

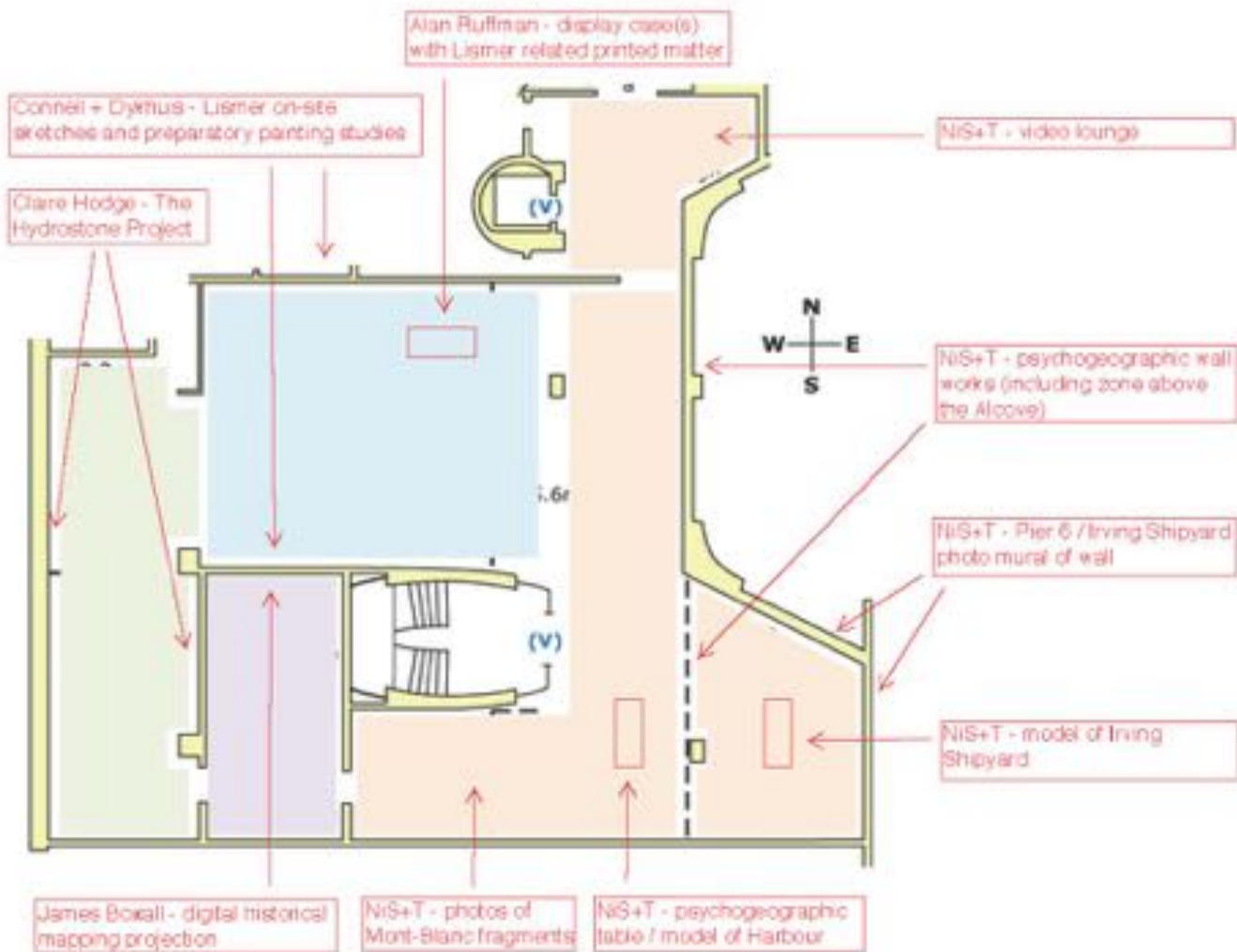
Dalhousie Art Gallery

Exhibition programming: 13 October – 17 December 2017

Five projects Affiliated with the 100th Anniversary of the Explosion in Halifax Harbour

The **explosion in Halifax Harbour** was a maritime disaster in Halifax, Nova Scotia, that occurred on the morning of 6 December 1917 due to the collision between the SS *Mont-Blanc*, a French cargo ship laden with high explosives, and the Norwegian vessel SS *Imo* in the Narrows, a strait connecting the upper Halifax Harbour to the Bedford Basin. A fire on board the French ship ignited her cargo, causing a large explosion that devastated the Richmond district of Halifax and the opposite shore of Dartmouth. Approximately 2,000 people were killed by the immediate blast, its concussion and debris, or the ensuing fires that engulfed collapsed buildings. An estimated 9,000 others were injured.

Nearly all structures on both shores within an 800-metre radius of the blast were obliterated. A pressure wave snapped trees, bent iron rails, demolished buildings, grounded vessels, and scattered fragments of *Mont-Blanc* for kilometres. Hardly a window in the Halifax and Dartmouth survived the explosion. A tsunami created by the blast also wiped out a community of Mi'kmaq First Nations people who had lived for generations at Turtle Grove in the area now known as Tuft's Cove on the Dartmouth Shore.



13 OCTOBER TO 17 DECEMBER 2017

*Narratives in Space + Time Society
Walking the Debris Field: Public
Geographies of the Halifax Explosion*

Narratives in Space + Time Society (NiS+TS) is an interdisciplinary creative research group working on projects involving mobile media and walking.

The Halifax Explosion of 6 December 1917 reverberates as a definitive moment around which powerful themes of destruction and reconstruction, urbanism and community continue to circulate.

From 2014 through to 2017, as the centenary of the Explosion approaches, NiS+TS engaged in a series of public walking events designed to explore the ways in which the disaster, the ensuing relief efforts and the reconstruction continue to shape us.



This exhibition will feature new projects created for the Explosion's 100th anniversary and will include a "psychogeographer's table" for the display of topographic information and artifacts from the Halifax Explosion debris field.

Founded in 2012 and based in Halifax and Dartmouth, Nova Scotia, NiS+TS promotes the use of mobile media by artists and members of the public. The group's projects are sited in spaces that are overlooked, disused or vacant. Participants use mobile media such as GPS, smartphones and mobility tracking devices, in combination with other modes (such as walking, talking and making objects) in interactive explorations of locations and subjects.



NiS+TS are Robert Bean, Renée Gruszecki, Brian Lilley, Barbara Louder and Mary Elizabeth Luka.

Claire Hodge: The Hydrostone Project

Curated by Peter Dykhuis

The Hydrostone neighbourhood, nearly a hundred years old, is perhaps one of the most striking commemorative symbols of the Halifax Explosion. It stands as a powerful testament to the needed reconstruction efforts to house working-class families made homeless by the events of 6 December. But for many, Hydrostone's appeal is in its unique ability to speak about the passage of time, where layers of the present co-exist with traces of the past. Anachronisms abound as the original grey granite 'hydrostone' blocks live side-by-side with a dizzying array of wood, composite, and vinyl siding materials. Structurally, extensions have been added, shutters have been removed, exterior walls have been painted, porches have been closed in, bushes and plants have been planted or unearthed.

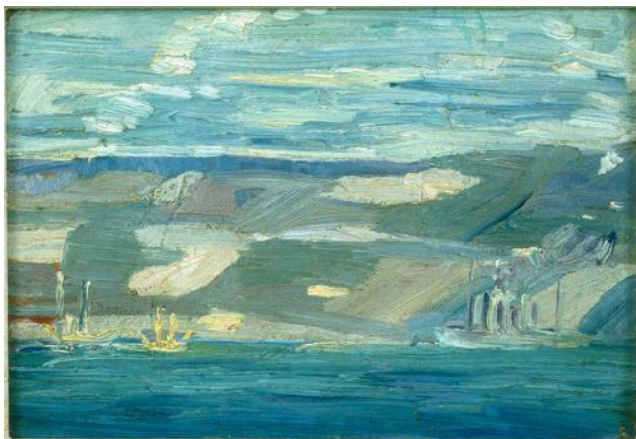
States Hodge, "The Hydrostone townhomes reveal a complex set of negotiations realized tacitly or explicitly by the people who have lived there. Some blocks of houses are united in their aesthetic vision. Others seem to attest to greater individualist streaks and look strangely disjointed. Most often, the blocks of houses suggest a series of compromises between harmony and difference, between the 'greater good' and tenacious individualism."



The Footsteps of Art: Arthur Lismer and the Halifax Explosion

Curated by Paige Connell and Peter Dykhuis

This exhibition is an overview of the work by Arthur Lismer, influential principal of the Victoria School of Art and Design (now NSCAD University) during his time in Halifax from 1916–19. The focus is specifically on the ambulatory nature of his artistic practice during these early years of his career, which pre-date the formation of the Group of Seven.



Much of Lismer's visual legacy from these years is his record of World War One's presence in Halifax. In 1918 he unexpectedly became an official War Artist for the home front, a responsibility that saw a shift in his typical subjects. Among the most significant of his works that reveal the effects of war are his chronicles of the Halifax Explosion on 6 December 1917, few of which are known to still exist.

Lismer was a mobile artist driven by his curiosity. He explored on foot, sketching as a means of gathering material and interpreting the external world. The works in this exhibition are studies, with the exception of *Halifax Harbour—Time of War*. They are observations not conclusions, offering insight into his technique and artistic process. Together these works provide a narrative of an ambitious artist who, by way of following his career to Atlantic Canada, was engaged in an unanticipated and complex story of war and Nova Scotian history.



Arthur Lismer and the Halifax Explosion

Selection of printed matter curated by Alan Ruffman

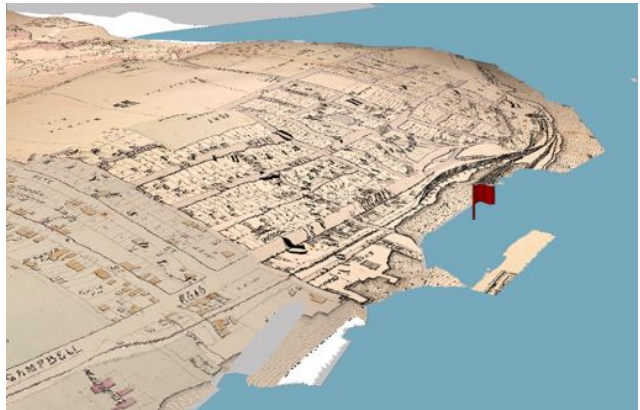


Reflecting on one of Halifax's darkest chapters, one of the only known copies of *The Drama of a City: The Story of Stricken Halifax*, by Stanley K. Smith, along with high resolution photographs of the eleven Arthur Lismer sketches used to illustrate this publication will be on display for the 100th anniversary of the Halifax Explosion, courtesy of Alan Ruffman. The Lismer sketches serve as documentation of the aftermath of 6 December 1917 and the photographic reproductions, taken by Gary Castle, provide a closer look at some of the only artistic interpretation of this historic disaster. The original sketches are not known to still exist, making the reproductions of these works ever more rare and essential to our present day understanding of the Halifax Explosion.

Halifax Digital Map

organized by James Boxall

The GISciences Centre is re-creating historic images in 2D and 3D which will allow people to query places in time, add in their own stories and images, and display changes over time for Halifax. The first iteration begins just before the Halifax explosion and continues to the present day. Future additions of data and imagery will move backwards to pre-settlement in 1749. The entire project will allow multiple users and specific communities to display their data within geographic space and context (e.g. Dalhousie University's Bicentennial, and the Africville settlement).



1878 Hopkins atlas map shown in 3D with the approximate explosion site identified

Production, Exhibition and Programming Schedule

Date	Task / Event
Fri. 14 July	- Fall film program determined with Ron Foley Macdonald
Mon. 24 July - TBD	- possible 'free lab' in the Gallery with Brian Lilley, School of Architecture and Planning, to prepare for installation
Tues. 1 August	- all texts for calendar and promotional material prepared
Fri. 15 September	- final texts due for all text panels and wall labels
Mon. 2 October	- begin installation of exhibitions
Thurs. 12 October	- opening reception for exhibitions, 7 PM

Once the exhibitions open to the public, we plan to host at least one event a week. Although times have not yet been assigned to them, the breakdown of projects is as follows:

Gallery-based tours and lectures of the exhibitions by the exhibitors:

Thurs. 12 October	- short exhibition tour by Paige Connell, Dalhousie Art Gallery curatorial intern, at opening reception
TBD	- exhibition tour and talk by members of Narratives in Space + Time Society (NiS+TS)
TBD	- exhibition tour and talk by Alan Ruffman, Halifax Explosion researcher and scholar
TBD	- exhibition tour and talk by Claire Hodge, visual artist and resident of the Hydrostone neighbourhood
TBD	- public talk and digital demonstration by James Boxall, Director, GISciences Centre, Dalhousie University

Guest lectures presented in concert with exhibitors (hosted at DAG or offsite TBD):

TBD	- a proposed lecture about the history of the Hydrostone neighbourhood by Brian Lilley and/or Peter Henry, School of Architecture and Planning, Dalhousie University
TBD	- led by Dr. Mary Elizabeth Luka of NiS+TS, a contemporary story-telling circle, suggested participants include: Ami McKay (Novelist); Catherine Martin (Mi'qmaq filmmaker, storyteller, and outgoing Nancy's Chair at Mount Saint Vincent University); Dr. Maya Eichler (Canada Research Chair in Social Innovation and Community Engagement, Assistant Professor in Political Studies and Women's Studies at MSVU); Sunday Miller (Executive Director, Africville Museum); Janet Maybee (Author and Historian)

Workshops and events affiliated with the exhibitions:

TBD	- hosted by NiS+TS: a forensic workshop of Explosion-based artifacts with Dalhousie University faculty Rebecca Jameson (Earth Sciences) and Kevin Plucknett (Engineering) and Explosion cloud photographs as researched by Joel Zemel
TBD	- hosted by NiS+TS: a 'Hololens' workshop with Derek Reilly, Faculty of Computer Science, and graduate students working on the psychogeographic table/model of the Harbour
TBD	- led by Renée Gruszecki of NiS+TS: an artifact accession workshop with Roger Marsters, Marine Curator from the Maritime Museum of the Atlantic

Co-hosted presentations and panel discussions (prepared by NiS+TS and the Dalhousie Art Gallery in concert with Laura Hynes Jenkins, Manager of Communications, Marketing and Alumni Relations, Faculty of Health Professions, Dalhousie University, and Genevieve MacIntyre, Faculty and Communications Officer, Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences, Dalhousie University).

Topics under consideration that can be presented as single lectures or clustered into panel discussions:

TBD	- representative(s) from the Dalhousie School of Nursing to speak about the Explosion's impact on the evolution of nursing education and care
TBD	- representative(s) from the Dalhousie Medicine's Department of Ophthalmology to speak about the Explosion's impact on the evolution of eye surgeries, facial repair and the multitude of new cases of blindness in the population
TBD	- representative(s) from the Faculty of Arts and Social Science's Department of History and representative(s) of the School of Architecture and Planning to speak about the post-Explosion evolution of the city's urban design
TBD	- representative(s) from the School of Health Administration to speak about the Explosion's impact on the field of emergency/disaster planning
TBD	- representative(s) from the Dalhousie School of Social Work to speak about the Explosion's impact on the evolution of social work

Offsite event and walking tours:

week of 18 October	- invitation-only boat trip for participants of the Creative Cities conference hosted by the Dalhousie Art Gallery and Narratives in Space + Time
TBD	- walking tour of Hydrostone led by Claire Hodge and Brian Lilley or Peter Henry
TBD	- off-site walking tours by Narratives in Space + Time, for example: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Africville to the Irving Shipyards - Turtle Grove/Tuft's Cove - Mulgrave Park/mural walk - Lismer/Bedford walk - variation on the Aftermath walk - variation on the Natural History walk
Wed. 6 December	- commemorative events for Halifax Explosion

End of Exhibition

Sun. 17 December	- last day of "Halifax Explosion" exhibitions
Mon. 18 December	- strike "Halifax Explosion" exhibitions