Just Playing Mad: Irrationalism in Automatism via Claude Gauvreau

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Abstract: Using the work and aesthetic theories of Claude Gauvreau as both case study and focalizer, my paper will address the aesthetics of madness as it arose in one substantial node of Canadian avant-gardism – the French-Canadian Automatist movement. The Automatists shared the European Surrealist’s strong spirit of unbridled, irrational psychological utopianism, but believed they had surpassed the Surrealists in rejecting representationalism in art (including dream representation). This paper demonstrates how and why the work of the Automatists struggled to enact and unleash an irrational art on an unsuspecting Québécois public.

Surrealism is not a poetic form. It is a cry of the mind turning back on itself, and it is determined to break apart its fetters, even if it must be by material hammers!
 “Declaration of January 27, 1925”¹

[illegible]

Claude Gauvreau, “Jappements à la lune”²

In Claude Gauvreau's outré dramatic objects and poetry, the madness of revolutionary politics is embedded and embodied in a disjunctive aesthetic form. In the 1940s, Gauvreau was a member of Québec's Automatist movement that has received acclaim and notoriety for their intellectual inheritance from the continental European Surrealists as well as for their contributions to the Québécois Quiet Revolution. The Automatists broke from the continental Surrealists, however – going so far as to reject André Breton's personal invitation to participate in the 1947 International Surrealist Exhibition.³ Fernand Leduc explained the minute but fundamental point of distinction

between Montreal's Automatists and the continental Surrealists in a letter to André Breton in January 1948:

Surrealism has wronged art – and especially painting – not in having used it, obviously, but in not knowing how to bridge science and art on the poetic plane, in falsifying the meaning of art by only considering it valuable as proof of something else [...] Surrealism should have distinguished between logical proofs literally expressed in pictorial form and the authentic expression of visually formulated intentions.⁴

The Automatists were primarily concerned with creating aesthetic objects – in painting or drama or poetry or dance – that embodied or was produced through an unfettered Surrealist/Automatist consciousness rather than indirectly expressing or representing Surrealist revolutionary ideas. Irrationalism was an important conceptual focus that the Automatists embraced in order to overcome the limitations of the conscious mind. Thus, they stayed primarily focused on the revolutionary implications of irrational art. The Breton-led continental Surrealists, however, were more committed to social revolution and the function of art in relation to political revolution. Paul-Emile Borduas's lead and eponymous contribution to the infamous *Refus Global* manifesto suite (1948) poignantly and powerfully articulates the need for political revolution in Québec. However, the signatories of the Automatist manifesto believed that if revolutionary politics triggers radical social change *before* the consciousness of the general populace itself has undergone radical change, the revolution will come undone:

You can keep your spoils, rational and premeditated like everything else on the warm bosom of decadence. We'll settle for unpredictable passion; we'll settle for total risk through global refusal [...] history teaches that only a full development of our faculties, followed by a complete renewal of our emotional well-springs, can take us out of this dead end, onto the open road leading towards a civilization impatient to be born.⁵

Implicit in Borduas' polemic is a reminder to contemporary revolutionary avant-gardists of the failure of the rampant idealism of the French Revolution to enact sustainable revolutionary change. In the mid-nineteenth century Baudelaire famously mocked avant-garde artists who advocated revolutionary politics but yet all wore a uniform costume and were not, in his assessment, themselves liberated.⁶ The Automatists, in contrast, aspired to help the people of the world “cast off their useless chains” to “realize their full, individual potential according to the unpredictable, necessary order of spontaneity – in splendid anarchy.”⁷ Their rejection of Surrealism for what they deemed “surrationalism” was less a rejection of the impulse to revolutionize the world than it was a sense of art's role in the revolution.⁸ For Gauvreau, furthermore, it was unconscionable to use art in the service of anything – revolution, capital, or social. In his writing, the madness theme demonstrates his endeavour to create a nonrepresentational but powerful and transformational art. To this end, Gauvreau's use of madness shifts rapidly from trope to aesthetic as part of a broader ambition to unfetter the poetic image – which would, in turn, unfetter the individual, and eventually all of society. The English Canadian experimental poet Steve McCaffery once praised the “infinite theoretical implications” of the nonsense words in Claude Gauvreau's poetry, select texts of which contains only neologistic morphemes strung together for emotive rather than semantic impact.⁹ In a series of letters to Jean-Claude Dussault, Gauvreau offered a defence of his disjunctive writing: “And let's have no stupid objections that certain poems – perfectly materialist and concrete – are hermetic and inaccessible! I can grasp Tzara's poems completely, and if I can do that, anybody is capable of

understanding any poetic reality! Of course they have to clean the mud out of their sensitivities first!”¹⁰ While his writing responded and contributed to the particular Catholic dominated ultra-rationalism of Québécois society at the time, and has been credited as historically influential on the revolutionary transformation of that society, Gauvreau understood his indigestible avant-garde writings to also and perhaps primarily participate in a broader avant-garde tradition from Baudelaire through to contemporary international experimentalists; a tradition focussed on creating a revolutionary art rather than an art of the revolution.

During his lifetime, Gauvreau published three books, including a novel, and many articles and commentaries, but the full wealth of his writing remained generally inaccessible until six years after his death. In 1977, Gauvreau’s collected works were published in a 1,498 page tome *Oeuvres créatrices complètes* in Ottawa. As evidenced by this remarkable document, the range of his writing extends from an early engagement with European Surrealism to more disjunctive non-signifying paralinguistic writings, using what he once described in a letter to Jean-Claude Dussault as “*image exploréenne*,” or a free, explorational use of language.¹¹ All of Gauvreau’s writings, from his first dramatic objects to his later poetry and even his novel, exude a sophisticated conceptualization of the discursive function of language systems in relation to performance and performativity. In this way, his experiments from 1947 to 1971 explore central concerns of the international avant-garde from the late 1960s through to the end of the millennium – a period in which continental French avant-garde authors and philosophers held unprecedented and substantial influence over international, particularly Western artists. In the first major recognition of Gauvreau’s innovation by English Canada, in 1978, Steve McCaffery traced Gauvreau’s aesthetic lineage from early European avant-gardes that explored the sonic potential of poetry:

In Canada, things [sound poetry, in particular] start not with Bill Bissett or bpNichol, but with Montreal Automatiste Claude Gauvreau. Gauvreau, working in the 40s, made structural modifications to French Surrealist ideas, especially the diminishment of pictorial image in favour of what he terms ‘rhythmic images.’ Gauvreau’s work, which bears comparison to Artaud and the Dadaists, is theoretically hermetic – a non-semantic language of pure sound which, however, never dominates in any one text. Rather Gauvreau exploits the tension between familiar and unfamiliar linguistic experiences, thrusting the listener into disturbingly volatile states of alternate comprehension and incomprehension. Gauvreau’s influence, however, has never extended outside Québec (his work, for instance, was a seminal influence of Raoul Duguay) and Anglophone sound poetry does not surface until the early sixties in the work of bpNichol and Bill Bissett.¹²

Though McCaffery highlights the provincial nature of Gauvreau’s reputation and influence, it is worth noting that he also credits Gauvreau for being the immediate and logical precursor to the wildly experimental and internationally influential English Canadian avant-garde that erupted in Vancouver and Toronto in the 1960s and 70s. In a lineage shaped by innovative aesthetics rather than individual influence, McCaffery gives Gauvreau primacy of place in Canada.

To be clear, the nature of Gauvreau’s political and provincial affiliations are complex and nuanced – which, in the context of Canada’s emotionally charged political milieu, probably explains English Canada’s neglect of Gauvreau more than the aesthetic eccentricity that Ellenwood suggests as a possible reason.¹³ Indeed, other scholars seem to write of the Automatists with the intention of fuelling the significance of the division between English and French Canada. André G. Bourassa, for instance, in his monograph on the history of Surrealism in Québec literature (originally published in 1977, and translated into English in 1984), constructs a teleological narrative around Gauvreau and

the Automatist movement that resolves in the realization of both the Quiet Revolution and Québec nationalism/separatism, focalizing the effects of their “revolutionary” art and writing to “the culture of Québec and its politics.”¹⁴ While Bourassa does spend a credible amount of time interrogating Gauvreau’s aesthetics, he frames that discussion as evidence of the ongoing discovery of “the voice of our people” that would “provoke us into prospecting our individual and collective myths, and realizing our dreams.”¹⁵ Bourassa twice quotes the same hyperbolic claim by *Cité Libre* columnist Pierre Vadeboncoeur that mythologizes the leader of Montreal Automatism Paul-Emile Borduas’ impact on Québec: “French Canada as we know it begins with him.”¹⁶ In a remarkable variety of lipogrammatic writing, Bourassa takes excessive pains to never mention Canada by name, except in quotations, whereas, in contrast, Gauvreau in 1947 casually muses that Montreal’s Surrealist *egregore* would be “of particular interest to Canadians, it being their original creation.”¹⁷ In a quote also included in *Surrealism and Québec Literature*, Gauvreau clarifies his resistance to politics of this sort, “Racists and nationalists only sow hatred.”¹⁸ Rather than the linguistic and nationalist context of his home province, or of his country, Gauvreau situated his own art as part of “the logical evolution of Christian civilization.”¹⁹ But rather than touching all of Christian civilization, as McCaffery regrettably noted in the passage cited above, Gauvreau’s influence was limited to Québec until after his death in 1971 when English-Canadians began discovering his work.

Gauvreau’s relationship to French-Canadian nationalism and separatism remains far from clear. He was without question an activist artist who believed in a revolution of the senses, and who freely embraced the socially liberating ambitions of the political revolutionaries of the French-Canadian nationalist movement. Ellenwood quotes Gauvreau describing Québec in 1970 as “a nation at last reaching maturity,” though the comment arose as part of a criticism of the Québécois lingering preference for referential art: “If Québec is incapable of producing anything else, dramatically or verbally, then we are in our senile second-childhood.”²⁰ Bourassa’s critical assessments of Québécois Surrealism use this ambiguity to blur the distinction between Gauvreau’s aesthetic revolution and the specific political, revolutionary aspirations of some of the most radical minds of his generation and locale. In contrast, Ellenwood’s critical writing and translations argue and demonstrate that Gauvreau’s primary orientation was aesthetic rather than political or utilitarian. Gauvreau’s consistent criticism of Bretonian Surrealism, for instance – and indeed the shared opinion around which the Automatist movement gathered – was the aesthetic compromise the Europeans allowed in pursuit of political or utilitarian goals.

As suggested in McCaffery’s brief assessment of Gauvreau’s writing, Gauvreau’s innovative approach to aesthetics involved the conceptually sophisticated exploration of the tension between meaningful and irrational expression. From his first play in 1947 to his final experiments in 1971, Gauvreau increasingly undermined rational, conventional deployment of language – moving from Surreal imagery and highly symbolic narratives to non-expressive linguistic utterances completely devoid of plot, character, or semantic content. Recognizing the transition in his writing, Gauvreau once mused that his plays present “a coherent progression which would be instructive if viewed as a whole.”²¹ The increasingly anti-rational orientation of his writing and his sense of the discursive function of non-meaningful language – notably a direction already present, if underdeveloped, in the dramatic objects included in *Refus Global* – evoke a formal linguistic aesthetic of madness that his earliest works address primarily through thematic and narrative content. Building from Ray Ellenwood’s pioneering and enabling work on Gauvreau’s aesthetics, the discursive function of madness can be recognized already in the three dramatic objects that were published in *Refus Global*. The conceptualization of discursivity introduced by Paul Ricoeur and the paralinguistic theories of Michel de Certeau provide a useful model in addressing the shift in Gauvreau’s writing from Surrealist-derived staged madness to non-semantic glossolalia. An aesthetic and linguistic analysis of Gauvreau’s writing may indeed be useful for an eventual political (and politically-motivated) excursus

in relation to French-Canadian Surrealism (the task is no great logical leap – as Paul Emile Borduas' lead manifesto to *Refus Global* already articulates the irrational impulse as antidote to French Canadian oppression – “To hell with holy water and the French-Canadian tuque!”²³), but my focus in this essay will remain on the decidedly innovative discursive use of Automatist madness as trope and method in Gauvreau's dramatic objects.

Though the borders between gothic conventions and medical diagnoses tend to be blurred in fictional uses of madness, “folie” in Gauvreau's literature seems to derive its functional intensity from its etymological roots in the Old French meanings for both (“*Folie générale*”) amorous delight and (“*Folie furieuse*”) violent outburst (*Le Trésor de la Langue Française*) – which combine to suggest a giddy, potentially violent, and libidinal pleasure from behaving foolishly (in English, “madness,” similarly derives from the Old English term for violent excitement). Gauvreau's etymologically correct usage contradicts the more religious and legal understanding and use of madness as proceeding from a mythical and deleterious moment of possession, a metaphorically invasive affliction that relieves the individual of the *mens rea* (the “guilty mind”) responsibility for the deeds they do – deeds that range from disgusting crimes to disjunctive art. Instead, Gauvreau's writing speaks to and appeals to the liberating potential of foolish, bawdy delight. Even though his madness appears disjunctive, deliberately open-ended, mystifying, or anti-aesthetic, it yet functions as plot device in his narrative scenarios. Madness appears by name in each of the three plays included in *Refus Global*: The Man in “In the Heart of the Bulrushes” (“Au Coeur des quenouilles”) uses madness as a metaphor to explain his predicament and earnest attempt to break free from conventional ways of thinking and seeing the world, claiming “I am a madman just like the strong ones. I am a mad killer, I am an escaped madman”²³; In “The Good Life” (“Bien-être”), The Woman also describes her predicament through a metaphoric madness, “Throats of madness in basins full of perspiration”²⁴; and in “The Shadow on the Hoop” (“L'ombre sur le cerceau”), The Shadow describes Clement as a “buffoon.”²⁵ But beyond this meaningful, tropic use of madness, each of these three plays (and especially the latter) also present the kind of linguistically embodied irrationalism that would become an increasing part of Gauvreau's writing: an irrationalism that, in escaping narrative, does not signify or symbolize or mean anything other than the experience of itself.

Madness was a common trope of avant-garde modernists, though most frequently spoken of as a form of possession, of being taken over by an alien influence who gave them strange and twisted images and ideas. Jack Spicer and Robin Blaser, for instance, took inspiration and dictation from “spirit mediums,” while Hugo Ball, Guillaume Apollinaire, and W.B. Yeats all had their own experiences and interactions with occult sources of inspiration. Even Canada's Bertram Brooker claimed that a genuine author was in fact just a “receiving-station” of the Weltanschauung of the times.²⁶ It was the continental French Surrealists, though, who pursued the aesthetic potential (in contrast to the anti-aesthetic potential explored by the Dadaists) of non-conscious art-making to its extreme. They embraced the idea of madness as the basis for an entire aesthetic. With their flurry of games and research and methods to outwit the conscious mind, they were much less interested in surrendering to the aliens than in unleashing an inner madness; an inner irrational core they believed dwelt within all humanity. The first goal in the freeing of the Surrealist consciousness, as Breton explained in the first “Manifesto of Surrealism” (1924), was to remove the obstructive impediment of social decorum that limits behaviour and consequently the imagination: “Poetic Surrealism, which is the subject of this study, has focused its efforts up to this point on re-establishing dialogue in its absolute truth, by freeing both interlocutors from any obligations of politeness [...] Thus the analysis of the mysterious effects and special pleasures it can produce.”²⁷ In breaking free from the ordinances of everyday manners, irrational and libidinal images issue forth into the liberated imagination: “The mind becomes aware of the limitless expanses wherein its desires are made

manifest, where the pros and cons are constantly consumed, where its obscurity does not betray it. It goes forward, borne by these images which enrapture it, which scarcely leave it any time to blow upon the fire in its fingers. This is the most beautiful night of all, the *lightning-filled night*.”²⁸ The Surrealist attack on the inhibitory reflex advocated a nonconformist, antisocial behaviour that was free of all encumbrances. It was an art and a way of life that explicitly accepted even the maddest impulse as an essential part of the human experience: “The simplest Surrealist act consists of dashing down into the street, pistol in hand, and firing blindly, as fast as you can pull the trigger, into the crowd.”²⁹ The Surrealist Revolution aspired to recondition the rational world with a deeper awareness of its irrational core, and thereby release or provoke an above-and-beyond-real consciousness. The Surrealist Revolution was the inevitable outcome of the transformed, Surrealist consciousness.

After the Second World War, the euphoric potential of Surrealism greatly dissipated, surpassed by other avant-garde movements, but not before Surrealist-inspired activity flared up in Montreal. The artists of this subsequent movement were also interested in using madness; in making ostensibly hideous art that reflected the irrational core of all individuals. Rather than the broadly utopian and revolutionary ideals of Breton and his ilk, these French Canadians were interested in using madness, a madness found within, to instigate change in their particular conservative and ultra-rational society. This paradox of intentional irrationalism speaks at once to the fiction of aesthetic madness but also to its function. Three plays by Claude Gauvreau, the preeminent Automatist dramatist, provide a useful case study of such a seemingly contradictory staged irrationalism.

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*“Hands in the abyss making leaves. That’s a wedding.”*³⁰

When these lines were first uttered on stage, to quote the playwright, “the entire audience burst into outrageous and uncontrollably hysterical laughter.”³¹ And yet, in the words of Paul-Emile Borduas, leader of the Automatist avant-garde collective in Montreal, “Of the crowd of our friends who were there [few] emerged intact.”³² Gauvreau’s elusive yet suggestive lines on the wonders of marital life couched as they are in a non-realistic, seemingly plotless play, signalled an imaginative eruption in Montreal, indeed in Canada. They are the opening lines of Gauvreau’s very first play, “The Good Life,” first performed on the 20th of May 1947 in Montreal, and published in 1948 as part of the *Refus Global* manifesto by the Borduas-led Automatists – who had by that point already splintered off from André Breton’s continental Surrealists. Gauvreau published two other theatre pieces in the manifesto suite, all three of which attempt a “surrational” theatre, a term Borduas coined to highlight the difference between the Automatists and the Surrealists that inspired them. In the glossary that accompanies the manifesto, Borduas defines surrational as “above and beyond the rational possibilities of the moment [...] The surrational act takes risks with unknown possibilities.”³³ Though the Automatists proved to be a short lived experiment and divided just a few short years after the publication of their shattering and enabling manifesto – as Ellenwood writes, “the Automatist egregore is generally conceded to have ended by 1955” (Ellenwood, *egregore* xi) – the theatre pieces included in *Refus Global* embody and enact the anti-rational aesthetic of the group.³⁴ It was through their deliberate use of madness that these plays sought to fulfill the avant-garde and revolutionary ambitions of the group in their Québécois context.

The first lines of Gauvreau’s play “The Good Life” – with only the thin outline of a plot – evoked something that jolted his audience. It was almost certainly not the storyline: two newlyweds begin on the stage, conversing in sparse, random images filled with connotations of love and childbearing and Biblical allusions. They hear the woman’s twin in another room playing a constant 5-note refrain on the piano and their conversation turns lusty. The woman suddenly and inexplicably

dies and the man discovers he has no hands. Two burly movers come for the piano in the other room which continues to play throughout: when the piano appears for the first time, like an image from a Jean Cocteau film, the man's missing hands are on the keys, still obsessively playing the 5-note refrain. As the play ends, according to Gauvreau's stage notes, the refrain should sound, "played by the orchestra in a crescendo that amplifies infinitely."³⁵ Ostensibly a saga of love and aging, Gauvreau's depiction of the "good life" satirizes conventional relationships and the oppressiveness of normal life. Art and even the ability to make art are carried off at the end of the play, away from the despairing husband. The parable suggests that conventional, middle-class living has lost genuine art and is stuck in a highly repetitious mode.³⁶ The play raises the question of how an artist and even a regular citizen could access and release the vital inner mysteries. With its stunted narrative and symbolic meaningfulness, the play also fulfills Paul Ricoeur's definition of discourse as a language-event in which messages and meanings are exchanged: "Discourse cannot fail to be about something."³⁷ Madness, in this play, metaphorically transforms the stultifying condition of conventional social life into the weakness, the hamartia, that will cause its downfall. If Gauvreau's play suggests that the "good life" is already conditioned by madness, it is a thematic madness predicated on an existential despair that is evoked here and not the liberating irrationalism conjured and worshipped by Surrealists. However, as Gauvreau's work would increasingly utilize a similarly liberating irrationalism, let us turn now and explore the Surrealist's interest in anti-rationalism.

In his first manifesto for Surrealism, in rejecting the mandates and privations of civilization, Breton mapped a delirious rejection of the adult world in favour of an embrace of madness and childlike wonder. Madness, for Breton, was a realm of imaginative freedom enjoyed by those outside of society's regulatory superstructures. He defines it simply and delightfully as "free not to care any longer."³⁸ Breton credits the Austrian pioneer of psychoanalysis Sigmund Freud for revealing the conflict within each individual between this latent untamed imagination and the tyranny of logic of Western society.³⁹ Surrealism was Breton's answer to the loss of the imaginative freedom of dreams and the drained psychic mechanism in reality. As he explained, he believed in another possibility: "I believe in the future resolution of these two great states, dream and reality, a *Surreality*."⁴⁰ The Surrealist artist could access an irrational core within him or herself as a creative source more ontologically and metaphysically revealing than any contrived literary device. It was a new aesthetic that embraced irrationality and the free association of images as a corrective force in an unbalanced, war-ravaged Apollonian world. Surrealism, which he defined as "the absence of any control exercised by reason," both explained all of the genius of past ages and would enable a magical future of wonder and dismay – of madness and the real intertwined.⁴¹ Breton discovered the poetry of madness during the war, when he worked as a medical intern in St. Dizier, France in 1916.⁴² From Freudian psychoanalysis, Breton borrowed the idea of automatism as both the act of free-association-writing without conscious intervention and the state of mind this act and others inspired. Using this method as an aesthetic rather than therapeutic technique was Surrealism's most important and demonstrable influence on Gauvreau and the Montreal Automatist movement.

Freud, on the other hand, and famously, refused all entreaties to ally himself with the Surrealists by explaining that he had no interest in dreams or the irrational mind as a creative source.⁴³ For Freud, the motivating conflict for his work on dreams was between civilization, which "rests on a compulsion to work and a renunciation of instinct," and the individual, who must suppress their instincts in order to work.⁴⁴ The conflict produces an "internal discord" that could potentially, but not necessarily lead to neuroses.⁴⁵ Rather than *exploiting* madness and internal discord, art and religion play a balancing role in this conflict by compensating the members of a civilization "for the sufferings and privations which a civilized life in common has imposed on them."⁴⁶ In other words, art was useful in a society for re-directing the buried rage inside every member of that society into less destructive projections. While Freud's theoretical models and framework shifted over the

course of his career, he maintained his goal to study madness and neuroses in order to cure people of them: as he declares in *The Future of an Illusion*, “our appointed task [is] of reconciling men to civilization.”⁴⁷ His self-declared aim was to secure “the primacy of the intellect” against delusions and neuroses, a category of anti-social imaginings that included madness and religion.⁴⁸ In contrast, Breton was an avant-garde artist more interested in reshaping normal life than in sustaining the status quo. His sur-reality would “manifest itself in all aspects of social life,” and thereby revitalize European civilization.⁴⁹

The revolutionary agenda inspired the Automatists to apply the aesthetic innovations of the European Surrealists to their own Canadian and particularly Québécois context.⁵⁰ The liberating potential of automatism and automatic writing were directly relevant to Québec, which was locked under the rigid control of a Catholic imagination and leadership. The Automatist manifesto *Refus Global* frames its emancipatory rhetoric directly at freeing Québec from the rational religious imagination, or as Borduas writes in the lead manifesto, “Christian civilization has reached the end of its tether [...] Exploitation began in the heart of the church with the self-serving use of emotions which were already there, but petrified; it began with the rational study of scriptures for the sake of maintaining a supremacy gained originally through spontaneity.”⁵¹ For the Automatists, the problems with Québec were caused by problems within the Catholic Church, which were in turn a symptom of a broader trend in Western civilization towards the rationalization of spirituality. Automatic writing was a means to access the spiritual spontaneity that had been lost over the centuries of the Christian era. Signatory Françoise Sullivan eloquently explains their ambition, “The true and profound treasure to be found in the unconscious is energy. Master of all internal forces, a portion of the cosmic energy, it is the motive power behind our actions [...] reach a trance-like state and make contact with the points of magic.”⁵² The released consciousness caused by automatic writing became a focus for those interested in releasing Québec from the conservative bondage of Catholic rule. Borduas concludes his manifesto with an invitation, “Let those moved by the spirit of this adventure join us” (41), and indeed, as Michel Van Schendel, Ruth G. Koizim, and Edward M. Corbett have argued, the Automatists played a key role in instigating artistic contributions to the Quiet Revolution that successfully overthrew the Catholic hold on their contextual society.⁵³ In this way, and ironically, the group fulfilled Freud’s claims of art by using their creative work to help balance the impact of civilization on individual liberty in Québec. They did so, however, not by appeasing the conflicted torment of the individual, but by spurring the French Canadian citizen to (quiet) revolutionary action and change.

This social and anti-Catholic agenda is useful in explaining and contextualizing the sustained biblical language and imagery in Gauvreau’s early theatre – particularly in “Bien-être” that critiqued the existing paradigms of conventional behaviour. More importantly, though, Gauvreau and the Automatists were keenly aware of the liberating potential of *playing mad* on the stage and in their art. Though produced through the automatic associational method, rehearsed, non-improvisational theatre requires a significant and substantial degree of intentional preparation in representing the original spontaneous, irrational moment.⁵⁴ Gauvreau’s intentional representation of irrationalism seemingly contradicts the Surrealist dictum to act without “any control exercised by reason,” but, significantly, does not contradict André Breton’s definition of madness, which as mentioned before meant to be “free not to care any longer.” Gauvreau’s staged irrationalism intentionally provoked his audience and was designed to contribute to the agitations for change in his province. It thus attempted to embody the ‘total refusal’ ambition of the group. The Automatists were deliberately disruptive, or as Borduas wrote, in search of “a magical process” that would give their art a “convulsive, transforming power.”⁵⁵ “The Good Life,” though, despite all of its strange, transformational imagery, is still a symbolic, representational play.

Over the course of his career, Gauvreau's theatre progressed into increasingly difficult and obtuse experimentation, arriving at an experimental extreme, parallel to what French theorist Michel de Certeau has described as literary "glossolalia" – that is, a breed of neologisms issued forth without semantic meaning, aspiring towards a "vocal utopia" that evokes "the possibility of any particular language."⁵⁶ Texts built with glossolalia rely on other structural principals such as rhythmic, sonic, and even allusive semantics to organize and orient the writing. Moreover, Certeau argues that glossolalia combines a prelinguistic return to the origin of language with a postlinguistic end of language decadence to create its eruptive moment.⁵⁷ Roland Barthes, in writing about the extreme presence of the sound of language in cinema, celebrates the particular and liberating pleasure ("jouissance") of that eruptive moment as found in sound conscious performance:

what it searches for (in a perspective of bliss) are the pulsational incidents, the language lined with flesh, a text where we can hear the grain of the throat, the patina of consonants, the voluptuousness of vowels, a whole carnal stereophony: the articulation of the body, of the tongue, not that of meaning, of language [...] it crackles, it caresses, it grates, it cuts, it comes: that is bliss.⁵⁸

In Gauvreau's later works, most notably the "Jappements à la Lune," the author makes exceptional use of the textural pleasure of the enunciation of meaningless syllabic packets that lack signification beyond their enunciation but yet that still excite or suppose the meaningful orientations of language. He named this poetic glossolalia "explorational images," and felt they fulfilled the aesthetic ideals of Automatism in literature:

To go deeper into the unconscious, to dynamite certain apparently unscalable walls, what you need what you need is exactly the commotion of an emotional volcano.

To allow a strong emotion to build up after it has shaken and shocked all our mental barriers, and then to write down in order, without any kind of preconceived idea or method, the whole unique sequence which has unwound like an endless snake (until you've had enough), that is how to expose in broad daylight caverns and deep recesses that the murmurings of the superficial unconscious won't even allow us to imagine. And that is Surrational Automatism [...] The explorational image is the authentic offshoot of Surrational Automatism.⁵⁹

A key dynamic in Gauvreau's progression toward increasingly nonfigurative language was the Montreal Automatists embrace of absolute automatism. Whereas the European Surrealists explored figurative dream memories and other means to represent memory in their art, the French Canadian Automatists insisted that the art *embody* psychological content of any form rather than represent it. Subject was defined entirely by plastic qualities, merging form and content. Having been, in the words of Automatist Fernand Leduc, "liberated by automatism and enriched by all that Surrealism has given us," the Automatists believed their imaginations were free to return their focus to the work of art rather than to the social context of the mind producing it.⁶⁰ Borduas, furthermore, accused the Surrealists of putting too much emphasis on intention within the construction of the work of art, rather than allowing the art to exist as a concrete, nonfigurative entity unto itself. The representational dream paintings of Salvatore Dali and Yves Tanguy were notably described as "mild" and ready to be surpassed.⁶¹ Such Surrealist works were touched by intentional representation rather than the brash aesthetic of irrationalism, focussed more "on the subject treated" than on the "real subject" which was the artwork as object and self-fulfilled content. In Gauvreau's words, "the

Surrealists still exercise a kind of aesthetic control over all of their productions.”⁶² The criticism of intentionalism and representationalism in art stems from Freud’s theories of the role and function of art within a civilization: art that relies on memory is marked by the inhibitions of the artist and their contextual civilization. The Surrealists accepted art with representational qualities⁶, whereas Gauvreau and the Automatists wanted a genuinely liberated and liberating art and thus pushed further by increasingly focussing on the nonfigurative manifest content of a work of art.⁶³ Just as expressive language began to disappear from Gauvreau’s dramatic objects, representational imagery disappeared from Automatist paintings. Such works do not depict madness or the “free not to care any longer” mandate so much as manifest it, and perhaps, ideally, provoke it.

Gauvreau’s three plays published in *Refus Global* appear relatively early in this transition but yet already demonstrate his interest in an embodied rather than symbolic art. The second piece in *Refus Global*, “In the Heart of the Bulrushes,” presents an allegorical myth of a liberated, uninhibited protagonist accessing that which all others have been denied: “my destiny,” he says, “is given over to escaping.”⁶⁴ He describes himself as a “snickering madman” as he rows down a stream into a thick bulrush. An angel with a sword appears and blocks his way. The angel declares that our protagonist has come “farther than he should” but that he is not the first.⁶⁵ None have carried on past the threatening figure of the angel; and as proof, bodies line the bottom of the river. The angel is established as an externalization of “repressed things,” which the man, in a flurry of erotic and violent images, overcomes by accessing the “mad killer” within himself.⁶⁶ His embrace of his own irrationalism enables the Man to push forward where others have cowered and failed – he gets through successfully to the allegorical domain of enlightenment. Like “The Good Life,” this text also uses madness as a symbolic trope that functions as an important plot device; madness explains the triumph of the protagonist. Unlike “The Good Life,” however, madness symbolizes the potential for imaginative liberation. The discursive language-event of the play explains the bizarre, occultic initiation embodied in passing through the gates to the forbidden territory by the character’s embrace of a self-conceptualization inclusive of violent and sexual madness.

The last play, chronologically, included in the *Refus Global* manifesto was “The Shadow on the Hoop,” a short monologue by the shadow cast “by a leaping acrobat.”⁶⁷ Unlike the others included in the book, this play breaks with the discursive function of meaning exchange by including a few examples of literary glossolalia, evoking but yet defying grammar and conventional semantic practice. The play begins: “Listen to the harvest of Belval and the thuriferous fork which has come to glean the careful rows of pupazzi pastiches and anglioche-glioche and Bux the Clown ejaculating trapeze and crossbow.”⁶⁸ While not his most experimental piece, this unconventional dramatic object demonstrates the increasingly anti-rational direction Gauvreau pursued and would continue to follow. In the content of the play, it is notable that The Shadow rejects the “Bones of sentimental anthologies” for the “algaesia of the planks [who] sings at the top of its glass under the melodious spell of the siphon.”⁶⁹ While suggestive of symbolisms, the insertion of neologisms spun from familiar words (algaesia suggests algae and amnesia, for instance) evokes a tension between the recognition of meaningfulness and misrecognition of ambiguous expression. The play’s use of conventional linguistic constructs, most notably by using parsable sentence and word structures, invites the anticipation of a discursive language-event only to evade reference. In this case, madness and the irrational content of the play are embedded in the form of language itself rather than in the discursive exchange of meaning.

The three primary uses of madness in these plays – language-event negative, language-event positive, and non-discursive language-event –, each with overlap, indicate the centrality of irrationalism to Gauvreau’s work. In a statement on his poetics, Gauvreau expressed his desire to create “a new concrete reality” by moving beyond recognizable, comprehensible images that could be decoded through memory or pre-existing, non-experiential knowledge.⁷⁰ He pursued

unencumbered imagery, images that were literally and figuratively free not to care any longer. Michel De Certeau cautions against falling into the habitual pattern of reactions to such vocalic delinquency that seek to minimize or display their implication: “In our era in the West [...] the serious and jubilant play of speech always receives a rather clever hermeneutic response that reduces the ‘want to say’ to a ‘want to say something.’”⁷¹ In Gauvreau’s anti-aesthetic madness, will and intention drive a need to speak – but, significantly, increasingly lead the poet away from saying ‘something.’ As Gauvreau’s art was of the stage, this fact requires a shift in Certeau’s vocabulary from the ‘want to say’ to the ‘want to play.’ Pushing further, in the ‘want to play mad,’ madness embodies the lack of something that Certeau insists functions as the core of glossolalia; madness embodies the lack of signification – and, thus, the liberating potential of the staged madness of Gauvreau’s art. It is in pursuing the euphoric release of the uninhibited, anti-aesthetic image, only by playing mad, that Gauvreau presents an opportunity to escape the compromise demanded by the rational, civilized world – a revolution of the senses in preparation for and contribution to the social revolution all Surrealists and Automatists long for. For indeed, Gauvreau experimented with the fundamentally discursive function of his language precisely because he understood the performative implications of delivering an increasingly irrational language into a society overly-dominated by rationalism.

In his 1973 essay “The Model of the Text: Meaningful Action Considered as a Text,” the French Philosopher Paul Ricoeur presents a hermeneutics (“the rules required for the interpretation”⁷²) of discourse that illuminates the linguistic implications of Gauvreau’s shift from expressive, tropic madness to non-rational discourse. Gauvreau’s conscious choice to embrace an anti-aesthetic, disjunctive style was predicated on the presumption that while his dramatic language was no longer *signifying* it was still *doing* something (a revolutionary politics motivating Certeau’s idea of the ‘want to say’ in glossolalia). Borrowing from the British linguist J.L. Austin, Ricoeur divides speech-events into the respective acts of the locutionary and the perlocutionary. The former he defines as “the act *of* saying” whereas the latter denotes “that which we do *by* saying.”⁷³ He gives the perlocutionary act special status for its particular resistance to inscription precisely because it depends on phenomenal effects in an interlocutor for its definition: it is, he writes, “the discourse as stimulus” and as such is a particular phenomenon of speech that evades written discourse.⁷⁴

Gauvreau’s dramatic objects progress from the expression of subjectivity and the exploration of madness as a thematic concern of the characters to the embodiment of madness in perlocutionary speech acts to elude subjectivity. Of course, Gauvreau’s dramatic objects were intended for the stage and for spoken performance. Gauvreau could anticipate that the delivery of his non-signifying explorational language would be complemented by illocutionary acts (gestural and performative cues) that would guide and shape audience interpretation of the glossolalia. Still, the ambiguity of the non-signifying language shaped by grammatical structures like sentences and words produces by itself a significant rupture in the exchange of meaning. As Gauvreau explained, such moments were not intended to say or express subjective personality; they were written to provoke a transformational experience in his audience. This sense of the performative potential of non-signifying language enables us to consider Gauvreau’s language-events as perlocutionary speech acts, as discursive, even though they lack reference or meaning. Poignantly for our discussion, they invite the audience to feel and experience the freedom of madness for themselves. The progression of Gauvreau’s writing toward increasing use of glossolalia corresponds to his recognition of the affective potential of non-signifying language – and the revolutionary potential of the effect. Ricoeur’s linguistic philosophy allows us to begin to consider this use of language as an extreme literary example of the perlocutionary speech act.

Recalling Sullivan’s goal for Automatism, as cited above, Ricoeur’s explanation of perlocution as an affective exchange of energy is remarkably consistent with the surreational and magical aesthetics pursued by the Automatists. He claims that perlocutionary speech “acts, not by my

interlocutor's recognition of my intention, but energetically, by direct influence upon the emotions and the affective dispositions."⁷⁵ *Refus Global* was originally published as a catalogue accompaniment to an exhibition of paintings (and other art events). Like Ricoeur's claim for the perlocutionary, Borduas warns the audience of the exhibition that they will not understand the intentions of the paintings, but that they will *feel* the effects of the works emotionally:

Looking at the pictures in this exhibition your mind will be blank. You won't even be allowed the idea of a picture. These paintings don't correspond to a landscape, nor to a still life nor to any scene you're familiar with, nor even to a geometrical abstraction. Thus, with all your mental habits put to flight, unable to make any kind of visual contact, you will have the uncomfortable feeling of a serious illness, a painful and needless amputation, a frustration.

You'll want to cry sacrilege, madness, early senility, hoax. If you're less honest, more cagey, you'll talk about visual and intellectual clichés and phony drawing-room revolutions [...] The violent necessities of sensual understanding will pursue their own destiny.⁷⁶

Even though these paintings and Gauvreau's glossolalia reject the expressive function of discourse, the affective, performative intention motivating the aesthetic fulfills the definition of the perlocutionary language event. Ricoeur was aware of the increasing interest in abstractionism and non-signification amongst authors and artists in the 20th Century, but dismisses "sophisticated" texts "without reference" as being anti-discursive.⁷⁷ He claims they are an "exception," however, and redirects his analysis back to "all other texts which in one manner or another speak about the world."⁷⁸ Surrealist madness, however, was never meant to be a renunciation of the world. Gauvreau's performative use of non-referential language, in fact, functions as a perlocutionary speech act that was intended to impact (and liberate) the imagination of his audience.

Etymological madness, it will be remembered, proposes the distinctly pleasurable moment of action (potentially violent and/or sexual) without recourse to reason or the mind. In this paper I have argued that Gauvreau integrated perlocutionary glossolalia into his writing as an attempt to embody madness into the formal properties of his language. Thus, rather than thematize madness, Gauvreau increasingly insisted on madness as an experiential objective of his theatre. While perlocutionary madness was clearly one effect of delinking language from signification, as a final note it is worth considering how such an unconventional use of language participates in and contributes to a revolutionary politics. Contemporary avant-garde theorist Sianne Ngai offers in her essay "Raw Matter: A Poetics of Disgust," a hermeneutics of cacophony that is notably useful for interpreting the political implications of non-signifying language. Her work provides a theoretical model that considers how harsh, gyrating sounds resist being consumed or incorporated into the general economy of art production and consumption. As many writers since Theodor Adorno have noted, being readily consumable effectively disables revolutionary disruption. While Barthes' theory of cinematic sounds highlights the potential and particular pleasures of a non-signifying use of language, Ngai's poetics of disgust evokes the "total refusal" revolutionary impulse of the Surrealists and Automatists. It is, she writes, precisely through its indigestibility that discordance enacts a rejection of its contextual ideological predicament.⁷⁹ Working against Freud's model of how art helps to sustain a civilization, Gauvreau's literary glossolalia function as perlocutionary language-events that allow and provoke the experience of being outside the rational, existent world – a chance to play mad and experience the childlike freedom to not care, if only for the duration of the act.

Notes

- ¹ Mary Ann Caws, "Declaration of January 27, 1925" in *Manifesto: A Century of Isms* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2001): 450.
- ² Claude Gauvreau, "Jappements à la lune" in *Imagining Language: An Anthology*, ed. Steve McCaffery and Jed Rasula (London: The MIT Press, 1998): 125.
- ³ Ray Ellenwood, *Eggregore: The Montréal Automatist Movement* (Toronto: Exile Editions, 1992): 90-96.
- ⁴ Quoted in André G. Bourassa, *Surrealism and Québec Literature: History of a Cultural Revolution*. 1977, trans. Mark Czarnecki (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1984): 68.
- ⁵ Paul-Emile Borduas, "Refus Global" in *Refus Global / Total Refusal: The Complete 1948 Manifest of the Montreal Automatists*. 1948, trans. Ray Ellenwood (Toronto: Exile Editions, 1998): 40.
- ⁶ Charles Baudelaire, *Oeuvres complètes* 1, ed. Claude Pichois (Paris: Gallimard Pléiade, 1975): 691.
- ⁷ Borduas "Refus Global," 41.
- ⁸ Paul-Emile Borduas, "Comments on Some Current Words," *Refus Global / Total Refusal: The Complete 1948 Manifest of the Montreal Automatists*. 1948, trans. Ray Ellenwood (Toronto: Exile Editions, 1998): 53.
- ⁹ Steve McCaffery, performance preamble for "Jappements à la lune," *Montreal Automatism: 1948 and Onwards* York University, Toronto. 14 November 1998.
- ¹⁰ Claude Gauvreau, letter to Jean-Claude Dussault dated 13 April 1950, translated and reprinted in Ray Ellenwood, *Eggregore: The Montréal Automatist Movement* (Toronto: Exile Editions, 1992): 197-98.
- ¹¹ Claude Gauvreau, *Œuvres créatrices complètes* (Ottawa: Les éditions Parti pris, 1971): 196.
- ¹² Steve McCaffery, "Sound Poetry: A Survey" in *Sound Poetry: A Catalogue*, ed. bpNichol and Steve McCaffery (Toronto: Underwhich Editions, 1978): 16-17.
- ¹³ Ray Ellenwood, "Translator's Note," in *The Charge of the Expormidable Moose* (Toronto: Exile Edition, 1992): 154.
- ¹⁴ Bourassa, inside cover.
- ¹⁵ Bourassa, xiii, 266.
- ¹⁶ Bourassa, 102, 265.
- ¹⁷ Bourassa, 88.
- ¹⁸ Bourassa, 131.
- ¹⁹ Bourassa, 86.
- ²⁰ Ellenwood, "Translator's Note," 155.
- ²¹ Quoted in Bourassa, 108.
- ²² Borduas, "Refus Global," 30.
- ²³ Claude Gauvreau, "In the Heart of the Bulrushes" in *Refus Global: The Complete 1948 Manifesto of the Montreal Automatists*, trans. Ray Ellenwood (Toronto: Exile Editions, 1998): 63.
- ²⁴ Claude Gauvreau, "The Good Life" in *Refus Global: The Complete 1948 Manifesto of the Montreal Automatists*, trans. Ray Ellenwood (Toronto: Exile Editions, 1998): 79.
- ²⁵ Claude Gauvreau, "The Shadow on the Hoop" in *Refus Global: The Complete 1948 Manifesto of the Montreal Automatists*, trans. Ray Ellenwood (Toronto: Exile Editions, 1998): 92.
- ²⁶ Bertram Brooker, "When We Awake!" in *The Yearbook of the Arts 1928-1929* (Toronto: Macmillan, 1929): 12.
- ²⁷ Andre Breton, "Manifesto of Surrealism" in *Manifestoes of Surrealism*, trans. Richard Seaver and Helen R. Lane (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1972). 35-36.
- ²⁸ Breton, "Manifesto of Surrealism," 37-8. Author's italics.
- ²⁹ Andre Breton, "Second Manifesto of Surrealism" in *Manifestoes of Surrealism*, trans. Richard Seaver and Helen R. Lane (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1972): 125.
- ³⁰ Gauvreau, "The Good Life," 69.
- ³¹ Ellenwood, *Eggregore*, 97.
- ³² Ellenwood, *Eggregore*, 97.
- ³³ Borduas, "Comments on Some Current Words," 53.
- ³⁴ Ellenwood, *Eggregore*, xi.
- ³⁵ Gauvreau, "The Good Life," 87.
- ³⁶ In the final scene of the play, the male lead pauses in his sorrow to denounce the utopian hopes of the Futurists, a prominent but fading avant-garde movement: "I am a generation of old youth [...] You are the young who dreamed of chimneys with blinding metal [...] I signal with my arms at the haughty future like a sailor covered in cankers of boredom" (86). While the Futurists embraced technology as the liberating agent for the future, this kind of progress bored Gauvreau – much as it did Baudelaire, whom these lines also evoke. For Gauvreau and the Automatists, as for

Breton's Surrealists, liberation lay not within the future or the transformation of the material earth by the human intellect but within the individual and the mysteries veiled in the human subconscious.

³⁷ Paul Ricoeur, "The Model of the Text: Meaningful Action Considered as a Text," *New Literary History* 5 (Autumn 1973): 92, 96.

³⁸ Breton, "Manifesto of Surrealism," 35.

³⁹ Breton, "Manifesto of Surrealism," 10.

⁴⁰ Breton, "Manifesto of Surrealism," 14. Author's italics.

⁴¹ Breton, "Manifesto of Surrealism," 26.

⁴² Theodor Fraenkel, *Carnets 1916-1918* (Paris: Éditions des Cendres, 1990): 56. Later, in his landmark essay "Surrealism and Painting," Breton would explain the connection between psychology and Surrealism: "A work cannot be considered Surrealist unless the artist strains to reach the total psychological scope of which consciousness is only a small part. Freud has shown that there prevails at this 'unfathomable' depth a total absence of contradiction, a new mobility of the emotional blocks caused by repression, a timelessness and a substitution of psychic reality for external reality, all subject to the principle of pleasure alone. Automatism leads straight to this region." Andre Breton, "Surrealism and Painting," *Surrealism*, ed. Patrick Waldberg (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1966): 84.

⁴³ See Freud's three letters to Breton in *Œuvres créatrices complètes*, 210-213. For further development of the distinctions between Freud and Breton see Jean-Pierre Morel, "Breton and Freud" *Diacritics* 2.2 (Summer 1977): 18-26. For his own part, Breton explains his criticisms of and devotion to Freud's work in "Les Vase communicants" (*Œuvres créatrices complètes*, 101-215).

⁴⁴ Sigmund Freud, *The Future of an Illusion*, trans. W.D. Robson-Scott, ed. James Strachey (London: The Hogarth Press, 1973): 6.

⁴⁵ Freud, 3.

⁴⁶ Freud, 14.

⁴⁷ Freud, 49. Psychoanalysis was a tool developed to minimize anti-social behaviour caused by civilization's privations. Freud, in this way, was seeking to establish more balance and order in society by realigning the borders between psychic reality, the proper domain of the id, and material reality, the proper domain of the ego.

⁴⁸ Freud, 49.

⁴⁹ Charles Russell, *Poets, Prophets, and Revolutionaries: The Literary Avant-garde from Rimbaud through Postmodernism* (Oxford: Oxford UP, 1985): 25.

⁵⁰ Claude Gauvreau clarified his debt to Breton in a letter to a young colleague: "you will have to admit that the route followed by Breton and his friends was the only fertile and necessary one between 1924 and 1940, and the only one with any relevance to the future." Claude Gauvreau, Letter to Jean-Claude Dussault (13 April 1950), translated and reprinted in Ray Ellenwood, *Egégore: The Montréal Automatist Movement* (Toronto: Exile Editions, 1992): 165.

⁵¹ Borduas, "Refus Global," 30, 34.

⁵² Françoise Sullivan, "Dance and Hope" in *Refus Global: The Complete 1948 Manifesto of the Montreal Automatists*, trans. Ray Ellenwood (Toronto: Exile Editions, 1998): 113.

⁵³ Borduas, "Refus Global," 41.

⁵⁴ Gauvreau, Letter, 200.

⁵⁵ Borduas, "About Today's Surrealism" in *Refus Global: The Complete 1948 Manifesto of the Montreal Automatists*, trans. Ray Ellenwood (Toronto: Exile Editions, 1998): 57-8.

⁵⁶ Michel De Certeau, "Vocal Utopias: Glossolalias," *Representations* 56 (Autumn, 1996): 30.

⁵⁷ Certeau, 33.

⁵⁸ Roland Barthes, *The Pleasure of the Text*, trans. Richard Miller (London: Johnathan Cape, 1976): 66-7.

⁵⁹ Gauvreau, Letter, 199.

⁶⁰ Quoted in Ellenwood, *Egégore* 177.

⁶¹ Borduas, "Comments," 46-7.

⁶² Gauvreau, Letter, 199.

⁶³ The extent to which the Surrealists hesitated in their use of irrationalism is addressed by Surrealist scholar Anna Balakian, who writes that Breton was "not after disorder for disorder's sake, but on the track of what he considers man's natural but lost heritage [... even in] simulations of insanity, Breton was wary of excess, and very vigilant lest the experimenter lose control of his experiment." It was in light of this insistent control over both the production of art and the artwork itself that the Automatists considered themselves to have surpassed the Surrealists. Anna Balakian, "André Breton as Philosopher," *Yale French Studies* 31 (1964): 41.

⁶⁴ Gauvreau, "In the Heart of the Bulrushes," 63.

⁶⁵ Gauvreau, "In the Heart of the Bulrushes," 64.

⁶⁶ Gauvreau, "In the Heart of the Bulrushes," 63.

- ⁶⁷ Gauvreau, "The Shadow on the Hoop," 91.
⁶⁸ Gauvreau, "The Shadow on the Hoop," 91.
⁶⁹ Gauvreau, "The Shadow on the Hoop," 92.
⁷⁰ Gauvreau, Letter, 197.
⁷¹ Certeau, 33.
⁷² Ricoeur, 92.
⁷³ Ricoeur, 93, 94.
⁷⁴ Ricoeur, 94.
⁷⁵ Ricoeur, 96.
⁷⁶ Borduas, "Comments," 50, 51.
⁷⁷ Ricoeur, 96.
⁷⁸ Ricoeur, 96.
⁷⁹ Sianne Ngai, "Raw Matter: A Poetics of Disgust," *Open Letter*. 10.1 (Winter 1998): 99.

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