

## Celebrating Canada's Numismatic Heritage

By Hunter Hicks

On July 17th, Canada will celebrate its 150th anniversary. The Royal Canadian Mint has made huge preparations in order to commemorate this historic milestone. They have created an entire series of coins dedicated to the 150th Anniversary of Canada. One of the most unique coins that has recently been released is the Canadian Coin Collection – Pure Silver One Kilogram Ultra-High Relief Coin. This coin is a fitting tribute to the numismatic culture and heritage of Canada's 150-year history.

Just seeing the coin doesn't tell the full story, there are many features that slip past the eye. The coin is 99.99% silver and contains a serrated edge, similar to the quarter. Although the coin is brand new, it might not look like that; this is due to the coin's antique finish. Unfortunately, in order to keep the coin exclusive, the mintage was a mere five-hundred pieces. It may be a challenge to sell due to the coin's CAD \$2,500 (approximately USD \$1,900) price tag.

This piece's obverse, features an effigy of Queen Elizabeth II (designed by Susan Blunt), date, value, and the country of origin. Although the obverse of the Canadian Coin Collection – Pure Silver One Kilogram Ultra-High Relief Coin is quite standard for Canada, the reverse is anything but that. Alex Colville, the undisputed king of creating Canadian currency, designed the coin. The reverse displays a 3D motif of thirty-five different (actual-sized), Canadian coins. It features commemorative coins such as the 100th Anniversary Women's Right to Vote coin and the 50th Anniversary Canadian Flag commemorative, as well as popular coins that entered circulation including the Victory Nickel and a 1987 example of a "Loonie" (a Canadian Dollar). At the World's Money Fair, Alex Reeves, a senior advisor at the Royal Canadian Mint, said "(the reverse's job) is celebrating Canada's numismatic heritage." Reeves also stated, "It's really a coin about the coin." Additionally, Reeves teased that another ultra-relief example might be made in gold.



Many find the coin to be a true *pièce de résistance* of numismatics. Customers of the Royal Canadian Mint have called the coin, "a fitting tribute to the history of coinage in Canada over the last 150 years," "Trinity coin of designs, history and engineering excellence," and, "The most spectacular looking high relief 1 kilo silver coin ever." The coin receives constant praise from numismatic news organizations such as Coinweek and Coin Update. It is especially incredible how incorporating designs from nearly three dozen other coins can make a coin seem unique.

Despite the many glowing reviews, others still have their doubts. Some find that just carving a few pre-designed coins on a slab of silver is more of a minting error than a beauty. One review rages, "Horrible design. Ugly looking. Keep away;" another dissatisfied collector feels, "That 1 kilo \$250 silver coin looks like a piece of junk! I wouldn't ever add it to my collection." Many believe the coin does not express enough originality due to the fact that the reverse is just a montage of coins that have already been

created. Unfortunately, the obverse expresses even less individuality because so many other Canadian coins feature a similar design. Others lack an appreciation of the coin's antique finish and instead believe it should look uncirculated or contain a deep-mirrored surface. As one numismatist brilliantly stated, "This is a very polarizing coin! - Some will love it-Some will hate it....But EVERYBODY will look closely at this coin to examine its complexity."

Whether you enjoy the look of the coin or not, all are aware that finding another coin like this is a near impossible feat. Since the coin's release, over four-hundred have been sold. If you are interested in buying it, do so quickly since less than twenty percent are available. This has become by far the most popular of the nine coins commemorating Canada's 150 years. Fortunately, even if you don't enjoy the coin's artistic value, the high silver amount of 1-kilo is one that few coins can compete with. The majority of people believe that the coin will always live as a prime example of the beauty that's produced by the Royal Canadian Mint.