



Old Punk Rockers Never Die, They Just Do Installation Art

A Profile of Artist Mary Anne Barkhouse

Written and produced by Jennifer Dysart and Tanya Bob, in collaboration with Mary Anne Barkhouse

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UBC Museum of Anthropology Pacific Northwest Sourcebook Series

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Written and produced by Jennifer Dysart and Tanya Bob, in collaboration with Mary Anne Barkhouse, 2000.

Revised and updated by Pam Brown in consultation with Mary Anne Barkhouse, 2012.

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Designed by Vanessa Kroeker.

Front cover: *Reservoir* (installation view), Mary Anne Barkhouse and Michael Belmore. Photo by Michael Belmore, 1997.

Back cover: This image is found on the blankets in the installation *pelage* (see pages 34-41).
This image of a killer whale pays homage to Mary Anne's great-great-grandfather Charlie James,
who often included a stylized killer whale on the chest of his thunderbird designs.

Inside back cover photograph by Bill McLennan.

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About this book

This sourcebook is about the life and selected works of Kwakwaka'wakw artist Mary Anne Barkhouse. It was written and produced by museum assistants Jennifer Dysart (Cree) and Tanya Bob (Tahltan/Tlingit) in collaboration with Mary Anne Barkhouse during the summer of 2000.

Preparation for this book began in 1999, when Mary Anne Barkhouse brought her works *pelage* and *Four Legs Good* to the group exhibit *Raven's Reprise* at the Museum of Anthropology (MOA). For archival purposes, Tanya Bob interviewed Mary Anne and recorded her discussions with MOA staff. From these two sources, along with personal communication and information obtained from written publications, a profile of Mary Anne Barkhouse was compiled. See the bibliography of this book for a list of sources.

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Meet Mary Anne Barkhouse

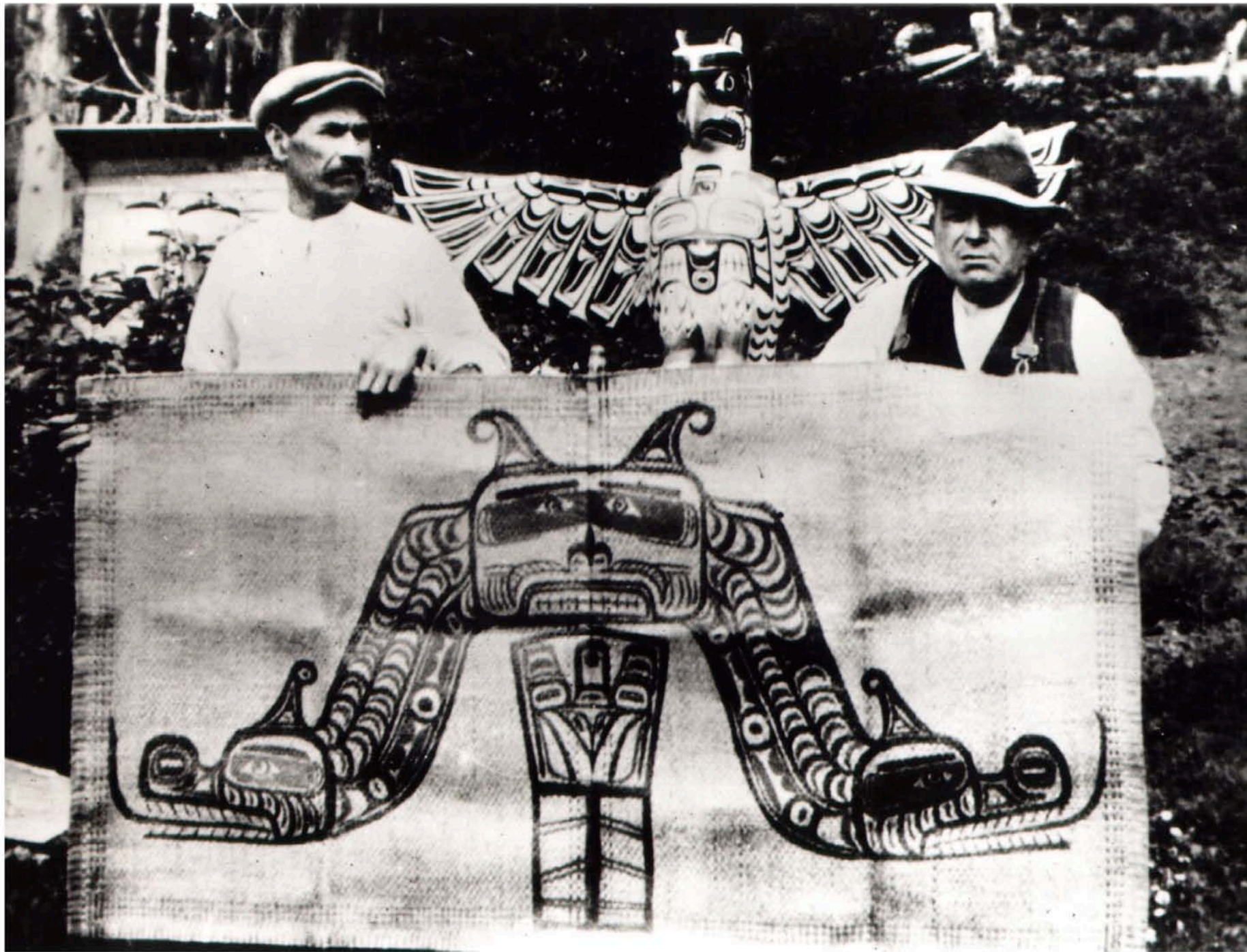
“Bookworm, punk rocker, metalsmith, installation artist, friend of animals, and foe to evil.”

That’s how this phenomenally gifted visual artist, musician, and thinker describes herself. From her beginnings as an art student and touring musician to the mastery of a multitude of media, her art comments with humour and penetrating intelligence on politics, history, the meeting place of personal and Aboriginal identity, and the environment.

Mary Anne was born in Vancouver, BC, and belongs to the 'Namgis First Nation. She is descended from a long line of internationally recognized Kwakwaka'wakw artists, including Ellen Neel, Mungo Martin, and Charlie James. In 1991, she graduated with honours from the Ontario College of Art in Toronto. Her mixed-media artwork has since been exhibited widely across Canada and the United States, as well as in England and Ireland.

Mary Anne creates her work in a variety of materials, on both large and small scales, examining environmental concerns, indigenous culture, and colonization through the use of animal imagery.

She currently resides in the Haliburton Highlands of Ontario with two terriers and other assorted wildlife.



Family Background and Inspirations

A lot of my work makes some direct and some indirect reference to my family.

Mary Anne Barkhouse (1999a)

Mary Anne has a diverse family background. On her mother's side of the family is a well-documented line of Kwagiutl artists, such as her great-aunt Ellen Neel, her great-uncle Mungo Martin, her great-great-grandfather Charlie James, and her first-cousin-once-removed Robert (Bobby) Neel. The fact that there are so many people in her family creating art helped her choose her life's work.

Mungo Martin (*in photo, left*) is Mary Anne's great-uncle. Charlie James (*right*) was Mary Anne's great-great-grandfather. This photo was taken in Alert Bay, probably around 1915. They are holding a cedar mat painted with a sisiutl (double-headed sea serpent) and a copper. The pole behind them was carved by Charlie James.

When I was a kid, I [was] influenced by Ellen [Neel] because we had a lot of her stuff around [and I heard] stories about how she worked and why she worked... It was important [to Ellen] to [let the family] have some of her work. She wanted to make sure that the family had a few nice pieces.

Mary Anne Barkhouse (1999a)



Mary Anne's great-aunt Ellen Neel photographed with some of her work, probably in the 1950s.
Photo: Private collection of Mary Barkhouse.

Bobby Neel was one of my inspirations... because he was Mr. Do-It-Yourself. He had no training, he taught himself, he made his own tools... Having to make a living at it... doing the tourist poles and the little items... I grew up with that sensibility.

Mary Anne Barkhouse (1999b)



Mary Anne's first-cousin-once-removed Robert (Bobby) Neel restoring an Ellen Neel pole from MOA's collection in 1984.
Photo: Private collection of Mary Barkhouse.

Mary Anne's father is a non-native Nova-Scotian. Although there are no documented artists on his side of the family, these relatives also inspire her work.

My mom's family has a very strong artistic tradition. My father's family is also artistic... but in a different way. The values, the stories, the way of life from both sides of my family greatly inform my work.

Mary Anne Barkhouse (2011)



Mary and Alan Barkhouse, Mary Anne's parents. They are both wearing some of her jewelry.
Photo: Glen Worton, 2000, Private collection of Mary Anne Barkhouse.

Many of the artworks shown in this sourcebook draw on Mary Anne's family history and the natural environment. She is influenced by the vastly differing landscapes across Canada because, as a child, she travelled to the east and west coasts of the country visiting family. Today Mary Anne lives in Minden, Ontario.

My home is surrounded by very rough Canadian Shield wilderness – lots of rock and bog. That's where you find a lot of the wildlife, and that's where all the action happens within an ecosystem around the wetlands – not only with the animals, but with the birds, insects, and plants. It's really diverse.

Mary Anne Barkhouse (1999b)

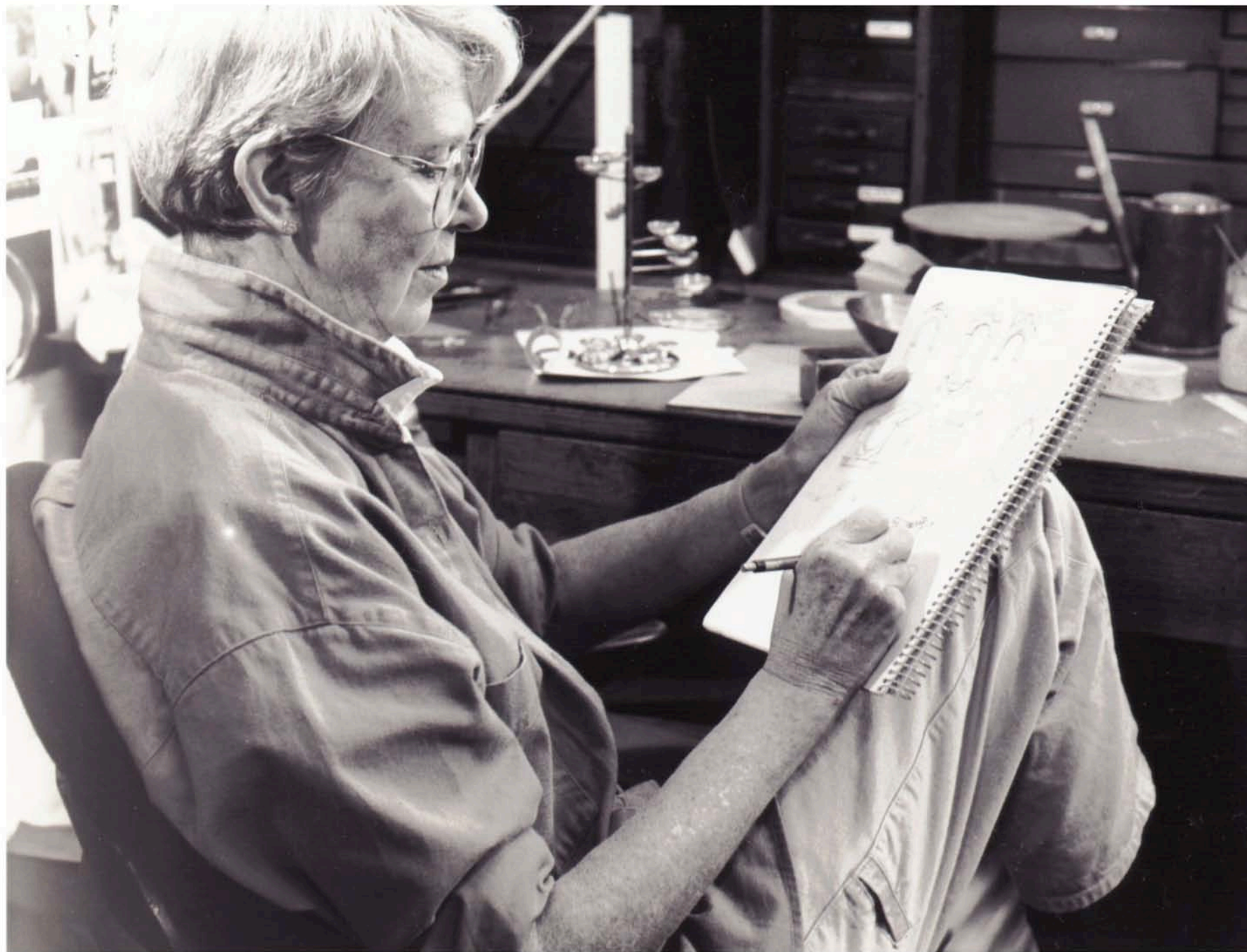
Mary Anne's home is also near the Haliburton Wolf Research Centre. There, she observes the semi-domesticated wolves in an enclosed habitat. Many of her works, such as *Early Morning Wolf Stretching Exercises* (see pages 56 and 57), were inspired by these wolves.



Wolf stretching at the Haliburton Wolf Research Centre, near where Mary Anne lives.
Photo: Mary Anne Barkhouse, 1997.

Mary Anne's metalsmithing teachers – Ken Vickerson, Beth Alber, and Lois Etherington Betteridge – have all influenced her metalwork, from conceptual approach to practical methodology. Mary Anne still studies with Lois Etherington Betteridge, an internationally acclaimed metalsmith whose craftsmanship has brought her numerous awards, including the 1997 Order of Canada.

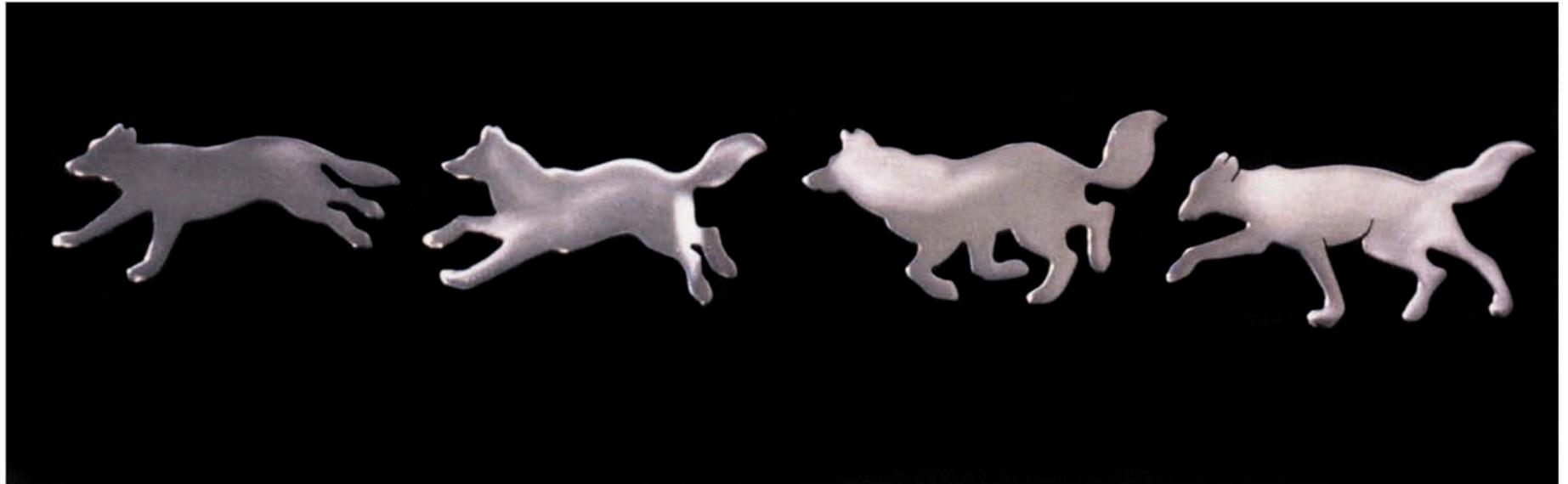
Although now retired from the Haliburton School of the Arts, where Mary Anne first studied with her, Lois continues to share her skills and experience through lectures, workshops, and mentorships. (Barkhouse, 2011)



Lois Etherington Betteridge at work.
Photo: Rolf Bettner, 1990.

Jewelry





Jewelry

Jewelry is more of an immediate fix... it's not like some huge answer to the world's problems, but there are nice little scenes or narratives that go on in there.

Mary Anne Barkhouse (1999b)

Mary Anne's great-aunt Ellen Neel inspired the family tradition of creating small-scale work for income, which Mary Anne continues:

My mother's family carved large commissioned works such as totem poles, which had a certain importance to a community or family. But there were also the smaller pieces, such as small totem poles, lamps, letter openers, and so forth, for the people who couldn't fit a full-size totem pole inside their houses! For me, jewelry fills that same niche, creating smaller, accessible works as a complement to the larger, monumental ones.

Mary Anne Barkhouse (2011)

Whale Jewelry: A Family Story

A bracelet, earrings, and pin together tell a story told to Mary Anne by various family members. It is the story of when her grandfather, Fred Cook, caught a whale while fishing one summer in the 1970s, and struggled to set it free.

My grandfather caught a whale, and he cut it out of the net, as opposed to letting it die, or letting it be taken to Marine Land. Apparently, the whale came right up on the boat. They were trying not to cut the net because those nets are just so expensive. He was speaking Kwak'wala to the whale the whole time. Eventually, the guys from Marine Land were on their way up to take the whale. So he just said, "To hell with it!" ... and he cut the net apart, and the whale just disappeared [finger snap] like that!

Mary Anne Barkhouse (1999b)

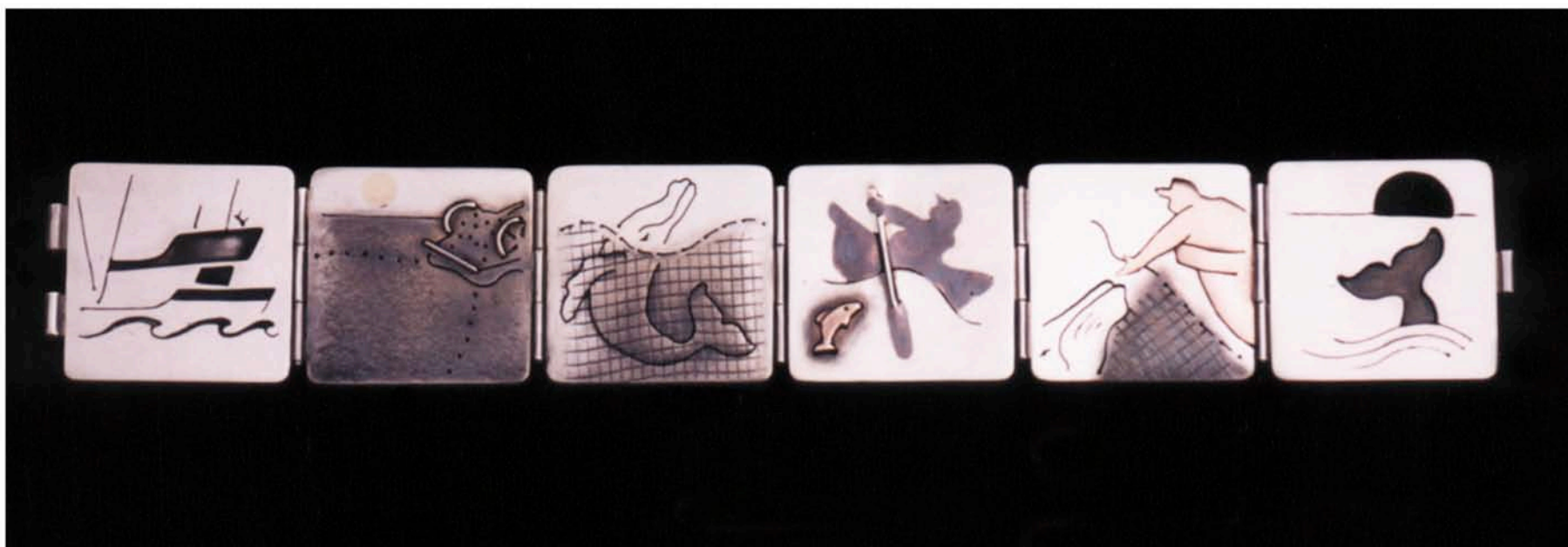
The story shows her strong family beliefs:

[This story] really embodies to me a lot of the values that our family has... there was no price that my grandfather wasn't willing to pay to let the whale go. It's a good thing.

Mary Anne Barkhouse (1999a)



Pin (Nb3.1478). Collection, UBC Museum of Anthropology. Photo (left): Mary Anne Barkhouse, 1996.
Earrings (Nb3.1477 a-b). Collection, UBC Museum of Anthropology. Photo (right): Samson Tam, UBC Museum of Anthropology, 2012.



While it has taken on a lot of significance over the years, this heart-warming family story changes slightly depending on the storyteller. For example, relatives don't agree whether the whale they caught that day was a grey whale or a killer whale:

Everyone [who was] there has slightly different versions [of the story]. My grandfather had his version, my Uncle Mickey had his version, and my other aunt [had hers]. Everyone is claiming the story as their own, and it's just hilarious.

Mary Anne Barkhouse (1999b)

The original jewelry set was given to Mary Anne's mother, and a slightly different second set is part of MOA's permanent collection. Bronze, copper, and silver metals were used to make this jewelry set.

Bear Medallion

This double-sided medallion was commissioned as a gift for the Prince of Japan in 1995. It is made of ebony and saw-pierced silver. One surface represents a story from her mother's side of the family, and the other surface depicts a story from her father's side. The side shown here was inspired by her maternal grandfather, who was a logger in British Columbia in the 1930s.

[My grandfather] and his partner cut down a tree that had a bear at the top of it. Apparently, the bear was OK.

Mary Anne Barkhouse (1999a)

This medallion also reminds her of another story:

My great-great-grandfather on my dad's side was a notorious bear killer... because when he was really young he was 'treed' by a black bear... and he just hated them after that. He killed over 150 black bears during his lifetime in that area of Nova Scotia. So I feel that my family has a lot of making up to do in bear country...

Mary Anne Barkhouse (1999a)



Two-Dimensional Artwork



Early Morning Wolf Stretching Exercise

Early Morning Wolf Stretching Exercises is a series of mixed-media images. They consist of cyanotypes, ceramic, copper, and wooden frames.

There could be a reaction between the wood and the oils in the wood with the back of the copper pieces and the ceramic and the paper, and you just never know until you do it.

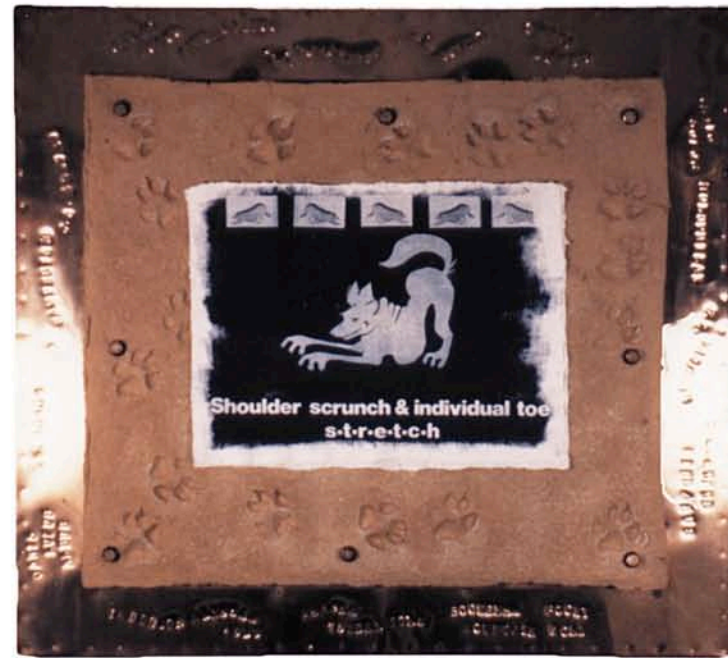
Mary Anne Barkhouse (1999a)

In *Early Morning Wolf Stretching Exercises* Mary Anne uses images of wolves to:

correlate ... to issues of identity and place within culture. ... Wolves in the media, they're either [considered] really great or they're really awful – there's a really polarized thought. That [idea] sometimes exists about Native cultures as well, that "they're out to take all our land back" or "they're really wonderful." This piece is about finding the middle ground...

Mary Anne Barkhouse (1999a)

This series was shown at the Museum of Anthropology in 1993-1994, as part of the exhibition *Multiplicity: A New Cultural Strategy*, guest curated by Robert Houle.



Mary Anne Barkhouse, *Early Morning Wolf Stretching Exercises*, cyanotype series, 1993.

Photo (left): Bill McLennan, 1993.

Photo (right): Mary Anne Barkhouse, 1993.

Waiver

Waiver is a series of cyanotypes that was shown in 1995 at the McMichael Canadian Art Collection, near Toronto, and in 1996 at the Canadian Museum of Contemporary Photography, in Ottawa. In *Waiver*, Mary Anne uses images of captive whales to portray

... issues of consent, and being taken away from your culture, either voluntarily or by circumstance. I used the images of the killer whale to relate to that, because they are family-oriented animals that have a culture.

Mary Anne Barkhouse (1999a)

Waiver also includes sets of rocks made with resin and varying amounts of seaweed. The seaweed invokes the separation that happens the farther away you get from your culture and your family.



Mary Anne Barkhouse, *Waiver*, cyanotypes and rocks cast with seaweed, 1995.
Photo: Michael Bowie, 1995.

Cyanotypes

Making cyanotypes is an old way of making photographs.

Cyanotypes are sort of a cross between photography and something that is more painterly. In terms of installation, what I do is more sculptural... There's more to it than just a pristine image, and that's why I break up the image by only painting some emulsion here, but not over here, so you catch bits and pieces of the whale, or the wolf, or whatever it is...

There is a feeling of gesture and land and connectedness; you paint [an emulsion] on [paper], you expose it in the sun. The ultraviolet rays expose the chemicals, and then you rinse it in water... and there is a really nice directness to the process that links itself to the image. One sort of feeds off the other, which you don't get out of typical black-and-white art photography, which [requires] a lot more chemicals, [and is done] in a darkroom.

Mary Anne Barkhouse (1999b)

I really appreciate people who do really nice, crisp, clean photographic work, but that's just not me. I like this really wild, brushy, collage style.

Mary Anne Barkhouse (1999a)

As Mary Anne mentioned, cyanotype images are exposed in the sunlight. The intensity of the colour varies depending on available sunlight, and the artist can never be certain of the results.

I did exposures in Banff in the middle of winter, and it took over two hours to get the exposures done. And then I did some exposures in Albany, New York, in the middle of summer, and it took about two minutes or three minutes to do the exposures. They're both just completely different: the exact same chemicals, but there is quite a difference in the tones of blue.

Mary Anne Barkhouse (1999a)

Wolves in the City

The cyanotype and Van-Dyke print series, *Wolves in the City*, consists of images of wolves in different urban environments, including Parliament Hill in Ottawa, and the Beaver Theatre in Minden, Ontario. In these cyanotypes the wolves represent people who are seen as existing outside of the mainstream, like First Nations people:

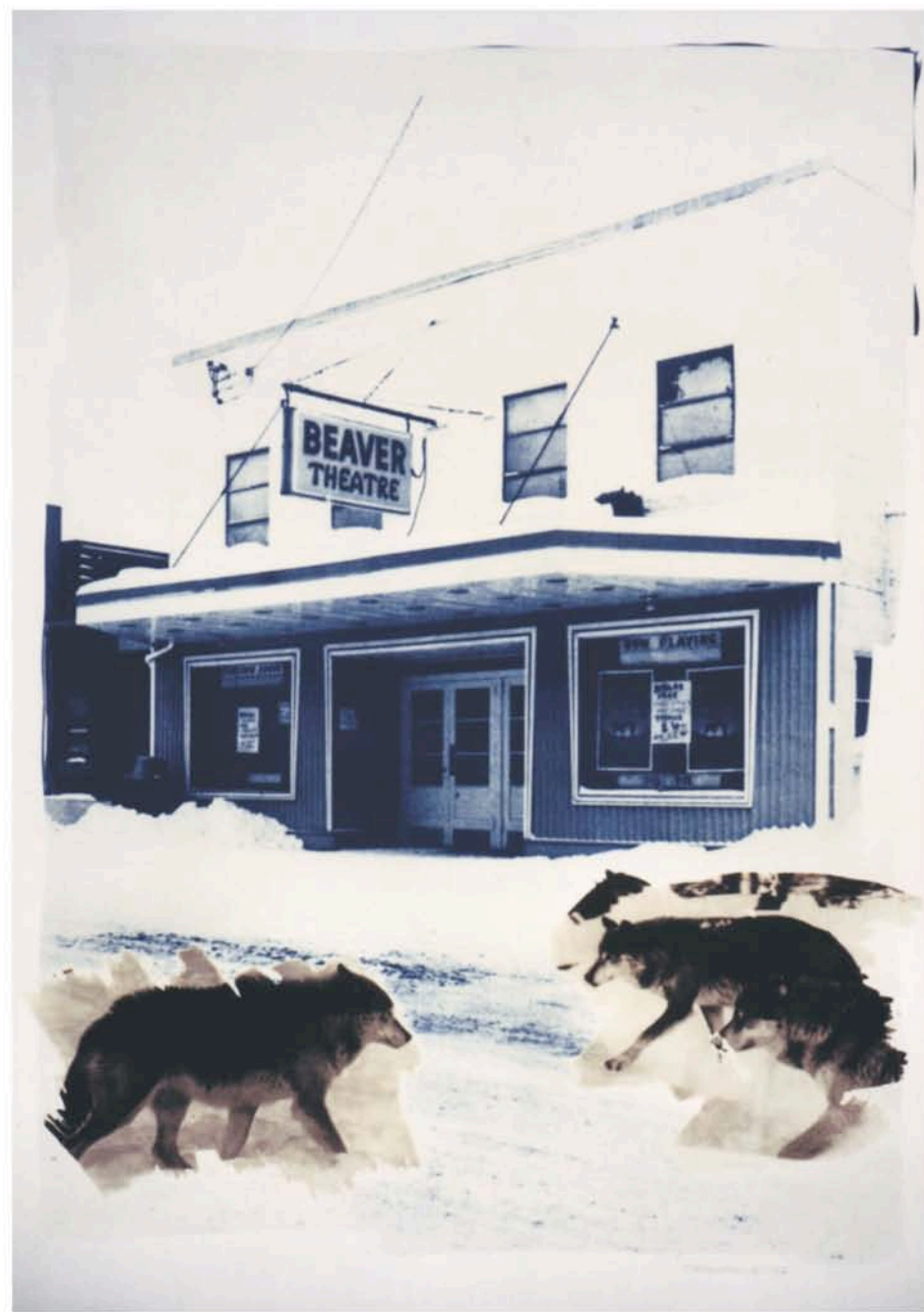
[A] reintegration of people who are outside the mainstream of society back into the mainstream of society – but it's not about assimilation... it's about the voice of the 'Other' and about being outside the mainstream, and still having a voice.

Mary Anne Barkhouse (1999a)

Personally, Mary Anne feels as though she is located on the margins of society:

In grade six I was about a foot taller than everyone else. I had glasses, braces, my clothes didn't fit, my teacher liked me—that's where the outsider art comes from: being the teacher's pet!

Mary Anne Barkhouse (1999a)



Mary Anne Barkhouse, *Wolves in the City*, cyanotype series, 1997.
Photos: Mary Anne Barkhouse, 1997.

pelage: The Different Skins of Mary Anne Barkhouse

pelage is composed of four appliquéd blankets. They were on display at the Museum of Anthropology in the exhibit *Raven's Reprise*, curated by Lynn Hill, from March, 2000 to January, 2001. The blankets are reminiscent of the button blankets used by coastal peoples for ceremonial purposes. Traditionally, the blankets show iconography that refers to the hereditary clan of the wearer. While these blankets are associated with her family history, Mary Anne expands the concept "to reflect layering, adaptation, and her personal growth." (Ace, 1999) Each blanket represents a stage in her life, with icons reflecting her interests during those times, and the disjuncture between identity and tradition.

When I was quite young, my maternal grandfather had a button blanket made for me with, as the custom goes, my clan crests prominently displayed on it. But clan affiliations have a way of mixing about, coming and going, and aren't necessarily those dictated by birth. Bookworm, punk rocker, metalsmith, installation artist, friend of animals, foe to evil—well, you get the idea. ...

[H]ow does one muddle their way through life, achieve some sort of progress while maintaining their own identity as well as retaining the intrinsic morals and truths of their specific traditions as passed down from those that have gone before?... Perhaps the answer is 'be flexible'... and if the occasion calls for it—wear leather.

Mary Anne Barkhouse (2000b)

pelage I & II

As a child, Mary Anne had a severe case of asthma, which competed with her love of pets. The small paw prints in *pelage I* allude to her foul-tempered poodle named *Ben*. The bird tracks refer to her chicken named *Chuck* that she hatched and raised as a part of a science-fair project, and later took to her paternal grandfather's farm in Nova Scotia. The horse hoof prints remind her of the pony she always wanted and never had. The Cat in the Hat symbols refer to her love of reading.

Music plays a significant role in Mary Anne's life. She played the piano as a child and later learned drums, electric guitar, and electric bass guitar. The *pelage II* blanket makes reference to the ten years between 1975 and 1985 when she played, toured, and recorded with bands like *Restless Virgins*. The writings on the studded leather blanket are punk and anarchist sayings.

[Punk rock] music is a form of artistic expression too, and it was very political music at that time [1970s and 1980s]—I mean socio-political.

Mary Anne Barkhouse (1999b)

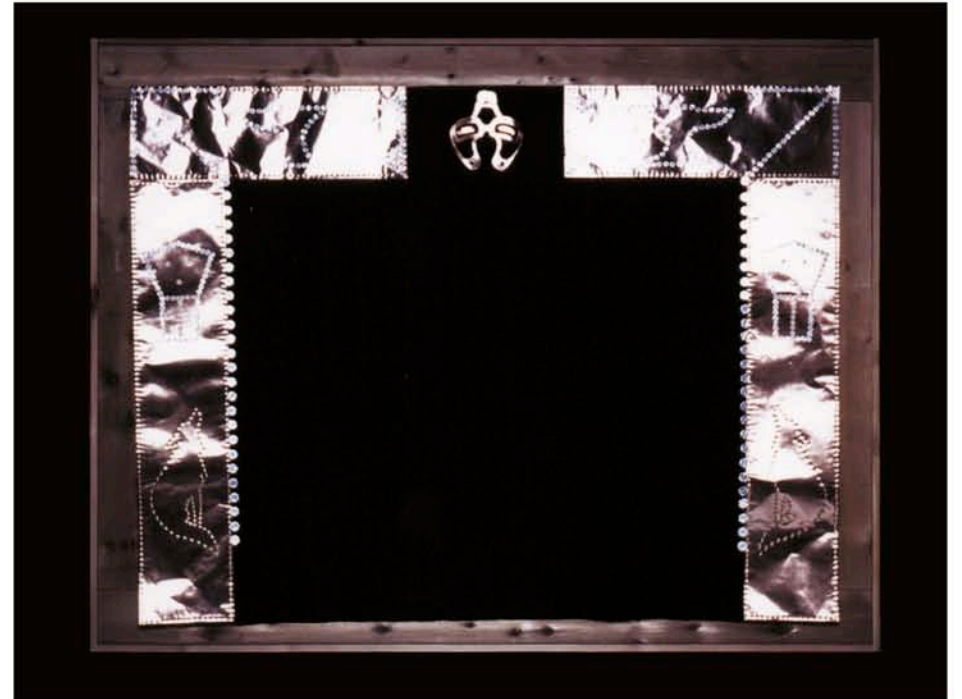


Left: *pelage I*. Right: *pelage II*.
 Photos: Allison Cronin, 1999, UBC Museum of Anthropology.

pelage III & IV

The *pelage III* blanket refers to Mary Anne's move out of the punk music scene and into art school. Mary Anne attended the Ontario College of Art (OCA) in the New Media Program. She began working with stop-motion animation pieces and experimental video, and later began creating jewelry as well as working with bronze and acrylic casting. After graduation from OCA, Mary Anne met Lois Etherington Betteridge, an internationally acclaimed silversmith who influenced her production technique and the underlying values of her work.

The *pelage IV* blanket refers to Mary Anne's life around the year 2000. The anvils on top are associated with her interest in metalwork. The images of coppers on the side, as well as the salt and resin buttons, indicate her renewed investigation into her family history.



Left: *pelage III*. Right: *pelage IV*.
Photos: Allison Cronin, 2000. UBC Museum of Anthropology.

Installations



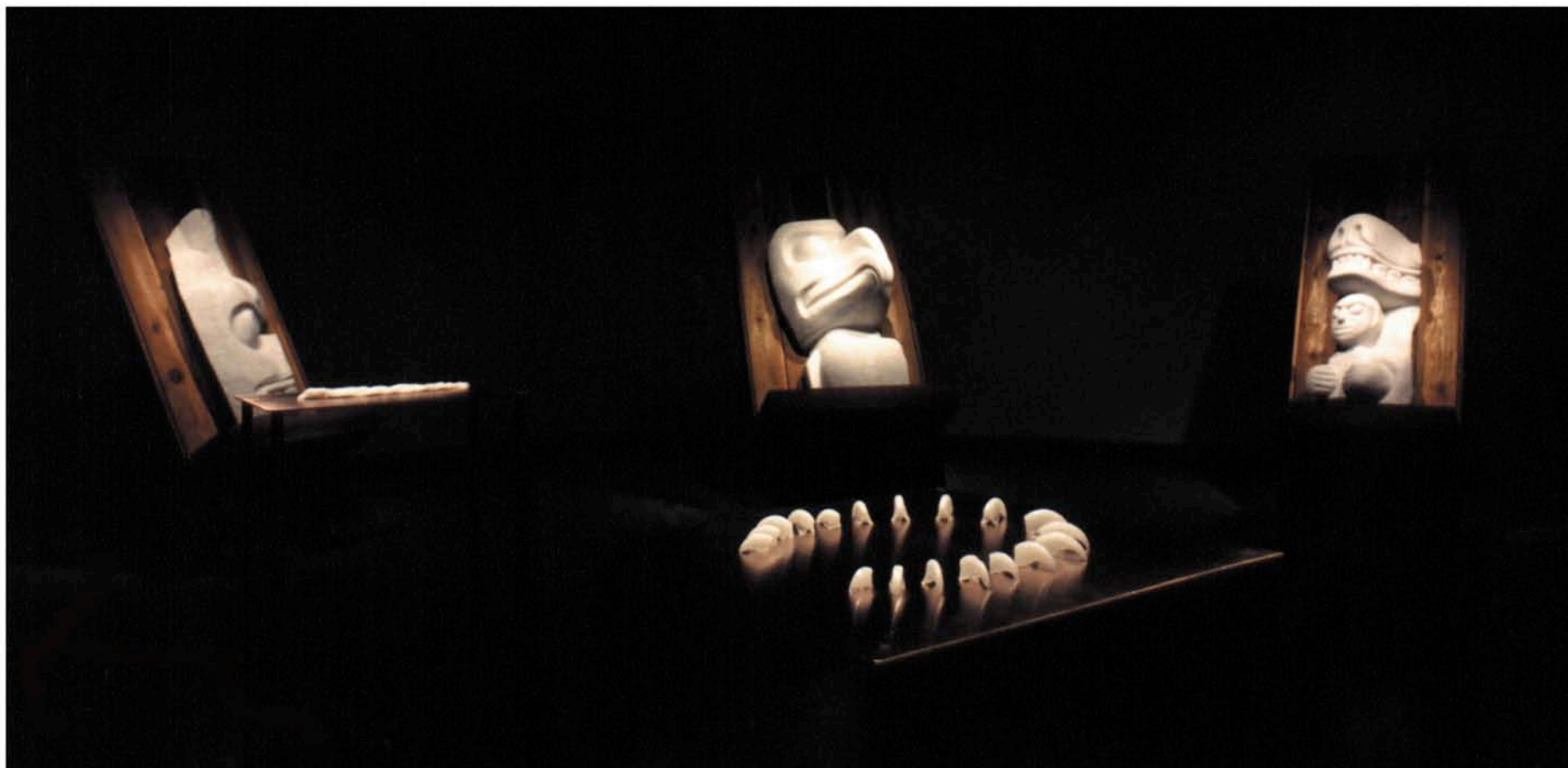
Reservoir

[*Reservoir* is] about looking at your own culture and your own family, and where you draw the line between inspiration, and where you get your moral values, your spiritual values, versus... exploiting or commodifying yourself or your culture. It's always a relevant issue.

Mary Anne Barkhouse, (1999a)

Reservoir is an installation by Mary Anne Barkhouse and Ojibway artist Michael Belmore. Both the materials and content of the installation relate to Mary Anne's family history and larger cultural background. Fragments of a pole, carved by her great-great-grandfather Charlie James, were cast in salt and mounted on cedar stands. Smaller items were mounted on copper-topped steel stands. Both cedar and copper are significant materials to coastal peoples.

The cast-salt bear claws, feather, and sweetgrass in *Reservoir* relate to Michael Belmore's Ojibway heritage. These things are associated with Ojibway culture and have become commodified and made into pan-Indian icons. Importantly, the salt casting and copper in *Reservoir* will chemically react with one another and deteriorate, adding another dimension to the history of this pole. In *Reservoir*, the salt "allude[s] to... the corrosive consequence of exploitation." (Barkhouse, 1997)



Mary Anne Barkhouse and Michael Belmore, *Reservoir* (installation view), cast salt, cedar, and copper, 1997.
Photo: Michael Belmore, 1997.

Salt casting is a process through which different kinds of salt are bound with polyester resin and shaped by using flexible rubber moulds. It is a time-consuming process, made more difficult if the artist is making small or intricate items. For salt castings to remain in good condition, the humidity of the environment must be just right. If there is any water in the air, the salt casting will absorb it.

The nature of the material has a lot of historical connotations. A lot of cultures everywhere have relations to salt. The substance itself is something [humans] need, but also if you have too much of it... it becomes toxic, poisonous, or detrimental.

Mary Anne Barkhouse (1999a)

Three different types of salt were used in *Reservoir* to get a discernible texture which looks similar to rock.

History of the Pole in *Reservoir*

Mary Anne chose to show fragments of the pole to make the point that family history is composed of “fragments, and bits and pieces of different stories.” (Barkhouse, 1999a) It was important to Mary Anne that she cast this particular pole because of its dynamic history. The original pole was carved on commission by her great-great-grandfather Charlie James, but it was not needed in the end. So the pole was used as a prop in the Edward S. Curtis film *In the Land of the Head Hunters*, later called *Land of the War Canoes*. It was then bought by the Art, Historical and Scientific Association of Vancouver and put on display in Stanley Park to attract tourists. As decay inevitably set in to the wood, it was decided to make a mould of the original and display a fibreglass replica in its place. The original was put into storage. As the rubber mould deteriorated over time, the fibreglass replica was all that was left of this stage of the life of the pole. It was this fibreglass replica that Mary Anne later cast in salt for this piece.

The history of this pole...it's so weird to begin with. Most poles wouldn't have that kind of history. It's gone from being a commissioned object to being a film prop, to being a tourist item, and now it's an artifact in a contemporary art installation, and I'm sure it won't end there. This pole had a life of its own. It's in the outer limits or something!

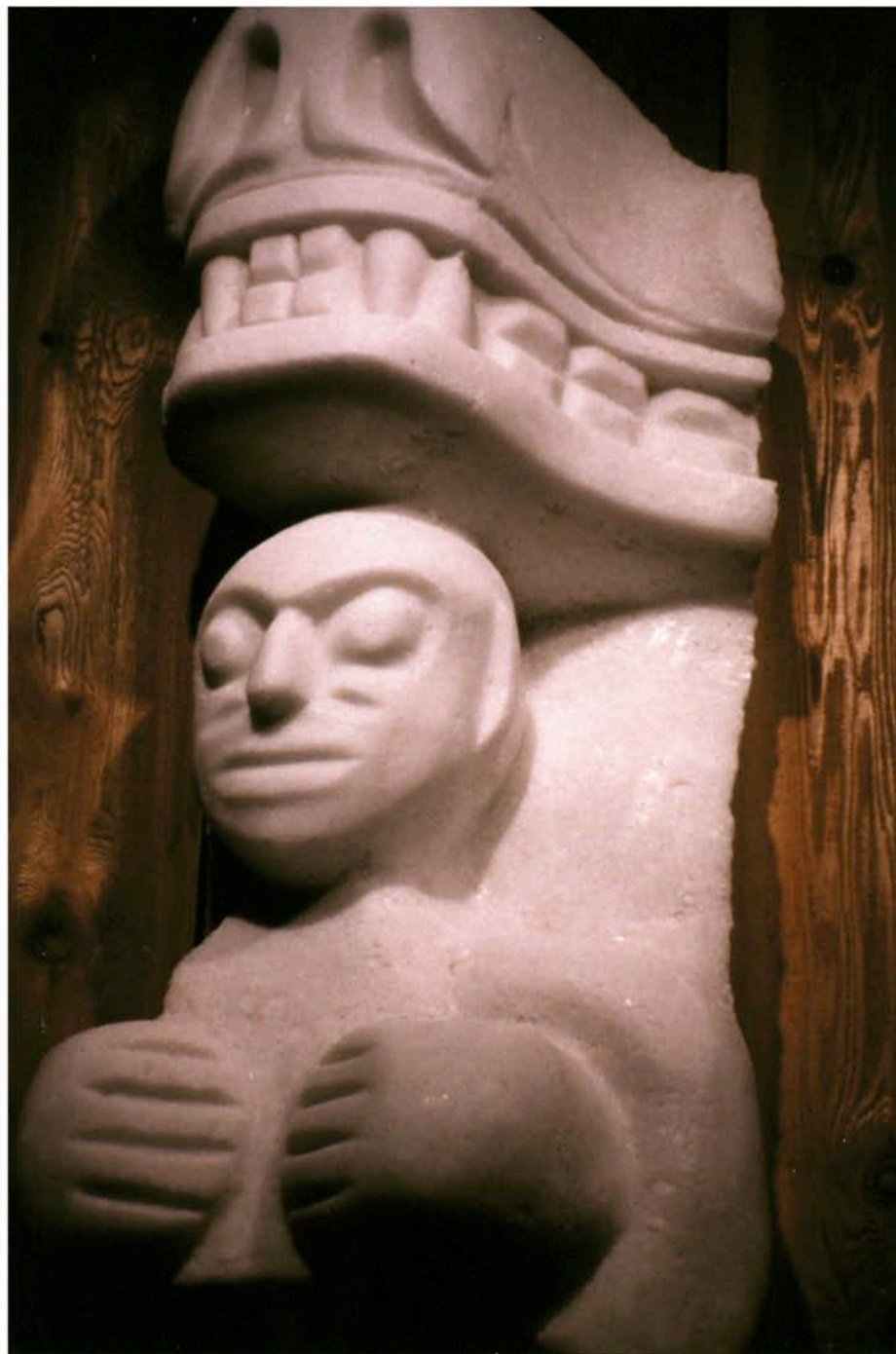
Mary Anne Barkhouse (1999a)

On the potential controversy of casting fragments of an old Charlie James pole for *Reservoir*, Mary Anne comments,

There are certain people that are just going to hate it and think it's stupid, and [will ask], "Why did you do it? That's sacrilege." If they think that, then [they've] missed the point. Maybe it will come to BC. I'll put on my Kevlar and come out and show it!

Mary Anne Barkhouse (1999a)

Reservoir was part of a 1997 show called *Staking LAND Claims* that was exhibited at the Walter Phillips Gallery in Banff, Alberta; at the Thunder Bay Art Gallery in Thunder Bay, Ontario; and at the Woodland Cultural Centre in Brantford, Ontario.



Mary Anne Barkhouse and Michael Belmore, *Reservoir* (detail), cast salt, cedar, 1997.
Photo: Michael Belmore, 1997.

Boreal Baroque

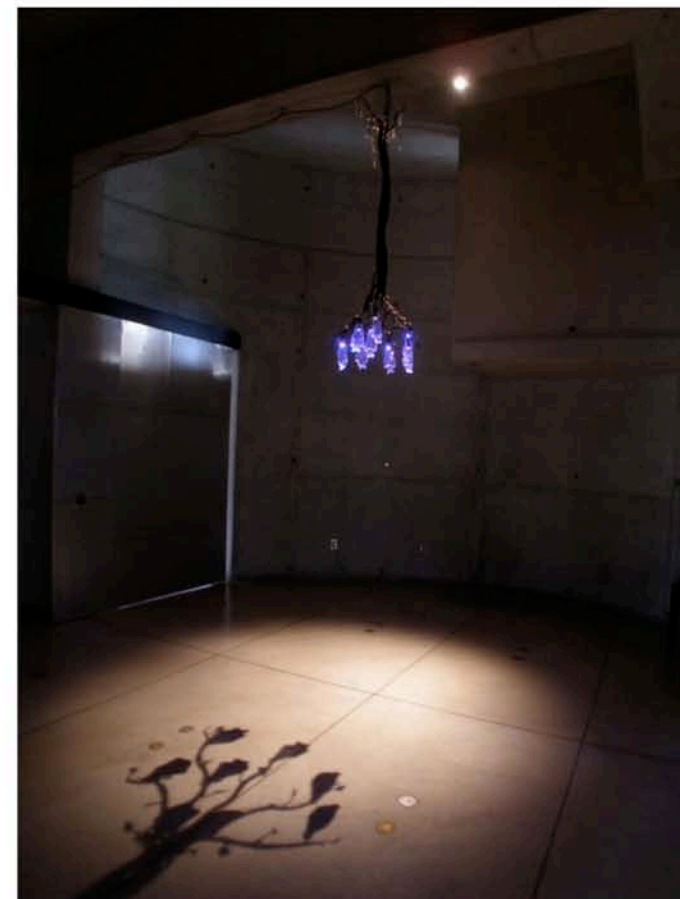
In 2007, Mary Anne had her first major solo exhibition, *Boreal Baroque*, which toured Canada, primarily to galleries in Ontario, Saskatchewan, and Alberta.

In this exhibition, indigenous wildlife was situated amongst and upon 18th-century furnishings. By combining the wild with the opulent, the work reflects on issues of sovereignty and survival in our northern environment.

Mary Anne Barkhouse (2011)



Left: Mary Anne Barkhouse, *Sovereign*, bronze, beechwood, velvet, 2007. Collection of the National Gallery of Canada.
 Right: Mary Anne Barkhouse, *Succession* (detail), porcelain, velvet, beechwood, 2007.
 Photos: Courtesy of Mary Anne Barkhouse.



Left: Mary Anne Barkhouse, *The Skins of Our Fathers II*, beechwood, cotton, silk, bronze, 2007. Collection of Mackenzie Art Gallery, Regina.
 Right: Mary Anne Barkhouse, *Vesper II*, glass, steel, copper, LEDs, 2007. Collection of the Mendel Art Gallery, Saskatoon.
 Photos: Courtesy of Mary Anne Barkhouse.

Within *Boreal Baroque*,

hibernating bats form a delicate chandelier (*Vesper II*), hares demonstrate their obeisance to the natural order (*Succession*), and a fox reclines in the luxury that is the boreal forest (*Sovereign*).

Mary Anne Barkhouse (2011)

In *Skins of Our Fathers II*, small cushions located on the confidante sofa are decorated with Native, English, and French fur-trading maps, contrasting “human endeavour with environmental consequence.” (Barkhouse, 2011)



By combining objects from colonial, contemporary, and natural history, [the work presents] different perspectives for the viewer's consideration. Materials such as bronze, porcelain, and mahogany are integral to the storytelling process because of their associations with value, strength, and authority.

Mary Anne Barkhouse (2011)

The Reins of Chaos

Mary Anne's second solo exhibition, *The Reins of Chaos*, addressed "the cyclical nature of apocalypse and offer[ed] up possibilities for an exit strategy." (Barkhouse, 2011) Held at the Ottawa Art Gallery in 2008 it featured two installations: *The Four Horses of the Apocalypse and the Donkey of Eternal Salvation*, and *Destrier*.

Tracing the roots of human conflict, *Destrier* shows the four horses of the Apocalypse (Barkhouse, 2011), drawn from the Biblical Book of Revelation, in which they represent Famine, War, Pestilence, and Death. The work re-imagines these apocalyptic equines as children's toys, with rocking horses modelled after warhorses from different cultures and eras: the yellow horse after a ledger drawing by Assiniboine artist Hongeeyesa in 1885; the red horse after the four horsemen depicted in the 12th century illumination *Silos Apocalypse*; the black horse after 19th century paintings by Paul Kane (*Assiniboine Hunting Buffalo*, c. 1851-56) and John Mix Stanley (*Buffalo Hunt on the Southwestern Prairies*, 1845), featuring wildly inaccurate depictions of horses in full gallop; and the white rocking horse was rescued by Mary Anne from a landfill. (Barkhouse, 2011)

On the walls are images of military aircraft, interspersed with vultures and ravens, the "perennial followers of the hunt." (Barkhouse, 2011)



Left: Mary Anne Barkhouse, *Destrier*, wood, paint, 2008.
Right: Mary Anne Barkhouse, *Destrier* (detail), wood, paint, 2008.
Photos: Dave Barbour, 2008. Courtesy of The Ottawa Art Gallery.



Left: Mary Anne Barkhouse, *The Four Horses of the Apocalypse and the Donkey of Eternal Salvation*, vintage horse rides, wood, taffeta, wheels, rope, 2008.

Right: Mary Anne Barkhouse, *The Four Horses of the Apocalypse and the Donkey of Eternal Salvation* (detail), vintage horse rides, 2008.

Photos: Dave Barbour, 2008. Courtesy of The Ottawa Art Gallery.

In *The Four Horses of the Apocalypse and the Donkey of Eternal Salvation*, the four horses, still representing Famine, War, Pestilence, and Death, are transformed into coin-operated kiddy rides. (Barkhouse, 2011) Images of military aircraft reappear here as well, this time decorating four heraldic banners that shadow the four horses.

Viewers of the exhibition are invited to interact with the work if they dare: “put a quarter in and Armageddon starts again—but this time with a new rider.” (Barkhouse, 2011)

In the corner stands a small wooden donkey.

For all their fancy mechanizations the horses are, ultimately, stationary. The donkey's advantage is its wheels—freedom of movement.

Mary Anne Barkhouse (2011)



Mary Anne Barkhouse, *The Four Horses of the Apocalypse and the Donkey of Eternal Salvation* (detail), wood, wheels, rope, 2008.
Photo: Dave Barbour, 2008. Courtesy of The Ottawa Art Gallery.

harvest

In 2009, Mary Anne participated in a group exhibition at Wave Hill Cultural Center in the Bronx, New York, '*The Muhheakantuck in Focus.*' Muhheakantuck was the original Lenape name for the Hudson River in New York, meaning "the river that flows both ways." (Wave Hill, 2009)

Harvest was produced specifically for this exhibition, and reflects on the history of this river from an aboriginal perspective. The beaver and the coyote characters represented in this work are "reminders of the lingering effects of ideologies such as Manifest Destiny." (Barkhouse, 2011)



Mary Anne Barkhouse, *harvest* (installation view), bronze, porcelain, wood, taffeta, 2009. Collection of the National Gallery of Canada.
Photo: Stefan Hagen, 2009. Courtesy of Wave Hill, Bronx, NY.



Mary Anne Barkhouse, *Harvest* (details), porcelain, taffeta, 2009. Collection of the National Gallery of Canada.
Photos: Mary Anne Barkhouse, 2009.

Soon after European contact, the once-thriving Muhheakantuck River area became environmentally devastated as a result of market forces; recent rejuvenation of both flora and fauna has occurred after concerted conservation and restoration efforts. (Wave Hill, 2009)

Water lilies, a favourite food of the river's once-again thriving beaver population, are here rendered of porcelain and inscribed with the names of the indigenous groups that inhabited this area over 400 years ago. (Wave Hill, 2009)

Public Artworks





Some Thoughts on Public Art Installations

Since 2001, Mary Anne's art practice has increasingly been focused on public artworks, though she continues to exhibit her work in a variety of exhibition venues, from artist-run-centres to large public art institutions. Her public artworks, including pieces done in collaboration with Michael Belmore, can be found across Ontario in Thunder Bay, Peterborough, Guelph, Oshawa, London, and Haliburton.

Having her work in public places is especially appealing to Mary Anne because they are accessible to a wider audience:

The good thing about public art is that the people who would never go into a gallery react to it and come up and tell [me] different stories. Street people liked having [the wolves from the installation *lichen*,] outdoors, and have really bonded with them, and they were really protective of them.

Mary Anne Barkhouse (1999a)

The photo opposite shows her installation *lichen*, at the Toronto Sculpture Garden. The man in the photograph, who lives on the streets of Toronto, is standing with his favourite wolf. He approached Mary Anne one day and recited a beautiful long poem about survival and living in a natural way, inspired by the presence of her bronze wolves.

It's Like Alchemy: Working with Bronze

Although bronze sculptures can take up to a year to complete, Mary Anne enjoys the entire process. In fact, the process of making bronze sculptures is one of the reasons she is so attracted to this medium.

The whole process... the fire and then the moulds. I usually try to go there when they're pouring them, so [I] can see the moulds glowing red hot [and watch the] metal while it is cooling down. It's very satisfying.

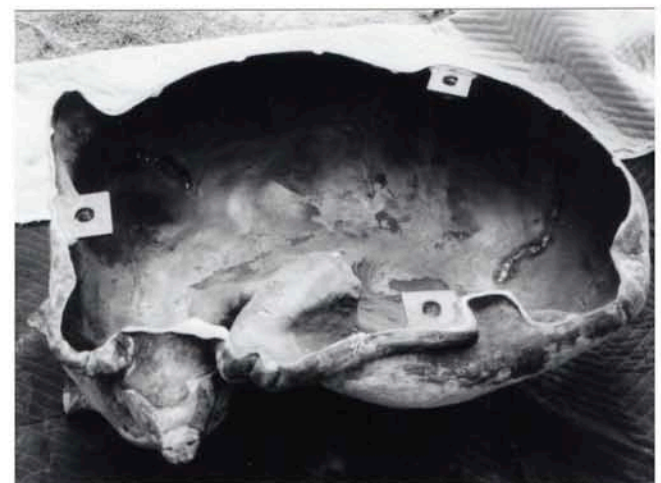
Mary Anne Barkhouse (1999b)

The sheer scale of doing something that big... it's got such a history behind it, which actually has nothing to do with Native American history because we didn't have that type of metal-smithing. It's Asian history; it goes back thousands of years. It's fascinating to see how it touches someone's life and how enduring it is... [Bronze] is an addiction. We're going to have to start a self-help group!

Mary Anne Barkhouse (1999b)



Mary Anne with bronze wolves in *lichen*.
Photo: Michael Belmore, 1998.



When Mary Anne talks about bronze you can hear excitement and enthusiasm in her voice.

You can make so many different things [with bronze], whereas painting is a surface thing, like a surface decoration. When you're doing the patination it's like alchemy, it's like going back to the dark ages and making gold out of something else. The chemical interaction is so linked with cause and effect. It's incredible! It's so easy to get sucked right into it!

Mary Anne Barkhouse (1999b)

lichen, a set of bronze casts, began with scale drawings of wolves. Then Mary Anne carved the approximate form of each wolf out of styrofoam (*top right photo*). Next, she covered the wolves with brown sculptor's wax and carved the details into them (*left photo*).

When the wolves were exactly as she wanted them, she brought them to the bronze foundry where moulds of the wax wolves were made. Later, bronze was cast into the moulds. The bottom right photo shows the underside of a bronze wolf.

lichen

lichen was installed outdoors at the Toronto Sculpture Garden in Toronto, Ontario, from 1998 to 1999. It consists of three bronze wolf sculptures created by Mary Anne, and a bus stop with an image of a raven made by Ojibway artist Michael Belmore. They could not find anyone who would donate a bus shelter for this installation, so Michael had a transit stop custom built.

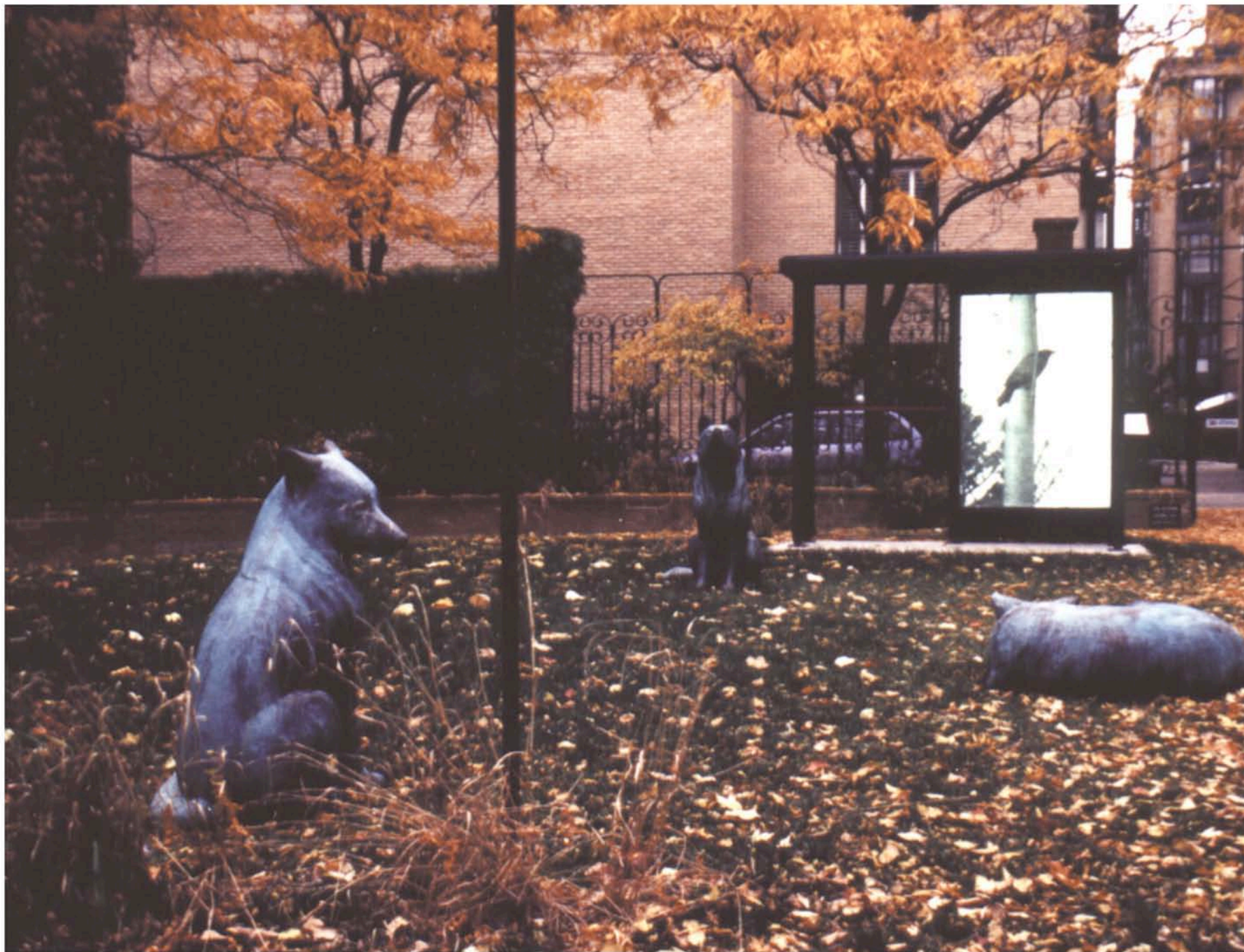
We own that bus shelter. When it comes home, I'd like to set it up on a country road just to screw people up!

Mary Anne Barkhouse (1999a)

lichen is about important decisions that have to be made in order to preserve nature and wilderness. Mary Anne believes that nature has incredible abilities to regenerate itself, given the chance, but before this can happen humans have to make some important decisions.

At some point in time we... as a culture, as a people, not just individuals or not just individual groups of people, have some big decisions to make. What decisions do we make so that there can be some sort of perpetuation of some type of original wilderness out there? That's why the wolves are waiting there. They've been waiting [such] a long time, they [have] lichen growing on them now.

Mary Anne Barkhouse (1999a)



Mary Anne Barkhouse and Michael Belmore, *lichen*, bronze, steel, glass, graphite drawings, 1998.
Photo: Mary Anne Barkhouse, 1998.

In *lichen*, wolves are waiting at the bus stop. Mary Anne was inspired by this theme when reading about the reintroduction of wolves into certain areas in North America where humans have depleted the wolf population.

Biologists would go up to the communities where the wolves were being reintroduced and assure everyone that the wolves wouldn't be killing everyone and waiting for the children at bus stops.

Mary Anne Barkhouse (1999a)

Michael Belmore's raven depicted on the bus stop also plays an important role in *lichen*.

Ravens in the wild are messengers. They're up there watching everything and their position is as a messenger of news. That's why we have these wolves waiting [for ravens to tell them what to do], and the ravens are waiting for us to make up our minds: 'What are we going to do?' Come on, guys.

Mary Anne Barkhouse (1999a)

lichen is now in the McMichael Canadian Collection, Kleinburg, Ontario.



lichen being installed at the Toronto Sculpture Garden.
Photo: Mary Anne Barkhouse.

grace

The three beavers lounging atop the granite slab in *grace* allude to virtues manifest in the natural world. The title is loosely inspired by the Three Graces of ancient Greece, who represented qualities such as charm, beauty, and creativity. (Barkhouse, 2011)

These three naturally Rubenesque figures groom and relax on a piece of red granite, sourced from a quarry near Mary Anne's home in Haliburton County. The top surface of the rock was sanded and polished to a mirror finish, in order to give the impression that it is wet with running water. (Barkhouse, 2011)

This sculpture was Mary Anne's first solo public artwork, and was commissioned by the Robert McLaughlin Gallery in Oshawa, Ontario. It was completed and installed at the gallery in 2007. Michael Belmore, Mary Anne's partner and occasional collaborator, assisted with technical production of the work, in particular, with the finishing of the granite rock. (Barkhouse, 2011)



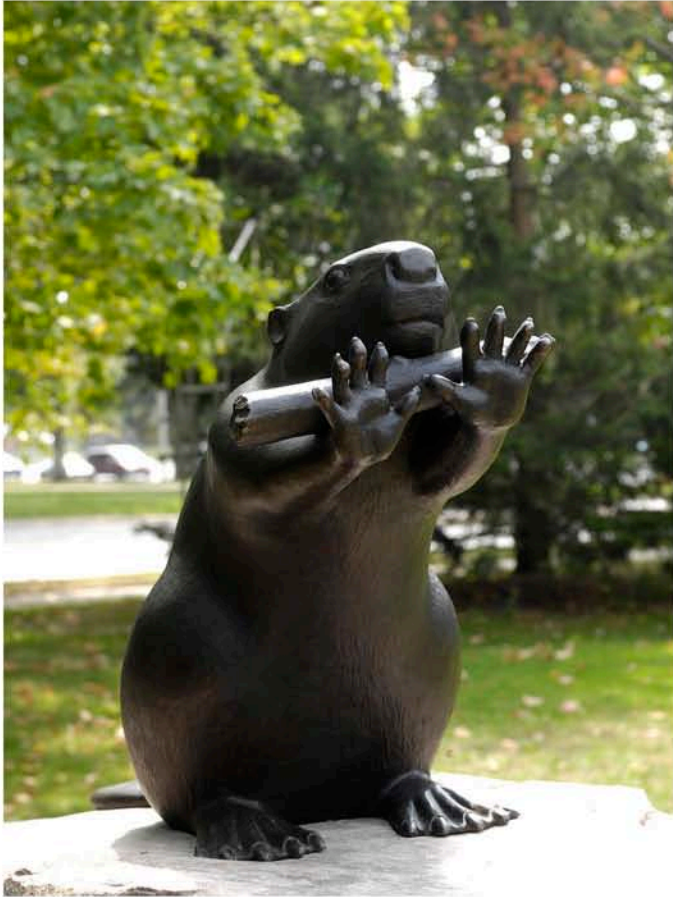
Mary Anne Barkhouse, *grace*, bronze and granite, 2007.
Photo: Courtesy of Mary Anne Barkhouse.

colony

colony is a work by Mary Anne Barkhouse and Michael Belmore. It was commissioned by the MacDonald Stewart Art Centre in Guelph, Ontario, and completed in 2007.

The piece “alludes to the idea of nature versus man-made colonial traditions”; beavers live their lives in the middle, subject both “to the forces of nature [and to] the forces of humanity.” (Barkhouse, 2011)

The bronze beaver, carrying a stick lodged between the chin and paws, stands on a large piece of granite. On the rock, Michael Belmore has carved a *Mishipizhiw*: an underwater panther from Ojibway mythological tradition. The carving reflects a sculptural style recently explored by Belmore, in which he draws on both the tradition and the form of European gargoyles, mixed with imagery from his own Ojibway background. (Barkhouse, 2011)



Mary Anne Barkhouse and Michael Belmore, *colony*, bronze and granite, 2007.
Photos: Courtesy of Mary Anne Barkhouse and Michael Belmore.

esker

esker was created by Mary Anne Barkhouse and Michael Belmore for the Millennium Walkway in Peterborough, Ontario. Ten artists and artist-teams were initially asked to submit proposals, and this sculpture by Mary Anne and Michael was chosen as the final work. It was funded by the Rotary Club of Peterborough, and completed in 2001. (Barkhouse, 2011)

The piece begins with granite pavers embedded into the grass, which gradually rise to form a path, and then a low stone wall. Round river rocks form one side of the wall, while flat dry-stack stone completes the other. The wall ends with a large piece of pink granite called Belmont Rose, sourced from a nearby quarry. Here, a young wolf sits, looking down at an older wolf, who is seated on the ground in front of the large piece of granite. (Barkhouse, 2011)

The piece reflects on the history of its location by the Otonabee River, while also expressing the idea that everything begins, and ends, with nature. The path emerging from the ground into a rock wall acknowledges the presence of humans. The river was first used as a pathway by aboriginal inhabitants; when many Irish moved to the area during the Great Irish Hunger of the 1800s, they brought with them their style of building, creating fieldstone walls from rubble collected while clearing land, and using flat, split rock to create dry-stack stone walls. (Barkhouse, 2011)



Mary Anne Barkhouse and Michael Belmore, *esker*, bronze and granite, 2001.
Photos: Courtesy of Mary Anne Barkhouse and Michael Belmore.

Dog Gallery

This section is dedicated to Mary Anne's dogs because they are an integral part of her life. Mary Anne gives a lot of credit to her animal companions:

I've always felt that my dogs kept me centred and stable, whatever I was going through.

Mary Anne Barkhouse (2000)



Left: Percy, one of Mary Anne's dogs, as a puppy in 1997. Photo: Mary Anne Barkhouse, 1997.
Right: Mary Anne with her late companions Asta P. Bouvier (*left*) and Alex Terrier (*right*), in Trinity Bellwood Park in Toronto.
Photo: Private collection of Mary Anne Barkhouse.





Percy with the installation *petition*, in the exhibit *small brown animals* at artspace, Peterborough, Ontario.
Photo: Mary Anne Barkhouse, 1999.

There's a saying that "old punk rockers never die, they just do spoken word." But I might add to that and say, "Old punk rockers never die, they just do spoken word and installation art!"

Mary Anne Barkhouse (1999c)

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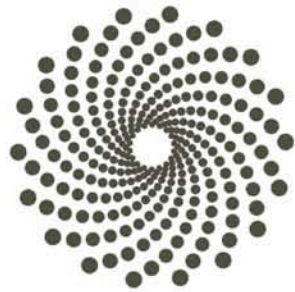
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