



Here I rediscover my face after 15 years of long hair and beard, assisted by barber and co-photographer Jeanne Kamins. This clean-cut youthful look will help me appear more employable during the current depression, while at the same time giving my male vanity a temporary boost. 360° panorama in our kitchen, December 7, 1981. #HenriRobideau

Henri Robideau 360° Panorama In our Kitchen, December 7, 1981

Henri Robideau's work was rarely exhibited in the seventies. Despite this, he has continued to make large bodies of photographs: of giant things, family, friends, landscapes, buildings. His work is witty and eccentric — not what one expects to find in contemporary photography. Robideau's photographs read like homespun narratives. He often writes on his photographs and amplifies in amusing ways the eccentricities he pictures. But his work is about more than this. In face of *humanitas*, it approaches profundities and absurdities with a cutting and perceptive wit.

Two other Vancouver photographers, Kandy Bradley and Share Corsaut, both work in colour and on a larger scale. Their work is more constructivist and abstract than any I have mentioned. In their individual ways they participate in the expanding discussions that began to occur between contemporary photography and art at the end of the seventies. A detailed discussion of their work will have to be left for another time. But without consideration of this and the work of many other younger artists/photographers which became more evident in the eighties, the continuing strengths and range of Vancouver photography will remain open-ended and incomplete.

The photography department at ECCAD seemed to be isolated from discussions and had little public profile until the late seventies. Jim Breukelman, a graduate in photography from the Rhode Island School of Design, single-handedly and courageously began a very small department. He augmented this by bringing in guest lecturers. Eventually, he proved there was a need for an expanded photography program in the context of the art college. A number of local photographers began to teach regularly on a part-time basis: Nina Raginsky, Bradley, Robideau, Penner Bancroft, Chris Czartoryski, Corsaut. All the photographers/teachers have tried to connect the students with both the history and contemporary issues of photography. It is in the eighties that one has also seen an acknowledgement of the relation of photography to the other visual arts. Student work has graduated from the context of the department and is moving toward maturity. Perhaps now that the department has grown and diversified and more students have graduated, it has reached the necessary critical mass. Now it provides an important context for artists/photographers in Vancouver.

By the mid-seventies, I have identified two loose groupings around the issues of photographs. I want to keep these loose for two reasons. More work acknowledged both traditions: photographic and concep-

tual. The emphasis appeared to rest with individual artists and their work — not on collaborative projects.

At this time, a number of endeavours were begun which spoke to these different existences: *Criteria*, Pender Street Gallery, Pumps, *YVR*, and NOVA Gallery. Part of the purpose of these bulletins and galleries was to acknowledge contemporary work, often photographic, which was being made in Vancouver. They situated this work in the context of a larger network of issues about art. They were attempts to create audiences, and in that way a critical forum for an artist's work. They were maverick, I think, by choice, whether marginally funded or not. They chose to show/discuss work that ran in the face of institutional considerations of contemporary art in Vancouver.

Both *Criteria* and *YVR* spoke about the most current visual arts. Although the majority of articles were on the visual arts, including photographic work, the editors were open to other cultural concerns. It was their commitment to a contextualization of Vancouver art that seems valiant.

The Pender Street Gallery was a parallel gallery and Pumps eventually became one. Both showed a variety of visual arts; the photographic shows they did were important ones. The Pender Street Gallery acknowledged the work of Ian Wallace, Rob Kleyn, Rodney Graham, Fred Douglas, Bill Jones. Pumps did a number of photographic shows of which *20 Photo Artists: A Show in Two Parts* was the most provocative. It showed artists/photographers who had been working in the seventies but had not recently exhibited, people who had begun to work but not yet shown, and young workers who were just beginning.

As its co-founder (with Andrew Graft), I cannot speak objectively about NOVA Gallery and therefore will describe its purposes in one brief paragraph. NOVA Gallery showed only photographic work: photographs from the history of photography; contemporary photographs which were from traditional and conceptual stances. Photographs by Vancouver artists; photographs by artists from elsewhere. The gallery not only showed photographs, it sold photographs. For five years it was the place where people could come to see photographs and find out what other things were happening around photography.

None of these endeavours exists today. Based on my experience with NOVA Gallery, I would like to offer a tentative answer to this state of affairs. All of these were collaborative efforts in the general sense. By



*The Giant Nickel, Sudbury, Ontario October 7, 1982*

*With thousands out of work and the mines shut down, this may be the only big money left in Canada.*

Henri Robideau

*Henri Robideau 82*

Since 1953, a number of people have been theorizing further, some with photographs.

It is in this context that I suggest one might begin to reconsider Vancouver photographic works. I would use work from both traditions to see which idea they connect with, and make a grouping around that idea. Each group would be a cultural possibility around which there could be varying interpretations from the different works. If this could be done, it would not read like our contemporary histories of art or photography. The photographs would insist on their contents.

"The point is this: the encounter with history and its specific determinations is made by the artist himself. (I add herself) . . . The making of a work of art is one historical process among other acts, events, and structures — it is a series of actions in but also on history. It may become intelligible only within the context of given and imposed structures of meaning; but in its turn it can alter and at times disrupt these structures."<sup>21</sup>

Let me finally draw your attention to the quote by F. R. Scott which appears at the beginning of Thomas Berger's book *Fragile Freedoms*:

"If human rights and harmonious relations between cultures are forms of the beautiful, then the state is a work of art that is never finished."<sup>22</sup>

Given this, I consider Canadian art, and all these photographs, "fragile freedoms" worth preserving.<sup>23</sup>

#### NOTES

I have written this article as a series of hypotheses, thus, I consider it a working paper.

More artists/photographers than I have mentioned were and are working. There has been too little work done about all Vancouver artists/photographers. I offer this work as a beginning acknowledgement.

- 1 T. J. Clark, "Clement Greenberg's Theory of Art," *Critical Inquiry* 9 (Sept. 1982), pp. 155-156. This essay was first presented as a paper in the symposium, *Modernism & Modernity* at UBC Mar. 12-14, 1981 organized by Serge Guilbault and David Solkin, art historians in the Fine Arts Department. (The entire proceedings will be published this summer by NSCAD Press.)
- 2 See Victor Burgin, "Seeing Sense," *Artforum* (Feb. 1980), pp. 64-67. A concise analysis of how photographic information is given and received, in order to show the pitfalls in modernist discussions about photography vis-a-vis Greenberg and Szarkowski (head of MOMA Department of Photography). Burgin maintains photography as a modernist practice through the "seeing subject" who addresses the content in photographs — the essence of the medium.
- 3 See Christopher James, "The Judgement Seat of Photography," *October* #22 (Fall 1982), pp. 27-63.
- 4 George Eastman House, The International Museum of Photography, is a different seat of power in discussions about photography since 1949. No one has yet analyzed the directions of its programs in the way James has with MOMA.
- 5 See Philip Leider, "Vancouver-Scene with No Scene," *Arts Canada* (June/July 1967); David Thompson, "A Canadian Scene," *Studio International* (Oct. & Nov. 1968); Peter Selz with Alvin Balkind, "Vancouver-Scene and Unscene," *Art in America* (Jan. 1970).

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**AL RAZUTIS**

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**Aeon**

1968-70 16 mm colour sound 24 min

**Amerika**

1972-83 16 mm colour sound 180 min

*The Cities of Eden* 1976-79

*Software* 1972-80

*Vortex* 1972-73

*Atomic Gardening* 1981

*Motel Row* (1) 1981

98.3 KHz: (*Bridge at Electrical Storm* (1)) 1973

*Motel Row* (2) 1976-81

*The Wasteland and Other Stories* 1976-79

*Motel Row* (3) 1981

98.3 KHz: (*Bridge at Electrical Storm* (2)) 1973

*The Wildwest Show* (1) 1980

*A Message from our Sponsor* 1979-80

*The Wildwest Show* (2) 1983

*Refrain* 1983

*Terminal Cityscapes* 1980-83

*Photo Spot* 1983

*Exiles* 1983

*The Lonesome Death of Leroy Brown* 1983

(*Fin*)\* 1983

*O Kanada* 1976/80/83

***The Moon at Evernight* . . .**

1973 16 mm colour sound 9 min

Courtesy of Canadian Filmmakers' Distribution West

***Le Voyage* . . .**

1973 16 mm colour sound 8 min

Courtesy of Canadian Filmmakers' Distribution West

***Sequels in Transfigured Time* from *Visual Essays: Origins of Film***

1976 16 mm colour sound 12 min

Courtesy of Canadian Filmmakers' Distribution West

***Portrait***

1978 16 mm colour silent 8 min

***Lumiere's Train Arriving at the Station* from *Visual Essays: Origins of Film***

1979 16 min b/w sound 9 min

Courtesy of Canadian Filmmakers' Distribution West

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**PATRICK READY**

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PATRICK READY IN COLLABORATION WITH HANK BULL

***HP Video Show***

1978 ¾" videotape colour sound 45 min

Courtesy of The Western Front Video

PATRICK READY IN COLLABORATION WITH CANADIAN SHADOWS: MARTIN BARTLETT, HANK BULL, KATE CRAIG, GLENN LEWIS

***Shadows***

1983 4 b/w photographs, shadow puppets

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**CHRIS REED**

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***Young Angel Of Fall's Road***

1980 blueprint enlargement 152 × 213 cm

Private collection

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**BILL REID**

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***Haida Thunderbird***

1981 silkscreen 70.5 × 76.2 cm

***Dogfish Lady — Boxwood Pendant***

1982 boxwood pendant: 8.4 cm diam.; chain:

53.3 cm long

Private collection

***Dogfish Lady***

1983 pencil on paper 29.2 × 33 cm

Private collection

***Dogfish Lady — Gold Pendant***

1983 22 ct. gold pendant: 8.4 cm diam.; chain:

53.3 cm long

Courtesy of Equinox Gallery

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**IRENE HOFFAR REID**

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***Indian Village***

1932 oil on canvas 66.3 × 76.5 cm

***The Washerwomen Of Gibraltar***

1932 oil on canvas 71 × 91 cm

***Margaret***

n.d. oil on canvas 61 × 45.7 cm

Collection of The Vancouver Art Gallery, gift of H. Mortimer Lamb, 1935

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**DAVID RIMMER**

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***Migration***

1969 16 mm colour sound 11 min music by Phil

Werren

Courtesy of Canadian Filmmakers' Distribution

West

***Surfacing on the Thames***

1970 16 mm colour silent 9 min at 16 fps, 6 min at

24 fps

Courtesy of Canadian Filmmakers' Distribution

West

***Variations on a Cellophane Wrapper***

1970 16 mm colour sound 8½ min music by

Don Druick

Courtesy of Canadian Filmmakers' Distribution

West

***Real Italian Pizza***

1971 16 mm colour sound 13 min

Courtesy of Canadian Filmmakers' Distribution

West

***Seashore***

1971 16 mm b/w silent 11 min

Courtesy of Canadian Filmmakers' Distribution West

***Fracture***

1973 16 mm colour silent 10 min

Courtesy of Canadian Filmmakers' Distribution West

***Canadian Pacific I***

1974 16 mm colour silent 11 min

Courtesy of Canadian Filmmakers' Distribution West

***Al Neill/A Portrait***

1979 16 mm colour sound 40 min

Courtesy of Canadian Filmmakers' Distribution West

***Narrows Inlet***

1980 16 mm colour silent 10 min

Courtesy of Canadian Filmmakers' Distribution West

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**HENRI ROBIDEAU**

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***The Giant Igloo Church***

1981 b/w silver gelatin prints

61 × 152.4 cm

***The Giant Crowd***

1982 b/w silver gelatin prints

61 × 208.3 cm

***The Giant Jesus and the Dinosaurs***

1982 b/w silver gelatin prints

61 × 175.3 cm

***The Giant Nickle***

1982 b/w silver gelatin prints

81.3 × 132.1 cm

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**KEITH RODAN**

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***Cinetude 2***

1968 16 mm b/w sound 90 min

Pacific Cinémathèque Archives

***S 1***

1970 16 mm colour sound 10 min

Pacific Cinémathèque Archives

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**EVELYN ROTH**

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***Evalina's Journey into Aboriginal Land***

1981-83 installation including: nylon snake, laminated photographs, audiotapes, traditional and contemporary aboriginal crafts 10 m. (adjustable)

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**CHARLES H. SCOTT**

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***Black Tusk***

1930 oil on panel 30.5 × 36.8 cm

Collection of J.C. Melvin Scott

***Resting In Howe Sound, B.C.***

1930 oil on board 26.4 × 36.8 cm (sight)

Collection of The National Gallery of Canada

Islands where he met his grandfather, Charles Gladstone, a Haida carver, and became interested in Haida artistic heritage. Inducted into the Canadian army in 1944. Employed as a CBC broadcaster in Eastern Canada 1945-48; also enrolled in jewelry courses at Ryerson. In 1951, returned to Vancouver and continued to work for CBC. Assisted Mungo Martin in carving a totem pole, 1957. Left CBC in 1958 to work at carving full time and began Haida village project at the University of British Columbia. Participated in many group exhibitions including the VAG, 1966; Canadian Pavilion, Expo '67, Montreal. Solo exhibitions include VAG, 1974; Children of the Raven Gallery, Vancouver, 1980; Equinox Gallery, Vancouver, 1983. He created a totem pole for the Shell Oil Centre, London, Eng., 1968; a totem pole raised at Skidegate, Queen Charlotte Islands, 1978; a monumental carving, *Raven and the First Men*, completed at the UBC Museum of Anthropology, Vancouver, 1980. Represented in many public and private collections.



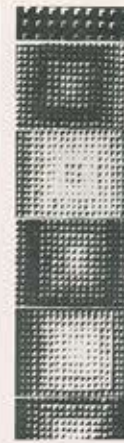
**IRENE HOFFAR REID 1908 -**  
Lives in Sidney, B.C. Studied at the Vancouver School of Art. Exhibited at the B.C. Artists Annual, VAG, 1933, 1934, 1937, 1938, 1940, 1941, 1950, 1951, 1954, 1955, 1956, 1957, 1968. Exhibited with the B.C. Society of Artists at the VAG, 1929, 1940, 1941, 1942, 1943, 1945, 1948-64, 1966, 1967. President of B.C. Society of Artists 1958-60, 1966, 1967. Collections include the Vancouver Art Gallery and private collections.



**DAVID RIMMER 1942 -**  
Born and lives in Vancouver. Studied at University of British Columbia and Simon Fraser University. Sculptor, video artist, and filmmaker since 1967. Screenings and exhibitions across Europe and North America include the Museum of Modern Art, New York, 1971; VAG, 1969, 1970, 1976, 1981. Award winning films include *Square Inch Field*, 1968 (Yale Film Festival and St. Lawrence Film Festival, New York); *Migration*, 1969 (Vancouver International Film Festival); *Variations on a Cellophane Wrapper*, 1970 (Monterey Film Festival and 14th Annual American Film Festival, New York); *Al Neill's Portrait*, 1979 (San Francisco Art Institute). Collections include the National Gallery of Canada, National Film Board of Canada, Museum of Modern Art, Carnegie Institute, British Film Institute, and Art Gallery of Ontario.



**HENRI ROBIDEAU 1946 -**  
Born in Connecticut; lives in Vancouver. Photographer. Group exhibitions include Artists Gallery, Vancouver, 1979; University of British Columbia Fine Arts Gallery, Vancouver, 1976; Helen Pitt Gallery, Vancouver, 1978; Viewspace, Vancouver, 1980; Sunshine Coast Art Centre, Sechelt, B.C., 1981; Optica, Montreal, 1981. Individual exhibitions include VAG, 1980; Photographers Gallery, Saskatoon, 1980; Coburg Gallery, Vancouver, 1983.



**KEITH RODAN 1946 -**  
Born in San Francisco. Short-term but productive residency in Vancouver. Involved with Intermedia. Divided his films into four categories: Animation, S Films, Garbage Films, and Documentaries. These included *Cinetude #1-4*, 1968-71; *Age of Steel*, 1971; *Blue-Zip Bebop*, 1971; *Space Movie*, 1971; *Warfilm*, 1971; *Intermedia Dance*, 1971. Screenings at the VAG in the *Intermedia* exhibition, 1969; *Noon Hour Film Series*, 1970, and a 1968-71 retrospective, 1971.



**EVELYN ROTH 1936 -**  
Born in Mundare, Alta.; lives in Vancouver. During 1966-69 participated as dancer and designer in numerous events staged by Intermedia. Organized many performances (sculptural wearables) and recycling events in Canada, USA, Europe, Japan, S.E. Asia, and Australia. Selected exhibitions and events since 1970 include VAG, 1970, 1971, 1973, 1974; American Museum of Contemporary Crafts, New York, 1971; Simon Fraser Art Gallery, Burnaby, B.C., 1971; Norman Mackenzie Art Gallery, Regina, 1971; Burnaby Art Gallery, B.C., 1972, 1979; *Canada recycle event, Vancouver to*