this experience visible not only to themselves but also to the public."

The exhibition included quotations from interviews with participants, together with a comments book in which visitors recorded their thoughts and experiences. Having previously toured in Newfoundland, this was the exhibition's first stop off the island.

This exhibition appeared on the main floor of the MSVU library, which is located in the E. Margaret Fulton Centre.



*Eternal August*, photography by Dean Peckfor

## Unpacking the Living Room

Organized by MSVU Art Gallery

Julie Hollenbach, Curator

8 September – 10 November 2018

Living rooms are spaces that we arrange and build around ourselves to support the comfort and wellbeing of the family, to host family and friends, to keep our most beloved and prized belongings, and to play and relax in when we're not working. But living rooms are spaces that are loaded with emotions and history, as well as social and political investments. The kind of living room we create says so much about our background, our values, our social position, and our aspirations. Even the privilege of having a living room speaks volumes when so many people live in precarious situations, are without shelter, or have been displaced from their homes and traditional lands. This collaborative exhibition unpacked the living room over three months by staging a radically re-imagined living room in the gallery space that played host to thoughtful community, craft and art, amateurism and professionalism, leisure and labour, and the private and the political. Through playful and insightful interventions, "Unpacking the Living Room" invited community members to reflect on the histories and ideologies that ground understandings of 'self', 'home', 'belonging,' and 'survance.'



Unpacking the Living Room (installation view) 2018



**Prospect 18: Christiane Poulin. Echoes**

Organized by MSVU Art Gallery

Ingrid Jenkner, Curator

13 October 2018 – 27 January 2019

Exhibitions in the *Prospect* series introduce artists in the early phases of their careers. A retired physician, Poulin recently graduated from NSCAD with a BFA in Textiles and the 2017 Starfish Student Art Award. She lives in Halifax. The woven structures of her site-oriented installation alluded to Brutalist design integrated into a landscape. Viewers were prompted to perceive the analogies between weaving and architecture, in particular the aesthetics of *béton brut*. Like her award-winning *Winds of Change: a Lace-scape*, *Echoes* played with the effects of light and shadow. The components of the installation were touchable. Visitors were invited to interact with a compact four-harness hand-loom in an adjacent room.



Christian Poulin, *Echo 2: Deconstruction* (detail) 2018



**Annual Mount Community Show**

Organized by MSVU Art Gallery

14 November – 9 December 2018

Mount Saint Vincent University students, staff, faculty, alumnae and their families were invited to display their creative work in this annual extravaganza.

**Jenn E Norton: Slipstream**

Organized and circulated by the Robert McLaughlin Gallery

Linda Jansma and Crystal Mowry, Curators

12 January – 3 March 2019

In an otherwise empty gallery space, six reflective panels positioned in an inward-facing ring created channels of infinite regress. A dancing figure in the form of a spiraling flurry of silk moved from one panel to another. As the dancer traversed the ring, it appeared that the viewer and the figure shared the same physical space. Inspired during a residency in Paris, Norton looks to 19th century inventor and modern dance pioneer Loïe Fuller's choreography and costume design as a performative sculptural object.



Jenn E Norton, *Slipstream* 2018

**James R Shirley: Landscapes from the Soul**

Organized by MSVU Art Gallery

9 February – 19 May 2019

*Landscapes from the Soul* presented seven of Jim Shirley's prints from the collections of Mount Saint Vincent University and Dalhousie University. A writer and artist, Shirley moved from New York City in 1972 to Nova Scotia, where he lived in Cape Breton and then Halifax until 1979. Featured alongside his own thoughts and words, Shirley's *Landscapes from the Soul* illuminated personal experience in a way that only an artist's voice can.

Since 1979, Shirley has lived in Rankin Inlet, Nunavut, where he is founder and coordinator of the Matchbox Gallery.



Jim Shirley, *Self Portrait II* 1976

## Skawennati: Teiakwanahstahsontéhrha' | We Extend the Rafters

Organized by Vox

16 March – 5 May 2019

Born in Kahnawa:ke Mohawk Territory, Skawennati created Indigenous virtual environments addressing history, the future and change. *We Extend the Rafters* framed the machinima *The Peacemaker Returns*, a futuristic saga set in 3025, yet firmly rooted in the ancestral Haudenosaunee confederation story. This machinima was an animation-style film produced on the virtual reality platform Second Life. *The Peacemaker Returns* was designed specifically for children aged 5 to 11 but visitors of all ages were invited to explore traditions and imagine the world of tomorrow in this “museum of the future.”



Skawennati, *Teiakwanahstahsontéhrha' | We Extend the Rafters* 2017

## SPECIAL EVENTS

7 May 2018

**WWOS Dinner** Tour of *Maria Hupfield: The One Who Keeps on Giving* and artist talk with Raven Davis followed by dinner, catered by the Gallery in the Faculty Lounge

14 May 2018

**Tour** of *Maria Hupfield: The One Who Keeps on Giving* for Sobeys Art Award jury members, National Gallery of Canada.

23 June 2018

**Artist's Talk** Jane Kidd presented an informal talk about her work followed by a relaxed reception.

21 August 2018

**Jane Kidd: Curious & MSVU Community Garden tour**

22 September 2018

**Opening Reception** and performance by Emily Davidson, *Unpacking the Living Room*.

29 September 2018

**Workshop** with artist Carrie Allison. Allison introduced the basics of beading and discussed her current collaborative project *The Shubenacadie River Beading Project* and its sister project *Shubie River*. These projects invited people to map the Shubenacadie River in beadwork, raising awareness about Indigenous sovereignty and land rights in the process.

29 September 2018

**Roundtable Discussion** with El Jones, Sherry Pictou, Lynn Jones and Gloria Ann Wesley for "Unpacking Colonialism and Environmental Racism in Halifax" a roundtable discussion of these topics and the destruction and displacement of the communities of Turtle Grove and Africville. The discussion was followed by a relaxed reception and refreshments in the gallery, sponsored by the MSVU Nancy's Chair in Women's Studies.

3 October 2018

**Workshop** artist Ruth Marsh led a hands-on workshop, using deceased bees and retro-electronic components, to learn how environmental change is affecting delicate bee ecology.

13 October 2018

**Opening Reception** *Prospect 18: Christiane Poulin. Echoes*.

20 October 2018

**Performance** WORK OUT|WORK OUT was a two-phase collaborative performance piece by Julie Hollenbach and Gambletron challenging idealized feminine gender performance through an immersive theatrical romp that included culinary sculpture, hobby craft kitsch, and a multi-media dance. The first phase followed a group of friends as they attempt to construct self-portraits. The second phase of the performance saw the friends forgo the arduous task of performing femininity to perfection. Opting instead to glitch, disembody and otherwise intervene in the prescriptive works of mainstream feminine



gurus such as Jane Fonda, Martha Stewart, Sheryl Sandberg, and Iliza Schlesinger. This phase of the performance witnessed the friends' collective embrace of the queer pleasure of gender failure.

21 November 2018

**Opening Reception** *Annual Community Show*.

12 January 2019

**Opening Reception and Artist's Talk** *Jenn E Norton: Slipstream*. The artist presented an informal talk followed by a relaxed reception.

27 February 2019

**An Evening of Poetry and Performance with Kavi Ade**

The Students' Union, the AMI and MSVU Art Gallery were proud to host Kavi Ade for an evening of poetry and performance. Kavi Ade is an activist, arts educator and nationally recognized spoken word poet of Afro & Indigenous Caribbean descent

March 23

**Two Monotype Workshops (9pm-12pm & 1pm-4pm)**

Working with artist David Dahms, participants learned the basics of monotype printmaking, inspired by the exhibition *James R Shirley: Landscapes from the Soul*.

**Coffee Hours** (informal, drop-in, morning receptions)

4 April 2018

9 May

4 July

18 July

9 September

10 October

31 October

21 November

16 January 2019

13 February (canceled due to snowstorm)

20 March

## PUBLICATIONS

**Bodies in Translation: Age and Creativity** 2017

Online catalogue: <http://artintranslation.ca/>

**Unpacking the Living Room** 2018

Online catalogue: <https://www.unpackingthelivingroommsvu.ca/>

**Prospect 18: Christian Poulin** 2018

Brochure, 7 panels, illustrated. Introduction by Ingrid Jenkner

**New Website Launch** 2018

In conjunction with increasing accessibility, MSVU Art Gallery updated our website in 2018. The previous website had been in place since the 1990s and included a searchable database of artists, an innovative component before individual artist websites were commonplace. Although it was a unique

resource for its time, the website required significant updating. The result has been a notable improvement in functionality and design, with additional features to be added in the future.

## **MEDIA RESPONSE**

### **General**

Withers, Paul. "Revenue Canada demotes Halifax sculptor to 'hobby artist' and gives him \$14K tax bill." *CBC* (30 April 2018).

<http://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/nova-scotia/canada-revenue-agency-halifax-artist-sculptor-tax-bill-1.4639086>

Cronin, Ray. "Listening to the Sea: Gerald Ferguson, Marsden Hartley and John Hartman's long conversation." *Visual Arts News* (Fall 2018).

Garvey, Susan Gibson. "In Memoriam: Susan Wood." *Visual Arts News* (Fall 2018).

Parks Canada. "Artists in Residence at Parks Canada Places in Cape Breton." *Government of Canada* (25 September 2018).

<https://www.canada.ca/en/parks-canada/news/2018/09/artists-in-residence-at-parks-canada-places-in-cape-breton.html>

Staff. "News Roundup: Kent Monkman Joins Glenbow Museum Board, and More." *Canadian Art* (21 February 2019).

<https://canadianart.ca/news/news-roundup-kent-monkman-joins-glenbow-museum-board-and-more/>

### **Bodies in Translation**

Smith, Jolee. "Bodies in Translation: Age and Creativity." *Revue d'art canadienne / Canadian Art Review* (2018).

<https://www.racar-racar.com/r---jolee-smith-432.html>

### **Material Remains**

Mullin, Morgan. "Raise a glass to the Weekend with these Sure Things." *The Coast* (24 May 2018).

<https://www.thecoast.ca/TheScene/archives/2018/05/24/raise-a-glass-to-the-weekend-with-these-sure-things>

Cronin, Mollie. "Visual arts review: Jane Kidd's Curious and group show Material Remains at MSVU." *The Coast* (5 July 2018).

<https://www.thecoast.ca/halifax/visual-arts-review-jane-kidds-curious-and-group-show-material-remains-at-msvu/Content?oid=15822894>

Cronin, Ray. "Material Remains: Frances Dorsey, Nancy Edell, Svava Juliusson, Lesley Sampson, Anna Torma." *Studio: Craft and Design in Canada* (Fall/Winter 2018-2019).

### **Jane Kidd: Curious**

Cronin, Mollie. "Visual arts review: Jane Kidd's Curious and group show Material Remains at MSVU." *The Coast* (5 July 2018).

<https://www.thecoast.ca/halifax/visual-arts-review-jane-kidds-curious-and-group-show-material-remains-at-msvu/Content?oid=15822894>

Cronin, Ray. "Curiouser and Curiouser." *Halifax Magazine* (2 August 2018).

<http://halifaxmag.com/blog/curiouser-and-curiouser/>

### **Unpacking the Living Room**

Barnard, Elissa. "Artist uses preserved dead bees to create mini masterpieces." *The Chronicle Herald* (26 October 2018).

<https://www.thechronicleherald.ca/living/the-novascotian/artist-uses-preserved-dead-bees-to-create-mini-masterpieces-253979/>

Mullin, Morgan. "Fall Arts Calendar 2018: Fests, Talks + Films." *The Coast* (20 September 2018).

<https://www.thecoast.ca/halifax/fall-arts-calendar-2018-fests-talks-films/Content?oid=17602861>

Mullin, Morgan. "Have a poppin' weekend with these Sure Things." *The Coast* (18 October 2018).

<https://www.thecoast.ca/TheScene/archives/2018/10/18/have-a-poppin-weekend-with-these-sure-things>

Staff. "Fall Arts Calendar 2018: Visual Arts." *The Coast* (20 September 2018).

<https://www.thecoast.ca/halifax/fall-arts-calendar-2018-visual-arts/Content?oid=17602866>

Staff. "Editor's Picks." *Canadian Art* (13 September 2018).

<https://canadianart.ca/agenda/unpacking-the-living-room/>

### **Jenn E Norton: Slipstream**

"Resurrections: Two new projects reimagine century-old works." *The Dance Current* 21.5 (September/October 2018): 24-31.

### **James R Shirley: Landscapes from the Soul**

Mullin, Morgan. "Lights, camera, weekend!" *The Coast* (28 February 2019).

<https://www.thecoast.ca/TheScene/archives/2019/02/28/lights-camera-weekend>

## Skawennati: Teiakwanahstahsontéhrha' | We Extend the Rafter

Mullin, Morgan. "All the Sure Things you need this St. Patrick's Day Weekend." *The Coast*. (14 March 2019).

<https://www.thecoast.ca/TheScene/archives/2019/03/14/green-guide-all-the-sure-things-you-need-this-st-patricks-day-weekend>

## ART GALLERY PERSONNEL

### Full-Time

Director	Ingrid Jenkner (BA, Toronto; MA, London) Retired November 2018
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December 2018	Laura Ritchie (BA, Mount Allison University; MA, Western University)
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### Part-Time

Administrative Assistant	Traci Steylen (BOAD, MSVU)
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Education & Outreach Coordinator	Claire Dykhuis (BAH, Dalhousie University; BA, Nova Scotia College of Art and Design University; MA, York University)
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Gallery Technician	David Dahms (BFA, Nova Scotia College of Art and Design University; BA, Mount Allison University)
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Gallery Attendants	Robyn MacKinnon Kelsey McLaughlin
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## STAFF ACTIVITIES

**Laura Ritchie** joined the team on December 10, 2018 and has been spending her first few months getting to know both the Mount community and the city of Halifax. She has joined APAGA, UCAGAC, and CAMDO, continuing her membership in AAM. Laura joined the College Art Association and in February attended their annual conference in New York City.

**David Dahms** scaled back his commitments to external group projects and committees and reconnected to his audio visual art practice. David continued as a Steward and a member of The Labour Relations Committee for NSGEU Local 81 at MSVU. David entered his 12<sup>th</sup> year as member of High Hopes Housing Co-op in Halifax. David began a video podcast called "Apropos of Nothing" in 2018, as well as launching a drawing and art based YouTube channel called simply "DAHMS".



**Claire Dykhuis** presented at the Atlantic Provinces Art Gallery Association 2018 symposium about the Gallery's implementation of accessibility and interpretive services. Furthering the Gallery's commitment to accessibility, Claire supervised NSCAD student intern Jolee Smith, who developed a research project on critical disability studies, institutional practices, and disability arts discourses in Canada.

**Ingrid Jenkner (Announcement from Mary Bluehardt, MSVUPresident and Vice-Chancellor)**

I am writing to share the news that Ingrid Jenkner will retire on November 2, 2018 from her role as Director of the Mount Art Gallery, following a 24-year career that is rich with accomplishments.

As Art Gallery Director, Ingrid has managed the University's permanent collection of nearly 800 works, and played an instrumental role in the addition of 300 works to the collection (valued at half a million dollars), the majority of which were acquired through donations from artists.

Some of the most notable exhibitions brought to the Mount Art Gallery under Ingrid's direction include: *Contingent*, 1995; *Queen Looking*, *Queer Acting*, 1997; and several exhibitions of work by Black artists, including *Racing the Cultural Interface*; *Adrian Piper, A Retrospective*; *Jim Shirley Returns*; *Style Council*; *Romare Bearden*; and *Denyse Thomasos*.

In 2017, the exhibition, *Walking With Our Sisters*, a nationally touring commemorative installation conceived by Metis artist Christie Belcourt, honoured missing and murdered Indigenous women, girls and Two-Spirit people. Presented with the support of Indigenous volunteers and Elders, the installation resulted in record-breaking attendance, advancing the university's outreach to Indigenous communities, and bringing healing to bereaved families throughout the Atlantic region.

Between 2009 and 2013, Ingrid organized exhibitions of site-specific installations by Nova Scotian artists, each one winning the Lieutenant Governor of Nova Scotia Masterworks Arts Award. The Mount Art Gallery is the only Nova Scotian arts organization to have presented three winners of this prestigious annual award honouring excellence in all artistic disciplines.

Also under Ingrid's leadership, the gallery served as a launching pad for numerous careers in the arts, and advanced a commitment to accessibility in its presentation practices.

During her role as Art Director, Ingrid was successful in obtaining grants from federal, provincial and municipal sources that made it possible for the art gallery to fund its public programs, fulfill museological standards and operate at a professional level.

Please join us in thanking Ingrid for her tremendous contributions to the Mount and the arts community more broadly, and wishing her all the best that retirement has to offer.

## GRANTS AND REVENUE

### FEDERAL

Canada Council for the Arts Annual Assistance to Museums and Public Galleries	\$78,000.00
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### PROVINCIAL

Arts Nova Scotia Production and presentation for <i>Unpacking the Living Room</i>	7,540.00
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### MUNICIPAL

HRM Project Assistance <i>Oh-Oh Canada*</i>	3,200.00
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<b>Grants Subtotal</b>	<b>\$88,740.00</b>
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### Earned Revenue

Catalogue sales	88.00
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<b>Total</b>	<b>\$88,828.00</b>
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\*Funds received and deferred for 2019-2020 project.



*Material Remains* (installation view) MSVU Art Gallery 2018

# msvu art gallery

## Statement of Purpose

MSVU Art Gallery respectfully acknowledges that the Gallery and Mount Saint Vincent University are situated on Mi'kma'ki, the ancestral, unceded territory of the Mi'kmaq.

Through its exhibitions and programs, the Gallery functions as a visual arts resource for Mount Saint Vincent University, communities served by the University, Metro Halifax residents and art publics everywhere. Admission is always free of charge.

MSVU Art Gallery reflects the University's educational aims by devoting a significant part of its activities to the representation of women as cultural subjects and producers. This program focus is balanced with exhibitions on themes in visual culture which are relevant to university academic programs and/or constituencies served by MSVU Art Gallery. Artists and artisans from the Atlantic region are represented, often in the early stages of their careers. The Gallery is committed to normalizing accessible presentation practices throughout its public programs. These programs are funded in part by the Canada Council for the Arts, and by provincial and municipal agencies.

Since many contemporary artists treat art making as a form of inquiry, the university galleries are uniquely positioned to promote access to their work. MSVU Art Gallery aims to foster informed, critical responses to works of contemporary and historical art, in keeping with its academic setting. Gallery publications, lectures and talks by visiting artists and scholars are announced in the semi-annual Newsletter.

The Gallery encourages interdisciplinary approaches to knowledge, and its exhibitions are used by students and faculty in their course work. In addition, the gallery supports the MSVU Cultural Studies curriculum.

On behalf of the University, MSVU Art Gallery manages a collection of art that reflects priorities set by the exhibition program and the University's mission. Many works can be viewed in the E. Margaret Fulton Communications Centre. The special collection of wares by Nova Scotia ceramicist and Mount alumna Alice Hagen is also displayed on campus





