



PETUNIA
Seven Americans, Anderson Galleries

GEORGIA O'KEEFFE
Courtesy of Alfred Stieglitz

Two Patrons, An Exhibition, and a Scrapbook

The Lawren Harris–Georgia O’Keeffe Connection, 1925–1926

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In the spring of 1938, Lawren S. Harris (1885–1970) and his second wife, Bess, drove more than 3,000 kilometres through ten states and over half the North American continent to relocate in Santa Fe, a sand-blown city renowned for its ethereal light and mystic landscapes.¹ The couple made the move from Hanover, New Hampshire, where they had lived for four years after leaving Toronto in 1934.

The Harrises’ relocation is an event that has been chronicled as happenstance: the couple arrived in the Southwestern city while on a motor holiday and liked it so much they decided to stay.² This account, however, seems unlikely. Aside from the extensive distance that the pair drove to reach their new home – much more an epic journey than a leisurely jaunt – it is hard to imagine that Harris, a man whose life was characterized by precise planning and actions, would have commenced such an ambitious expedition without a fixed destination. This paper explores what was arguably a key motivating factor behind the Harrises’ move to the Southwest: his interest in the American painter Georgia O’Keeffe (1887–1986), who from 1929 onward lived part of every year in Abiquiú, just outside of Santa Fe, as one of the area’s most celebrated residents.³

Since 1984 when Roald Nasgaard proposed a connection between the paintings of Harris and O’Keeffe and argued that both manifest transcendental symbolist content, scholars have drawn parallels between the work of these two artists who painted concurrently and shared an interest in forging an indigenous response to European modernism.⁴ Echoing Nasgaard’s view, Michael D. Hall and Nannette V. Maciejunes situate Harris, along with O’Keeffe, Charles Birchfield, John Marin, Marsden Hartley, Charles Demuth, and Arthur Dove, as part of a group of North American avant-garde modernist painters who transformed landscape subjects into visual abstraction.⁵ Sandra Shaul suggests an even stronger link between the pair,

Detail of a page from Lawren S. Harris scrapbook, 1922–1960, showing a reproduction of Georgia O’Keeffe’s *Petunia and Coleus*, 1924, pasted upside down. (Photo: Lawren S. Harris Fonds MG30-D208, vol. 12, Library and Archives Canada)

stating that Harris's expressionist, geometric work "draws him closer to Georgia O'Keeffe" than any other artist associated with Stieglitz's modern art galleries.⁶

Peter Larisey takes the comparison one step further and suggests that Harris's natural, simplified approach to *North Shore, Lake Superior*, 1926, may have been influenced by the precise lines and simplified surfaces O'Keeffe used in her pastel *Alligator Pear*, 1923.⁷ "Like O'Keeffe," he surmises, "Harris wanted to reduce the shapes of objects to their essential forms so that a picture would suggest a universal meaning."⁸ Finally, Dennis Reid writes that the work of O'Keeffe and Arthur Dow, "based on an intense nature experience, often symmetrical, and otherwise hieratic in nature," would have encouraged Harris in the mid-thirties when he began to depict an increasing number of abstract forms such as *Winter Comes from the Arctic to the Temperate Zone (Semi-Abstract No. 3)*, ca. 1935.⁹

Despite the range of scholarship comparing Harris's art to that of O'Keeffe, there has been no conclusive evidence that demonstrates which of her paintings he saw, and when. My research will close this gap by revealing that Harris saw O'Keeffe's work through two art patrons: Doris Louise Huestis Mills (later Speirs, 1902–1989), the Canadian painter and art writer, and Katherine Dreier, founder of the New York-based avant-garde art organization, the Société Anonyme, Inc. I will also examine Harris's personal scrapbook, a previously unstudied artifact, which includes no fewer than six reproductions of paintings by O'Keeffe. In light of this documentation, I will compare works made by O'Keeffe and Harris in the mid-twenties to argue that the relationship between these two artists merits further study.

Doris Mills, Bess Housser, and *The Eggplant*, 1924

Although documentation establishes that Harris was familiar with O'Keeffe's painting in the mid-twenties, exactly when he became aware of her work is unknown.¹⁰ His first recorded visit to New York City, a getaway taken with some fellow officers while serving in the Canadian Army, was from 30 December 1917 to 7 January 1918.¹¹ During this trip, it is possible that he visited the celebrated photographer, curator, and publisher Alfred Stieglitz, who had recently mounted O'Keeffe's inaugural solo exhibition at his 291 Gallery. From that show onward O'Keeffe's name appeared regularly in the media as she quickly became known for her powerful personal style, characterized by precise lines, simplified surfaces, and transcendental themes.¹² By the summer of 1918 Stieglitz had made a professional commitment to show and promote O'Keeffe's work regularly.¹³ If her art did not catch Harris's eye while he was an army officer, it certainly would have by 1921 when O'Keeffe became one

of North America's most talked-about painters. As Nancy Hopkins Reily writes, after Stieglitz (who married O'Keeffe in 1924) exhibited her paintings alongside his nude photographs of her, she was "at once on the map [and] everyone knew her name."¹⁴

In 1925, Doris Louise Huestis Mills became the first Canadian to buy a painting by O'Keeffe, a purchase that can be linked to Harris.¹⁵ Biographical entries on Mills, who exhibited with the Group of Seven in 1926, 1928, 1930, and 1931, connect her to Harris through the Toronto Studio Building where she took an atelier in the twenties and worked alongside him, A.Y. Jackson, and J.E.H. MacDonald.¹⁶ In the context of documenting Harris's interest in O'Keeffe, however, there is a much more significant connection between him and Mills and it predates the early twenties.¹⁷

In 1934, Bess Larkin Houser (1890–1969) married Harris, becoming his second wife. A painter and art journalist known for her charm and intellect, Larkin Houser was a close friend of Doris Mills. "I looked up to her as to a goddess," wrote Mills. "She was so beautiful and everything she did seemed so right to me."¹⁸ Larkin Houser was equally admiring of Mills, whom she credited as "the instigator" for encouraging her to start painting.¹⁹ The two women met as girls and had much in common: both were graduates of Toronto's Havergal Ladies College, Christian Scientists, largely self-trained artists, and dedicated supporters of the Group of Seven. Doris and her first husband W. Gordon Mills, an executive with the T. Eaton Company (and later Deputy Minister of National Defence for Naval Services in the Second World War) were among the earliest individuals to collect works of the Group of Seven, while Bess Larkin was married to F.B. Houser (1889–1936), author of the first history of the Group of Seven.²⁰

The friendship between Bess and Fred Houser and Doris and Gordon Mills extended to Harris and his first wife Beatrice. Both Harris and Gordon Mills were members of the Arts and Letters Club, while Harris and Fred Houser had attended St. Andrews College together.²¹ In early 1920, Harris painted *Portrait of Bess*.²² He displayed his painting of Larkin Houser in the Group of Seven's first exhibition (1920) then never again showed it in public.²³

There is little question that, by the time Doris Mills and Bess Houser visited New York City together in May 1925, the women shared a powerful bond with one another and with Harris.²⁴ Well-read and cosmopolitan, Mills regularly turned to him for advice on art. In fact, in 1927, she confessed in her diary how Harris and Bess had become such important influences on her art that she needed to pay less attention to them and trust her own judgment more.²⁵ In light of this, it is hard to imagine that Harris did not have a hand in shaping the itinerary of the two friends, which included a visit to the Anderson Galleries, where earlier that spring Steiglitz had curated an



1 | Georgia O'Keeffe, *The Eggplant*, 1924, oil on canvas, 81.5 × 30.5 cm, Art Gallery of Ontario, Donated in memory of Doris Huestis Speirs by her late husband, Dr. J. Murray Speirs, 1990. (Photo: Art Gallery of Ontario © Georgia O'Keeffe Museum/SODRAC, 2011)

exhibition, *Seven Americans*, in which paintings by Arthur Dove, Marsden Hartley, John Marin, Charles Demuth, Paul Strand, Alfred Stieglitz, and Georgia O'Keeffe had been on view.²⁶

At the Anderson Galleries, Mills became captivated by a vertical painting of an aubergine, executed by O'Keeffe in 1924 and listed in the exhibition's program as *The Egg Plant* (Fig. 1).²⁷ "She has painted [it] perfectly," Mills wrote in her travelogue, "with blue-purple light over it . . . Miss O'Keefe [*sic*] is very wonderful, silent, sensitive as a medium, observing and transmuting. She

paints her reaction to nature, water, flowers, etc and rarely uses forms which remind one of things but of feelings, thoughts.”²⁸

Shortly after Mills wrote this entry she purchased the painting. Today, it is the sole O’Keeffe work owned by the Art Gallery of Ontario. In 1925, however, *The Egg Plant* hung in the home of Doris and Gordon Mills, where regular guests, including Lawren Harris, had ample opportunity to view it.

Harris, Katherine Dreier, and *The International Exhibition of Modern Art*, 1926

In November 1926, Harris’s path intersected with O’Keeffe’s again, when both artists displayed their work in *The International Exhibition of Modern Art* at the Brooklyn Museum. The show was arranged by Katherine Dreier, who contacted Harris after admiring his paintings – *Ontario Hill Town*, 1926, and the gold-medal winning *Northern Lake*, ca. 1926 – at the 1926 Sesquicentennial International Exposition, a world’s fair held from May until November in Philadelphia to celebrate the anniversary of the American Declaration of Independence.²⁹

Dreier and Harris had an immediate rapport: both were passionate champions of contemporary art, committed theosophists, and admirers of the Russian painter and theorist Wassily Kandinsky (who was named Honorary Vice-President of the Société Anonyme in 1923).³⁰ Dreier had founded the Société Anonyme in 1920, with Man Ray and Marcel Duchamp. The society’s mandate was to promote modern art in the wake of the First World War; according to Dreier, disillusionment toward the avant-garde followed the cataclysmic events of the early twentieth century. Without exposure to contemporary art, she argued, Americans would quickly lose interest in the forms that were “giving expression to the new ideas which were stirring the century.”³¹ After seeing work by Harris in Philadelphia, Dreier invited him to join her organization and to participate in the Brooklyn show at which he was the sole Canadian representative.³²

Approximately three hundred works were on view at the Société Anonyme exhibition, the largest and most significant showing of international modern art since the 1913 Armory Show.³³ Harris displayed two paintings: *Miners’ Houses*, *Glance Bay*, ca. 1925 and *Mountain Forms* (date unknown).³⁴ He was one of 106 artists from 23 countries – among them Pablo Picasso, Man Ray, Fernand Léger, Marcel Duchamp, Franz Marc, El Lissitzky, and Georgia O’Keeffe, whose paintings *Grey Tree*, *Lake George* (Fig. 2) and *Abstraction II* (Fig. 3) were both on show.³⁵

On the evening of November 19, 1926, O’Keeffe and Steiglitz attended the opening of the exhibition.³⁶ Although there is no documented account of



2 | Georgia O'Keeffe, *Grey Tree, Lake George*, 1925, oil on canvas, 91.4 × 76.2 cm, Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York. Alfred Stieglitz Collection, Bequest of Georgia O'Keeffe, 1986, Accession Number 1987.377.2. (Photo: Metropolitan Museum of Art © 2010 Artists Rights Society [ARS], New York. Original work in colour)

Harris's presence at the Brooklyn Museum that night, it is hard to imagine that he did not encounter O'Keeffe and her work at the show. Harris made visits to New York in the late fall of 1926 to meet with Dreier in an effort to bring the Société Anonyme exhibition to the Art Gallery of Toronto.³⁷ For him it was "the most representative, most stimulating and the best exhibition of modern art so far shown on this continent," and its presentation in Canada was a matter of national interest.³⁸ As he wrote to Dreier, Canadian artists would not be able to forge a nationalistic response to contemporary art until they had first-hand experience of it.³⁹ Thanks to Harris's efforts, the Art Gallery of Toronto's board committed to showing the exhibition from 2–24 April 1927, the first display of avant-garde art in Canada.⁴⁰

Despite Harris's extensive involvement in *The International Exhibition of Modern Art*, there is no record of his intersection with O'Keeffe's painting at the 1926 show. One potential explanation for this lack of documentation is that, despite her participation in the Brooklyn exhibition, O'Keeffe never



3 | Georgia O’Keeffe, *Abstraction II (Pink Tulip)*, 1926, oil on canvas, 91.5 × 76.2 cm, The Baltimore Museum of Art: Bequest of Mabel Garrison Siemonn, in Memory of her husband George Siemonn, BMA 1964.II.13. (Photo: The Baltimore Museum of Art © Georgia O’Keeffe Museum/SODRAC, 2011)

joined the Société Anonyme.⁴¹ Another possible reason is that when the exhibition did come to Toronto in early 1927, O’Keeffe’s paintings were not included. Owing to Stieglitz’s concern for their safety, works by O’Keeffe, Stieglitz, Dove, Hartley, and Marin were all omitted from the Canadian show.⁴²

However, it is important to consider O’Keeffe’s contribution to the Brooklyn exhibition particularly with respect to Harris’s writing in defence of *The International Exhibition of Modern Art*. When the avant-garde show opened its doors in Canada, its unfamiliar-looking works became a source of media scorn and ridicule. “Cosmic comedies” and the “greatest freaks of art” sneered the *Toronto Star*, which also labeled the exhibition’s artists a “weird mixture of juveniles, Aztecs, and intellectuals.”⁴³

In response to widespread criticism and other angry outbursts about the show, Harris published “Modern Art and Aesthetic Reactions: An

Appreciation” in the *Canadian Forum*. His goal was to educate readers about contemporary painting and to illuminate some of its philosophical underpinnings. Most of the works in the exhibition, Harris explained, required “a new way of seeing.” One had to become familiar with a fresh visual idiom to enjoy “a new, clear and thrilling communication.”⁴⁴ For the sake of greater comprehensibility, Harris identified two categories of abstract painting: representational works based on “naturalistic sources” and non-objective art based on “inner seeing.”⁴⁵ While Harris defended both categories, he declared a bias toward the first category of avant-garde painting, which he described as “the most convincing pictures,” for their ability to convey “a sense of order in a purged, pervading vitality that was positively spiritual.”⁴⁶

As Elizabeth Turner and Marjorie Balge-Crozier demonstrate in *Georgia O’Keeffe: The Poetry of Things*, O’Keeffe’s art, no matter how closely it flirted with abstraction, was always rooted in the thing she was painting.⁴⁷ The two works that O’Keeffe had on display at the Brooklyn exhibition exemplify this quality as well as Harris’s description of abstract art based on “naturalistic sources.” *Grey Tree, Lake George* is the final work of seven in a series of canvases, each 61 × 91.5 centimeters, in which O’Keeffe depicted white tree trunks twisting amid foliage. Featuring spindly, curving, and highly expressive branches, O’Keeffe anthropomorphizes and enlivens nature’s grey and green woody limbs to present an abstract vision based in nature.⁴⁸ Similarly, although the title of O’Keeffe’s other work in the Brooklyn exhibition, *Abstraction II*, signals that the painting does not represent a familiar object, in fact its arcs of chartreuse and ripples of yellow depict a figurative image based in nature: a cropped view of a tulip’s interior.⁴⁹

In addition to the fact that Harris would have seen *Abstraction II* in the Brooklyn exhibition, there is another important reason to consider this painting in relation to his art. It is one of a series of large-scale flower paintings that O’Keeffe began in 1924, a body of work for which she would become particularly renowned. We know that Harris was among those who studied and considered O’Keeffe’s flower paintings because his scrapbook contains *Petunia and Coleus*, one of eight floral works that O’Keeffe exhibited in 1925.⁵⁰

The Lawren Harris Scrapbook and Six O’Keeffe Reproductions

Scrapbooks are by nature private, eccentric, and idiosyncratic. Moreover, according to the historians Katherine Ott, Susan Tucker, and Patricia P. Buckler, in form, scrapbooks more often resemble a kitchen junk drawer than a thoughtfully composed visual narrative. As they write in their introduction

to *The Scrapbook in American Life*, “Some scrapbooks spend their entire existence unbound.” Such volumes wait the day “when the gatherer will become the compiler.”⁵¹

Lawren Harris’s scrapbook might be classified in this way.⁵² It is housed at Library and Archives Canada and has been catalogued as pertaining to the years 1922–1960. However, most of its vertical, legal sized, heavy, parcel-paper-coloured pages, which measure 36.5 x 28 cm, contain pasted ephemera that is undated and uncaptioned. Moreover, the scrapbook also seems to have been a place for storing loose keepsakes, presumably to be pasted in at a later time. Such items include invitations, postcards, art exhibition programs, and reproductions of artworks. Also clipped but loose and unglued is a range of newspaper and magazine stories from Canadian and international publications including *The Christian Science Monitor*, *The Canadian Forum*, *The Washington Star*, and the *Santa Fe New Mexican*.⁵³

Since Library and Archives Canada stores the pages of Harris’s scrapbook in an unbound form and because most of its folios are undated, it is impossible to read the volume as a continuous narrative or to give it any sort of precise chronology. Nonetheless, the album does provide valuable insight into Harris’s interest in Georgia O’Keeffe. In his scrapbook, Harris pasted reproductions of works by Canadian and international artists, including Alexander Archipenko, Constantin Brancusi, Pieter Brueghel, Honoré Daumier, Charles Demuth, Marsden Hartley, A.Y. Jackson (1882–1974), Rockwell Kent, Thoreau MacDonald (1901–1989), Aristide Maillol, John Marin, Georgia O’Keeffe, Auguste Rodin, Henri Rousseau and Tom Thomson (1877–1917). However, of all the international artists whose work Harris clipped and collected, only two individuals are represented by more than three examples: Rockwell Kent, represented by nine works, and Georgia O’Keeffe, represented by six works. The works by O’Keeffe, all executed in the early 1920s, are as follows: *Lake George* and *Blue and Green Music* (pasted upside down) (Fig. 4a), *Alligator Pear* (Fig. 4b), *The Flagpole (II)* (Fig. 4c), *Petunia and Coleus* (pasted upside down) (Fig. 4d), and *Spring/The Flagpole* (Fig. 4e).⁵⁴

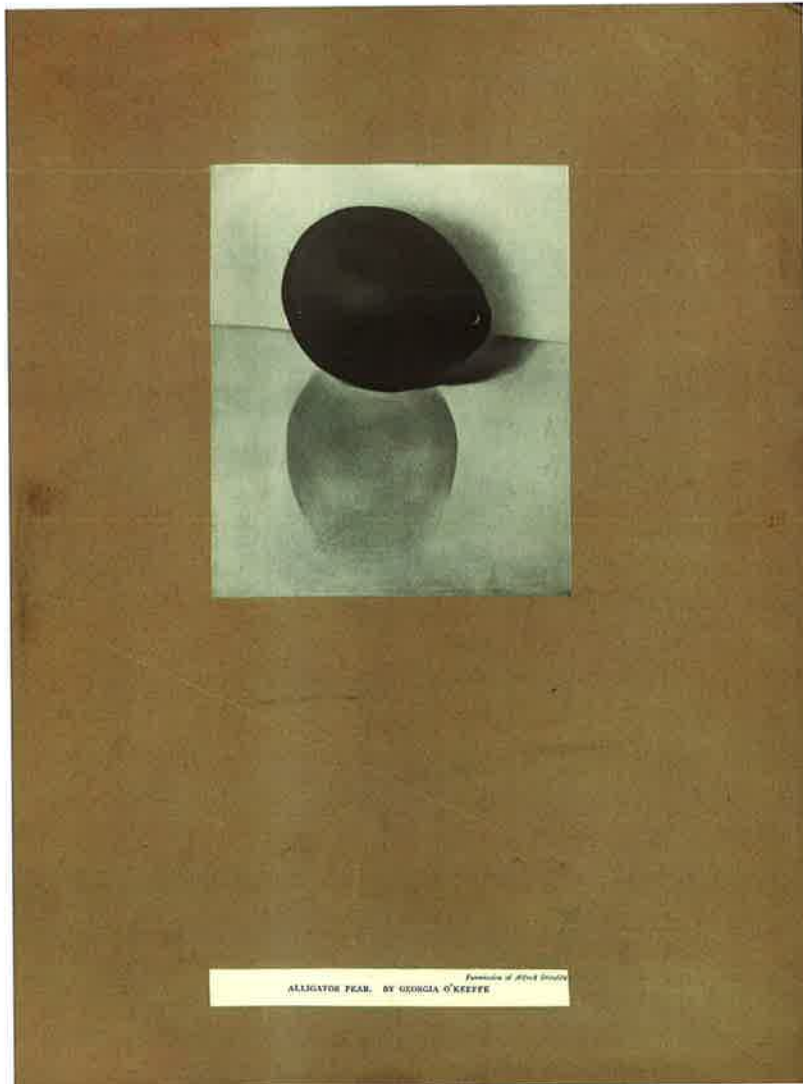
To understand what these works might have meant to Harris, it is helpful to take a step back and consider the scrapbook as a product of its time. By the late nineteenth century, when the deluge of printed matter – ticket stubs, advertising cards, photographs, candy wrappers, news media – reached unprecedented heights, scrapbooks provided a way to create a sense of order.⁵⁵ “We all read, but not with enough purpose,” wrote E.W. Gurley, an early advocate of the scrapbook. He advised that a more focused understanding of print media could be achieved through the regulation, organization, and storage of material in “the well preserved pages of a good scrapbook.”⁵⁶



4a | Page from Lawren S. Harris scrapbook, 1922–1960, showing reproductions of *Lake George*, 1922 (above) and *Blue and Green Music*, 1921, pasted upside down (below) by Georgia O’Keeffe. (Photo: Lawren S. Harris Fonds MG30-D208, vol. 12, Library and Archives Canada)

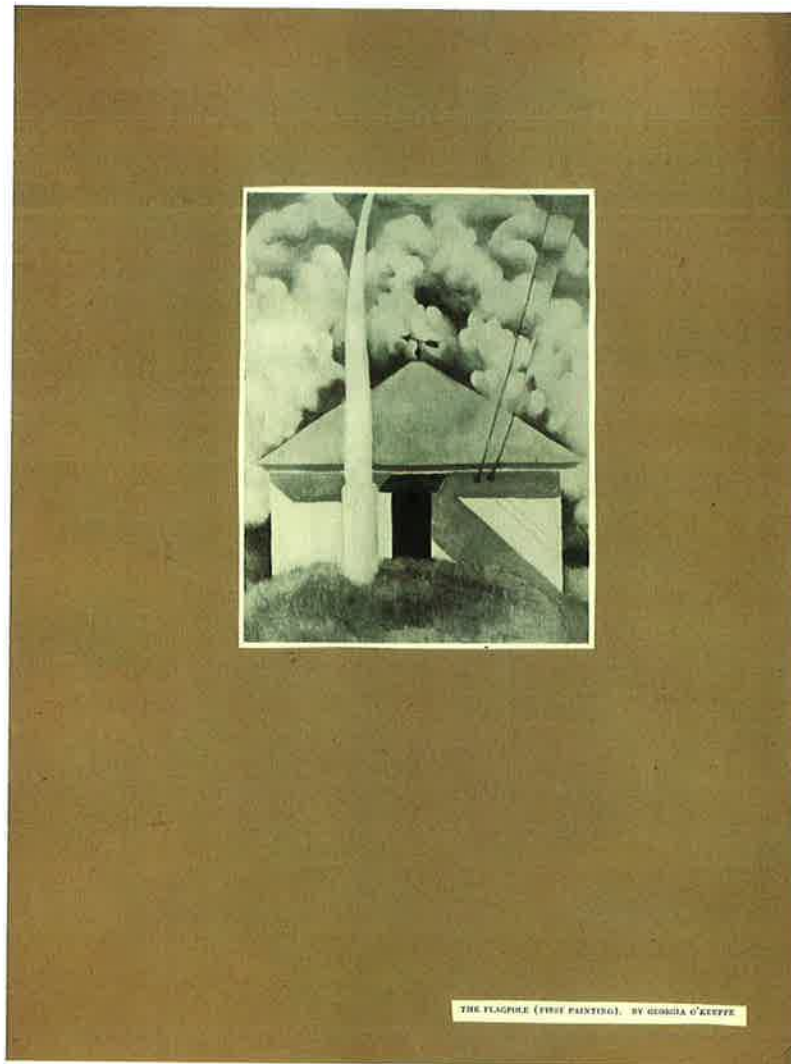
By the time Harris was a schoolboy, educators had long been promoting scrapbooks not only as a means to encourage mental concentration, improve visual literacy and train the mind’s eye, but also as a valuable tool for teaching art.⁵⁷ The process of cutting and pasting – skills that emphasized order and repetition – and the collection of such cultural iconography as flags, stamps, and reproductions of noteworthy paintings turned scrapbooking into a significant exercise for anyone seeking to create a personalized art notebook.⁵⁸

Harris may be counted as one of several early twentieth-century artists, most famously the German Dadaist Hannah Höch, who used the scrapbook as an aid to creating their work.⁵⁹ Although they were using a mass-cultural form, these artists pioneered an authentic genre, creating an entirely unique



4b | Page from Lawren S. Harris scrapbook, 1922–1960, showing reproduction of Georgia O’Keeffe’s *Alligator Pear*, 1923. (Photo: Lawren S. Harris Fonds MG30-D208, vol. 12, Library and Archives Canada)

product. Ott, Tucker, and Buckler support this point and argue that, in this respect, the scrapbook is similar to the artist’s book, and might be understood as such.⁶⁰ Furthermore, they suggest that although these volumes represent enigmatic accounts of the self, their collected pages contribute to a larger narrative of their makers. Despite the coded nature of the scrapbook, as Martha Langford states in *Suspended Conversations*, “the album gives voice to the intensity of human experience.”⁶¹ While her words reference books of collected photographs, this insight can be applied to the Harris scrapbook. Its contents are items that were separated and preserved from the detritus of Harris’s everyday life – ephemera that was valued, which provides a clue to a moment of particular intensity in his life: the mid-twenties.



THE FLAGPOLE (FIRST PAINTING). BY GEORGIA O'KEEFFE

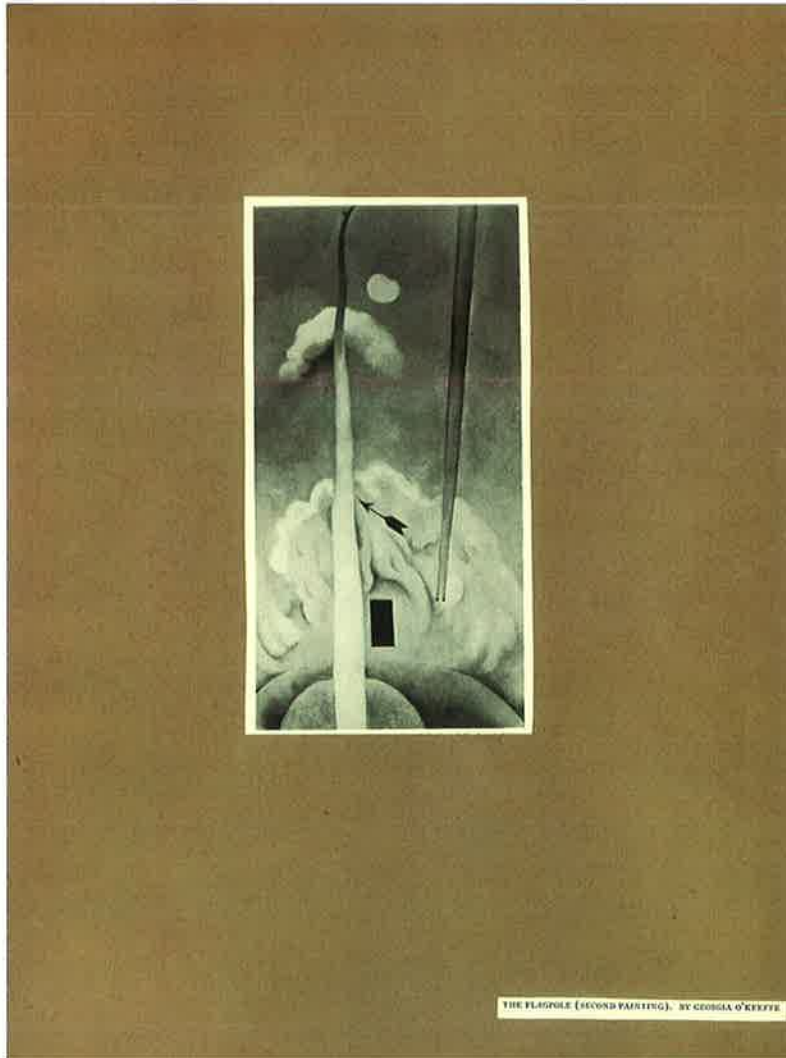
4c | Page from Lawren S. Harris scrapbook, 1922–1960, showing reproduction of Georgia O’Keeffe’s *The Flagpole (I)*, 1924. (Photo: Lawren S. Harris Fonds MG30-D208, vol. 12, Library and Archives Canada)

Although the contents included in Harris’s scrapbook spans approximately forty years, it contains few folios featuring material that is both pasted down and dated beyond the late twenties. By the thirties, the scrapbook seems to have become more of a repository for clippings than a thoughtfully composed book. Moreover, while Harris provides no caption information as to where he found the O’Keeffe reproductions in the scrapbook, with the exception of *Alligator Pear*, it can be established that they were published in the mid-twenties.⁶² These facts reveal that just before and after 1925 was a particularly intense and noteworthy time in Harris’s life with respect to his observation of O’Keeffe’s work.



4d | Page from Lawren S. Harris scrapbook, 1922–1960, showing reproduction of Georgia O’Keeffe’s *Petunia and Coleus*, 1924, pasted upside down. (Photo: Lawren S. Harris Fonds MG30-D208, vol. 12, Library and Archives Canada)

In *Georgia O’Keeffe: Catalogue Raisonné*, Barbara Buhler Lynes includes a publication history of reproductions of O’Keeffe’s early painting until 1946.⁶³ Based on Lynes’s inventory and the fact that the Harris scrapbook contains so few pasted and dated items after the late twenties, we can determine where and when the O’Keeffe images in his scrapbook were found. The *Lake George* reproduction came from the 15 October 1923 issue of *Vogue* magazine where it was part of an article called “Why Modern Art?”⁶⁴ Harris clipped *The Flagpole (II)* from the May 1925 issue of the American art and culture journal *The Dial*, where it was captioned “The Flagpole Second Painting.” No further notation of this work exists other than in Steiglitz’s records and today it is



4e | Page from Lawren S. Harris scrapbook, 1922–1960, showing reproduction of Georgia O’Keeffe’s *Spring/The Flagpole*, 1923. (Photo: Lawren S. Harris Fonds MG30-D208, vol. 12, Library and Archives Canada)

assumed that the painting is lost.⁶⁵ *Petunia and Coleus* was also published just once before 1946, in the April 1925 issue of *The Arts*.⁶⁶ *Spring/The Flagpole* can be traced to the May 1925 issue of *The Dial*, the only place it was published before 1946.⁶⁷ *Blue and Green Music* was first published in *Vogue* in 1923; it was alongside *Lake George* in the magazine and it appears this way in Harris’s scrapbook.⁶⁸

The records of Doris Mills and Katherine Dreier leave no doubt that Harris saw O’Keeffe’s work in person in 1925 and 1926. Harris’s scrapbook reveals that during this same period he not only observed the media’s attention to O’Keeffe’s painting, he was moved to clip, save, and store samples of it, singling out her art from the work of others. From these facts, the following questions may be asked: Did O’Keeffe’s painting have an impact on the evolution of Harris’s own work during this period? And if so, what was it?

Harris Reconsidered

In the fall of 1921, Harris left Toronto to visit the north shore of Lake Superior. Within months of this journey he began creating work that set him apart from his colleagues in the Group of Seven. The full extent of Harris's artistic evolution is exemplified in *Above Lake Superior*, 1921–22.⁶⁹ Compared to *Beaver Swamp, Algoma*, 1920, painted less than two years earlier, the forms of *Above Lake Superior* are pared back, its colours are muted, and its brushwork is far less visible. As Jeremy Adamson writes, the painting is the artist's most pivotal work and one that "no earlier picture prepares us for."⁷⁰

In the first commentary on *Above Lake Superior*, written in 1926 by F.B. Housser, Harris's stylistic leap is connected to his contemporaneous embrace of theosophy, a doctrine that holds all religions as spiritual attempts to evolve to greater perfection.⁷¹ While it is indisputable that theosophy had an impact on Harris's painting, in particular his reduction of forms, Housser and subsequent scholars have overemphasized its importance as the key explanation for the artist's stylistic transformation.⁷² Despite the prevailing myth that the Group of Seven's style came about because its members divested themselves of foreign techniques and turned exclusively to the Canadian landscape for direction, and although Harris himself insisted that his art had no known ancestry, his interest in O'Keeffe's paintings as evidenced in his scrapbook, as well as his first-hand encounter with her art in the mid-twenties, demands that his artistic development be revisited in light of these influences.⁷³

This evolution includes a new composite form that emerged fully in Harris's painting by 1923: oscillating, undulating bands of colour. In Harris's *Above Lake Superior*, 1922, the bands can be found in cloud patterns set in the sky; in *Ice House, Coldwell, Lake Superior* (Fig. 5), the form is evident in the sky's striations and the water's waves. The moving stripes of colour in both of these paintings are strikingly similar to the diagonal ripples found in O'Keeffe's *Blue and Green Music* (Fig. 4a), a work that Harris saw in 1923 and whose reproduction he included in his scrapbook.

Although by 1925 Harris's subject matter differed from O'Keeffe's (landscape was his focus, hers was primarily still life, especially fruit and flowers), closer attention must be paid to how *The Eggplant* may have influenced his art. Part of a series of works experimenting with Cubist faceting, *The Eggplant* is an example of how O'Keeffe employed a reductive formalism and a flat, even application of paint to distill a single subject to its essence.⁷⁴ Harris used a similar approach in his 1925 painting *Mount Temple* (Fig. 6), a work that, like *The Eggplant*, allows one natural element to become the central focus of the canvas. Although *Mount Temple* is based on an actual mountain, one that Harris saw when he first visited the Rockies in 1924, he



5 | Lawren S. Harris, *Ice House, Coldwell, Lake Superior*, ca. 1923, oil on canvas, 94 × 114.3 cm, Art Gallery of Hamilton, Bequest of H.S. Southam, C.M.G., LL.D., 1966. (Photo: Stewart Sheppard and the Art Gallery of Hamilton)



6 | Lawren S. Harris, *Mount Temple*, 1925, oil on canvas, 122 × 134.6 cm, Montreal Museum of Fine Arts, Purchase, Horsley and Annie Townsend Bequest. (Photo: Stewart Sheppard and the Montreal Museum of Fine Arts)



7 | Lawren S. Harris, *North Shore, Lake Superior*, 1926, oil on canvas, 102.2 × 128.3 cm, National Gallery of Canada, Ottawa. (Photo: © NGC)

paints this natural form with a decidedly stylized use of light and colour that animates the foreground and serves to draw the eye deeper into the composition – an approach similar to O’Keeffe’s depiction of *The Eggplant*.

Harris’s *North Shore, Lake Superior* (Fig. 7) is a third painting worth considering in light of the art by O’Keeffe that he had seen and contemplated by the mid-twenties. One of the most notable features of the painting is that it marks an early instance of Harris honing in on his subject, presenting it close to the painting’s foreground. Whereas Harris views landscape from a distance in *Mount Temple*, his *North Shore, Lake Superior* presents nature up close and with an unprecedented intensity. In this respect the painting echoes two works by O’Keeffe, both published in May 1925, and both found in the Harris scrapbook: *Spring/The Flagpole* (Fig. 4e) and *The Flagpole (II)* (Fig. 4c). Like



8 | Lawren S. Harris, *Lake Superior III (Lake Superior)*, ca. 1928, oil on canvas, 86.1 × 102.2 cm, National Gallery of Canada, Ottawa, Vincent Massey Bequest, 1968.
(Photo: © NGC)

these works by O’Keeffe, *North Shore, Lake Superior* includes a dramatically low horizon line – one far closer to the painting’s base than can be found in any previous works by Harris. As well, *North Shore, Lake Superior* shares a dominant compositional element with both paintings by O’Keeffe: a tall vertical form that projects from the earth and intersects with the sky.

Another parallel between *North Shore, Lake Superior* and O’Keeffe’s art lies in how Harris presents an abstracted view of his subject. A.Y. Jackson, who was with Harris when he found the damaged tree trunk depicted in the work, wrote that it was not within sight of a lake.⁷⁵ From this description we might conclude that Harris’s depiction of a tree trunk, lit from the side, exaggerated in its three-dimensionality, and overlooking water, represents a personalized vision of his subject. At its core *North Shore, Lake Superior* is a stylized consideration of nature – much like O’Keeffe’s approach to her dramatically rendered tulip in *Abstraction II*.

A final point of comparison might be made between Harris’s *Lake Superior III* (Fig. 8) and *Grey Tree, Lake George* – the other painting by O’Keeffe that Harris saw at the Brooklyn exhibition. Like O’Keeffe’s two flag paintings in the Harris scrapbook, this work features a low horizon, a dominant perpendicular motif, and the presentation of its subject matter as radically near. But a new element also enters this work. As Peter Larisey writes, there is an important distinction between *Lake Superior III* and Harris’s earlier paintings of the region: its trees are “anthropomorphic . . . as they bend or lean toward the light.”⁷⁶ Only one year earlier Harris had encountered a similar vision of nature in O’Keeffe’s *Grey Tree, Lake George*. Arguably, her attenuated and life-like branches offered a source of inspiration for Harris’s otherworldly and reaching tree in *Lake Superior III*.

The New Mexico Connection

Starting in 1929, Harris faced numerous challenges both in his professional and personal life that would bring his painting to a near standstill by 1930. He was committed to the promotion of modern art yet he could not wholeheartedly embrace abstraction; he continued to promote Canadian culture yet his own painting increasingly presented an interest in a universal consciousness. Moreover, Harris had fallen in love with Bess Housser, for whom he would leave his wife of twenty-four years, Beatrice.⁷⁷ In 1934, seeking refuge from disapproving friends and relatives in Toronto, the couple moved to Hanover, New Hampshire, where Harris’s uncle and friend William Kilborne Stewart was a professor at Dartmouth College.⁷⁸

Further evidence of Harris’s connection to O’Keeffe during this period comes from Emily Carr (1871–1945). While the late twenties marked a time

of artistic stagnation for Harris, the opposite was true for Carr, whom he mentored and counted as a friend from the time of their first meeting in 1927. Harris was a tireless supporter of Carr's work and arranged for her to meet Katherine Dreier in New York in April 1930. Dreier then introduced Carr to O'Keeffe, who had just returned from a four-month stay at the Taos home of the American arts patron Mabel Dodge Luhan.⁷⁹ There O'Keeffe had found volcanic mountains and empty deserts that spoke to her; she learned of prehistoric Indian culture in which colour symbolism played an active role and vibrant native ritual in worship of the land and universe.⁸⁰ Following this experience the artist wrote, "I feel so alive that I am apt to crack at any moment," and resolved to spend a part of every year in New Mexico.⁸¹

Carr witnessed O'Keeffe's enthusiasm for the Southwest first hand when she viewed the artist's recent Taos paintings at An American Place, the gallery Stieglitz opened in 1929.⁸² While Carr's correspondence with Harris has been lost, there is a considerable possibility that she told him how these works affected her. As Sharon Udall writes, after Carr met O'Keeffe her art began "to pulsate with the force of vibrations, as O'Keeffe's work."⁸³ Even if Harris did not learn of O'Keeffe's paintings from Carr, he would have read about them. The press covered O'Keeffe's 1930 exhibition extensively, reporting that the New Mexico work marked a decided change in her painting and a fresh, spiritual, indigenous, and abstracted approach to landscape.⁸⁴

Harris's art also underwent a fundamental transition in the early thirties. Within weeks of his arrival in New Hampshire, Harris began to paint again after a two-year hiatus and his compositions moved toward a new type of abstraction, one based on inner seeing. It was an evolution that would be fully realized only when he moved to New Mexico four years later and became part of the Transcendental Painting Group, composed of artists who were concerned with the development and presentation of various types of non-representational painting.⁸⁵ For Harris, an artist who identified himself as a painter of Canadian landscapes, this stylistic shift was monumental. Moreover, it was one that defined the rest of his artistic career.

By 1939, Lawren and Bess Harris were living happily in Santa Fe where they were members of the city's vibrant arts scene. In mid-February of that year Doris Mills received a letter from Bess, packed with accounts of her friend's new Southwestern home. The note also included details of her travels with Harris to New York City earlier that month. As part of their trip out east, Bess told Mills how they visited Steiglitz and had a "tender and lovely" time.⁸⁶ The familiarity implied in this phrase suggests that by the late thirties, Harris and Bess's relationship with Steiglitz was hardly new. This gives further credence to the assertion that the Harrises ended up in Santa Fe by intention rather than coincidence. It is a subject that, along with

Harris's scrapbook, his encounters with O'Keeffe's work, and the connections between his painting and hers, belongs to a much larger story: the account of how in the mid-twenties Harris began to withdraw from a distinctly Canadian idiom to contemplate new questions of style and new directions for his art.

NOTES

I am grateful to Professor Mark A. Cheetham, Professor Dennis Reid, and Professor Martha Langford for their encouragement, guidance, and insightful comments on this essay. I would also like to thank the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada (SSHRC) for its support.

- 1 For more on Santa Fe and its mystic appeal to artists see Sharyn ROHLFSEN UDALL, *Santa Fe Art Colony, 1900–1942* (Santa Fe: Gerald Peters Gallery, 1987), 11–30.
- 2 Peter LARISEY, “Chronology,” in *Atma Buddhi Manas: The Later Works of Lawren Harris*, ed. Dennis Reid (Toronto: Art Gallery of Ontario, 1985), 105. Also see Ian M. THOM, “Lawren Stewart Harris: A Canadian Painter,” in *Lawren Stuart Harris: A Painter's Progress* (New York: The Americas Society, 2000), 39.
- 3 On O'Keeffe's division of her time between New York and New Mexico see Roxana ROBINSON, *Georgia O'Keeffe: A Life* (New York: Harper & Row, 1990), 313–45.
- 4 Roald NASGAARD, *The Mystic North: Symbolist Landscape Painting in Northern Europe and North America, 1890–1940* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1984), 203–204.
- 5 Michael D. HALL and Nannette V. MACIEJUNES, “On the Middle Border: Charles Burchfield Revisited” in *The Paintings of Charles Burchfield: North by Midwest* (New York: Harry N. Abrams, Inc., in association with the Columbus Museum of Art, 1997), 20. Ann Davis also echoes Nasgaard's view, stating that both Harris and O'Keeffe shared a concern with the spiritual; see Ann DAVIS, *The Logic of Ecstasy: Canadian Mystical Painting, 1920–1940* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1992), 6.
- 6 Sandra SHAUL, *The Modern Image: Cubism and the Realist Tradition* (Edmonton: The Edmonton Art Gallery, 1982), 16.
- 7 For reference to *North Shore, Lake Superior*, see Peter LARISEY, S.J., *Light for a Cold Land: Lawren Harris's Work and Life – An Interpretation* (Toronto: Dundurn Press, 1993), plate 24. For reference to *Alligator Pear*, see Barbara BUHLER LYNES, *Georgia O'Keeffe: Catalogue Raisonné* (New Haven: Yale University Press; Washington: National Gallery of Art; Abiquiú, NM: Georgia O'Keeffe Foundation, 1999), 224; entry 414.
- 8 LARISEY, *Light for a Cold Land*, 95–96.
- 9 REID, *Atma Buddhi Manas*, 23–24, 65.

- 10 On Harris's awareness of O'Keeffe and Stieglitz, See Charles C. HILL, "Interview with Doris Huestis Speirs, 15 October 1973," *Canadian Painting in the Thirties Exhibition Records* (Ottawa: National Gallery of Canada Fonds, National Gallery of Canada Library and Archives, 2008), 10.
- 11 Peter LARISEY, "Chronology," in *Lawren S. Harris: Urban Scenes and Wilderness Landscapes 1906–1930*, ed. Jeremy Adamson (Toronto: Art Gallery of Ontario, 1978), 15. Although not all trips were documented after this one, Harris made several visits to New York City; see LARISEY, *Light for a Cold Land*, 126.
- 12 For an example of early writing on O'Keeffe, see William MURRELL FISHER, "The Georgia O'Keeffe Drawings and Paintings at '291,'" *Camera Work* (June 1917): 5.
- 13 Barbara BUHLER LYNES, *O'Keeffe, Stieglitz and the Critics: 1916–1929* (Ann Arbor, MI: UMI Research Press, 1989), 8–9.
- 14 Nancy HOPKINS REILY, *Georgia O'Keeffe: A Private Friendship* (Santa Fe: Sunstone Press, 2007), 289.
- 15 Judith PARKER, "Speirs, Doris Huestis," in *A Dictionary of Canadian Artists* 9 (online), compiled by Anne Newlands and Judith Parker, National Gallery of Canada. Accessed 2 Aug. 2011, <http://www.pro.rcip-chin.gc.ca/bd-dl/aac-aic-eng.jsp>.
- 16 Ibid. Also see the entry "Speirs, Doris Huestis" in *The International Register of Profiles* (Cambridge, UK, 1976).
- 17 In the city archives of Pickering, Ontario (where the Houssers lived), photographs of the Harrisses with the Millses in 1919, confirm that their friendship predated Doris's studio rental. See HS-Art165, Pickering Township Historical Society Fonds, Pickering Public Library. Provenance: Doris Huestis Speirs to Pickering Historical Society to PPL.
- 18 Doris Speirs to Lawren Harris, 6 Oct. 1969. Ms Spiers, D. Coll 319, Box 5, folder 6, Thomas Fisher Rare Books Library (Hereafter referred to as the "Speirs Collection").
- 19 Ibid.
- 20 Charles C. HILL, *The Group of Seven* (Toronto: McClelland & Stewart Ltd.), 217, 226. F.B. HOUSSEY's book is *A Canadian Art Movement: The Story of the Group of Seven* (Toronto: Macmillan of Canada, 1926).
- 21 LARISEY, *Light for a Cold Land*, 4.
- 22 For a reference to Harris's portrait of Bess Houser, see HILL, *The Group of Seven*, 309. For more on Harris painting this portrait, see Ross KING, *Defiant Spirits: The Modernist Revolution and The Group of Seven* (Vancouver: Douglas and McIntyre and Kleinburg: McMichael Canadian Art Collection, 2010), 378–79.
- 23 Ibid.
- 24 For documentation of the trip to New York by Doris Mills and Bess Houser, see Doris Spiers, 14 May 1925, Diary 1924–26, Box 16, Speirs Collection.
- 25 Doris Speirs, diary entry, 12 Aug. 1927, Diary 1927, Box 16, Speirs Collection.
- 26 The full title of the exhibition was *Alfred Steiglitz Presents Seven Americans: 159 Paintings, Photographs & Things, Recent & Never Before Publicly Shown by Arthur G. Dove, Marsden Hartley, John Marin, Charles Demuth, Paul Strand, Georgia O'Keeffe, and Alfred Steiglitz*. The exhibition was on display from 9–28 Mar. 1925. For a brochure of the exhibition, the history and how it entered into the collection of the Art Gallery of Ontario, see *The Eggplant* Registration file, The Art Gallery of Ontario.

- 27 For reference to this work, see BUHLER LYNES, *Georgia O’Keeffe*, 246, item 453. Today, its title is *The Eggplant*.
- 28 Doris Speirs, diary entry, 14 May 1925, Diary 1925, Box 16, Speirs Collection.
- 29 Dreier to Harris, 26 Aug. 1926. Katherine S. Dreier Papers / Société Anonyme Archive, Yale Collection of American Literature, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Yale University, YCAL MSS 101 (Hereafter referred to as the “Dreier Papers”). For reference to *Ontario Hill Town*, see LARISEY, plate 16. For reference to *Northern Lake*, see LARISEY, *Light for a Cold Land*, 74.
- 30 For a more detailed discussion of the shared interests of Harris and Dreier, see SHAUL, “Katherine Dreier: The Société Anonyme and the Canadian Connection,” in *The Modern Image*, 9–10.
- 31 Katherine DREIER, “Intrinsic Significance in Modern Art,” *Three Lectures on Modern Art* (New York: Philosophical Library, 1949), 5.
- 32 Dreier to Harris, 19 Nov. 1926. Société Anonyme File, Art Gallery of Ontario.
- 33 Ruth L. BOHAN, *The Société Anonyme’s Brooklyn Exhibition* (Ann Arbor, MI: UMI Research Press, 1982), xviii.
- 34 Ibid. *Miners House* is in the collection of the Art Gallery of Ontario. *Mountain Form* was exhibited as an undated work. Today the painting is unaccounted for; it was in storage at the Art Gallery of Ontario in 1934. After that there is no record of it. See letter of Dennis Reid, Art Gallery of Ontario to Sandra Shaul, 30 Apr. 1981.
- 35 For reference to both these works, see BUHLER LYNES, *Georgia O’Keeffe*, 288 (*Grey Tree, Lake George*, item 512) and 265 (*Abstraction II*, item 478). In the catalogue raisonné, *Abstraction II* is referred to as *Pink Tulip*.
- 36 Hunter DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP, *Full Bloom: The Art and Life of Georgia O’Keeffe* (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 2004), 269.
- 37 BOHAN, *The Société Anonyme’s Brooklyn Exhibition*, 63.
- 38 Lawren Harris letter to the Exhibition Committee, Art Gallery of Toronto, December 1926, reprinted in L.R. PFAFF, “Lawren Harris and the International Exhibition of Modern Art: Rectifications to the Toronto catalogue (1927) and Some Critical Comments,” *RACAR* (1984): 84.
- 39 Harris to Dreier, December 1926, Dreier Papers.
- 40 Christine BOYANOSKI, *Permeable Border* (Toronto: Art Gallery of Ontario, 1989), 20.
- 41 While Dreier asked Stieglitz and O’Keeffe to join the Société Anonyme, only the former became a member as O’Keeffe shied away from joining group organizations. However, Stieglitz convinced O’Keeffe that the 1926 Brooklyn exhibition was of such significance that she participated in it, along with other members of Stieglitz’s circle, including Arthur Dove, Charles Demuth, and John Marin. See BOHAN, *The Société Anonyme’s Brooklyn Exhibition*, 50.
- 42 Ibid., 222, footnote 52. Bohan cites Stieglitz’s letter to William Henry Talbot, 21 Sept. 1926, in which he addresses his concern that the frames of O’Keeffe’s paintings not be scratched, as “any markings would destroy the perfection of O’Keeffe’s work and presentation.”
- 43 “Art Gallery Now Contains Greatest Freaks of Art,” *Toronto Star*, 31 Mar. 1927. “Exit Scrambled Zoo Exhibition,” *Toronto Star*, 25 Apr. 1927.
- 44 Lawren HARRIS, “Modern Art and Aesthetic Reactions: An Appreciation,” *The Canadian Forum* 7 (May 1927): 240. Also in the same issue was a scathing assessment of the show by Franz Johnston, a former member of the Group of Seven (who

resigned in 1922), entitled, “An Objection” in which he referred to the works as “abortions in paint” and “mental miscarriages” claiming that the artists who had created the works were “more dangerous than many incarcerated in asylums for the insane.”

- 45 Later in 1949, when Harris wrote “An Essay on Abstract Painting” for the *Journal of the Royal Architectural Institute of Canada*, he identified three categories of abstract art (images inspired by nature; non-objective painting conveying a central idea through formal means, and autonomous works composed only of formal elements with no predetermined idea). See Joyce ZEMANS, “Abstract and Non-objective Art in English Canada” in *The Visual Arts in Canada*, ed. Anne Whitelaw, Brian Foss, and Sandra Paikowsky (Don Mills: Oxford University Press, 2010), 164.
- 46 HARRIS, “Modern Art and Aesthetic Reactions.”
- 47 See Elizabeth TURNER, “The Real Meaning of Things” and Marjorie BALGE-CROZIER, “Still Life Redefined” in *Georgia O’Keeffe: The Poetry of Things* (Washington: The Phillips Collection, 1999), 12–13, 52.
- 48 DROHOJOWSKA-PHILP, *Full Bloom*, 251.
- 49 For a further description of this work, see BUHLER LYNES, *O’Keeffe, Stieglitz, and the Critics*, 58 and 157, and Sarah WHITAKER PETERS, *Becoming O’Keeffe. The Early Years* (New York: Abbeville Press, 1991), 132.
- 50 BUHLER LYNES, *O’Keeffe, Stieglitz, and the Critics*, 335. Of the 30 works O’Keeffe exhibited in 1925, 8 were flowers. For a reference to *Petunia and Coleus*, see BUHLER LYNES, *Georgia O’Keeffe*, 252, item 463.
- 51 Katherine OTT, Susan TUCKER, and Patricia P. BUCKLER, “An Introduction to the History of Scrapbooks” in *The Scrapbook in American Life*, ed. Katherine Ott, Susan Tucker, and Patricia P. Buckler (Philadelphia: Temple University Press), 12.
- 52 Scrapbook 1922–1960, vol. 12, Lawren S. Harris Fonds, MG30-D208, Library and Archives Canada.
- 53 Other papers that Harris clipped include *The Canadian Review*, *The Detroit News*, *The Vancouver Sun*, *The Winnipeg Free Press*, *Saturday Night Magazine* (Toronto), *The Listener* (London), *The Mail and Empire* (Toronto), *The Toronto Telegram*, *The Toronto Star*, and *Weekend Magazine* (New Zealand).
- 54 For colour reproductions and further commentary on these works, see BUHLER LYNES, *Georgia O’Keeffe*; 185 for *Blue and Green Music* (item 344); 211 for *Lake George* (item 391); 224 for *Alligator Pear* (item 414); 240 for *Spring/The Flagpole* (item 446); and 252 for *Petunia and Coleus* (item 463).
- 55 Maurice RICHARDS, *The Encyclopedia of Ephemera: A Guide to the Fragmentary Documents of Everyday Life for the Collector, Curator, and Historian* (New York: Routledge, 2000), 283–85.
- 56 E.W. GURLEY, *Scrap-Books and How to Make Them* (New York: Authors’ Publishing, 1880), 10–11, 13, 51.
- 57 By 1835 the use of scrapbooks was prolific enough that a Hartford Connecticut publisher founded a periodical entitled *The Scrapbook*, which described the hobby of scrapbooks as keeping a blank book in which pictures, newspaper cuttings and the like were pasted for safekeeping. See OTT, TUCKER, and BUCKLER, “An Introduction to the History of Scrapbooks,” 8.
- 58 Grace STORM, *The Social Studies in the Primary Grades* (Chicago: Lyons and Carnahan, 1931), 267.

- 59 Melissa A. JOHNSON, "Souvenirs of Amerika: Hannah Höch's Weimar-Era Mass-Media Scrapbook" in *The Scrapbook in American Life*, eds. Ott, Tucker, and Buckler, 135–52.
- 60 OTT, TUCKER, and BUCKLER, *The Scrapbook in American Life*, 12.
- 61 Martha LANGFORD, *Suspended Conversations: The Afterlife of Memory in Photographic Albums* (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2001), 21.
- 62 According to Buhler Lynes, *Alligator Pear* was exhibited in 1924 at the Anderson Gallery and then in 1934 in New York at an American Place before becoming part of a private collection in Paris, France. The author provides no record of publication for this work. See BUHLER LYNES, *Georgia O'Keeffe*, 224.
- 63 In the Buhler Lynes's O'Keeffe catalogue raisonné, the publication history of O'Keeffe's paintings goes up to 1946 (and not beyond this date) because this documentation was created as part of a project initiated and sponsored by the American Art Research Council, starting in 1944. Rosalind Irvine (later curator at the Whitney Museum of American Art, New York City) created the publication record and she conducted most of her research between 1944–1946. For further details see BUHLER LYNES, *Georgia O'Keeffe*, 14–15.
- 64 Herbert J. SELIGMANN, "Why 'Modern' Art? Six Artists in Search of Media for Their Various Capricious Spirits Demonstrate That 'Modern' Art is Not Merely Contemporary Art," *Vogue* 62:8, 15 Oct. 1923, 76–77. According to Buhler Lynes, this image was first published in the October 1923 issue of *The Arts*. See *Georgia O'Keeffe*, 211.
- 65 *Ibid.*, 1103. The image appears in *The Dial* as part of an insert of illustrations after page 380 of the volume.
- 66 *Ibid.*, 252.
- 67 *Ibid.*, 240.
- 68 SELIGMANN, "Why 'Modern' Art?" 76–77. In Seligmann's article the painting was titled *Music*. It was next reproduced in 1927 and titled *Music–Blue and Black and Green* in *Pageant of America*. Its next reproduction, in *Knight Publisher*, plate 6 (1937), was titled *Music–Blue and Black and Green*. In 1939 it was reproduced and titled *Music Black and Green in A Primer of Modern Art*. For further details see BUHLER LYNES, *Georgia O'Keeffe*, 185.
- 69 For a reference to *Above Lake Superior* see LARISEY, *Light for a Cold Land*, plate 23.
- 70 ADAMSON, *Lawren S. Harris*, 123–24.
- 71 See F.B. HOUSSER, *A Canadian Art Movement: The Story of the Group of Seven* (Toronto: Macmillan Co. of Canada, 1972 edition), 190–91. Harris first came into contact with theosophy while studying in Berlin from 1904 to 1908, but like many others of his generation, adopted its principles after the First World War. In 1922 Harris became a member of the Toronto Theosophical Society and by the time he painted *Above Lake Superior*, he was a firm believer that, in accordance with theosophical doctrine, the contemplation of visible nature and the rendering of natural scenes and effects demanded a simplification of the naturalistic to its fundamental and purest forms.
- 72 See ADAMSON, *Lawren S. Harris*, 123–24 and THOM, "Lawren Stewart Harris: A Canadian Painter," 29–33.
- 73 Harris said of his art: "It was not derivative. It was not English Landscape. It was not French Impressionism or Post Impressionism . . . It was a natural growth in the

country . . . Nature evolves new species by 'spirits' sudden and inexplicable leaps into altogether novel flowerings." See Lawren HARRIS, "Canada Has Given Birth to a New and National Art," *Toronto Star Weekly*, 26 Jan. 1924. Quoted in LARISEY, *Light for a Cold Land*, 59.

- 74 For further commentary on *The Eggplant* see BOYANOSKI, *Permeable Border*, 30 and WHITAKER PETERS, *Becoming O'Keeffe*, 100 and 274.
- 75 A.Y. JACKSON, *A Painter's Country: The Autobiography of A.Y. Jackson* (Toronto and Vancouver: Clarke, Irwin & Company Limited, 1958), 58–59.
- 76 LARISEY, *Light for a Cold Land*, 96.
- 77 *Ibid.*, 118.
- 78 *Ibid.*, 124.
- 79 Emily CARR, *Growing Pains: The Autobiography of Emily Carr*, foreword by Ira Dilworth; introduction by Robin Laurence (Vancouver: Douglas & McIntyre, 2005), 302.
- 80 WHITAKER PETERS, *Becoming O'Keeffe*, 505.
- 81 Georgia O'Keeffe to Ettie Stettheimer, August 1929, Art Institute of Chicago. Quoted in WHITAKER PETERS, *Becoming O'Keeffe*, 302.
- 82 Sharyn ROHLFSEN UDALL, *Carr, O'Keeffe, Kahlo: Places of Their Own* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2000), 250.
- 83 O'Keeffe and Carr discussed O'Keeffe's *The Lawrence Tree* (1929) at length. This painting is a depiction of a great pine described in D.H. Lawrence's novel set in Taos, *St. Mawr*. From that conversation, Carr developed a fascination with Lawrence and would soon copy the *St. Mawr* passage into her journal. According to Sharyn Udall, Carr's meeting with O'Keeffe may have influenced her decision (in 1930–31) to produce charcoal drawings that moved away from native imagery and toward a search for nature's formal equivalents. As well, after Carr's meeting with O'Keeffe, she began to incorporate zig-zag or saw-tooth shapes into her work (see *Untitled*, 1930) as O'Keeffe had done before her. For further details see ROHLFSEN UDALL, *Carr, O'Keeffe, Kahlo*, 147–52.
- 84 Publications on O'Keeffe's 1929 New Mexico paintings include: Edward Alden JEWELL, "New O'Keeffe Pictures: A Sharp Monumental Vigor Characterizes Work of This Brilliantly Original Artist," *New York Times*, 9 Feb. 1930; Henry MCBRIDE, "The Sign of the Cross: Georgia O'Keeffe's Impressions of the Taos Region Exhibited Here," *The New York Sun*, 8 Feb. 1930; Marty MANN, "Exhibitions," *International Studio* (March 1930); "The Paintings of O'Keeffe in Taos," *Atelier* (June 1931); Murdock PEMBERTON, "The Art Galleries: Raise the Flag, the French Are Here! – A Different American," *The New Yorker* (February 1930); Mabel Dodge LUHAN, "Georgia O'Keeffe in Taos," *Creative Art* (June 1931).
- 85 REID, *Atma Buddhi Manas*, 28–29.
- 86 Doris Speirs to Bess Larkin Houser, 19 Feb. 1939, Box 4, folder 23, Speirs Collection.