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**“I Love Regina!” . . . and its “Infinite Horizons”:
The Art of the Small Prairie City**

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All of this is really to say that cities are *places*.... What, after all, is a place? We say: It is an area of significance, a physical staging ground. But it is more than that. It is somewhere that matters, where we find or lose ourselves, where understanding good and bad is forced upon us. Places are environments, sites of action, horizons of concern. They are infused with our aspirations and beliefs, reflecting and shaping them both.

Mark Kingwell, *Concrete Reveries: Consciousness and the City* (1)

As Paul Duchene and Greg Beatty write with an ironic beat in a recent issue of the *Prairie Dog*, “You can still heart Regina, but from now on we’ll officially be promoting our infinite horizons to the rest of the world.” (2) In reflecting on Saskatchewan’s capital as *place*, and the place of art in it, I too find myself caught between the two boosterish representations of it to which they refer—between the City of Regina’s 2002 logo campaign: “I Love Regina!”; and its new “community brand,” just launched in the spring of 2010: “Infinite Horizons”:



ILLUSTRATION 1: I LOVE REGINA LOGO INSTALLATION



ILLUSTRATION 2: INFINITE HORIZONS

But there is a third, historical force, that haunts them both: Wascana, the Cree “Pile O’ Bones” that would become the ghostly 19th century “staging ground” of the “Queen City” of the Canadian flatlands as it attempted to erase the Aboriginal people and put in their place a white-settler capital. (3) I join a growing cadre of artists and journalists who have found these recent branding campaigns troubling: In the case of “I Love Regina,” it’s an embarrassing and derivative anachronism at best (given the strides being made by other Canadian cities inspired by the “creative cities movement” and Regina’s own status as the “Cultural Capital of Canada” in 2004) (36). And, in the case of “Infinite Horizons,” (given what we know about the unsustainability of urban sprawl and what we suspect in terms of the land sale profits accruing around the new Harbour Landing site), it’s a city politicians’ and developers neo-colonialist gaff at worst. As a result, these artists and writers are variously challenging the corporate values and tone of bland optimism of such

official representations by foregrounding in their work more critical perspectives on the state of Regina and the pressing issues it faces.

As Kingwell says, every city is a “a city of the imagination, an unrealized project,” but one that nevertheless takes *place* in an actual “environment,” a “site of action,” or “horizon of concern.” (4) In “A Guide to Urban Representation and What to Do About It,” Rob Shields writes about the importance of *representation* to understanding cities as *places*. The city itself, Shields says, is, in fact, a *representation* of these enabling conditions of discursivity on the one hand and materiality on the other. As a representation, the City of Regina is a “complex formation” of “material, techniques and ideologies in which social practice is linked to social thought and imagination,” but wherein issues surface between the “official representation” and the “experience of everyday life.” (5) Simply put, such official campaigns as “I Love Regina” and “Infinite Horizons” are idealized, abstract, reified, if not overwrought



**ILLUSTRATION 3: NEW I HEART REGINA AND ITS INFINITE HORIZONS
LOGO**

representations that exist in tension with the multiple collisions and conflicts of identities and social practices that living cities actually are. (6)

In recent years, those conflicts have become newly visible in Regina, resurfacing with a vengeance, as the seemingly ‘benign’ image of Wascana that lies quietly dormant beneath successive official representations of the city (i.e. Wascana Park, Wascana Lake as the jewels in its crown) has been exposed on the national stage by John Gatehouse in a now infamous *Macleans* article from 2007: “Canada’s Worst Neighbourhood: How did the province where medicare was born end up with a city this frightening?” (8) As we know, the piece went on to provoke a storm of controversy, opening, as it did, skeletons of white racist apartheid in the Queen City’s closet—a new or revived pile of bones in North Central—that have been hard to face.

However, in the event, Gatehouse, an outsider to Regina and its lively arts scene, was clearly not aware of the kinds of critical engagement with *place* that have been erupting in the work of our artists and filmmakers in the past ten years. I want to examine some of those insider voices alongside the important journalistic work that Gatehouse and the *Prairie Dog* have performed in exposing Regina’s underbelly: its unofficial face, its questionable attitude to its own heritage, its sagging downtown, its suburban sprawl, and most importantly its historical and contemporary mistreatment of our Aboriginal citizens as its darker horizon of concern. For example, in 2003 the MacKenzie Art Gallery presented “That’s My Wonderful Town,” an exhibition of mostly local artists curated by Timothy Long as part of the city’s centenary, designed to both celebrate and interrogate Regina; which in turn inspired the publication of *Regina’s Secret Spaces*, a collection of essays and images by Regina-based artists, architects, writers, musicians and cultural

theorists critically reflecting on specific geographical locations in the city, published in 2006 by the Canadian Plains Research Centre; (9) while several filmmakers have also explored the fabric of the city in television, documentary and experimental forms.

Together, I argue, their social practice as artists exposes what lies beneath the golden horizon line encircling our small prairie city, their works performing for the Queen City what Michel de Certeau would call important “tactics of resistance” (10) in the name of representing the lived and living city—in both its “good and bad” aspects—as *a place that matters*.

Regina’s secret spaces

As I have indicated, lying dormant beneath our city and its “Infinite Horizons” is the ghost of Oskunah-kasas-take—the pile of bones in our closet—the destiny in poverty, drugs and the sex trade that we have helped fashion for our Aboriginal youth in the ghetto of North Central Regina. In the juxtaposition of the unearthing of “Canada’s worst neighbourhood,” set over against our “Love” for Regina and its “Infinite Horizons,” what I am attempting to reveal is what Shields calls the dynamics of “social spatialization” at work in our city. Social spatialization involves the habitual practices and representations in which we engage in our urban environments—the subtle “spatial structuring” of the “social imaginary” that results in the social divisions which we create but that largely go unnoticed. As the official representation of any city becomes second nature, it comes to efface history—the “original, first nature of the physical ecology” of the place—and so becomes the often whitewashed framework with which the city boosts itself and idealizes its social relationships. North Central, the downtown, the east-end box stores, Harbour

Landing—all are examples of how Regina is socially spatialized. But these spaces, Shields argues, cannot simply be “read off from power and privilege as ‘intended’ or as consonant with class struggle, patriarchy or white domination.” These spaces are ambiguous, relative, open to dialogue, their meanings always there to be “claimed and contested.” (37) Gatehouse, Beatty and Dechene would agree, as would the Regina artists and filmmakers who have recently concerned themselves with unearthing the “secret spaces” of the structure of their city. In this sense, it must be noted that an important aspect of Regina’s unique vernacular as a small city definitely begins to distinguish itself since, as Garrett-Petts and Dubinsky report, “smaller cities seldom find themselves the subject of . . . artistic representation.” (38) Regina’s arts scene is indeed sophisticated for a city of 200,000 people, I argue, as will become apparent in what follows.

In *The Imaginative Structure of the City* Alan Blum is concerned with the city as a social formation and as set of social practices. The concept of the “imaginative structure of the city” refers to the “collective anxiety” aroused by the question of the “relevance of place to life,” and to the ways that the unique issues and details of a city’s everyday life (such as ignoring or remedying poverty, destroying or refurbishing old or unused buildings, rebuilding neighbourhoods, approving box store developments, designing logos, making art, inspiring pride of place, etc.) play out in the eternal “conflict over the ideal and the real.” (39) On the one hand, the city is an economic organization concerned with the supply and management of resources; ruled by a division of labour; and subject to governance—a force of power and control. On the other hand, the city is a manifestation of soul concerned with the needs and desires of its people; answerable to

complicated notions of community, history, identity, equality and sustainability; ambiguous, vertiginous and irresolvable; an ever-evolving work in progress—a force of art. In this unfinalizable dialogue—in this contested space between governance and soul—there, I argue, bubbles the controversy over the City of Regina’s branding campaigns.

The rub, of course, is not only the question of “Who loves Regina?” but “Whose Regina are we talking about?” and the “I Love Regina” logo negotiates those tensions. Planted so squarely in front of City Hall, it is a signifier not only of the Mayor’s personal voice but of his power to govern; a booster’s not-so-subtle exhortation to accentuate the positive and open one’s heart to the Queen City as New Yorkers and the world open theirs to the Big Apple; a utopian interpellation to help build the city’s commonwealth—a gesture which, in fact, became less an inspiring invitation than an obstreperous command to “Wear the Gear, Show your Love” in the billboard ads that were also part of the branding campaign. As Blum cautions, and many of the campaign’s critics would agree, “the city must function as more than a label but as a course of action.” (41) The city is not merely a blunt instrument for the transmission of one official vision of progress; it is a *lived experience* of the many ethical collisions that characterize collective life. In the case of Regina, that lived experience entails dystopian elements that make the logo ring hollow: the feeling of bitter disenfranchisement and white racism for North Central; settler nostalgia for the glory days of Regina as a bastion of progressive socialism; mourning for the downtown heritage buildings that have been demolished for surface parking; and anger and resentment at the box store developments and suburban sprawl that have decimated the city centre so that there is no longer a commercial cinema or

even a grocery store located in Regina's downtown, leaving a once bustling life-world a ghost town on evenings and weekends. What the branding campaign and derivative logo ultimately reveal is a crisis in the city's sign function between appearance and being. (42)

If, as Blum argues, the city is a social formation and a set of social practices, it is also an "action of empowerment" and "an expression of art" in the "need and desire to renew itself." (43)

I will now turn to the ways in which these tensions and collisions in the imaginative structure of Regina identified above are revealed in two of the sculptural works included in *That's My Wonderful Town* and critiqued in *Regina's Secret Spaces*, Edward Poitras' "Ledge" and Jennifer Hamilton's "Outskirts," followed by a brief analysis of the filmic artistry of Randy Redroad, Brett Bell, and Ken Wilson as they variously reject official *appearances* in order to express the city's lived *being*—its contested spaces, its painful secrets and its need and desire for constructive critique, authentic change and organic self-renewal.

Regarding the sculptures, they are, like most of the pieces in *That's My Wonderful Town*, "dystopian visions." In "In the Heart of the Pink Capital," Annie Gerin discusses the history of Regina as the centre of the "era of change" and "progressive reforms" that swept over Saskatchewan in the mid-twentieth century with the election of the Co-operative Commonwealth Federation (CCF). With legislation creating Medicare, the Crown Corporation Act and Canada's first Arts Board, as well as a modernist urban renewal movement creating landmark buildings and public art in Regina's downtown, its city centre became a lively hub for the centralization of economic activity and human resources in what the *New York Times* famously called North America's first socialist

capital. As the “Pink Capital,” Gérin writes, Regina was proud of and envied for its core of innovative political, economic, social and cultural policies: “Indeed Regina represented itself in documentary films, photographic displays and television commercials as a modernist utopia colonized by skyscrapers. It showcased modernist structures dominating the horizon and forming a dense knot jutting from the even prairie, a dynamic economic and cultural vortex revolving tightly within and around the central core of the city.” (44) However, while this forward looking leftist energy of the 1950’s and 60’s enabled Regina to “renegotiate” its former status as a remote backwater “on the margin of Canadian culture,” by the 1980’s and 90’s, Gérin observes, the Pink Capital had lost its heart due to lack of planning, urban sprawl, and neglect of both the core socialist values and the attention to the core of the city that were at the centre of its success.



ILLUSTRATION 5: OUTSKIRTS

She discusses Jennifer Hamilton's "Outskirts," a sculptural installation piece involving an awkwardly extending fiberboard table accompanied by two photographs depicting the city limits and the traces left in the dirt by the proliferating box store and housing developments as they encroach on the bald prairie horizon line. The work is thus a comment on the mindless unsustainable suburban development that skirts away from Regina's centre, and on the supposed "Infinite Horizons" of opportunity that purportedly lie in store. Indeed, Regina's current exurban development frenzy, "boundless in the absence of rivers, mountains or existing cities that might inhibit its expanding footprint," (45), flies in the face of what urban studies experts and other leading Canadian cities now know about the dangers of urban sprawl. But, as the *Prairie Dog* reports, it continues unabated. For Gérin, what is striking in Hamilton's art is its insight that, "as the city limits skirt away from the center, the city fabric's unity becomes more and more tenuous. In other words, communities developing on the outskirts draw materials and resources from the communal downtown core to expand the city in ill-fitting segments that threaten to collapse. As the city extends, its own survival is compromised by the abandonment of its own core." (46)

Abandonment of the Regina commons is also the theme of Edward Poitras' "Ledge," although he approaches it, not from the sprawling margins but from the crumbling centre.

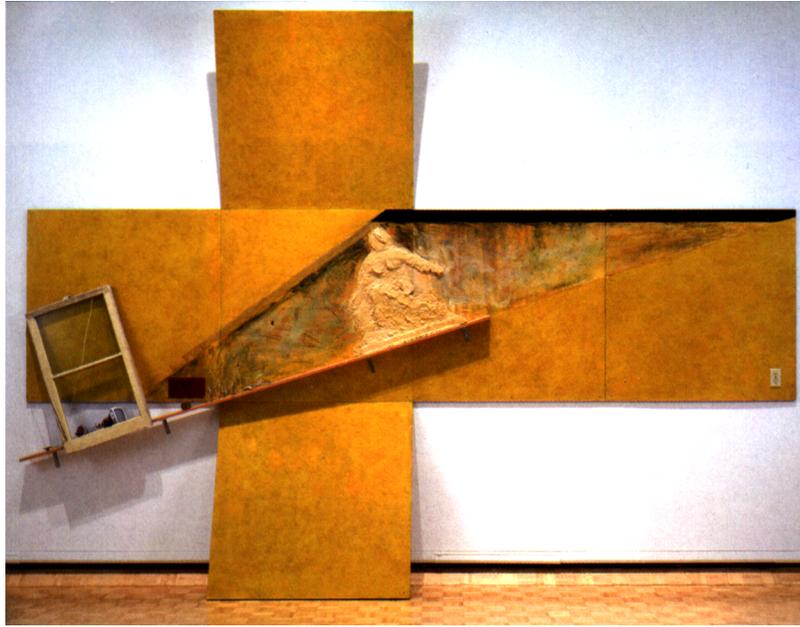


ILLUSTRATION 6: LEDGE

Also a sculptural installation piece accompanied by a photograph, “Ledge” depicts the Saskatchewan Legislative Building, the ruling “jewel of Wascana Park,” in looming monumental form, paired with a tiny mock-up of the city framed as a modernist cube. But both the “Ledge,” as it is known in Regina, and the downtown core, are portrayed as profoundly unstable, leaning dangerously, threatening to slide off, as Gérin writes, “causing an irrecoverable loss of memory.” (47) But memory, of course, returns with a vengeance in Poitras’ work, referencing as it does the self-interested and corrupt forms of white governmentality and colonialism that overlay Wascana / Oskuna-kasastake at the birth of the province and its capital and that are now being called into question by many of Regina’s citizens—Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal alike. “Ledge” is accompanied by a large photographic work, “The Big Picture,” which depicts the

abandoned and now decrepit Utopia Café, an arts enclave located in North Central that used to be the hub of the Regina arts scene in the 1980's and 90's, but is no more. As a member of the Gordon First Nation in Treaty Four Territory, Poitras, one of Saskatchewan's most gifted and successful artists, suggests with this piece that indeed the cultural soul of Regina is falling into oblivion, marked metaphorically and most pointedly by North Central as "a ruin of sorts, an absence," (48) a shameful place in the Queen City's crown linked to our treatment of our Indigenous people, to our racist history, and to the dark origins of our city in what should have been recognized as a sacred pile of bones.

Interviewed by Greg Beatty for his piece in *Regina's Secret Spaces*, Poitras reveals an even darker aspect to Regina's Pile O' Bones legacy. While doing research of his own into the origins of the city, he discovered in a 1916 report of a speech given by Father Joseph Hugonard, the founder of the Lebret Indian Residential School, that, in fact, many of the bones that Palliser had found back in 1857 were human. "I have been told," said Hugonard, that "these were piled together by survivors, some years after a band of Indians had been decimated by an epidemic of small pox." (49) Indeed, a small pox epidemic had struck the Assiniboine in the mid 1830's, crushing the population and leaving survivors, "who were often blinded and disfigured," in a state of "abject despair"—another chapter in the all-too-familiar story of the deliberate infecting of Aboriginal people by white European settlers in the colonizing of the New World. As Beatty concludes, Poitras' research

casts a long-standing piece of relatively benign Regina folklore in a much more sinister light. While the virtual extinction of the buffalo through over-

hunting in the mid-nineteenth century was, from an Aboriginal perspective, an historical tragedy, the thought that the presence of human remains in a large pile of buffalo bones could have been so cavalierly dismissed by both Palliser and the European settlers who began arriving in the region shortly after, is truly disturbing. (50)

For Poitras and Beatty, looking more closely at the big picture of Regina shines a whole new light on the rosy tones of the Pink Capital.

Regarding the films, each work marks an arresting encounter between film form and experience, employing similar themes to the works in *That's My Wonderful Town*. In the case of *Moccasin Flats*, Redroad uses the short melodramatic form expertly to capture the destructive experiences of poverty, alcoholism, family breakdown, and sexual abuse that lead Aboriginal youth from North Central into the drug and sex trades.



ILLUSTRATION 7: MOCCASIN FLATS

The series began in the summer of 2002 as one of the initiatives in the media empowerment project called “repREZentin” run by Toronto-based Big Soul Productions to give voice and opportunity to at-risk Aboriginal youth. (51) Based on interviews with North Central teenagers about their experiences, Redroad worked with Big Soul to shape a twenty-four minute neo-realist-meets-cinema-verité melodramatic short in which most of the secondary actors used their own first names. The dramatic tension revolves around Dillon, played by Justin Toto, who wants to leave home to attend university, but his love for Sarah, played by Kristin Friday, a sex trade worker trying to escape a violent pimp, keeps him tied to the ghetto. Shot entirely on location with a cast and crew of 40—most of whom were North Central residents—the production unexpectedly took on a life of its own, “like a volcano” about to explode, says Big Soul partner Jennifer Podemski. (52)

Trading on the global influence of American hip-hop culture on disaffected urban youth, Redroad portrays Regina in a gritty ‘hood style that explores the harsh realities of life in North Central. A surprise hit at Sundance, *Moccasin Flats* went on to further acclaim at ImaginNATIVE and the Toronto International Film Festival, evolving into a six-part, scripted, character-driven series which debuted on Aboriginal People’s Television Network (APTN) in November 2003 and was then picked up internationally by Showcase. A third and final season wrapped production in summer of 2005 as the series grew with Sarah, Dillon, and their friend Mathew Strongeagle (played by Mathew Merasty) to include stories about the humour, camaraderie, and hope of the neighbourhood as well as its challenges. In 2008, a made-for-television feature film,

Moccasin Flats: Redemption, closed the show. Together, the group of friends portrayed in the series and the film symbolize that the future of Aboriginal youth in North Central lies in solidarity, education, exposure to the world beyond the ghetto, and a questioning of globalized American media stereotypes (such as gangsta' behavior), as well as in remembering and honoring cultural traditions and the sense of place and belonging that can come from family and one's local community life. Ultimately, *Moccasin Flats* has captured the soul of North Central in both its dystopian and utopian energies in a way that Gatehouse and Campbell's outsider reporting, and City Hall's boosterism, never could.

The soul of the city is also the main issue for Brett Bell in *Home Town* and Ken Wilson in *East of Eden*. In the first case, Bell fuses the autobiographical documentary with the city film to sardonically mourn the devastation that thirty years of neglect and questionable municipal governance have had on the heart of his beloved hometown.



ILLUSTRATION 8: HOME TOWN

The film focuses (among other things) on the controversial 1982 demolition of the McCallum-Hill building—Regina’s first skyscraper and an important heritage property—to make way for two nondescript corporate glass towers (the Hill Centre Towers I & II); and on the disappearance of the bustling neon-signed downtown pedestrian streetscape of Bell’s youth, leaving us to ponder, as Timothy Long puts it, “the filmic impasse between the lyrical reconstruction and ironic deconstruction of home.” (54) Bell ends the film with a quote from John Berger: “The metaphor which holds the improvised home together...is memory.” Regina, this wryly poignant film suggests, is losing its memory,

and with that its once proud and influential reputation as the innovative hub of Canada's socialist heartland.

With *East of Eden*, Wilson comes at the soul of the city not from its heart, but, like Jennifer Hamilton, from an ironic position on its superficially wealthy but morally and culturally bankrupt box-store fringe.



ILLUSTRATION 9: EAST OF EDEN

Throughout the weekend, the downtown sleeps while Regina's east end is a tangle of car fumes, grid-lock and road rage as people drive from parking lot to parking lot in a blind consumer frenzy. As Carle Steel reports in "Sour Grapes: North Central stays grocery-free as former Superstore becomes a no-food zone," it was to the up-and-coming upper

middle class east end that North Central's only grocery store was moved in 2001, leaving the downtown with a huge white elephant:

The former Superstore site on Dewdney and Albert sold last month for a new retail development, which should be good news. But it turns out there's a catch. Loblaw Companies Limited—which runs Superstore—placed a non-competition clause on the property, agreeing to sell the 12-acre site only on the condition that there never be a grocery store on that site. *Ever*. Any attempt to retail those contraband items would result in hefty punitive damages to the new owners, charged daily, until the end of time.... “That’s the power Superstore had over the neighbourhood,” says Rob Deglau of the North Central Community Association. “Even after it was gone, after it had devastated the neighbourhood Mom ‘n Pop shops, it was still able to control who got to move in next.” (55)

Using Uncle Tupelo's plaintive cover of the Flying Burrito Brothers' “Sin City” as counterpoint to abstract images capturing the east end's network of soulless ‘super’ stores and parking lots at dusk—“This old town's filled with sin, it will swallow you in if you've got the money to burn...”—Wilson uses an experimental do-it-yourself home-movie aesthetic to capture and critique the economically, environmentally, socially, and culturally unsustainable wasteland of Regina's east end. Neon, cars, the consumer wasteland—what James Howard Kunstler has called “the geography of nowhere,” (56)—*East of Eden* suggests, is our future now.

Together, this group of films provides powerful commentary on the Queen City's contested spaces—from the “no food zone” of a decayed North Central through the “no life after five zone” of the downtown to the “nobody-in-their-right-mind-would-want-to-

live-here zone” of the east end. Like the works in *That’s My Wonderful Town*, they eschew the branding campaigns’ superficial boost of corporate self-esteem, revealing to us the “social spatialization” of Regina, making visible and intelligible the lived “spatial divisions” and indicating the “fault-lines of social relations” in our community. (57) And they represent a Queen City definitely in need of deep change and creative collective action.

Conclusion

As Alan Blum writes, *theorizing* about the city raises the question of “the voice of the city through its desire to recreate this object (the city)”—an ambiguous mass governed through economic and political structures and strategies—“as a terrain of many voices”—a collective, a soul. (66) So, as we have seen in the case of Regina, does *representing* the city in art as a “tactic of resistance” to its official representation. Seeing troubling aspects of the Queen City in art and on film through the eyes of our artist-creators and through the work of our investigative journalists and cultural critics—its once vibrant but compromised past, its still racist present, the sustainability of its future—*materializes it in practice*, mirroring back to us what Blum would call any city’s “capacity for reflection,” and its transcendent potential to show, challenge, and change itself as a truly dialogic “free space of meaning” (67)—an evolving work of art.

However, artists, journalists and cultural critics can’t do it alone; nor can North Central, as Emma Ruthnum writes in “North Central: 3 years later.” She quotes Rob Deglau, the Community Coordinator of the North Central Community Association: “We can’t always beat ourselves down and say, ‘Hey, look how terrible its is.’ But at the same

time we have to start showing the positive sides of the neighbourhood,’ said Deglau. ‘The sad reality is that we almost want *Macleans* to come back and do another article. With news, it’s whatever the hit is today, right? We’re old news now.’” (68) On that note, maybe it’s time for the City of Regina, as our collective “horizon of concern,” to turn our backs on the bald horizon line that has always obsessed us (with its tired colonialist trope that hisses in our ears, “Here we are, in the gap, in the middle of nowhere!”); squarely face the racism and colonialism in our closet that haunts us; bring back our once envied co-operative know-how and collaborative spirit as an integrated “site of action;” and look ourselves in the eyes as a small but creative city on the edge with a view to actually trying to create a better place for all of us.

NOTE: This is an abridged version of a chapter that will appear in *Mind the Gap: Saskatchewan Cultural Spaces*, edited by Christine Ramsay and Randal Rogers (Regina: Canadian Plains Research Centre, forthcoming 2011)

Endnotes:

1. Mark Kingwell, *Concrete Reveries: Consciousness and the City*, Toronto: Penguin, 2008, 14.
2. Paul Dechene and Greg Beatty, “Expanded Horizons: Will Regina’s new brand make this city infinitely excellent?” *Prairie Dog* February 11-24, 2010, 5.
3. Histories of the formation of the City of Regina include Earl G. Drake, *Regina: The Queen City*, Toronto: McClelland & Stewart, 1955; Wascana Centre Authority, *Wascana Worlds*, Regina: Wascana Centre Authority, [?1972]; and George A. Nader, “Regina” in *Cities of Canada: Volume 2: Profiles of Fifteen Metropolitan Centres*, Toronto: Macmillan of Canada and Maclean-Hunter Press, 1976, 296-313. For a more scholarly account, see J. William Brennan, *Regina: An Illustrated History*, Toronto: Lorimer in

collaboration with Canadian Museum of Civilization with the Secretary of State, 1989. For a more critical account, see Greg Beatty, "Skeletons in Regina's Closet?" In *Regina's Secret Spaces*, Regina: Canadian Plains Research Centre, 2006, 66-67.

4. Rob Shields, "A Guide to Urban Representation and What to Do About It: Alternative Traditions of Urban Theory," in *Re-Presenting the City: Ethnicity, Capital and Culture in the 21st-Century Metropolis*, ed A.D. King, New York University Press, New York, 24.

5. Ibid., 227, 229.

6. Ibid., 229.

7. Ibid., 231.

8. Jonathon Gatehouse, "Canada's worst neighbourhood," *Macleans*, January 8 2007, 12:00am. <http://ca.new.yahoo.com/s/08012007/21/canada-s-worst-neighbourhood.html>

9. See Lorne Beug, et al. *Regina's Secret Spaces*, Regina: Canadian Plains Research Centre, 2006. The volume has been a very important document of the recent proliferation of "insider voices" and critical cultural energies marking Regina as place of which I am speaking. In addition to Timothy Long's extended curatorial statement about the MacKenzie exhibition, "That's My Wonderful Town," 94-97, there are pieces by Neal McLeod, a Cree painter, writer, filmmaker and scholar from James Smith First Nation (now working in Peterborough, Ontario), who took a leading role in advancing Aboriginal arts and artists in Regina through his work with Sâkêwêwak Artists' Collective and the Regina branch of the Saskatchewan Cultural Exchange Society ("Crow Hop," 165); and Annie Gérin, an art historian and cultural critic (now working in Montreal, Quebec), who was a key participant in the "Friends of the Dunlop" movement to save the Regina Public Library's Dunlop Art Gallery from closure in 2003 ("In the Heart of the Pink Capital," 72-75). For further information on Sâkêwêwak and the Friends of the Dunlop, see: <http://www.facebook.com/pages/Sakewewak-Artists-Collective/102620741255>; and <http://www.rubyarts.org/dunlop/FoDAG.html>. It was, in part, the success of *Regina's Secret Spaces* as an arts and cultural portrait of Saskatchewan's capital that inspired Randal Rogers and me to create *Mind the Gap: Saskatchewan Cultural Spaces* as a kind of counterpart on the provincial level.

10. Gary Bridge and Sophie Watson, "City Publics," in *A Companion to the City*, ed. Gary Bridge and Sophie Watson, London: Blackwell, 2000, 376.

11. George A. Nader, "Regina," 296.

12. Wascana Centre Authority, *Wascana Worlds*, 4. As I have argued in another context, the name "Wascana" continues to characterize the way Regina represents itself to itself, but it now takes on a very different connotation, as a prairie oasis in the middle of what is often assumed to have been an unhistoried desert until the arrival of European settlers. With Wascana Centre Authority charged with the management of Wascana Park and

Wascana Lake, the urban greenspace at the centre of the city's official utopic self-promotional discourse, the name "Wascana" has undergone a whitewashing of sorts, and is now far removed from its origins in Cree culture as Oskuna-kasas-take. See Christine Ramsay, "Regina's *Moccasin Flats*: A Landmark in the Mapping of Urban Aboriginal Culture and Identity," in *Indigenous Screens*, ed. Marian Bredin, Winnipeg: University of Manitoba Press, forthcoming 2010.

13. Ibid., 4.

14. George A. Nader, "Regina," 297.

15. Ibid., 296.

16. Wascana Centre Authority, *Wascana Worlds*, 4.

17. Ibid., 6.

18. George A. Nader, "Regina," 297.

19. David Bell and Mark Jayne, "Conceptualizing small cities," in *Small Cities: Urban Experience Beyond the Metropolis*, ed. David Bell and Mark Jayne, New York: Routledge, 2006, 2-5, *passim*.

20. W.F. Garrett-Petts and Lon Dubinsky, "'Working Well, Together': An Introduction to the Cultural Future of Small Cities," in *The Small Cities Book: On the Cultural Future of Small Cities*, Vancouver: New Star Books, 2005, 1.

21. See Gordon Pitts' "Prosperity comes to the prairies." *The Globe and Mail* April 23, 2010,

<http://www.theglobeandmail.com/report-on-business/prosperity-comes-to-the-prairies/article1545139/>; and "Boom Times in the Bread Basket." *The Globe and Mail* April 24, 2010, <http://v1.theglobeandmail.com/servlet/story/LAC.20100424.SASKATCHEWANECONOMYATL/TPStory//?pageRequested=1>

22. Jonathon Gatehouse, "Canada's worst neighbourhood," *Macleans*, January 8 2007. <http://ca.new.yahoo.com/s/08012007/21/canada-s-worst-neighbourhood.html>

23. Ibid.

24. Ibid.

25. Colin Campbell, "Regina: 'It's not the worst neighbourhood': Regina's honchos gather to defend their city's wounded pride," *Macleans* January 29, 2007, http://www.macleans.ca/article.jsp?content=20070129_139814_139814

26. Murray Mandryk, “Not everything was wrong in *Macleans* article,” January 24 2007, <http://www.canada.com>.
27. Trish Elliott, “City to re-think expansion plan,” *ActupinSask*. September 27, 2006, Septer<http://www.actupinsask.org/content/view/166/2/>. Invoking a definite feeling of *déjà vu* in terms of Dewdney, MacDonald, the CPR and the founding of Regina in 1882, Elliott reports that the site of the new condo development south of the airport, Harbour Landing, is smack-dab in the middle of a parcel of land owned by the Fiacco family.
28. See the City of Regina’s website for the outlines of the new “Downtown Neighbourhood Plan,” <http://www.regina.ca/Page4202.aspx>.
29. City of Regina, “Vision 2020,” May 14, 2007. <http://www.regina.ca/Page1585.aspx>. The document outlines a vision that by 2020 Regina will be “Canada’s most vibrant, inclusive, attractive, sustainable community, where people live in harmony and thrive in opportunity.”
30. Ashley Martin, “Everyone loves Regina!” 15:46, December 4-January 4, 2003, <http://www.thecarillononline.com>
31. See the City of Regina website, <http://www.regina.ca/Page351.aspx>.
32. See the Wikipedia for a brief overview of the role of boosterism in North American urban history: <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Boosterism>. For more detail, see Sinclair Lewis, *The Man from Main Street: A Sinclair Lewis Reader*, New York, Random, 1953.
33. On that note, it is interesting to observe that while in Regina the vacancy rate for rental properties is only 0.6%, “the lowest in the country,” controversy reigns over the way that City Hall has been dealing with the crisis. See Paul Dechene, “Homes Before Domes: Advocates head to the marble palace as housing crisis deepens;” and “Curse of the Living Dead Condo: Tenants feel the heat as vacancy rates remain tight,” *Prairie Dog*, <http://www.prairiedogmag.com/news/?c=home>
34. Paul Dechene and Greg Beatty, “Expanded Horizons,” 6.
35. Quoted in Mark Schorer, *Sinclair Lewis: An American Life*, New York: McGraw-Hill, 1961, 142.
36. In 2004 Regina was designated a “Cultural Capital of Canada.” The designation was given by the program of the same name, designed by Canadian Heritage to “support special activities and celebrate the arts and culture and build a cultural legacy for the community by integrating arts and culture into overall community planning.” See <http://www.pch.gc.ca/eng/1267468580182>. The designation lead to a conference at the University of Regina, called Realizing the Creative City (October 13-15, 2004), which in turn resulted in the formation of a university-based non-profit organization, ArtsAction Inc., which has realized several projects supporting the role of arts and culture in

downtown revitalization, including a feasibility study for the re-use of the Legion Building as an arts and culture centre and a Cultural Map of Downtown Regina. See <http://cat.uregina.ca/artsaction/>. See also the Creative City Network of Canada, which has played a key role in motivating the kinds of research that ArtsAction has undertaken in Regina: <http://www.creativecity.ca/>.

37. Rob Shields, "A Guide to Urban Representation," 231.

38. W.F. Garrett-Petts and Lon Dubinsky, "Working Well Together," 8.

39. Alan Blum, *The Imaginative Structure of the City*, McGill-Queen's University Press, Montreal & Kingston, London, Ithaca, 2003, 12-13.

40. Ibid., 3.

41. Ibid., 38.

42. Ibid., 27.

43. Ibid., 4-5.

44. Annie Gérin, "In the Heart of the Pink Capital," in *Regina's Secret Spaces*, Ed. Lorne Beug, et al. Regina: Canadian Plains Research Centre, 2006, 73.

45. Ibid., 75.

46. Ibid., 75.

47. Ibid., 74.

48. Ibid., 74.

49. Greg Beatty, "Skeletons in Regina's Closet," 67.

50. Ibid., 67.

51. Jana G. Pruden, "Aboriginal TV series set in Regina neighbourhood," *Saskatoon Star Phoenix*, September 7, 2004, C3. See also my forthcoming article on the series, noted above, "Regina's *Moccasin Flats*, (note 12).

52. Cheryl Petten, "All-Aboriginal television drama set to air," *Wind Speaker* 21: 8, 2003, 21.

53. Tom Lyons, "Young aboriginals flock to hip-hop, acting work," *Toronto Star*, August 30, 2003, H4.

54. Timothy Long, "Home Town: A Film by Brett Bell," *Splice Magazine*, Fall 2003-Winter 2004, 12. On the Hill Centre Towers I & II, see also Lorne Beug, "Regina's Technological Sublime," in *Regina's Secret Spaces*, 68-69.
55. Carle Steel, "Sour Grapes: North Central stays grocery-free as former Superstore becomes a no-food zone," *Prairie Dog*, November 8-21, 2007, 7.
56. James Howard Kunstler, *Geography of Nowhere: The Rise and Decline of America's Man-Made Landscape*, New York: Simon & Schuster, 1993.
57. Rob Shields, "A Guide to Urban Representation," 231.
58. Stephen J. Shaw, "The Canadian 'World City' and Sustainable Downtown Revitalization: Messages from Montreal 1962-2002," in *British Journal of Canadian Studies*, 16:2, 2003, 363.
59. Jon Hawkes, "The Fourth Pillar of Sustainability: Culture's essential role in public planning," 2001. <http://cdn.publisher-site.com/ProductShop>. His work has been extremely influential in the creative cities movement in the past decade.
60. See note 36, above.
61. Pamela Cowan, "Downtown Regina's one-way streets may be changing," *Regina Leader Post*, January 23, 2008, <http://canada.com>
62. Pat Fiacco, "2008 State of the City Address," www.regina.ca.
63. As Visiting Research Fellow at the University of Regina's Humanities Research Institute in 2009-2010 Badham organized "Creative Conversations" with the help of the Department of Theatre and ArtsAction Inc. It was a two panel series, designed as a follow up to the strides made by Realizing the Creative City in 2004. The first panel, Realizing the Collaborative City, took place on November 30, 2009 with a focus on the synergies that must be created between culture, business and policy making in the City of Regina to truly advance it as a creative and collaborative place. Panelists included Glen Gordon (Coordinator for Arts, Culture and Film, City of Regina); Hirsch Greenberg (Justice Studies, University of Regina); James Youck (P3 Architects); Laura Pheifer (organizer of the recent series of "Jane's Walks" in downtown Regina); and Marian Donnelly (Inner Circle Management and developer of the Loggie's Building as a space for fashion design and artists' studios). The second panel, Adventures in Community Engaged Research, took place on January 11, 2010 and profiled the work of three University of Regina professors whose research has made important community alliances in and around Regina. They included Dr. Charity Marsh (Canada Research Chair in Interactive Media and Performance in the Faculty of Fine Arts), who has created important links between her hip-hop media lab and the students of Scott Collegiate in North Central Regina; Professor Sarah Abbott (Media Production and Studies, Faculty of Fine Arts), who has worked with film students and the Regina and Saskatchewan

Aboriginal communities to create short dramatic works on questions of social justice and human rights; and Dr. Marc Spooner (Education), a University of Regina Teaching and Learning Scholar, who has created a City of Regina Survival Guide and Map for homeless people and who works on projects to develop the creative potential of at-risk youth.

64. Catherine Murray, "Creative Regina: Realizing the Creative and Collaborative City: Think Green!" November 30, 2009, 7-10, *passim*. Unpublished speaking notes.

65. *Ibid.*, 10.

66. Alan Blum, *The Imaginative Structure of the City*, 47.

67. *Ibid.*, 45, 34.

68. Emma Ruthnum, "North Central: 3 years later," in *The Sasquatch*, (v2: n 2), March-April 2010, <http://sasquatchnews.com/north-central-3-years-later/>

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