

RAY CRONIN: WRITER/CURATOR/EDITOR

PROFILE

Senior Arts Professional with over 25 years' extensive experience in leadership roles within the culture sector, including in art galleries and museums (Director and CEO, Senior Curator, Curator of Contemporary Art: Art Gallery of Nova Scotia; Program Coordinator, Artcite Inc.); museum services (Vice-President, TOTAL Museum and Fine Arts Services, Inc.); publishing (Publicity and Promotions Manager, Goose Lane Editions); and arts journalism (Columnist and arts reporter, *The Daily Gleaner*, Fredericton; columnist, *Here*, Saint John; contributor, *The Globe and Mail*, Toronto, Arts blogger, *Halifax Magazine*, Halifax; Editor-in-Chief, *Billie: Visual Culture Atlantic*). Demonstrated knowledge and passion for modern and contemporary art, known nationally as a respected curator and active freelance writer, published in numerous magazines and in catalogues and books for art institutions across the country. Curator of dozens of exhibitions, several of which toured nationally and internationally. Graduate of the Getty Museum Leadership Institute. Author of thirteen books on Canadian art, including the forthcoming *Halifax Art & Artists: An Illustrated History* (Arts Canada Institute, Toronto). Developed and managed the internationally recognized Sobey Art Award on behalf of the Sobey Art Foundation, served as the Award's founding curator and sat on the Sobey Art Award Governance Committee.

AREAS OF EXPERTISE

- Curating
- Writing & Editing
- Visual Arts & Fine Arts
- Art History
- Art Criticism
- Arts Administration
- Grant Writing
- Leadership & Direction
- Employee Relations
- Fundraising
- Stakeholder Engagement
- Government Relations
- Strategic Planning
- Consulting
- Collections Management
- Transportation, Storage, Logistics
- Public Speaking
- Facilitation & Teaching
- Facilities
- Publishing

EXPERIENCE

Self-Employed: Curator, Writer, Editor, and Consultant

2018-present

Curator

Freelance curator for Canadian art galleries and museums. Recent projects include *Brigitte Clavette and Anna Torma: Resisting Constraints* for the Beaverbrook Art Gallery, *Creative Obsessions* for the Confederation Centre Art Gallery (with Sarah Maloney), *Windsor-Essex Triennial of Contemporary Art 2021* (with Lucas Cabral, Art Gallery of Windsor), and the on-line exhibition *The Measure of Nature: Alex Colville Centennial Coins* (Co-production between the Beaverbrook Art Gallery, *Billie Visual Culture Atlantic* and the Art Canada Institute). Currently developing the solo exhibitions *Graeme Patterson: Strange Birds* (2024), *Colleen Wolstenholme: Works 1992-2023* (2025), and *Anna Torma* (2026) for the Beaverbrook Art Gallery.

Writer

Sole author of twelve published books on Canadian artists and contributor to seventeen more. Have written numerous essays, reviews and other projects for galleries, museums, magazines, and newspapers. Arts blogger for *Halifax Magazine*, frequent contributor to *Border Crossings*, *Atlantic Books Today*, *Canadian Art*, *Prefix Photo*, *Espace*, *Studio Magazine*, *Sculpture* and *Visual Arts News*, among others. Former arts blogger for *Halifax Magazine* and columnist for *The Daily Gleaner*. Recent books include *Alan Syliboy: Culture is Our Medicine* (2022), *Maud Lewis: Life & Work* (2021, Art Canada Institute), *Colleen Wolstenholme: Complications* (2021, Gaspereau Press), *Mary Pratt: Life & Work* (2020, Arts Canada Institute), and *Maud Lewis: Creating an Icon* (2020, Gaspereau Press). Current projects include an art history of Halifax, a book on Nova Scotia Folk art, a book about Halifax sculpture, and a book on Herménégilde Chiasson.

Editor-in-Chief

Editor of the on-line visual arts magazine *Billie: Visual · Culture · Atlantic*

Contract Editor

Editor for institutions and individuals. Recent projects: *Tom Sherman: Extended Memory* (David Diviney, Art Gallery of Nova Scotia, 2022), *Gerald Ferguson: Close to the Edge / Collected Writings and Statements* (David Diviney, Art Gallery of Nova Scotia, 2017); *Autism Arts* (Dale Sheppard, Art Gallery of Nova Scotia, 2021).

Consultant

Occasional consultant for institutional and individual clients, including Art Gallery of Nova Scotia, Total Transportation Solutions, the Canada Council for the Arts, and the Art Canada Institute.

TOTAL Transportation Solutions Inc., Toronto, ON/Halifax, NS

2015-2017

One of the largest art shippers in Canada through its Fine Arts Division, over 2015-2016 the division was transformed into TOTAL Museum and Fine Arts Services Inc., with a complete re-branding and extensive outreach to the Canadian and US gallery and museum communities.

Vice President, TOTAL Museum and Fine Arts Services Inc.

Responsible for steering the re-branding of the Fine Arts Division, including marketing and advertising, outreach activities, sponsorships, and philanthropy. Provided leadership as a Halifax branch was established, including recruiting and training staff, and working with the local arts community to establish client relationships. The Halifax office was closed in the autumn of 2016, while the national re-branding effort continued with the switch of the Fine Arts division to the TMFAS brand. Retained 2016 to 2017 by TOTAL Transportation Solutions Inc. as Vice-President, Museum and Fine Arts Services on a consulting contract to work on their brand recognition and to increase their art shipping and services business across Canada.

Selected Accomplishments

- Led the re-branding effort of the company’s art division, including new marketing and advertising materials and corporate identity.
- Assisted with the expansion of the company’s offering from fine art transportation to include more services such as exhibition promotion, installation, and de-installation, and other “back-of-house” services.
- Secured “preferred art shipper status” for the company from major Canadian artist service groups such as CARFAC, RAAV, the Royal Canadian Academy of Arts, and Visual Arts Nova Scotia.
- Enhanced the profile of TOTAL as an art and artist centred service and logistics provider, leading to an expanded market share in the fine art transportation industry.

The Art Gallery of Nova Scotia (AGNS), Halifax, NS

2001 - 2015

The largest art museum in Atlantic Canada with over 17,000 works that is responsible for acquiring, preserving and exhibiting works of art, and for providing education in the visual arts, home of the Sobeys Art Award, Canada’s premiere visual arts prize.

Director and CEO

2008 - 2015

Responsible for providing visionary leadership and direction, overseeing organizational operations, developing strategic action plans focused on increasing excellence and financial performance, establishing long-term growth, and strengthening government relations. Identifying the artistic vision and creative direction for the gallery; building and encouraging a talented team of 42 employees, collaborating with an engaged Board of Directors, advancing the organizational mission and vision, and establishing a reputation of distinction. Collaborating and building partnerships with galleries to develop exhibitions, acting as an advocate and ambassador for the arts, the gallery and Nova Scotia, and nurturing relationships with funders, donors, local communities, partners, members, volunteers, and other stakeholders.

Selected Accomplishments

- Secured important acquisitions of contemporary and historical art
- Secured additional \$600,000 annual funding from the Government of Nova Scotia to cover building operation costs
- Managed financial and operational affairs to ensure operational and financial stability and an effective work environment
- Developed a comprehensive 5-year strategic plan to continue to strengthen and grow AGNS
- Increased the AGNS First Nations permanent collection exhibition space by 100% and expanded the First Nations collection

- Expanded the publication program, including monographs on artists such as Mary Pratt, John Greer, David Askevold, Alex Colville, and Jacques Hurtubise, as well as publications such as *The Last Art College* (with MIT Press).

Acting Director and Chief Curator**2007 - 2008**

Responsible for managing the administrative, financial, and programming operations of the AGNS, under the supervision of the Board of Directors, while a search was undertaken to fill the vacant role of Director and CEO.

Senior Curator and Curator of Contemporary Art**2006 - 2008****Curator of Contemporary Art, The Art Gallery of Nova Scotia, Halifax, NS****2001 - 2006**

Responsible for managing and providing strategic leadership to the exhibition program, developing programming budgets, supervising a team of 38 in a variety of creative and administrative roles, and managing the art, development and marketing of the AGNS. Leading and supervising the Curatorial, Education, Registration, Preparation and Conservation areas of the organization; researching, organizing, and directing temporary, travelling and permanent collection exhibitions, managing the annual Sobey Art Award and shaping the vision of the AGNS. Creating and producing grants and reports to secure and demonstrate essential funding, liaison with lending institutions and managing human resource procedures.

Selected Accomplishments

- Founded and Managed the Sobey Art Award – an internationally recognized Canadian art prize
- Increased annual federal funding by 33%, demonstrating the AGNS's role in programming Contemporary Canadian art
- Enhanced the profile as a centre of excellence for research, exhibition, and dissemination of contemporary Canadian art
- Managed an annual programming budget of over \$1,000,000, and supported funding through grant proposal development

ADDITIONAL EXPERIENCE

Guest Curator , Beaverbrook Art Gallery, Fredericton, NB	2003
Author , <i>Visual Arts (Bi-Weekly Column)</i> , Here, Saint John, NB	2000 - 2001
Contributor , <i>In the Arts</i> , NBNet Community Active Website	1999 - 2001
Author , <i>State of the Arts (Weekly Column)</i> , The Daily Gleaner, Fredericton, NB	1998 - 2001
Member, Exhibition Committee , The Beaverbrook Art Gallery, Fredericton, NB	1996 – 1998
Adjunct Curator , The Confederation Centre Art Gallery and Museum, Charlottetown, PEI	1998 - 2000
Publicity and Promotions Manager , Goose Lane Editions, Fredericton, NB	1994 - 1999
Program Coordinator , Artcite Inc., Windsor, ON	1991 - 1993
Visual Artist (exhibition and collections history available upon request)	1987 - 2001

EDUCATION

Certificate in Museum Leadership , Getty Museum Leadership Institute, Claremont University, Claremont, CA	2014
Master of Fine Arts , University of Windsor, Windsor, ON	1989 - 1991
Bachelor of Fine Arts , The Nova Scotia College of Art and Design, Halifax, NS	1985 - 1987
General Liberal Arts Courses, French Immersion, Saint Thomas University, Fredericton, NB	1982 – 1984

MEMBERSHIPS & AFFILIATIONS

International Association of Art Critics, Elected
 Writers Federation of Nova Scotia (Writers Circle), Juried
 Writer's Union of Canada, Juried
 ACCESS Copyright Collective

PUBLICATIONS

Complete publication list available upon request.

TEACHING

Instructor, Writing for the Arts, Pen and Inkling Festival, Charlottetown, PEI (Weekend workshop)	2011
Instructor, <i>Writing for the Arts</i> , Ottawa Art Gallery, Ottawa, ON (Weekend workshop)	2008
Instructor, <i>Reading Sculpture</i> Seminar Course, NSCAD University, Halifax, NS	Fall 2007
Instructor, Critical Writing Workshop, Ottawa Art Gallery, Ottawa, ON (Weekend workshop)	2007
Instructor, <i>Writing for the Arts</i> , Maritime Writers Workshop, University of New Brunswick, Fredericton, NB	2004
Instructor, <i>3-D Design</i> , New Brunswick College of Craft and Design, Fredericton, NB	Fall 2001
Instructor, <i>3-D Design</i> , New Brunswick College of Craft and Design, Fredericton, NB	Fall 2000
Instructor, <i>3-D Fundamentals</i> , University of Windsor School of Fine Arts	Fall 1991

COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

FACILITATION, LECTURES & PUBLIC SPEAKING

Guest Speaker, AGNS : <i>Creative Minds: An Evening with Maud Lewis (Ray Cronin and Carol Bruneau)</i>	2022
Guest Speaker, Beaverbrook Art Gallery: <i>Brigitte Clavette and Anna Torma: Resisting Constraints</i>	2022
Guest Speaker, Grace Jollymore Joyce Art Centre: <i>Icons of Canadian Art</i>	2022
Guest Speaker, Halifax Humanities Society: Other Worlds—Maud Lewis and Graeme Patterson	2021
Panelist, “Maud Lewis: Folk Art Icon,” Art Canada Institute (online)	2021
Moderator, “Conversations: The Windsor Essex Triennial of Contemporary Art Artist Talk Series (online)”	2021
Panelist, “How do you get your work written about?,” Visual Arts Nova Scotia, Halifax, NS	2019
Panelist, “Authors Salon,” Gaspereau Press Wayzgoose, Kentville, NS	2018
Public Reading, Gaspereau Field Guides to Canadian Artists, Kentville, NS	2018
Public Reading, Gaspereau Field Guides to Canadian Artists, Halifax, NS	2018
Panelist, <i>Sorting the Studio</i> , Visual Arts Nova Scotia, Halifax, NS	2018
Panelist, <i>What Makes Art Canadian</i> , Arts Canada Institute, University of Toronto, Toronto ON	2017
Guest Speaker, <i>The Creative Process</i> , Dalhousie University, Halifax NS	2017
Guest Speaker, 2016 Canadian Art Museums’ Director’s Organization Annual Meeting, Whistler, BC	2016
Guest Speaker, 2015 Atlantic Provinces Art Gallery Association AGM, Corner Brook, NF	2015
Commencement Address, NSCAD University Graduation Ceremony, Halifax, NS	2010
Guest Lecturer, Arts and Letters Club, Toronto, ON	2008
Guest Lecture, <i>New Realism in Contemporary Canadian Sculpture</i> , Southern Methodist University, Dallas, TX	2007
Delegate, British Council Visual Arts Showcase	2005
Keynote Speaker, Graduation, New Brunswick College of Craft and Design, Fredericton, NB	2003
Guest Lecture, <i>Beauty in Contemporary Art</i> , The Beaverbrook Art Gallery, Fredericton, NB	2002
Guest Lecture, <i>Realism in Contemporary Sculpture</i> , Nova Scotia College of Art and Design	2001
Member, Curriculum Committee, New Brunswick College of Craft and Design, Fredericton, NB	2000
Guest Lecture, <i>Putting the Boots to Art History</i> , The Beaverbrook Art Gallery, Fredericton, NB	1997
Member, University of Windsor Alumni Way Public Sculpture Committee	1992 - 1993

JURIES

Arts Nova Scotia, Literary Arts	2022
Canada Council for the Arts: Engage and Sustain Program	2019, 2020
Juror, <i>Small Treasures</i> , Inverness County Centre for the Arts, Inverness, NS	2018
Canada Council for the Arts, Visual Arts Standing PAC for Major International Exhibition program	2015
Scotiabank Photography Prize	2014
Sobey Art Award Jury Chair	2004-2007
Centennial Prize, Royal Canadian Navy	2007
Canada Winter Games Exhibition	2007
Aliant New Media Prize	2006
Nova Scotia Department of Tourism, Culture and Heritage Grants	2006
Canada Council International Residencies Program	2006
Canada Council Art Bank	2005
Sheila Hugh MacKay Award	2004
Sobey Art Award Atlantic Juror	2001-2003
Great Canadian Printmaking Competition, Ernst and Young	2003
Canada Council for the Arts York Wilson Endowment Prize	2003

Canada Council for the Arts, Publication Assistance for Magazines and Journals 2001
Arts-by Invitation Competition, New Brunswick Arts Branch 1998

GRANTS AND AWARDS

National Gallery of Canada *Top Ten Articles of 2021* 2022
Canada Council for the Arts Research and Creation Grant (Visual Arts: Independent Critic) 2020
Arts Nova Scotia Creation Grant (Literature) 2019
Arts Nova Scotia Creation Grant (Literature) 2017
British Council Travel Grant 2005
British Council Travel Grant 2004
Christina Sabat Award for Art Criticism 2001
Canada Council "Mid-career" Grant (Visual Arts) 1999
Ontario Arts Council (OAC) Exhibition Assistance Grant 1993
OAC Work-in-Progress Grant 1993
OAC Exhibition Assistance Grant 1992
Ontario Graduate Scholarship 1990-91
Exhibition Award, Nova Scotia Arts Council 1989

REFERENCES

References are available on request.