

CALL FOR PAPERS

Cloth Cultures: Future Legacies of Dorothy K. Burnham

An International Conference at the Royal Ontario Museum, Toronto, Canada
November 10-12, 2017

Deadline for Submissions: September 30, 2016

During Canada's 2017 Sesquicentennial celebrations, the Royal Ontario Museum will host an international conference to explore the material culture of textiles through the work and legacies of Dorothy K. Burnham (1911-2004), internationally renowned textile scholar and member of the Order of Canada (1985). Burnham was in the vanguard of the generation of early 20th century curators who made textiles and costume a field of valid scholarly research by finding out how and why objects are made in particular ways, what they meant when produced and what they mean to us today.

Dorothy Burnham's pioneering work demonstrated the many layers of meaning that could be revealed through object-centered research by looking at woven, knitted, embroidered, quilted and stitched objects from Indigenous and Western cultures. Often working alongside her husband Harold B. Burnham, she devised rigorous and systematic techniques for analysis of the origins of technique and forms. Her imaginative studies clearly documented how skin and cloth distinguish and bridge cultures, continents and time. Burnham's publications and exhibitions foreshadowed and influenced material culture studies, textiles and costume history, design and technology history as well as gender studies, anthropology, and ethnology.

This international conference will examine the contemporary trajectories that stem from Dorothy K. Burnham's legacies by bringing together an international group of academics, artists and maker communities directly or indirectly influenced by her work. It will be of interest to those working from many scholarly disciplines and practices including anthropology, sociology, history, economics aesthetics, museology, weaving, spinning and fibre art. Together, we will explore the current diversity of interdisciplinary methods used to study the technologies, economics, meanings and cultural imbued in global textiles and clothing, and in the process acknowledge and assess Burnham's many contributions.

- We invite submissions from senior and junior scholars, graduate students, artists, and makers.
- These may include individual papers, organized sessions illustrated lectures with digital media or live demonstrations and performances.

- We aim to include a graduate student session on new scholarship.
- We especially encourage papers on issues of hand and machine manufacture, globalism, zero waste, economics and cultural intersections/appropriation
- We seek papers that examine Burnham's thinking and seminal collecting, and documentation.

We seek presentations in the following three broad areas:

- ***Making and Production:*** weaving, knitting, sewing, cutting etc.
- ***Methodologies of Recording and Analysis:*** drafting, drawing, patterns, diagrams and visual and technical analyses (thesaurus), oral histories
- ***Intersecting Traditions:*** cross-cultural and cross-disciplinary research on making, use and wearing

Keynote Speakers

Dr. Ruth Phillips, Canada Research Chair, Professor, Art History, Carleton University, Ottawa

Dr. Adrienne Hood, Associate Professor, Department of History, University of Toronto, Toronto

Dr. Timo Rissanen, Assistant Professor of Fashion Design and Sustainability, Parsons School of Design, NYC

Workshop Master Class

John E. Vollmer, Vollmer Cultural Consultants Inc., NYC and Research Associate, Royal Ontario Museum

* Limited spaces 10.30 am and 2pm sessions, Thursday November 10, 2017

ELECTRONIC SUBMISSIONS FORMAT

Deadline for abstract submissions: September 30, 2016

Submission Requirements:

Presentation format is a 20-minute lecture with digital images and/or video

Individual presenters: please include

- 250-word abstract (pdf)

- 1 page CV (pdf).
- a cover email with your name, affiliation, title of your paper, contact information. Identify if you are part of a proposed panel or have multiple submissions

Organized panels of 3 papers: please include

- 250 word panel rationale
- 250 word abstract for each panel participant
- One pdf with 1-page CVs for each presenter

Send all submissions to: clothcultures@rom.on.ca

SUBJECT: *Cloth Cultures 2017*

Submission review:

Final selections will be made by the Conference Committee based on originality of topic and the suitability for the conference themes.

- Submitters will be notified by November 30. 2016

PUBLICATION

A select number of papers will be invited for publication in an edited, peer-reviewed journal or volume.

ORGANIZING SCIENTIFIC COMMITTEE

- Alexandra Palmer, Senior Curator, Royal Ontario Museum
- Sarah Fee, Curator, Royal Ontario Museum
- Adrienne Hood, Associate Professor, Department of History, University of Toronto
- Trudy Nicks, Senior Curator Emeritus, Royal Ontario Museum

DOROTHY K. BURNHAM (Nov. 6, 1911 – Oct. 24, 2004)

Dorothy Kate Burnham began her long career as a second assistant draftsman at the Royal Ontario Museum in 1929 when she was just 17 years old. She was appointed the first curator of textiles in 1939 and retired in 1977. Her work in Canadian hand-weaving led to the development of ground-breaking research and an outstanding documented collection. The exhibition *Keep Me Warm One Night*, (1972), and the book co-authored with her husband, Harold B. Burnham, won international recognition. The brilliant exhibition and publication, *Cut my Cote* (1973) linked clothing cultures across time and geography and was on the museum's best- sellers internationally.

In 1977, after her retirement from the ROM, Burnham continued to work into her nineties on special research projects for the National Gallery of Canada, the

Provincial Museum of Alberta and the Canadian Museum of Civilization.
Her publications include:

- *Fascinating challenges: studying material culture with Dorothy Burnham* eds. Thompson, Hall and Tepper in collaboration with Dorothy K Burnham (2001)
- *To please the caribou: painted caribou-skin coats worn by the Naskapi, Montagnais, and Cree hunters of the Quebec-Labrador Peninsula* (1992)
- *Unlike the lilies: Doukhobor textile traditions in Canada* (1986)
- *Warp & weft: a dictionary of textile terms* (1981)
- *The comfortable arts: traditional spinning and weaving in Canada* (1981)
- *L'art des étoffe: le filage et le tissage traditionnels au Canada* (1981)
- *Warp and weft: a dictionary of textile terms* (1980)
- *Looms and their products: 1977 proceedings Irene Emery Roundtable* (1979)
- *Pieced quilts of Ontario* (1975)
- *Cut my cote* (1973)
- *Skær en skjorte--klip en kjortel : med stoffets bredde som udgangspunkt* [Cut my cote. Danish.]
- *Skjortor, särkar och blusar* [Cut my cote. Swedish]
- *Coptic knitting: an ancient technique* (1972)
- *Keep me warm one night: an exhibition* (1972)
- *Keep me warm one night: early handweaving in Eastern Canada* (1972)
- *Costumes for Canada's birthday: the styles of 1867* (1966)
- *Fibres, spindles and spinning wheels* (1950)