NATION BUILDING 2.0: Will crowdsourcing culture and innovations in the digital era allow Canada's 150 to build on Expo 67's experimental legacy during McLuhan's "electric age"?

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PART ONE: Expo '67 and Nation Building in the Electric Age (aka hot media cools down at "McLuhan's Fair")

1967 was the year that the Confederation of Canada turned a youthful 100. In nation-state years this was like entering your 'dirty thirties' - slightly older and wiser but still within the allowable age to be experimental and exploratory. On the international stage, Canada had certainly gone through its awkward phase. In the previous 100 years, the reviews at world fairs and expositions hosted over in Europe seemed to express that audiences were underwhelmed with this newly formed nation. (Kroller, 2004: 36) Now, with the opportunity to host on the homefront, Canada was in the position to razzle and dazzle. On a more local North American stage, a certain University of Toronto professor was gaining celebrity status in the States with his pronouncements (and predictions) about the rapidly developing mass media age. Regarding this professor, Marshall McLuhan, an edgy American journalist propositioned the public with the suggestion that "suppose he is the oracle of the modern times?" (McBride, 2011) The year was 1965. The article was titled "What if he is right?" and the journalist was Tom Wolfe, a fellow cultural provocateur, even perhaps a kindred spirit. Wolfe, who would go on to authour such trippy titled books as "Radical Chic & Mau-Mauing the Flak Catchers" and "The Electric Kool-Aid Acid Test" was also gaining celebrity status around his ideas about the radically changing times. His own theories played a role in what would become the school of New Journalism.

Wolfe's dandy style consisted of his signature white suits. He looked the part of a provocateur. McLuhan, on the other hand, favoured suits in gray and black. In typical Canadian fashion, he was stylishly *underwhelming*. Perhaps, on a national level, that lack of flash was the reason that on the world stage Canada was seen as "simply Serious." (Kroller, 2004: 36) And maybe it was why people weren't expecting to find what they discovered at Expo 67. Canada had slipped under everyone's radar and then suddenly that summer tourists were met with an urbane cosmopolitanism and greeted on the grounds of the man-made Île Notre-Dame by multilingual hostesses in miniskirts. The growing metropolis of Montréal and the experience of Expo positioned Canada on the world stage. Expo 67, as far as an exercise in nation building, outdid itself. It could be argued though that Canada had been busy developing who it was for some time, for example, with cultural institutions like the National Film Board of Canada (NFB) under the provocative direction of John Grierson, the man who coined the term "documentary" and

inspired generations after to explore new ways of making films. (Grierson, 1946) The moment Canada was pushed out into the spotlight it was prepared for a cameo appearance like no other. The timing of technological innovation coupled with the growing promotion of pluralism made for a perfect match. People were ready for the fresh vision Canada had to offer an emerging Global Village.

In the *Virtual Marshall McLuhan*, authour Donald Theall proposed that Expo 67 was "McLuhan's Fair" (Theall, 2006: 126). Certainly, the emerging vibrations this "poetic futurologist" (Theall, 2006: 111) was picking up on permeated the experimental ethos that architects, filmmakers, and artists were working in. More than that though, the words of McLuhan, whose celeb status was continuing to expand south of the border, were featured in the pavilion *Terre des Hommes / Man and His World*. (Theall, 2006: 126) The messages of McLuhan were literally worked into the architectural medium (Kenneally, 2010) curated with content that showcased the best Canada had to offer. In not-so-typical Canadian fashion, support for McLuhan was being demonstrated at home.

Early on that same summer the CBC documented a historical event in collaboration with the BBC show *Our World*. The episode's summary read as follows:

> It's a brave new world for TV, and the CBC is at the forefront. The Canadian broadcaster is part of Our World, the first global broadcast via satellite. As the clock counts down to the broadcast's launch, communications sage Marshall McLuhan is on hand to remark on its significance. Our World then takes viewers to scenes from a New Jersey media circus, an Alberta ranch, a Vancouver beach, the Tokyo subway and a Melbourne tram yard. (CBC, 1967)

McLuhan expressed that the day's event was akin to the unique historical moment that was taking place a few hours away down the highway in Montréal. As he spoke to host Stanley Burke regarding the simultaneous satellite broadcast that was about to happen, he compared it to what was occurring at Expo:

> A huge mosaic has been created which is in effect a kind of x-ray of world cultures - not a storyline, not a perspective, not a point of view, but a kind of x-ray through this mosaic is created in which everybody can participate.

Everybody is surprised at Expo, at how deeply they appreciate and participate in the show. Nobody seems to realize why it is so unlike other world fairs. And I think this show this afternoon will have some unexpected repercussions in that way. People will be drawn into it as participants where as they are merely viewing themselves as spectators of the moment. (CBC, 1967)

As the show continued, the host asked McLuhan to expand on the ways this "electric society" (CBC, 1967) they were living in was changing them. McLuhan explained how the medium of television was transforming audiences. He claimed that in the past media like books or film accommodated a passive sort of engagement as an onlooker. As for the medium of television, he posited that "this strange, new all-at-once situation in which everybody experiences everything all at once creates this kind of x ray mosaic of involvement and participation for which people are just not prepared. They have lived through centuries of detachment, of non-involvement and suddenly they are involved." (CBC, 1967)

In this post-television moment we now live in, it is hard to conceptualize what McLuhan meant by all of this. We take it for granted that we are living at a time where interactivity and participation are part of engaging with our choice of interface. The warm flesh of our fingers literally presses into the cool of the screen as a way to express our emotions through our phone. During a Facebook livestream we can gage the sentiment of others as we see thumbs up, hearts and red-faced angry emoticons float across our screen in real time, from any given location. By comparison, the experience of a medium like television seems docile.

For McLuhan, it was not about the sensory experience of touch, rather it was about the connection that the "instantaneous quality of the mosaic" gave viewers. (CBC, 1967) The new medium of television introduced what he called this "all-at-onceness" that conflated time and place. In the moment that lay minutes ahead of him, CBC would enable their audience to connect to America, other parts of Canada, Japan and Australia. They would skip briskly across the world - *together*. McLuhan was sensing the speed and what it would go on to imply for human connectivity. He saw the extending web. He understood how the immediacy of connection "wipes out the old distances and times between age groups and ethnic groups." (CBC, 1967)

The world at large was certainly curious about its neighbours. Photographer Edward Steichen's *Family of Man* exhibit had opened just over a decade prior, in the Post-War moment. It toured extensively around the globe for 8 years to an approximate audience of 9 million. (Moma.org) It was considered an incredible success as well as an experiment in audience experience. The exhibit broke with curatorial tradition around the display of photographs. Images were hung in suspended structures that dropped from the ceiling partitioning the space like shoji screens. Other images wrapped around curved walls. In looking at exhibit stills (Moma.org) it is clear that Steichen had designed the space to be immersive. MoMA calls the *Family of Man* "a forthright declaration of global solidarity in the decade following World War II...celebrating the universal aspects of the human experience" (MoMA, 2017). It was a 'cycle-of-life' type of show with photographs that ran "the gamut of life from birth to death." (MoMA, 2017)

Four years after the last tour of *Family of Man*, the NFB premiered their production, *In the Labyrinth*, at Expo 67. The content of this film was also curated around the universalizing theme of life cycles. Gathered from years of footage shot by NFB filmmakers Roman Kroitor, Colin Low and Hugh O'Connor (NFB, 2017) like *Family of Man* the film broke with tradition around audience experience as well as the way in which screens were utilized. In an archival image of the screens that would be used for *Labyrinth,* five large structures are joined in a "cruciform." (Concordia, 2015) A man in a lab coat can be seen behind the transparency of the central screen standing on scaffolding that transports him high off of the floor below. All of this is taking place in an airplane bunker that the NFB rented for the purpose of constructing the screens. It may have been the only place large enough to build such an architectural feat. Certainly the dramatically lit black and white image conveys the sexiness of the moment where the technology of architecture and media meet. In a structure made for the production of planes another structure is being built that will bring the world closer together through the collective experience of McLuhan's so defined "instantaneous quality of the mosaic." (CBC, 1967)

"Much of the official memory and documentation on Expo 67 focuses on innovative use of multimedia - photography, film, and audiovisual installations" (Keneally, 2010) and *Labyrinth* with it's "multiple-screen, three-storey environment" (Keneally, 2010) was the definitive Expo production. On the NFB website the digital archive of the film, now as digitized video, attempts to convey the experience of *Labyrinth.* The viewer can see the juxtapositions of the edited footage that included such scenes as diverse as Winston Churchill's funeral to a man hunting a

crocodile at night in the jungles of Africa. One gets the sense that it would have been a rich cinematic experience although not without the problematics of racializing essentialism that is easy to spot now, fifty years on. (NFB, 2017)

Labyrinth was a massive innovation that along with the NFB film *Polar Life,* also screened at Expo, would lead to the cinematic innovation of IMAX technology. (Marchessault, 2011) It was this kind of exploratory approach to multimedia and the resulting productions that McLuhan was referring to on the CBC's broadcast of *Our World:*

> This kind of speed up enables you, for example, at Expo to see all the cultures of the world in x ray form, in depth. What you encounter at Expo is not history but the immediate experience of these countries. You walk into the pavilion and you experience them not as they were or they will be but as they are as an immediate experience. (CBC, 1967)

Curiously though, despite the innovations in satellite technology happening at that time, "McLuhan's Fair" was not focused on speed per se. Cinematic moments like *Labyrinth* and *Polar Life* (Cinema Expo 67, 2015) were painstaking to produce requiring many hours of filming in often challenging environments like the Arctic as well as more hours to complete the final edit. Then, there was the time and labour in designing the technology and architecture in order to manifest the vision of the filmmakers. (Cinema Expo 67, 2015) There was nothing immediate about the process and nothing instantaneous about the connection. The footage being viewed may have been filmed years prior and editorial decisions on how to tell the story included the directors' biases. One could argue that these types of cinematic experiences were not reflective of the media experiences McLuhan claimed were being made redundant with the technology of television, a media experience that McLuhan said dissolved "storyline," "perspective" and "a point of view" in favour of a kind of "x ray" experience that allowed for depth and participation rather than detached spectatorship. (CBC, 1967) Film, even with the advances of digital technology, has not disappeared but rather remains an important part of our visual culture. As well, multiple perspectives and plural points of view are more important than ever. And at the start of the 21st Century, storyline, or in other words storytelling, has become one of most defining motifs in new media.

As previously acknowledged, what really made Expo unique was the many advances in screen technology. This was why Expo went down in history, both nationally and internationally, as the World Fair like no other. In 2011 the Canadian Embassy in Berlin hosted a conference on the 100th anniversary of McLuhan's birth. The conference included McLuhan's influence on Expo 67 and Canada's Centennial celebrations. McLuhan and Expo expert Janine Marchessault, a professor in Cinema and Media Studies at York University, presented her paper "McLuhan's Fair - Expo '67 as Counterblast." (Marchessault, 2011) The video of the talk is digitally archived and can be accessed for public viewing. When speaking with regards to these innovations Marchessault references Judith Shatnoff's review of the fair for the Fall edition of Film Quarterly that same year. In listening to Marchessault's riffing off of Shatnoff's assessment of Expo the talk starts to sound like a spoken word performance with its poetics around the innovations:

> Explosion of screens.
> 2 screens and 3 screens and 6 screens and 5 screens and then 9 screens.
> And then circle screens, and 112 moving screen cubes, a 70mm frame broken
> into innumerable screen shapes.
> Screens mirrored to infinity.
> A water screen. A dome screen.
> And then new names being invented to describe these screens…

Circle-Vision, Polyvision, Kinoautomat, Diapolyecran, Kaleidoscope." [emphasis, the authour] (Shatnoff, 1967)

By echoing Shatnoff, Marchessault conveys to the listener the dazzling, perhaps even disorienting, display of multiple lush and sensual media experiences that immersed and seduced the audiences. Quoting Theall, Marchessault expresses agreement with the McLuhan scholar that "Expo was designed in McLuhanist style as a total environment." (Marchessault, 2011)

Despite Canada's embrace of McLuhan, the acceptance was not without confusion as to what his words implied about the times that surrounded the Centennial moment. Theories, like his ideas of hot and cold media, could be awkward in their articulations. "Cool is involving. Hot is not." (Marshall McLuhan Speaks, 2017) Film was a hot medium due to the fact that it didn't require the audience to engage. On the other hand television was cool because "when it handles war and the sufferings of war it creates an audience involvement that makes war

almost untakeable." (Marshall McLuhan Speaks, 2017) Placing this particular theory onto the digital landscape would imply we are living at the coolest of times where we have long since moved from spectator to engaged participant but in moments of crisis like the Syrian war, played out in real time in live videos connected to social media, it would seem that the audience, even when it chooses to engage, can be left impotent able only to witness. Certainly though his theories were a harbinger of what was to come when the Global Village entered this hyper-participatory digital era.

Marchessault goes on to relate how television as a new media was influencing what was happening at that time, especially at Expo, by introducing the ideas of Gene Youngblood, one of the early influential figures in new media studies and authour of *Expanded Cinema*. Youngblood, influenced by both McLuhan and his own experience at Expo 67, particularly around his viewing of *Labyrinth*, (Marchessault, 2011) made the bold claim that "television was the software of the earth." (Youngblood, 1970: 78) In this assertion, Youngblood was revealing how the technology of television was creating a shift in consciousness and the impact was being felt worldwide:

> A culture is dead when its myths have been exposed. Television is exposing the myths of the republic. Television reveals the observed, the observer, the process of observing. There can be no secrets in the Paleocybernetic Age. On the macrostructural level all television is a closed circuit that constantly turns us back upon ourselves. Humanity extends its video Third Eye to the moon and feeds its own image back into its monitors. "Monitor" is the electronic manifestation of superego. Television is the earth's superego. We become aware of our individual behavior by observing the collective behavior as manifested in the global videosphere. We identify with persons in news events as once we identified with actors or events in fiction films. Before television we saw little of the human condition. Now we see and hear it daily. The world's not a stage, it's a TV documentary. Television extends global man throughout the ecological biosphere twenty-four hours a day. By moving into outer space, television reveals new dimensions of inner space…" (Youngblood,1970: 78)

It is in these types of articulations that the fog begins to lift on McLuhan's concepts. Things become clearer as other theorists build on his work. As we see now, it was not so much that film was on its way to becoming obsolete. In actuality, the technology of television was changing film, not in so much as the way film was produced, but rather in the way it was being watched - both the architecture and the audience. (Marchessault. 2011) Marchessault's thesis is that

television impacted film through the introduction of the monitor. She relates how the screen had been revealed in works like *Metropolis* and *1984* as "classical depictions of dehumanization that stage the cinema screen as precisely that which alienates humans from social structures and from each other" but she goes on to say:

> Expo's image of the screen was just the opposite - not of a close circuit but of open interculture connectivities that were found in the excess of visual media; the sheer quantity and experimental quality of films that focused on showing through images and sounds rather than through the printed or spoken language, attempting to find a universal language and a new form of pedagogy created through the media. (Marchessault, 2011)

In *Expanded Cinema* Youngblood dedicated a section to delving into a selection of films from Expo. In the chapter titled "World Expositions and Nonordinary Reality" one of *Labyrinth's* director's, Roman Kroitor, is quoted as saying:

> There's a basic human need for a **communal experience of vision**. [emphasis mine] (Youngblood, 1970: 352)

It is here, in this simple statement, we find a seed. In investigating Expo 67, through watching both professional and amateur video, the buzz of the crowd is palpable despite being separated in time and mediated through the interface of a computer screen. I can sense the summer heat as well as the heat from the bodies lined up for entrance into all of the popular Pavilions. I can hear the multiplicity of mother tongues spoken while everyone waits.

As I watch, I recall the story an older gentleman once shared with me about his time at Expo. He was a young farm boy - tall, lanky and awkward. This anglophone Albertan didn't know any French but after visiting Expo 67 he knew he now wanted to. He spoke of the fashionable French girls he saw, marvelling in the way they smoked cigarettes that he mistakenly pronounced "gah-lou-says" instead of *Gauloises*. When he tells the story I can smell the sweet scent of tobacco mixed with perfume and new types of cuisines being served at all the national pavilions. He left the Île Notre-Dame inspired by the collective experience he had just encountered. He says his time there changed him. He claims it also changed a nation.

In so many recollections of Expo it's this fleshy quality of the crowds and the physicality of the shared moment that stand out as well as the predominant emphasis on the collective visual experience. A synergistic energy runs through. Conceptual motifs that are hovering around in the pop kulch as McLuhan called it (McBride, 2011) - new media, new journalism, new age - permeates the collective psyche. Wolfe's provocation that perhaps McLuhan might just be the "oracle of the modern times" doesn't seem so far-fetched. The experimentation and exploratory quality of the creative minds that gathered to produce work for Expo 67 assisted in defining the Centennial moment as a sophisticated and well executed strategy of nation building.

The legacy of Expo 67 is a formidable one. The fair became the anchoring event in the Centennial Celebrations of that year. Many other events were taking place across the country and groundbreaking had started on the construction of much of the cultural infrastructure we know now. Prime Minister Lester B. Pearson had announced that the Government of Canada would commit funds to the building and rebuilding of centres for culture in each province in the larger municipalities. The National Arts Centre in Ottawa was one of these legacy projects. The Centennial Flame was another. (Davidson, 2010) In the collective conscious of Canadians though, Expo 67 was what stood out as the defining moment. The multimedia and architecture, like Buckminster Fuller's Dome and Moshe Safdie's Habitat, are etched into people's minds, even of those who didn't attend or are too young to remember. There is, for certain, a shared visual lexicon aided by the sleek branding of Canada's Centennial and Expo 67 (Marchessault, 2011). The mention of Expo conjures up associated feelings of national pride at a time when Canada seemed to own it's brilliance as a young nation.

Expo 67 branded Canada as technologically savvy and both progressive as well as provocative in its construction of nation building narratives that joined a country and a world. Can Canada 150 live up to this persona?

PART TWO: Canada 150 and Constructing National Narratives in a Digital Era (aka Expo 67 - a hard act to follow)

This Sesquicentennial moment comes at another interesting time both technologically and socially speaking. While in 67 events, like Expo, drew the crowds to a centralized location for the celebrations of Canada's 100th year of Confederation, this time around, many of the events and initiatives are taking place in cyberspace. In a survey of the Government of Canada's Signature Projects (view http://timemapper.okfnlabs.org/mixedbagmag/canada-150 and http://canada-150-signature-projects.silk.co) digital components like crowdsourcing, livestreaming, and tweetathons gather people to a shared collective experience but without the physicality of being immersed in a crowd. (Canada, 2017) What happens when all the the fleshy sensuality of a physical experience of nation building are not the main event? Thinking back to Kroitor's assertion that "there's a basic human need for a communal experience of vision" can visual culture be as effective when it's experienced in the the virtual commons, especially with regards to nation building? Will it be discovered Post-Canada 150 that the the fleshed out experience of nation building is prefered or will the virtual space surpass what we could have imagined?

Hashtags like the official #Canada150 gather people to a twitter stream of reflections and contributions on nation building. The Government of Canada's Signature Projects for Canada 150 are also using hashtags to unite Canadians from coast to coast to coast. (Canada, 2017) Associated hashtag campaigns include Historica Canada's #HERESMYCANADA. (Historica, 2017) Historica Canada is the organization that produces the well-known and loved "Heritage Minutes" and describes itself as "the country's largest organization dedicated to enhancing awareness of Canadian history and citizenship." (Historica, 2017) The hashtag will highlight crowdsourced videos "inviting Canadians to express what Canada means to them." (Historica, 2017) In a way, these 30 second videos will be a collection of do-it-yourself Heritage [Half] Minutes.

This crowdsourcing of multiple voices seems to be the main strategy of social engagement on everyone's radar for Canada 150. Many of the Signature Projects are utilizing their web portals as a place to engage Canadians in the act of storytelling. In *Expanded Cinema* Youngblood quotes Kroitor, regarding his work at Expo 67, as having said that "new kinds of storytelling and new audience tastes will result from this technology." (Youngblood, 1970: 352) *Labyrinth*, in its cycle-of-life themed content, used multi-screened environments to juxtapose people from seemingly disparate backgrounds to exemplify the common experiences of humanity. This

effect is not unlike the the tiling web page of www.heresmycanada.com where the submitted #HERESMYCANADA videos are archived. Upon visiting the site, one sees the images of the faces of the many people who have contributed their thoughts on Canada. The visual juxtaposition-ings re-configure as new videos are added to the archive. Reflecting on Expo and the technological advances, Kroitor expressed that "people are tired of the standard plot structure." (Youngblood, 1970: 352) The plot shift for Canada 150 is this changed notion of authourship. In the footage of *Labyrinth* at no time do the subjects turn to the camera in order to speak to the audience. It is the voice of the directors, driven by their editorial decisions, that is privileged. This switch in the subject as authouring their own story will no doubt produce some of the richest content from Canada 150.

The seeds of this changing notion of authourship were already taking root at Expo. Cameras - still and motion, film and video - were becoming more accessible to the general public and DIY culture was on the rise. (Marchessault, 2011) Polaroid's Swinger Camera had an increased its sales over the duration of Expo. (Marchessault, 2011) Sony's Video Rover was launched that year. It was "the first Portapak, or analog videotape camera that could be carried and operated by a single person." (Maloney, 2012) What this meant was that the audience was truly becoming engaged. Films of films. Video of videos. Videos of Film and Films of Video. A search for "expo 67" on YouTube's platform produces almost a half a million results many of which are amateur recordings now digitized and publically accessible. The audience at Expo was now able to construct a narrative around their experience in a way that would expand on McLuhan's theorizing that in the electric age people were shifting from spectator to participant.

Kroitor also spoke to the fact that the "new film experiences will result, in which there'll be a tight relationship between the movie and the architecture in which it's housed. We took a step in that direction with Labyrinthe." (Youngblood, 1970: 352) Notably, in *Expanded Cinema*, another filmmaker associated with Expo, Francis Thompson (co-director of *We Are Young!*) is quoted as saying "We're interested in films expanding and swallowing a huge audience...but we're also interested in pictures the size of a wristwatch. We would like to make the world's smallest motion picture as well as the largest." (Youngblood, 1970: 354) In so much of the groundbreaking work around screen technology that was showcased in Montreal that summer, we see the prototyping of what will become. In the present, the "architecture" that houses our new media is exactly about showcasing "the smallest motion picture" in a screen only slightly

bigger than the face of a watch. How does that experience change the audience? When Marchessault speaks to the materiality of the screen that in hindsight became a defining motif of experimentation in the 60s (Marchessault, 2011) there is no better example of this than the physical intimacy of holding a screen, containing the voices of a multitude, in the palm of our hand. The materiality of the interface of a handheld device is the productive conclusion of the cultural context that seeded the exploration that took place at Expo.

Kroitor went on to say that due to screen and architectural innovations conceived at Expo, as well as the way narrative was being explored in films like *Labyrinth,* a "new language is going to develop. There are ways in which shaping the relationships of images cuts through the superficial realities and reaches for something deeper." (Youngblood, 1970: 353) Are we witnessing the legacy of this now with image content that leverages digital innovations and crowdsourcing culture? Will crowdsourced images and DIY videos for initiatives like Canada 150's Signature Projects present an experiment in nation building that will result in a radical social shift? Where will this social experiment lead to with regards to deepening diversity and broadening the discussions around issues of inclusion? This motif of multiple voices and narrative agency is foregrounded in the Canada 150 celebrations in the strategy of providing social media platforms for people to express what being Canadian means to them. National identity and what you have to say about it is THE hot topic. Even resistance as agency is built into the system. National identity and what that means in the reality of an ongoing Settler Colonial context can be challenged, in real time. (Elliott, 2017) Hashtag campaigns such as #Resistance150 started by Métis artist Christi Belcourt as well as academic Eric Ritskes's #Colonialism150 deconstruct the national mythology around 'Canada the Good' and take to task the nation with regards to Indigenous rights, land, cultural sovereignty and governance. (Sandals 2017) These virtual sites of resistance merge with the sites of celebration by utilizing the official hashtag #Canada150 as a strategy to talk back and counter the narratives of inclusion that in actuality exclude. Expo 67 only had the Indians of Canada Pavilion. Canada 150 has the entire twitterverse.

This is the speed McLuhan was talking about, the capability to see "cultures" with "x ray form, in depth." (CBC, 1967) And one doesn't even have to walk into a physical space like a pavilion to do it. This "instantaneous quality of the mosaic" is there within reach - literally. We grasp/ touch / hold onto the screens that become our portal to connect to our fellow citizens through social

media platforms and websites. Nation building becomes co-creative and participatory in way that perhaps even McLuhan couldn't fully grasp as this cool type of medium that is the digital has increased the desire for storytelling. In a pluralistic society, emphasis has been placed on allowing the space for a multitude of stories bringing to the forefront narratives repressed by Colonial erasure. Oral, along with visual expression, are privileged over the written word.

Livestream technology taps into this emphasis on oral and visual forms of collective experience. The disembodied subject reaches out to the disembodied audience meeting somewhere in the wireless architecture. Canada C3 is a Signature Canada 150 project that through the technology of livestream will be offering "live-learning" events as it journeys along the entire coast of Canada. (CanadaC3, 2017) C3, which stands for coast to coast to coast, will be hosting a 'Arctic live dive.' where "you will be able to virtually dive underwater with this team in real time, see what the divers do, ask them questions while they are underwater and learn about the Arctic Ocean ecosystem firsthand!" C3 is a 150-day tour that will begin in Toronto, Ontario on June 1 and travel to Victoria, British Columbia via the NorthWest Passage. C3 is "inviting a diverse cross-section of Canadians to come on board the expedition, including scientists, artists, Indigenous Elders, historians, community leaders, journalist and educators" (CanadaC3, 2017) along with any other Canadians who want to participate virtually.

Livestream technology will also be used to connect Canadians, again coast to coast to coast, during conferences and summits that Signature Projects will be hosting throughout 2017. Experiences Canada will be holding youth summits across the country for its initiative Canada 150 & Me. (Experiences Canada, 2017) From March to June The Walrus Foundation will be livestreaming its Walrus Talks series "Conversations about Canada: We Desire a Better Country." The talks will then be archived on CBC Radio. (The Walrus, 2017) Recently Inuk filmmaker Alethea Arnaquq-Baril broke the internet with her thought-provoking Walrus Talk on Canada 150, or as she says "it's Canada 15,000. Get with the times." Her talk was livestreamed from Iqaluit at the end of March and was shared and reshared on Facebook many times in the days that followed.

Architecture and screen innovations that leverage digital technology to create immersive environments is another way that celebrations around Canada 150 are looking to build upon the legacy of Expo '67. SESQUI is a Canada 150 Signature project whose team was "inspired by

the innovations at Expo 67 that lead to the creation of IMAX technology" and "began with a simple question "How can emerging 360° technology provide new ways to see and understand Canada?""(Sesqui, 2017) The website goes into detail about the different digital technologies they will be using from MERIDIAN VR to geodesic domes, in the spirit of Buckminster Fuller, built for a 360° screening experience.

MERIDIAN VR is an app, available for free download, that "hosts six original, interactive virtual reality stories, featuring Canadians who are shaping their world through creativity." One of the projects *INDIAN CITY 360°* features Ottawa-based Indigenous DJ collective, A Tribe Called Red.

> Remix a Tribe Called Red track using only your eyes! Filmed at Toronto's Fort York, this interactive video from the acclaimed Indigenous DJ collective uses gradient audio to mix traditional and contemporary sounds, and features a throwdown between hip-hop and powwow dancers. (Sesqui, 2017)

It is of interest to note that Thompson, after Expo 67, was already envisioning these types of technology that SESQUI will be employing in the service of this national celebration:

> Thompson's other major interest is the earphone/eyephone concept similar to the hoodlike training devices used in aircraft and aerospace navigation schools. A mini-dome or individual sphere is lowered over the head of the viewer. "You have images that completely fill your field of vision and sound that would fill your entire range of hearing." Thompson also finds in expanded cinema the potential for a new consciousness and life style. "Through formal relationships of images, most carefully planned, you can produce the most powerful kind of communication. With a great sphere you're introducing people into a whole new visual world which would be emotionally, physically, and intellectually overwhelming." (Youngblood, 1970: 358)

A motif that threads through all the Canada 150 Signature Projects is this focus on the participatory. In many, there is an emphasis on interactive storytelling, with words like "co-creative" appearing in the promotional language of the projects. Other ways of describing this process of storytelling could be "cross-platform", "trans-media", or "enactive" (Aylett et al., 2010: 124) but as cautioned in *Interactive Storytelling: Third Joint Conference of Interactive Digital Storytelling* "just because the Web is successfully incorporating some types of linear video - usually the short and the user generated kind - that doesn't mean that video is adjusting

itself to the interactive format." (Aylett et al., 2010: 124) Here, the caution is more specific to interactive documentary and the default technique to fall back on the conventions of documentaries - "cue music, fade in titles, cue voice of god narrator, all in 16:9 widescreen" (Aylett et al., 2010: 124) but what remains to be seen is how the crowdsourced content of Canada 150 is curated after the fact. Will interactivity simple mean clicking on an upload button? Or will Canada 150 provide an opportunity for groundbreaking work around this motif of co-creative narrative production? What would such a cultural product look like? Feel like? In the book's chapter "An Interactive Documentary Manifesto" authours Andre Almeida and Heitor Alvelos look for similar answers to what interactive means for new media pointing to the fact that "these questions and many others are not totally new as we can track its roots at the World Expo in Montreal in the sixties and Gene Youngblood's seminal book Expanded Cinema. (Aylett et al., 2010: 123)

In the seeds sown at Expo what developed was the "precursor to digital culture" as well as innovations that point to the "multiplication and interconnectedness of network screens that characterized 21st Century digital architectures." (Marchessault, 2011) There was something fertile in the ground there and now we are reaping the benefits produced by the cultural provocateurs who explored and experimented in the mind-altering, mind-expanding psychedelic summer of 67. With the youthful and renewed spring of Trudeau 2.0, internationally, Canada is no longer flying under the radar. Canada has been successfully branded as progressive and provocative (forties are the new thirties, as they say!) at a time when parts of the Global Village are reverting back to old xenophobic ways of instituting nationalism. When it comes to building on the legacy of Canada's Centennial in 1967, what are the possibilities for this nation going forward? In the words of McLuhan - "If you really are curious about the future just study the present." (McBride, 2011)

2017. The future of Canada could be now.

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