

## Canadian or Conadian?? EH??

By Peter S. Blundell

I have been watching articles appearing in National Newspapers suggesting that “Canada has become a dumping ground for stolen art” (TheStar.com March 26 2010) by Greg Quill, and “Canada Paints Perfect Landscape for Art-Related Crime, Lawyer says” (Vancouver Sun Sept 15, 2010) by Douglas Quan, “The Woman Who Became a Pariah for What She Said About Bill Reid” (National Post December 17, 2010) by Brian Hutchinson.

The latter article suggested that quite a few people were involved in the production of artworks without credit under Bill Reid’s name. Grace Mooney shared her studios in Vancouver and Granville Island with Bill Reid and has much documentation as to who made what. I first met Grace Mooney when she lived in Vernon and we keep in touch. Reality will unfold in time.

Recently (February 15, 2011) Le Journal De Quebec announced in an article by Eric Thibault that Richard McClintock of St. Roch, Quebec had been charged with allegedly forging 73 paintings and signing them Riopelle, Borduas, Pellan, Cosgrove, Roberts, Vaillancourt, Leduc, Leo Paul Tremble, Jackson Pollock, Marcel Ferron. These paintings had been created and not copied from known pieces.

Surely this alleged forger must be an incredible artist but does not have a following for his own works.

While his trial wends its way through the judicial system, J. Michael Babin has forbidden McClintock to possess the tools to paint pictures or to set foot in an art gallery or browsing internet sites that sell art. He will be back in court in March.

I am following these developments as the outcomes will affect the value of our Canadian art.

While having red faces from embarrassment is not new for Canadians, the thing that worries me the most is that Canada only has a handful of art theft law enforcement specialists housed in Montreal. There are none known in the rest of Canada. The only way for a Canadian who has had art stolen is to register with Canada Customs and the Art Loss Registry. However, Canada Customs will let original art come and go without going through a duty process – so really do not have any interest in even looking at original artworks.

The illicit trade world wide in stolen art is estimated to be \$6 billion (U.S.) a year business without hardly any downside. This makes one think!!!!

If you would like to see a copy of the original articles and have difficulty accessing them through the usual channels, I would be happy to email you a copy.

Peter Blundell  
Independent Antiques Appraiser  
[www.blundellartandantiques.com](http://www.blundellartandantiques.com)  
250-542-4540