

Illustrator's garden foliage inspires coin designs



Numismatic PROFILE

By Carolyn Mullin

Celia Godkin has a new best-seller on her hands, despite the fact that the Ontario-based author hasn't published a book recently.

In her other life, that of illustrator, one of Godkin's 2013 coin designs has already been identified by the Royal Canadian Mint as a top-selling collectible.

The \$20 coin, made from 99.99 per cent silver, features a colourized open blossom of the blue flag iris – immortalized as the fleur-de-lys of Quebec – along with three Swarovski crystals.

In fact, another 2013 coin release featuring the initials "CG" has been identified as at least 80 per cent sold as well. That one, the first in a series depicting dragonflies, and also made from 99.99 per cent silver, is colourized and features a hologram.

During her life, Godkin has had what she calls overlapping careers, "including work as a biologist, a teacher of studio arts and an author and illustrator of children's natural science books," according to her website.

While she spent her early years in England and Brazil, she came to Canada after completing an undergraduate degree in biology. When early work in the field turned out to be less than satisfying, she enrolled in the Ontario College of Art and Design, and later at the University of Toronto, where she completed an illustrated master's thesis in zoology. She taught non-credit art and professional illustration courses at the U of T until 2005, when she "retired" to a tiny community between Brockville and Smiths Falls, south of Ottawa.



Celia Godkin is an Ontario-based author who also specializes in botanical illustration.

When not designing coins, Godkin focuses much of her work time on creating children's books. She has produced several over the years, for which she has written the

story and produced the accompanying art. Her 1989 book *Wolf Island* earned the Roundtable of Canada 1990 Information Book of the Year, and was shortlisted for the 1989 Mr. Christie's Children's Book Award for illustration in Children's Literature. The story explores the fragile balance of a natural ecosystem, and what happens when one of the elements in that ecosystem is removed.

Coin design in some ways acts as a contrast to the children's book projects.

"I'm very happy with this line of work," notes Godkin, who first started designing for the Mint in 2007. "I like having what for me is a relatively short project, because my other work in children's books often takes a couple of years and so I can slot in the coins in between."

"When I get a coin commission, I drop everything to do it."

Godkin's first coin was part of the provincial and territorial series depicting flo-

ral emblems. While the Mint endeavoured to find someone for each design who lived in, or was at least geographically close to, the province or territory in question, it wasn't always possible. When a colleague from Ontario offered Godkin's name as a potential artist – given her realistic style and background in botanical illustration – the results can be found on the 11th coin in the series, a 34-millimetre piece made from 99.99 per cent gold and featuring the Arctic creeping purple saxifrage, which represents Nunavut.

Whether she has been commissioned to design a coin – as she was with all five of the coins depicting sugar maples and featuring crystal "rain-



The new hologram dragonfly coin is the work of designer Godkin.

YOU CAN NOW SUBSCRIBE DIGITALLY...

... and save a tree while you save money

Subscribe to CCN in our new digital format, and never miss an issue!

- With digital you don't have to wait for your issue to arrive via snail mail, get your copy at the earliest possible date.
- Receive email notifications when your issue is ready to be read
- Carry your digital library in your pocket, issues are just a click away
- Keep your carbon footprint as small as possible.
- Click through to web pages and email addresses contained in ads and articles

CONVENIENCE WITH A CLICK!

Subscribing digitally to **Canadian Coin News** has never been easier. Now you can order online in minutes. Go to www.canadiancoinnews.ca and click on the "Subscribe Now" button in the top right corner.

ALREADY A SUBSCRIBER?

If you wish to convert your current print subscription to a digital format, please email office@trajan.ca and let us know. We will update your account to receive digital copies at no extra cost.

ONE YEAR (26 issues) \$43.75[†]*

[†] Receive your copies of CCN in both print and digital formats for an additional \$26*

* Plus applicable taxes



CanadianCoinNews.ca

Get the information you need, WHEN you need it!



The blue flag iris coin is one of several to be released this year with the initials of designer Celia Godkin.

"I have to make the lines very clear and crisp, because that is what the engraver follows," she notes. In the case of a colourized coin, she will complete a separate piece in colour, usually a watercolour.

There is always time built in to do research and find appropriate images, which can be easier at some times than others. In the case of the sugar maples, Godkin didn't need to look too far to find what she needed; with a sugar maple tree in her garden, she simply had to make sure to take enough photos in the appropriate seasons: "They sometimes want me to do it in the middle of winter, when there are no leaves on the tree, so I take lots of photos for reference just in case."

While she is reluctant to name any one coin as her favourite, she says the

Nunavut floral emblem holds a special place with her because it was her first competition. The big-leaf maple coin with its hanging flower cluster and crystal raindrop (2011) is another front-runner.

Other than commissions for artwork, such as pet portraits, or requests to create an exhibition piece for such groups as the Botanical Artists of Canada, Godkin is waiting on word from her new publisher on a children's book manuscript, a project that has been in the works for about two years, she says.

When not working on these creative ends, Godkin can be found in her extensive garden or reading as part of her participation in a local book club. 🍁

This hobby is full of interesting people and we'd love to help our readers get to know more of them.

If you know somebody who should be profiled on this page let us know. Call us at 905-646-7744, ext 227 or send an email to bret@trajan.ca. Please be sure to include some contact information, and some reasons for your nomination.

Machines...

Continued from page 1

According to Coinstar, retailers or financial institutions may choose to subsidize the fee.

The advantage for consumers, and bank tellers, is that they do not have to take the time to count and roll the coins.

Coinstar has more than 700 locations across Canada. The U.S. parent company also operates Coinstar machines in the U.K.

TD Canada Trust is not the only Canadian bank offering the service.

The Bank of Montreal has a network of "BMO Bank of Montreal Coin Counters," which first went active in 2011 and can be found using the bank's website.

According to BMO, their machines are free for both customers and non-customers.

In May 2012, BMO reported that it has 57 machines across Canada. In the first year of use, the machines counted more than 54 million coins totalling more than \$7 million in loose change.

"The free service has resulted in upwards of \$880,000

in savings for Canadians, as transaction fees for similar services can run above nine per cent of the total amount of money deposited," the company crowed.

As expected, most of the coins were of the 1-cent value. The bank reported that more than 30 million 1-cent coins, weighing more than 70,000 kilograms were counted. However, higher coins were also included. In the first year, the BMO machines counted more than six million 5-cent coins, eight million 10-cent coins, nearly seven million 25-cent coins, and more than a million each of loonies and toonies.

Both machines accept both Canadian and U.S. coins, although the U.S. coins are valued at par.

The machines have also appeared at some credit unions.

In Alberta, a Calgary-based firm known as Cash Your Coin has set up five machines in Calgary and Okotoks.

That firm charges consumers 14.8 per cent for the use of the machine. The retailer is paid rent for the location, and the company donates 10 per cent of its profit to registered Canadian charities. 🍁

BUY & SELL:

BULLION
JUNK SILVER
GOLD COINS
SILVER COINS
PLATINUM COINS
PALLADIUM COINS
GOLD SCRAP
SILVER SCRAP
PLATINUM SCRAP
NUMISMATICS
MILITARIA
ANYTHING GOLD,
SILVER, PLATINUM

BUYING COINS, GOLD, SILVER

KMG GOLD IS THE ONLY TRUSTED SOURCE TO SELL COINS, GOLD, SILVER, & PLATINUM

NO ONE ELSE

in Canada has won Better Business Bureau Torch Awards for ethics, integrity and honesty.

NO ONE ELSE

in the industry has done more to promote transparency and to educate consumers.

NO ONE ELSE

in the industry has the same in-depth knowledge and understanding of precious metals (Michael Gupton, published author and expert on environmental practices of gold mining).

See you at the
Delta Winnipeg
for the 2013 RCNA
Convention,
July 24-27

Michael Gupton BScEng(Civil)
Co-founder, KMG Gold



KMG • GOLD®
gold • silver • platinum

THE ORIGINAL GOLD BUYER™

620-C ACADEMY RD WINNIPEG MB R3N 0E6
204.452.4653 • 1.877.468.2220
WWW.KMGGOLD.COM • RECYCLE@KMGGOLD.COM

