



INSTITUT
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More News

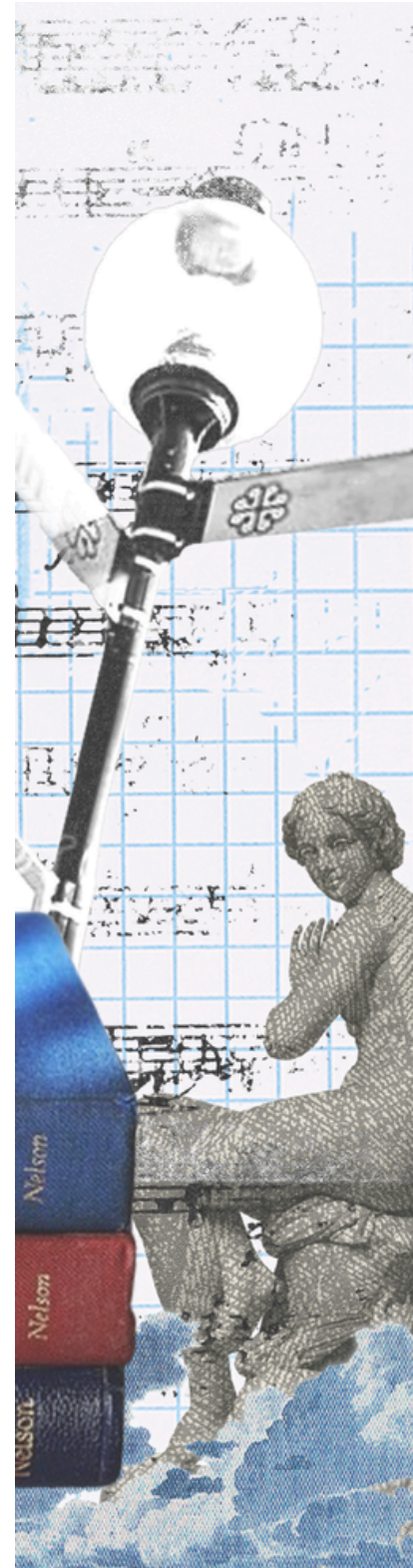
Spotlight on our 80th Anniversary: The Thomas More Institute's Annual Art Show

For our 80th anniversary, the More News will be publishing articles highlighting elements of our rich history.

Have you ever admired the artwork that adorns the walls and shelves of the Thomas More Institute and wondered how a small non-profit academic institution acquired such beautiful works? For over forty years, from 1962 to 2008, the Thomas More Institute held an annual Exhibition and Sale of Art, organized by exceptional volunteers. (P.2)

The Times They Are A-Changin': The Historical and Current Stakes in Immigration as Discussed with Dr. Mireille Paquet in the Thomas More Institute's 80th Anniversary Interview Series "Encountering the Other"

Reflections on the Spring Series Interview with Dr. Mireille Paquet "Encountering the Other: Migration and Democracy" from the point of view of Louise Jarrett, who emigrated to Canada from England. While attending this interview, she was able to compare her immigration experience from over fifty years ago to the current state of immigration in Quebec, Canada, and the world. Read on to learn more about the event and her unique take on what was discussed. (P.3)



thomasmore.qc.ca
3405 Atwater Avenue
Montreal, QC H3H 1Y2
(514) 935-9585

Feature Article

Spotlight on our 80th Anniversary: The Thomas More Institute's Annual Art Show

Have you ever admired the artwork that adorns the walls and shelves of the Thomas More Institute and wondered how a small non-profit academic institution acquired such beautiful works? For over forty years, from 1962 to 2008, the Thomas More Institute held an annual Exhibition and Sale of Art, organized by exceptional volunteers Martin O'Hara, Hedwidge Asselin, Uve Von Harpe, Cassie Cahoon, Tony Joseph, and others. The exhibition was known as an opportunity for young Quebec artists to show their work. Sarah Valerie Gersovitz, Tony Joseph

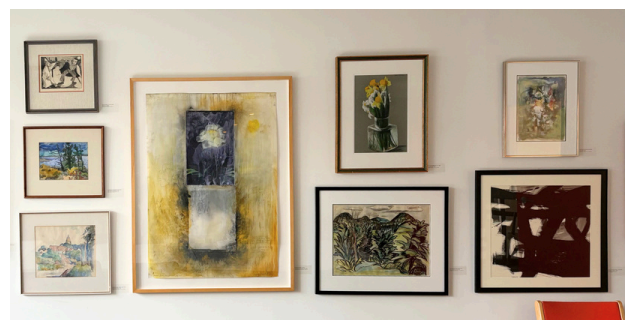


TMI ART SHOW

told me, “participated in almost all of our TMI exhibitions. She was a famous and well-known Canadian artist whose name gave extra prestige to our exhibition and drew attention from other artists wanting to participate.” The exhibit also served as a fundraiser for the Institute. Should an artwork sell, a percentage of the profit would go to the Thomas More Institute, while the rest would go to the artist.

Hedwidge Asselin, who held a Ph.D. in philosophy and studied art history at the Sorbonne and McGill University, was engaged in the local art scene and knew many contemporary artists. Through her connections, the Institute was able to show important up-and-coming painters and sculptors. Quebec artists such as Louis Belzille, Sylvia Safdie, Luba Genush, and Fritz Brandtner displayed their works at the exhibition. Each show held a competition for the top prize, with the winning work purchased by the Thomas More Institute, thus contributing to its collection. The show was made possible by the hard work of the Associates, a committee of dedicated volunteers who worked to organize the academic and cultural events of the Institute (learn more about the Associates in our [December 2025 edition of More News](#)).

Each year the art exhibition would be shown for ten days, often in such fine venues as the Lotto Québec premises. Lotto Québec was one of the biggest customers of the show, sometimes ordering five or more paintings. In the final exhibition in 2008, one year after her passing, several pieces of Gersovitz's work were displayed in a separate space, in recognition of her extraordinary talent and her generosity to the Institute throughout the years.



TMI GALLERY WALL 2026

Feature Article

The Times They Are A-Changin': The Historical and Current Stakes in Immigration as Discussed with Dr. Mireille Paquet in the Thomas More Institute's 80th Anniversary Interview Series "Encountering the Other"

By Louise Jarrett

I emigrated from England to Canada, at the beginning of my twenties, to escape Thatcherism. Ten years later I "migrated" from Toronto to Quebec, where I have lived for 42 years. Not growing up in Quebec, the place has remained something of a mystery for me. I was very pleased to attend the interview with Dr. Mireille Paquet, on March 24 ([Encountering the Other: Migration and Democracy](#)) and learn more. Apparently, Quebec has a unique and interesting history of immigration.

Dr. Paquet, who was interviewed by Brian McDonough and Carol Fiedler, gave a very personal and lively account of immigration in Canada, in general, and Quebec in particular. She grew up in Sherbrooke: a really homogeneous part of the province. Her first real encounter with "the Other" was when a group of Yugoslavian refugees attended her high school. It was a seminal moment that led to her studying social sciences and focusing her research on immigration. Her interest grew out of her realization that these refugees were more like her than not like her: the Other was not other but the same.



"ENCOUNTERING THE OTHER: MIGRATION AND DEMOCRACY" EVENT

Dr. Paquet stressed that there is generally "fuzzy thinking around immigration." The terms "migrant" and "refugee" are often confused when they should not be. While there is no clear definition of what a migrant is, this is not the case for a refugee. An Administrative Tribunal, created after WWII, decides who has refugee status according to strict criteria. These criteria have changed to now account for violence on the basis of gender and sexual orientation. However, climate change and poverty, which are major causes of human migration, are not criteria for refugee status. "Economic refugees" is a relatively new term for an age-old problem.

Canada is unique in that jurisdiction over immigration is shared by the federal and the provincial governments. No other country in the world has this arrangement. Interestingly, and not surprisingly, Quebec is unique among the provinces: it receives federal funding for the integration of its immigrants. In Quebec, immigration is a package deal: it is inseparable from integration.

Feature Article (continued)

In the Duplessis era, Quebec was opposed to immigration. Following the Quiet Revolution, the province became very proactive on the issue. In 1968, the Department of Immigration was created and was based, rather significantly, in Montreal, rather than Quebec City.

Dr. Paquet explained how Quebec has experienced three waves of immigration. From the sixties to the nineties there was heated debate around the subject. From the nineties to 2012 there was a period of consensus: immigration was stable but growing. With the CAQ entering the political scene in 2012 and then coming to power in 2018, there was a radical shift. In order to distinguish itself from the Liberal Party and the Parti Quebecois, the CAQ sought to reduce the number of immigrants. Unfortunately, immigration is a wedge issue dividing the province today. While polls show that immigration is not something that preoccupies voters, it is increasingly the issue being politicized by the right wing movement. Traditional, moderate parties are forced to respond to the rhetoric around immigration and in the process become fractured. The constant reiteration of immigration as an issue means that, eventually, it becomes an issue. Sadly, this is where we stand today in Quebec, in Canada and in the world at large.

There is evidence that foreign interference is using the issue of immigration to divide and conquer. Our news routinely provides more opinions than facts. As Dr. Paquet expressed it, "we are living in a media echo-system." Immigration is now beset by issues regarding policy cancellations, back-logs, delays and even concerns surrounding AI-generated documentation.

In the next five years Quebec will face an essential workers crisis. The demographic future of Quebec is in doubt. There is currently a 16-17 year delay for immigrants seeking to become Permanent Residents. This delay allows workers to be exploited for decades. One million residents of Quebec are about to lose their status as temporary workers. What will their fate be?

Listening to Dr. Paquet, I realized that I had been a Canadian immigrant in the Golden Age. My journey had been simple, with no roadblocks along the way. Canada is in a new, darker era now and immigration may never be straightforward again. As Democracy unravels, immigration will become a more divisive issue, but only if we allow it to.

Recent Events

Volunteer Appreciation Day 2026!



A Toast to 50 Years
of the Seniors
Program!

Meet our Summer Team

The Thomas More Institute is pleased to welcome Dannette and Karen, who are able to join us thanks to the Canada Summer Jobs program, and Clara, a new volunteer. All three are working with staff members to help the Institute get ready for the 2026-27 academic year!



Dannette, a student entering McGill's undergraduate psychology program, will be joining the Thomas More Institute this summer in the role of Academic Administrative Assistant. Passionate about art history and classic literature, she found the Institute to be an incredibly rich space that offered a wonderful selection of widely interesting courses. Thus, she will be channeling her interests and skills in supporting TMI in its upcoming academic year.



Hey! I'm Karen, a student in the role of Development Assistant at the Thomas More Institute, born in Montréal but raised in Dubai. This fall, I'll be finishing my third year at McGill University studying Political Science and Economics. Outside of lectures, I'm usually painting, drawing, catching a movie, or exploring Montréal's incredible food scene with friends. I love staying involved on campus, keeping busy, and making the most of everything this city has to offer. I honestly cannot wait to jump in and join the team at Thomas More!



Clara is a Communications volunteer at the Thomas More Institute. She is twenty-three years old and has recently graduated from the Communications and Cultural Studies program at Concordia University. Clara enjoys science-fiction, superheroes, and books with a sense of humour. This summer she will be assisting in the promotion of courses. She is excited to lend a hand, to draw more attention to the wonderful courses being taught here, and to learn as much as she can along the way.

In Memoriam

Mary Catherine Hughes (nee Mason)
January 11, 1938 – April 8, 2026



It is with great sadness that we announce the death of Mary Hughes, a beloved discussion leader and enthusiastic participant at the Thomas More Institute. Mary had a wonderful, positive outlook on life and a lifelong love of learning. She will be missed.

Her full obituary can be read at

<https://montrealgazette.remembering.ca/obituary/mary-hughes-nee-mason-1093723262>

