

TRAFFIC

CONCEPTUALISM IN CANADA

INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE AT
THE UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO

PRESENTED BY THE JUSTINA M. BARNICKE GALLERY

26-28 NOVEMBER 2010

PROGRAMME

The Justina M. Barnicke Gallery at the University of Toronto welcomes you to a major conference on the history and legacy of Conceptual Art in Canada. This conference is the first major gathering of artists, writers, critics, art historians, and students concerned with the manifestations of conceptualism in the history of contemporary art in Canada. Taking as its starting point the notion that conceptualism was (and continues to be) a global phenomenon, this conference seeks to develop a greater understanding of the specificity of local manifestations in artistic centres in Canada and of the exchanges amongst these and their international counterparts.

The conference is held in conjunction with the exhibition TRAFFIC: CONCEPTUAL ART IN CANADA 1965 - 1980, which is on view at the University of Toronto Galleries until November 28, 2010. This major, multi-institutional and multi-venue exhibition is curated by Grant Arnold, Catherine Crowston, Barbara Fischer, Michèle Thériault with Vincent Bonin, and Jayne Wark, and is organized jointly by the Art Gallery of Alberta, the Justina M. Barnicke Gallery and the Vancouver Art Gallery, in collaboration with the Leonard and Bina Ellen Art Gallery and Halifax, INK. The exhibition premiered at the four galleries of the University of Toronto (University of Toronto Art Centre, Blackwood Gallery, Doris McCarthy Gallery and Justina M. Barnicke Gallery) in September 2010 and will tour across Canada in 2011 and 2012.

An exhibition catalogue will be co-produced with our partners in Vancouver, Edmonton, Montreal, and Halifax, to be published in 2011.

In addition, the Justina M. Barnicke Gallery has partnered with the Centre for Contemporary Canadian Art to publish a web-based project in the form of a Canadian Conceptual Art Online Database which will include interviews, selections from the conference, and added research perspectives from Canadian and international scholars, artists, and students to form a growing research database on conceptual art in Canada.

Thank you for attending the conference,

Barbara Fischer

Director/Curator
Justina M. Barnicke Gallery

THANKS AND ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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OUR FUNDERS	
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AND A SPECIAL THANK YOU TO	
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Bill Kirby, Adam Welch, Heather Diack, Mark Cheetham, Elizabeth Legge, Christine Davis and Janine Marchessault, PUBLIC	
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- Sunny Kerr
- Charles Stankieveh
- Martha Langford
- Elizabeth Legge
- Simon Brown
- Paul Woodrow
- Andrew Kear
- Reiko Tomii
- Kathleen McLean

RESPONDENTS

- Louis Kaplan
- Sharla Sava
- Luis Jacob
- Jayne Wark
- Dan Adler
- Andy Patton

KEYNOTE

- Blake Stimson

CONCEPTUALISM, TRANSNATIONALISM AND DIASPORA

RESPONDENT: LOUIS KAPLAN

DAVID TOMAS – A MINOR BUT STRATEGIC DOCUMENT: 45° 30' N – 73° 36' W + INVENTORY AND ITS PLACE IN THE HISTORY OF CONCEPTUAL ART.

Sir George Williams University and the Saidye Bronfman Center in Montreal were host in February 1971 to a group exhibition entitled *45° 30' N – 73° 36' W*. The show organized by Arthur Bardo, Gary Coward, Bill Vazan and Zoe Notkin was accompanied by a hybrid catalogue/anthology/artist's book entitled *45° 30' N – 73° 36' W + Inventory*.

The shoestring exhibition was conceived by its organizers as the “first challenge to the official art” in Montreal and it presented a survey of the advanced art of the late 1960s and early 1970s to a Montreal audience. Notwithstanding its inadequate funding, the exhibition's ambitions were reflected in the organizers' desire to present works based on “systems, concepts, process, information, l'arte povera, earth documentation, photos and slides, body sculpture, etc.” The resulting exhibition and catalogue focused on Canadian artists but also included the work of such international artists as Sol LeWitt and Robert Barry. In this sense it provided an early survey of the Canadian work in these areas, as well as a picture of the international filiations that underwrote the exhibition's curatorial stance, although both were subject to the limitations of an open invitation letter and meager budget.

The 1971 exhibition marks a watershed in the history of Quebec conceptual art. It was one of the first systemic attempts to take public stock of the impact of new international trends in dematerialized and related art practices on the Montreal art scene. The unusual title places *45° 30' N – 73° 36' W* in the wake of the seminal conceptual art exhibitions of the late 1960s and early 1970s, a position that is also reflected in the catalogue's form. This paper will examine this catalogue as a peculiar example of conceptual multitasking and, if time permits, as an example of a minor, yet strategically important conceptual document.

DAVID TOMAS is an artist and writer who is the author of five books including *Beyond the Image Machine: A History of Visual Technologies* (2004), *A Blinding Flash of Light: Photography Between Disciplines and Media* (2004) and *Transcultural Space and Transcultural Beings* (1996). Tomas's recent articles include a study of the relationship between Dziga Vertov, Harun Farocki and the cinematic representation of the technological underpinnings of a society of surveillance and an in-depth examination of the seminal *N. E. Thing Co. Environment Exhibition* that was held at the National Gallery of Canada in 1969. He is currently terminating a book to be published by NSCAD University Press on the links between Dziga Vertov, Michael Snow, and Harun Farocki.

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HEATHER DIACK – MAPPING CONCEPTUALISM: THE CENTRE DOES NOT HOLD

In a 1969 interview, the artist Douglas Huebler observed that a map is “never really a real thing, and yet we begin to assume it is a real thing. Most people experience maps or clocks or charts and so forth as very real life-defining phenomena, or whatever.” This paper will work through the idea of mapping as a conceptual proposition regarding experience and as a means of interrogating the global subject. By discussing the work of conceptual artists that use maps and “orientating” strategies in order to provoke questions as opposed to providing grounded answers, I will demonstrate how these artists, among others, were concerned with what Frederic Jameson famously called “an aesthetics of cognitive mapping,” in an effort to consider the place of the individual subject in a globalized world. Considering our increasingly decentered communication networks, I will ask how this conception of art remains poignant, by reading conceptual art as a kind of cartographic project. Ultimately, this paper argues for the continuing relevance of “the map” as topos in contemporary art, and for the very real impossibility of autonomy for either the art object or the artist.

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HEATHER DIACK is a postdoctoral fellow in Modern & Contemporary Art in the Department of Art History, Visual Art, and Theory at the University of British Columbia. Diack is a writer and independent curator with a PhD in art history from the University of Toronto. She has held many fellowships including a research residency at The Canadian Centre for Architecture, Montreal, and a Rubenstein Fellowship in Critical Studies at the Whitney Independent Study Program, New York. Diack has presented papers internationally on topics related to twentieth century art, conceptual art, photography and theory throughout Europe and North America.

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DOT TUER – LOCAL CIRCUITRIES/TRANSNATIONAL TRANSMISSION: COUNTER-POINTS TOWARDS TRAFFICKING IN CONCEPTUALISM

This paper examines the political context for trafficking in conceptualism in Canada by counter-posing the assertions made by Mari Carmen Ramírez (“Tactics for Thriving on Adversity,” in *Global Conceptualism: Points of Origin, 1950s-1980s*, 1999) and Luis Camnitzer (*Conceptualism in Latin American Art: Didactics of Liberation*, 2007) that conceptualism in Latin America was distinguished from the art world centre of New York by its strategic response to the turbulence of revolutionary politics and the effects of mass media communication. Both Camnitzer and Ramírez argue that conceptualism in Latin America located ideology as the “material identity” of art. The key issue that this counterpoint of centre and periphery raises is whether conceptualism as it was manifested outside of New York’s dematerialization of the art object (Lucy Lippard, *Six Years: The Dematerialization of the Art Object*, 1973) was formally derivative or distinctively adaptive in its fusion of art and politics. In response to this issue, this paper asks whether conceptualism in Canada can be distinguished by its ideological intentions from New York’s conceptual art movement. Specifically, the paper compares two exhibitions: a collective artistic intervention, *Tucumán Arde*, held in Rosario and Buenos Aires in 1968; and Carol Condé’s and Karl Beveridge’s *It’s Still Privileged Art*, held at the Art Gallery of Ontario in January, 1976. How each of these exhibitions addresses issues of class, race, and imperialism, and the reception of these exhibitions, are analysed. As well, the Contextual-Art Conference hosted by CEAC, The Centre for Experimental Art and Communication, which was held in Toronto in November, 1976, is discussed in relation to the conditions for the reception of conceptual art in Canada in the mid-1970s. By way of conclusion, Cildo Meireles’s *Inserções em Circuitos Ideológicos* [*Insertions in Ideological Circuits*] (Brazil, 1970) is proposed as an additional counterpoint and departure for discussion.

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DOT TUER is a cultural historian, art critic, and professor at OCAD University. Her writing on contemporary art focuses on performance, photography, video and new media in Canada and Latin America. She also researches and publishes on colonial Latin American history and art. She is the author of *Mining the Media Archive: Essays on Art, Technology, and Cultural Resistance* (Toronto: YZY Books, 2005), which includes a history of CEAC and an essay on the work of Carol Condé and Karl Beveridge.

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PLACE AND SPACE IN THE GLOBAL VILLAGE (I)
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RESPONDENT: SHARLA SAVA

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 GABRIELLE MOSER – NON-SITE TO NON-PLACE: CHALLENGING MYTHS OF PLACE-
 LESSNESS IN VANCOUVER PHOTO CONCEPTUALISM

My paper proposes a reading of several photographic projects created in Vancouver between 1965 and the early 2000s which attend to the role that the specificity of place and local architecture played in the emergence of a Vancouver School of photoconceptualism. Though its existence, name and membership are hotly contested, the Vancouver School appellation frames the development of several artists' photographic practice (Jeff Wall, Ian Wallace, Roy Arden and Stan Douglas among them) within a particular historical moment highly influenced by the circulation of works and exchange of ideas by other West Coast conceptual artists, including Robert Smithson's photographic projects and "non-site" installations, Ed Ruscha's photo books documenting the architectural banal and Dan Graham's photo-essay *Homes for America* (1966-67).

Though these American precedents were important influences, Wall, Wallace, Arden and Douglas did not take up their strategies uncritically. As Wall and other art historians assert, the School posited a counter-tradition to these conceptual strategies by critically reframing what Smithson called the "non-site" into an investigation of what Scott Watson termed the "defeated landscape." Although the images made by the School's photographers were of Vancouver, however, they are rarely read as being about Vancouver. Instead, Vancouver photoconceptual images are interpreted as depicting a banal "non-place" or an existential nowhere.

Through an analysis of several images created by Wall, Wallace, Arden and Douglas, I contend that the School's brand of photoconceptualism is in fact directly concerned with the specificity and eccentricities of the Vancouver landscape as a way of critiquing the relationship between land speculation and late capitalism that was emerging in the city in this period. By re-reading these photographs with an attention to their engagement with the city and their sustained depiction of local architectural anomalies such as the "Vancouver Special" (a style of house that proliferated in the city between 1965 and 1985, the same time frame as the TRAFFIC exhibition) and their subsequent adaptation into suburban 'monster homes,' I assert that the banality of the Vancouver landscape is, paradoxically, what makes these photographic projects a uniquely local adaptation of conceptualism.

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 GABRIELLE MOSER is a writer, curator and PhD student in the art history and visual culture program at York University in Toronto. She is an instructor at OCAD University, has curated exhibitions for Vtape, Xpace and Gallery TPW and was the assistant curator of The Leona Drive Project. Her writing appears in ARTnews, Canadian Art, C Magazine, esse, Phillip, Invisible Culture, Photography and Culture and in the Gallery 44/Ryerson University book *Emergence: Contemporary Photography in Canada*.

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 KENNETH R. ALLAN – N.E. THING CO. LTD., MARSHALL MCLUHAN, AND THE COUNTER-ENVIRONMENT

Several of N.E. Thing Co. Ltd's innovations, of the mid-1960s to early 1970s, have been suggested to anticipate "Institutional Critique," a term that arrived quite late in relation to the artistic practice it refers to. But already in the early 1960s, Marshall McLuhan had developed and was promoting his theory of the "Counter-Environment," which described and clearly mapped out this very practice as being the true task for art. As a theorist, McLuhan had considerable currency in the North American artworld of the 1960s due to the pertinence of his publications on the nature of radical cultural-societal change and his position as a popular intellectual figure. His book *Understanding Media* could serve almost as a template for many subsequent developments in contemporary art.

Regarding the "Counter-Environment," McLuhan writes: "Environments are not passive wrappings, but are, rather, active processes which are invisible. The groundrules, pervasive structure, and over-all patterns of environments elude easy perception." McLuhan suggests that "the role of art is to create the means of perception by creating counterenvironments that open the door of perception to people otherwise numbed in a nonperceivable situation." Furthermore: "As information becomes our environment, it becomes mandatory to program the environment itself as a work of art. The parallel to this appears in Jacques Ellul's *Propaganda*, where he sees propaganda not as an ideology or content of any medium, but as the operation of all the media at once... It shapes our entire outlook and all our ways of feeling. Like any other environment, its operation is imperceptible... The artist provides us with anti-environments that enable us to see the environment."

The varied Conceptual art projects of Iain and Ingrid Baxter's N.E. Thing Co. Ltd. can be profitably considered by means of the "Counter-Environment" as a theoretical point of reference. This is particularly true of early projects that involve: directing attention to the framework of the exhibition space and its history; re-contextualizing artworks held by the museum; infiltrating corporate organizations, associations, and electronic communications networks; and creating artists' magazine projects that direct attention to otherwise hidden processes of circulating information and authorization in the artworld environment.

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 KENNETH R. ALLAN is Assistant Professor of Art History at the University of Lethbridge, teaching courses in 20th-century art, photography, and avant-garde cinema. His research specialization is Conceptual art and the history of artists' magazine projects. He has contributed the essays "Metamorphosis in 391: A Cryptographic Collaboration by Francis Picabia, Man Ray, and Erik Satie" to *Art History* (2011); "Grounds of Forgetting and Intermediaries for Memory: Some Photographs by David M.C. Miller" to *Public* (2010); "Understanding Information" to *Conceptual Art: Theory, Myth, and Practice* (2004); "The A-Poetic Poetry of Bernar Venet" to *Public* (2003); as well as "Business Interests, 1969-72: N.E. Thing Co. Ltd., Les Levine, Bernar Venet, and John Latham" to *Parachute* (2002).

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 JOHANNE SLOAN – URBAN ATTITUDES IN MONTREAL, C. 1968-1972

This paper addresses the intersection of conceptual art strategies and urban experience in Montreal during the period immediately following Expo 67, the world's fair held in the city during the summer of 1967. While that event had proposed a technologized, future-oriented cityscape, some Montreal artists of the late 1960s and early 70s were intent on unravelling this paradigm. Melvin Charney's *Montreal More or Less* [*Montréal plus ou moins*] exhibition in 1972, as well as contemporaneous projects by Bill Vazan, Françoise Sullivan, and other artists, introduced a series of conceptual maneuvers and "architectonic tendencies" (David Frisby) based on walking, driving, measuring, and demarcating the city – gestures which pointed to the city's social and material transformation. Charney's exhibition imagined a politicized, urbanized form of conceptual art, that would culminate in the infamous Corridor four years later. While urban-oriented conceptual art projects were undertaken elsewhere (Ian Wallace in Vancouver; Robert Smithson in New York, eg.) this paper investigates the distinctive character of Montreal's conceptual imprint.

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 JOHANNE SLOAN is Associate Professor and Graduate Program Director in the Department of Art History, Concordia University. Her writings include the essays "Conceptual Landscape Art: Joyce Wieland and Michael Snow," (2007), and "Bill Vazan's Urban Coordinates" (2009). She is also the co-editor of *Expo 67: Not Just a Souvenir*, a collection of essays to be published by University of Toronto Press in November 2010.

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 VINCENT BONIN – TRANSLATING THE CANON: CONCEPTUAL ART IN MONTREAL AND THE PROVINCIALISM PROBLEM

In this paper, I will comment upon the circumstances in which a certain canon of American conceptual art was integrated in a specific locale (Montreal) by using the notion of "travelling theories" as coined by Edward Said to describe the (often political) refashioning of hegemonic discursive constellations by the peripheries during a process of decolonization. My approach will strategically narrow down the definition of Conceptual art to map out the material processes of translating a circumscribed body of texts and artworks from one context to the other. In a broader framework, I will compare the assimilation of this canon by English speaking Montreal artists/cultural workers at the end of the 1960 and the beginning of the 1970 to its reception in other parts of Canada during the same period. As it was the case in Toronto or Vancouver, these protagonists embraced the "idiom" as a way to fight the provincialism of existing institutions and, thus, gain agency in a new decentralized art world. Like their American and European counterparts, some of them used language in their work as a heuristic tool capable of calling into question the very foundations of an ideology of medium specificity, as well as an apparently inalienable definition of artistic subjectivity. English was nevertheless the "code" they all shared as a given community of speakers. The reception of Conceptual art became somewhat more problematic for a larger group of francophone protagonists bound up in the complex equation of painting as a strong cultural marker and the linguistic debate then at its peak. Although I wish to analyse the effects of this divide as it affected (and slowed down) the assimilation of the Conceptual art canon in Montreal, my analysis will take into account attempts made by certain cultural players (artists, critics, curators) to bridge this rift, if only in part. Beyond the project of understanding this local manifestation of what Terry Smith called the "problem" of provincialism, I want to acknowledge the discursive effects of such cultural transfers, as they help to understand how "context" is retrospectively constructed within a curatorial or historical narrative.

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 VINCENT BONIN is an author and independent curator. From 2000 to 2007, he worked as an archivist at the Daniel Langlois Foundation for Art, Science, and Technology (Montreal). Alongside his research on conceptual art practices of the 1960s and 1970s, he is interested in the social meanings of archives, and the refashioning of the documentary genre in the field of contemporary art.

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CONCEPTUALISM: CENTRES, NETWORKS, EXCHANGES (I)

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 RESPONDENT: LUIS JACOB

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 FELICITY TAYLER – CONSTELLATION AND CORRESPONDENCES: NETWORKING BETWEEN ARTISTS, 1970-1980

Independent publishing by artists paralleled experimentation in electronic media, such as video, from 1970 to 1980. Artistic practices became increasingly ephemeral and performative, as they were no longer tied to a physical place a key concern was distribution through alternative networks. Printed matter served as a means for information transmission between artists and could be considered a significant contributor to the early development of parallel galleries in Canada. In his mythic narrative, AA Bronson refers to publishing as the “connective tissue” in the emerging trans-Canada art scene. Documents (correspondence, newsletters, magazines, artists’ books and other ephemera) were the platform for the communication of art, ideas and affinities across the geography of the country and beyond national borders. What drew together this constellation of disparate elements that correspond through space and time?

This presentation will address a selection of publishing by artists drawn from the collection of the National Gallery of Canada Library and Archives (including the Art Metropole Collection). Through bibliographic methods a communications circuit can be traced between author, publisher, printer, distributor and reader. These examples demonstrate a networked structure emerging from artists collectives such as Image Bank (Michael Morris and Vincent Trasov) and General Idea (AA Bronson, Felix Partz, Jorge Zontal); parallel galleries such as Western Front (Vancouver), A Space (Toronto), Véhicule Art (Montreal); magazines such as FILE, IS, or Parallelogramme and artists such as Roy Kiyooka, Tom Sherman, Tom Dean, or Tanya Mars. Relationships between parallel galleries and literary small presses may also be discerned.

At a time when only two art magazines, Canadian Art and Vie des Arts, were published in Canada, what were the original use values of these publications? How should they be read from the perspective of the present?

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 FELICITY TAYLER is a Faculty of Fine Arts Fellow in the Humanities Doctoral Program, Interdisciplinary Studies in Society and Culture at Concordia University. She holds a Masters degree in Library and Information Studies from McGill University and a Bachelor of Fine Arts from Concordia University. Her research, writing and artistic practice explores visual art as a means of information exchange and the function of artist-initiated publishing as a communications circuit. Related writing can be found in Art Documentation, Art Libraries Journal and *Documentary Protocols* (1967-1975) (Ed. Vincent Bonin and Michèle Thériault, 2009). Recent curatorial work was presented as part of the National Gallery of Canada Library and Archives Exhibition Series.

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 EARL MILLER – INFORMATION REMOTE: ON COMMUNICATION ART IN CANADA, 1970-1980

Communication art – an artistic collaboration involving two or more people using communication technology to transmit either images or sound – in Canada from 1970 to 1980 linked Canadian conceptualism and new media art. Canadian communication art, typically categorized as electronic media art, has been granted little consideration in conceptual art history.

However, the first significant work of Canadian communication art is N.E. Thing Company’s telegram/telex project at the Museum of Modern Art’s touchstone conceptual art exhibition, *Information* (1970). N.E. Thing Company’s and other telephone-based correspondence art were influenced by Canadian mail art, notably General Idea’s mail art network (active from approximately 1969 to 1972). General Idea’s work, mail art and otherwise, was one of the most significant bodies of early conceptual art; therefore, it is also one of the most crucial bridges between Canadian communication art and conceptual art.

By the late seventies, Canadian artist-run centres regularly initiated communication art projects, for one reason because they aided these spaces’ collective mandate of spanning Canada’s vast geography through artists’ networks. In 1980, a seminal Toronto telecommunication art conference included General Idea, as well as Hank Bull, who like General Idea was closely involved with artist-run centres. Other participants, such as Roy Ascott and Norman White, had, by the 1980s, moved from communication art to computers. From this early computer-based art came new media.

Communication art is a largely overlooked movement likely because of the overtly simple, now obsolete technology it used. Yet it formed an unacknowledged connection between conceptual art and today’s new media art practices.

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 EARL MILLER is a critic and independent curator residing in Toronto. He has regularly written on art and technology for magazines such as Fuse, C, and Parachute. He published an article on Web Cam technology’s relation to first generation Conceptual art (“Jenni’s Web”, Fuse, 23:2, 2000). He has recently curated exhibitions at Galeria Vermelho (São Paulo), The Doris McCarthy Art Gallery (Toronto), the Art Gallery of York University (Toronto), and the Kenderdine Gallery (Saskatoon).

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 BRUCE BARBER – KIWI/CANUCK CONCEPTUALISM: CONCEPTUAL ART CORRE-
 SPONDENCES BETWEEN CANADA AND NEW ZEALAND, 1970 - 1975

Taking some cues from Terry Smith's essay "Peripheries in Motion: Conceptualism and Conceptual Art in Australia and New Zealand" published in the exhibition catalogue *Global Conceptualism: Points of Origin 1950's - 1960*, this paper explores a little known connection between Canadian artists Bill Vazan, Terry Reid, Tom Burrows with the parallel development of conceptual art in New Zealand and Canada circa 1968-1975. The author will discuss the participation of New Zealand artists in William Vazan's global project *Contact* 1970-1974, Terry Reid's Fluxus and conceptual art inspired conceptual mail art projects undertaken globally from his base in Auckland during the early 1970's, Tom Burrows conceptually driven site specific sculpture (1971) produced during the International Sculpture Symposium and New Zealand artist Andrew Drummond's conceptual performance work produced when he was studying with Basia Irland at the University of Waterloo (1973-1975). The author will conclude with a discussion of the affirmation of conceptualism in New Zealand and Canada through the aegis of Lucy Lippard and Mel Bochner who toured with the exhibition *Some Recent American Art* that visited New Zealand and Australia in 1974, and some personal observations about the aftermath of conceptual art at the Nova Scotia College of Art & Design when he arrived there in 1976 to study in the MFA program.

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 BRUCE BARBER is an interdisciplinary media artist, cultural historian and curator, based in Halifax, Nova Scotia where he teaches Media Arts and directs the MFA program at NSCAD University. His interdisciplinary artwork has been shown at the Paris Biennale, Sydney Biennale, the New Museum of Contemporary Art, the Walter Phillips Gallery, London Regional Gallery, Artspace, Sydney and Auckland. Barber is the editor of *Essays on Performance and Cultural Politicization and of Conceptual Art: the NSCAD Connection 1967-1973*. He is co-editor, with Serge Guilbaut and John O'Brian of *Voices of Fire: Art Rage, Power, and the State*, editor of *Conde + Beveridge: Class Works* (2008); also author of *Performance [Performance] and Performers: Essays and Conversations* (2 volumes) edited by Marc Léger (2008), and *Trans/Actions: Art, Film and Death* (2008) His critical essays have appeared internationally in numerous anthologies, journals and magazines. His art practice is documented in the publication *Reading Rooms*. He is best known for his performance work, interdisciplinary reading and writing *Rooms*, *Squat Projects* and his theoretical writing and theory on littoral art, cultural intervention and other relational art practices.

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 VIRGINIA SOLOMON – CENTRALITY DEMATERIALIZED: MAIL ART, THE ETERNAL NET-
 WORK, AND CANADADA IN THE EARLY 70S

Canada certainly has featured prominently in dominant narratives of Conceptual Art. Lucy Lippard's interest in N.E. Thing, Co., and the presence of numerous major Conceptual artists at NSCAD are only two examples. The Canadian practices that this narrative includes, however, support a model of centrality and peripherality that runs counter to the potential contained within Conceptualism's much-touted de-materialization. It also ignores myriad other practices that dominated Canadian art in the latter decades of the 20th century, which addressed so many of Conceptual Art's primary concerns while eschewing its title, its institutions, and its value systems.

My paper takes the practice of Canadian art collective General Idea as a case study to demonstrate how these other practices reconfigured space itself. General Idea and its fellows were not trying to make themselves part of a center. Instead, they obviated the possibility of a center. Through projects that included Mail Art, art made for broadcast, and the production of editions and multiples, General Idea and its cohort dematerialized centrality itself.

I discuss this dematerialization in relation to three General Idea projects: FILE Magazine, *The Boutique for the 1984 Miss General Idea Pavillion*, and *The Pavillion for the 1984 Miss General Idea Pageant*. The group published FILE from 1972-1989, initially as a part of its participation in *Mail Art* and later as a way to expand upon its own practice. *The Boutique for the 1984 Miss General Idea Pavillion* (1980) was a store installed in museums that sold editions and multiples created by General Idea. Finally, *The Pavillion for the 1984 Miss General Idea Pageant* was a work that was installed in multiple locations throughout the 1980s, which the group discussed not as a decentralization but rather as a multiplication of centers. Each of these projects reconfigures space, be it literal or conceptual, in a way that responds to but also supersedes specific conditions in Canadian art, culture, and politics. Because of these conditions, Canadian artists were able to offer an engagement with space that was not imaginable within other contexts.

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 VIRGINIA SOLOMON advanced to Ph.D. candidacy in December of 2009. She specializes in modern and contemporary art, culture, and politics. Her dissertation, tentatively titled *Queer Outsider Methods: General Idea's Art and Politics, 1969-1994*, considers the work of Canadian artist group General Idea. She places the group's practice in the context of an expanded and evolving conversation concerning the relationship between art and politics, and argues that its incorporation of sexuality enabled it to reconfigure what constituted both political and artistic activity. Other interests include feminist theory, cultural studies, and visual studies. Solomon was a Helena Rubinstein Fellow at the Whitney Independent Study Program for the 2007/2008 academic year. She was a 2009/2010 Canadian Art Research Fellow at the National Gallery of Canada, and is the 2010/2011 Whitney-Lauder Curatorial Fellow at the Institute of Contemporary Art in Philadelphia. She graduated from Stanford University in 2004 with a B.A. in studio art and feminist studies.

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BUSINESS (NOT) AS USUAL... (I) Session A
CONCEPTUAL PEDAGOGY

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 RESPONDENT: JAYNE WARK

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 ROBIN SIMPSON – LET THE BUYER BEWARE: ROCHDALE COLLEGE’S COUNTER-PUBLICS AND PRINTED SATIRE

This paper explores issues of counterculture rhetoric through Rochdale College and its printed documents. Occupying an eighteen story concrete building just north of University of Toronto, Rochdale College was an unprecedented alternative living and learning environment. Following its opening in 1968 Rochdale and its community quickly came to be a beacon for counterculture in Toronto. Entirely student-run, Rochdale was a world-onto-itself with its own governing committees for administration, finance, and education.

The College’s residents, in collaboration with Coach House Press, produced a wide array of printed ephemera. Amongst this material was the College’s infamous degrees and corresponding non-degrees. Sold within the building and via mail-order, these phoney certificates were both saturnalia party favours and key components to a fund-raising scheme for the debt-ridden experiment. Their circulation – through advertisements, media coverage, and word of mouth – extended their satirical rhetoric far beyond Toronto. This paper asks what happened to this satire when its contexts of reception resulted in the formation of a public in excess of the scheme’s intended scope? Unpacking the degree’s rhetoric and examining correspondence between the College and buyers this paper considers how these documents, at once satirical and pragmatic, delivered the College’s educational and social principles while bringing into sight the impasse of these utopian dreams. As a critique on the commodification of knowledge these documents are considered in light of similar strategies present in conceptual art and Fluxus circles. This material is further considered against education reform under way at that time in Ontario. The Hall-Dennis Report, whose publication date was synchronous with Rochdale’s opening, put forth recommendations for greater student autonomy, equal access, dynamic learning without competition, and a reorientation of the relations between industry and school. Through this close reading I argue that the counterpublics constituted by the degrees were not simply unified around a shared recognition of the satire at hand, nor was their participation in Rochdale’s jest a manifest celebration of counterculture.

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 ROBIN SIMPSON is a curator, student, and writer based in Montreal where he is currently pursuing graduate studies in art history at Concordia University. He is co-founder of Pavilion Projects (www.pavilionprojects.com) a nomadic and often symbiotic curatorial and arts service initiative, a founding member of the art collective The Discriminating Gentlemen’s Club ~ Le Club des Gentilshommes Avertis (www.dgc-cga.org), and publisher of Grace an exploded arts magazine published one signature at a time (www.tsald.info).

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 SUNNY KERR – FAILURE STUDIES AT ROCHDALE COLLEGE

Rochdale College was a notorious counter-cultural beacon located at Toronto’s Bloor and Huron streets between 1968 and 1975, an intense youth-run combination of co-op residence, flophouse and experimental school. While it was a morass of internal contradictions and almost every aspect is still in dispute, much can be learned from Rochdale’s kaleidoscope of anarchistic pedagogy, id-fuelled rebellion, tight community, and visionary satire. This paper views Rochdale College through the lens of a research exhibition and free school curated by myself and Rebecca Noone – also called *Rochdale College*. The paper explores the project with Rochdale’s controversial education program as its background.

Rochdale College opened in October of 2009 in the University of Toronto Art Centre’s art lounge. Graduate student, Rebecca Noone and I had originally undertaken it as a research project into utopian promise and conflict of Rochdale. We decided to playfully reactivate it as a way to look at our present situation. We conceived of this exhibition as a collision of historical moments, gleefully mimicking Rochdale’s name and spirit, if only for a brief time. This paper will attempt to map the contextual meanings of this utopian reappearance. How is the historical moment of Rochdale, a moment that stands so clearly for self-determination, translated and claimed by present-day students? The project was arranged around a fiction that Rochdale College continues to this day. A large sign saying “Rochdale College” hung over two bulletin boards advertising activities scheduled in the gallery for the month. Our little fiction is superseded, still, by the way that Rochdale does indeed continue to circulate and inspire in culture despite (or because of) its incredible difficulties. The exhibition was testament to this inspiration by way of three different activities that gave it structure: art by contemporary students, alumni/archival materials, and a school project that saw a month of ‘classes’ run by students for students on their own subjects and in their own styles. We were principally interested in how the contemporary meanings of Rochdale could be revealed by the way contemporary students responded to our invitation to teach ‘classes’ in the gallery lounge. We were interested, moreover, in sorting through the project’s timeliness amid a convergence of contemporary forces in art, education and politics, a convergence that it brought into strong relief. Notions of fallibility and actualization as aesthetic facets of pedagogy are among the sticking points of the Rochdale ‘tar baby.’

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 SUNNY KERR is an artist and independent curator whose practice includes a relational work with members of an automotive club and invited artists, site-responsive window pieces, and, as a member of the WayUpWayDown collective, a nomadic, cumulative bookstore intervention. He completed his BFA at NSCAD University and earned his MFA at York University in 2006. Until Spring 2010 he ran student programs at the University of Toronto Art Centre and was most recently a sessional instructor in the University of Toronto’s Visual Studies program.

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CHARLES STANKIEVECH – OVER THE WIRE: A CONCEPTUAL PEDAGOGY

In 2007 the Yukon School of Visual Arts was created as Canada's most northern accredited art college. As a founding faculty member and part of the curriculum development, I created the conceptual pedagogy OVER THE WIRE. OVER THE WIRE is a project series that creates an exchange between an Artist and the Yukon School of Visual Arts. Celebrating the extreme remoteness of the school, the project mediates the geographical distance by fostering a correspondence--both literally and aesthetically--between the Artist and the students. Each semester, a set of instructions created by a distant Artist is delivered to the students in order to produce a new work. The students in turn interpret the instructions and create the work locally for exhibition. In addition to the exhibition of the work, each project is completed with a publication or multiple. To date, Lawrence Weiner, Iain Baxter, Gary Hill, Shary Boyle and Tim Hecker have all participated. For TRAFFIC, I will contextualise OVER THE WIRE within the history of Canadian Conceptual Art and within my overall personal practice. An archive of the project can be viewed at: <http://media.yukonsova.ca/over-the-wire>

CHARLES STANKIEVECH creates "fieldworks" which have been recently included in the context of the Palais de Tokyo (Paris), International Symposium on Electronic Arts (ISEA2010, Germany), and Biennale of Architecture (Venice). He has curated such unorthodox exhibitions as *Magnetic Norths*, *A Wake* for St. Kippenberger's METRO-Net, and created the series OVER THE WIRE with Lawrence Weiner, Gary Hill, and others. Having worked with R. Murray Schafer and Alvin Lucier, his compositions have been commissioned internationally for the likes of Philip Glass' MATA foundation. His writings have been included in *Leonardo Music Journal* (MIT Press) and *306090* (Princeton Architectural Press). A founding faculty member of the Yukon School of Visual Arts in Dawson City, Northern Canada, Stankieveh splits his time between the Arctic and other landscapes.

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BUSINESS (NOT) AS USUAL... (I) Session A
MICHAEL SNOW

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RESPONDENT: DAN ADLER

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MARTHA LANGFORD – DIS-INFORMATION, MICHAEL SNOW'S IDEAS ABOUT IDEA ART

The Museum of Modern Art's landmark exhibition *Information* (1970), organized by Kynaston McShine, included no gallery work by Canadian artist Michael Snow. The artist was represented in *Information* through screenings of two films: *Wavelength* (1967) and <— > (Back and Forth, 1968-69). McShine's list of readings included, *Michael Snow/A Survey* (1970), the catalogue for Snow's mid-career survey. *Lucy Lippard's Six Years: The Dematerialization of the Art Object from 1966 to 1972* contains a number of references to Snow's activities as a filmmaker and sculptor, extracts that alert the reader to the formal dialogues that inform his theme of perception. Snow's comments on his sculpture *First to Last* (1967) are illuminating in this regard. He stresses film's intensification of vision and the parallel effect created by *First to Last* as a "perfect square in middle-grey, turned in on itself ... Art [as] a focusing-in on things."

Ephemeral things, sometimes, and there's the rub. Dennis Young, in his *Michael Snow/A Survey* essay, categorizes *First to Last* among works "like the films, keyed to the framing and containment of change" – to the uncontainable, unrepeatable factors of experience over time. Performative grist for mill of Conceptual art. And yet the framing devices of such experiences pull in another direction – one of presence and specificity, as "specific objects." Indeed, Young ends his essay by drawing Snow closer to Donald Judd, to Minimalism, in which materiality, however productive of spectatorial performance, isn't going away.

Back and forth, between concept and creation, Snow is engaging with these issues. His contribution to a Neo-Dada exhibition at the Isaacs Gallery, misunderstood and mis-executed by Dennis Burton, should have been a steak on a plinth. For his solo exhibition at the Venice Biennale of 1970, an event running parallel to *Information*, Snow created *Shore* (1970), whose sculptural form and rueful text can be read as a subtle reproof to Conceptualism's literalist representations. In this paper, I will present Snow's position in relation to Conceptual art, then turning my attention to the Conceptual nature of his films: to actions materialized in a form that dematerialize as it flows into the consciousness of a willing spectator. I will discuss Snow as an episodic participant in Conceptual Art, whose contributions nevertheless inFORM its development in Canada.

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MARTHA LANGFORD is an associate professor and Concordia University Research Chair in Art History at Concordia University. Major works include *Suspended Conversations: The Afterlife of Memory in Photographic Albums* (2001) and *Scissors, Paper, Stone: Expressions of Memory in Contemporary Photographic Art* (2007), as well as an edited collection, *Image & Imagination* (2005), all from McGill-Queen's University Press. Her forthcoming book, co-written with John Langford, is *A Cold War Tourist and His Camera* (MQUP, 2011). She is currently writing an intellectual biography of Michael Snow.

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 ELIZABETH LEGGE – SUPERFACIALITY: AUTHORITY, CANDOUR, AND ARTISTS
 PHOTOGRAPHING IN THE MIRROR

In 1969 Michael Snow, then living in New York, took a series of Polaroid photographs in a mirror. The complex final work, *Authorization*, now in the National Gallery of Canada, is mounted on the mirror that brought it into being. It lends itself to being understood as a “conceptual,” and almost seems to parody self-reflexivity, self-critique, and candour about the apparatus. It was published as the lead image for the first major article on Snow, Annette Michelson’s “Toward Snow,” in the June 1971 *Artforum*; and in February 1973 Michelson published it again, inserted into Robert Morris’s essay “Some Splashes in the Ebb Tide,” where it seemed to serve arguments about and conditions for making art at the time. If there is some ambiguity around whether *Authorization* achieves aimless phatic repetition or a cumulative intellectual yield, part of its interest is its apparent debt to William Anastasi’s *Nine Polaroid Photographs of a Mirror*, which was exhibited at the Dwan Gallery in 1966. The resemblance between the Anastasi and the Snow that seems to mimic it is actually a blind for a range of assumptions and intellectual concerns of the time that bear closer attention.

ELIZABETH LEGGE has written on Dada, Surrealism, and contemporary Canadian and British art, in a number of journals including *Art History*, *Word and Image*, and *Representations*. In 2005 she was a visiting professor at the Humanities Centre at Johns Hopkins University. Her book *Michael Snow, Wavelength* was released in 2009 by Afterall Books / MIT Press as part of the One Work series.

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 TRAFFIC
 CONCEPTUAL ART IN CANADA 1965 –1980
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GALLERY BUS TOUR | SUNDAY 28
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A free bus will be touring to the four University of Toronto galleries presenting TRAFFIC. Each stop will be introduced by artists featured in the exhibition. This tour is reserved for conference delegates and registrants and is available on a first-come, first-serve basis.

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SCHEDULE
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12:00PM Depart from Hart House, front steps on Hart House Circle
 5:00PM Return to Hart House

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 Blackwood Gallery, speaker ALLAN MACKAY
 Doris McCarthy Gallery, speaker ROBIN COLLYER
 University of Toronto Art Centre, speakers IAIN BAXTER & MAX DEAN
 Justina M. Barnicke Gallery, speaker SUZY LAKE

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 Note: Order of gallery visits subject to change
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SPECIAL OPENING HOURS | THURSDAY 25 – SUNDAY 28
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JUSTINA M. BARNICKE GALLERY | TH 10A-8P; F 10A-7P; SA-SU 12P-6P
 Hart House | University of Toronto | 7 Hart House Circle | Toronto ON
www.jmbgallery.ca | 416-978-8398

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UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO ART CENTRE | TH-F 12P-5P; SA 12P-4P; SU 1P-5P
 University College | University of Toronto | 15 King’s College Circle | Toronto ON
www.utac.utoronto.ca/ | 416-978-1838

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BLACKWOOD GALLERY | SA-SU 10P-3P
 University of Toronto Mississauga | 3359 Mississauga Road North
www.blackwoodgallery.ca | 905-828-3789

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DORIS MCCARTHY GALLERY | TH-F 10A-4P; SA-SU 12P-5P
 University of Toronto Scarborough | 1256 Military Trail
www.utsc.utoronto.ca/dmg | 416-287-7007
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CONCURRENT PROGRAMMING

INSTRUCTIONAL TAPES I Video Screening

Curated by **MAIKO TANAKA** in collaboration with **BARBARA FISCHER**

It could be said that 'school' is the archetypal site where well-defined social codes, roles and rules are inscribed and tested through ongoing confrontations between individual agents and top-down authority. These early video works of *Instructional Tapes*, ranging from the late '60s through to the early '80s, are situated precisely at this point of tension – between the possible and the prescribed. Like a curriculum of tapes exhumed from the past, this programme proposes that these instructional, demonstrative and documentary-like works be viewed as educational artifacts. They are contextualized within a unique period of art production, pre-dating the peak of the western art market system, while post-dating wide-scale student unrest stirred around '68, as well as the immediate access to TV and video production that spurred diverse counter-media practices.

Most of the artists in this selection are also known (some infamously) for their long-term engagement as art educators. In these tapes, they play multiple roles as teacher, student, learner and subtle critic with sly style, improvisational spirit, and tactical wit. Whether teaching a plant the alphabet, correcting a dog's spelling mistakes, teaching art students to dance to funk, setting up homemade science-inspired experiments or highlighting the phenomena of everyday life, the artists pay astute attention to the aesthetic and ritualistic details of learning in sincere and subversive ways. Subscribing perhaps to what Freud once articulated as the 'impossible task of education,' the artists' pedagogical attitudes counter assumptions and preconceived ideas of what teaching, learning and knowing are, or ought to be.

Part I: INSTRUCTING OTHERS, INSTRUCTING ONESELF

David Askevold	<i>Bliss DF (to the second power)</i> , 1977	06'30"
Martha Rosler	<i>Semiotics of the Kitchen</i> , 1975	06'09"
Lisa Steele	<i>Juggling</i> , 1972	06'00"
Terry Fox	<i>Children's Tapes</i> , 1974	18'00"
Suzy Lake	<i>The Natural Way to Draw</i> , 1975	13'00"

Part II: DOCUMENTATION OF INSTRUCTION

Howard Fried	<i>The Burghers of Fort Worth</i> , 1975	22'00"
John Baldessari	<i>Teaching a Plant the Alphabet</i> , 1972	18'08"
William Wegman	<i>Spelling Lesson</i> , 1973	00'49"
Adrian Piper	<i>Funk Lessons</i> , 1983	15'17"

BRUCE BARBER: WORK 1970-2008 I Book Launch

Edited by STEPHEN CLELAND and BLAIR FRENCH

Published by Artspace Visual Art Centre (Australia) and Te Tuhi Centre for the Arts, (New Zealand)

Developing out of major survey exhibitions at Artspace and Te Tuhi, this book surveys almost four decades of work by Canada-based artist Bruce Barber. Ranging across performance, installation, film, video and photography, Barber's practice has long been consistently situational and propositional, resulting in works that engage and question social and political regimes of power. The book features extensive documentation of Barber's work between 1970 and 2008 along with contributions by Bruce Barber, Christina Barton, Brad Buckley, Emma Bugden, Mark A. Cheetham, Alex Gawronski, Marc James Léger and Laura Preston.

FUNKAESTHETICS I Book Launch

Essays by LUIS JACOB, PAN WENDT and ADRIAN PIPER

Foreword by BARBARA FISCHER

Published in conjunction with the exhibition *Funkaesthetics*, presented at the Justina M. Barnicke Gallery from February 12 to March 23, 2009, and at the Confederation Centre Art Gallery (Charlottetown, PEI), from November 21, 2009 to February 28, 2010. Explores the social, political, pedagogical, and aesthetic influences of Funk culture within a trans-historical context.

TOP SONGS I Performance

IAN MURRAY

Join us for a special restaging of the seminal 1970 performance *Keeping on Top of the Top Song*. For the work, a drummer is instructed to play along with an audio track which s/he has not previously heard, searching for a point of reference or an underlying beat. The audio track consists of Ian Murray's *The Top Song* – a compilation of the first ten seconds of each of the top one hundred pop songs of the 1960s.

EXTRACURRICULAR SUGGESTIONS

EXHIBITIONS

GREG CURNOE *Original Copy* | Wynick/Tuck Gallery | 401 Richmond St W, Suite 128

ARNAUD MAGGS *The Dada Portraits* | Susuan Hobbs Gallery | 137 Tecumseh St

IAN WALLACE *The Economy of the Image* | The Power Plant | 231 Queens Quay W

EVENTS

Prefix Photo 22 release party + *To Be Real* closing reception | Thursday 25 | 7–10PM

Prefix Institute of Contemporary Art | 401 Richmond St W, Suite 124

FRIDAY 26 27 SATURDAY

SIDNEY SMITH HALL
ROOM 2102

UTAC ART LOUNGE
UNIVERSITY COLLEGE

BISSELL BUILDING
ROOM 205

HART HOUSE
GREAT HALL

HART HOUSE
COMMITTEES ROOM

HART HOUSE

BISSELL BUILDING
ROOM 205

SIDNEY SMITH HALL
ROOM 2102

9:00 – 11:00 CONCEPTUALISM, TRANSNATIONALISM AND DIASPORA		BREAK 11:00 – 11:15	
11:15 – 1:15 PLACE AND SPACE IN THE GLOBAL VILLAGE (I)	11:15 – 1:15 CONCEPTUALISM: CENTRES, NETWORKS, EXCHANGES (I)	LUNCH 1:15 – 2:30	
2:30 – 3:30 CONCEPTUAL PEDAGOGY	2:30 – 3:30 MICHAEL SNOW	BREAK 3:30 – 3:45	
3:45 – 5:45 INSTRUCTIONAL TAPES Screening	3:45 – 5:45 CONCEPTUALISM: CENTRES, NETWORKS, EXCHANGES (II)	EVENING BREAK 5:45 – 6:30	
6:30 – 8:00 BLAKE STIMSON The Interior of Art		8:00 – 10:00 RECEPTION	

8:30 - 6:00
FRIDAY AND
SATURDAY

REGISTRATION
AND
GUEST
SERVICES

9:00 – 11:00 SOUTH DINING ROOM PLACE AND SPACE IN THE GLOBAL VILLAGE (II)	9:00 – 11:00 CONCEPTUAL ART IS DEAD. LONG LIVE CONCEPTUALISM! (I)	BREAK 11:00 – 11:15	
11:15 – 12:15 SOUTH DINING ROOM N.E. THING CO.	11:15 – 12:15 NSCAD	LUNCH 12:15 – 1:30	
1:30 – 3:00 GREAT HALL TERRY SMITH One and Three Ideas	BREAK 3:00 – 3:15		
7:00 – 9:00 MUSIC ROOM CLOSING RECEPTION: TOP SONGS + INSTRUCTIONAL TAPES + FUNKAESTHETICS AND BRUCE BARBER BOOK LAUNCHES			3:15 – 5:15 CONCEPTUAL ART IS DEAD. LONG LIVE CONCEPTUALISM! (II)
EVENING BREAK 5:15 – 6:00			

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CONCEPTUALISM: CENTRES, NETWORKS, EXCHANGES (II)
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RESPONDENT: ANDY PATTON

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 SIMON BROWN – CONCEPTUAL PRACTICES IN CHARLOTTE COUNTY, NEW BRUNSWICK, 1969 TO THE PRESENT DAY: OVERVIEW OF A PARA-MARGINAL MILLIEU
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In the Fall of 1969 Robert Barry drove from New York to Halifax, where he would participate in David Askevold's *Projects Class* at the Nova Scotia College of Art and Design. It was during this stay at NSCAD that he would realize the now-celebrated *Decide* on a single common idea piece. On his way to Halifax, Barry entered Canada at the international border crossing between Calais, Maine and St. Stephen, New Brunswick. Understandably tired after ten hours of driving, he decided to stop for the evening at the Busy Bee Motel on Highway #1 leading out of St. Stephen towards Nova Scotia. Before turning in for the night however, Barry became involved in a discussion with the janitor of the motel, Randall Gullison.

During the discussion with Robert Barry, the janitor became somewhat perplexed, then intrigued. When learning of his *Inert Gas Series*, Gullison contended that he himself also executed on regular basis actions wherein the imperceptibility of the action and its aftereffects became the locus of the action's meaning and affect, such as in his habitual emptying of the motel's liquid waste into the nearby Passamaquoddy Bay.

Robert Barry left Charlotte County the next morning, but the repercussions of his brief stay were felt for several years following through the activities of a small group loosely based out of the Whistle Cove commune on Grand Manan Island and headed by the aforementioned janitor's cousin, Donny Gullison. At its heyday in the early 1970s, their activities were visible primarily in the form of collaborative earthworks (the well-known *Gravel Pit* pieces) and actions that involved the corporeal transfer of small amounts of fluid from one body of water to another (the infamous *Pissing In the River* series).

The fact of having grown up in Charlotte County, and knowing personally many of the key players in the "movement" (mostly now retired from art practice and/or deceased), gives me a unique perspective on this fascinating and little-known aspect of the history of Conceptualism in Canada.

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 Writer and artist SIMON BROWN grew up in the rural community of Old Ridge, New Brunswick and now resides in Montreal, Quebec, where he is finishing an MFA at Concordia University. His recent book, *The Shit That Excretes The Person*, is available from Anteism artist-book distribution.

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 PAUL WOODROW – HISTORY IS WRITTEN BACKWARDS BY PEOPLE WHO WEREN'T THERE
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The talk addresses the problem of getting things "right" ethically when using systems of representation. Writing about the past becomes an aesthetic of the impossible since representation inevitable fails to represent those who were present in the past. The discussion will give an anecdotal account of events that took place in the seventies in Calgary from a privileged and biased point of view of a participant whose faltering memory is implicated in the creation of a fiction.

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 PAUL WOODROW is a professor in the Department of Art at the University of Calgary.

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 KATHLEEN MCLEAN – LINES AND OTHER EPHEMERAL MARKINGS: BILL VAZAN'S EARLY CONCEPTUAL WORKS
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Taking as a starting point the Montreal-based artist Bill Vazan's line works of the late 1960s and early 1970s, this paper examines the intersections of conceptual art and the space of the public art gallery in Canada - the relationship between new modes of working and notions of authorship and their accommodations by the museum. By focusing on the dialectical relationship of the artist to the museum, the paper will revisit this understudied moment to make fresh connections between an expanded aesthetics and cultural production. Originating from Vazan's personal interest in ephemeral markings while collaborative in execution, *Canada Line*, *Worldline*, *Intercommunication Lines*, and *Life Line* provide the context for consideration of a focused period of Vazan's hybrid practice – aligned as it was with the concerns of land art, ephemerality, and institutional critique.

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 KATHLEEN MCLEAN holds a master's in Art History from York University. From 1999 to 2006 she was Assistant Curator at the Art Gallery of York University, Toronto where she curated exhibitions by Pierre Bismuth, Peter Bowyer, Stephane La Rue, Sally Speth, and Scott Lyall. She works on public programs at the Art Gallery of Ontario.

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REIKO TOMII – A NETWORKING GURU: MATSUZAWA YUTAKA AND JAPANESE
CONCEPTUALISM

The elder statesman of Japanese conceptualism, Matsuzawa Yutaka (1922-2006) emerged in the early 1960s with his singular text-based practice as part of the country's Anti-Art (Han-geijutsu) movement. He combined his eschewal of materialism with his eclectic interest in philosophy and religion (especially Esoteric Buddhism), occult and parascience, UFO's and contemporary physics to achieve what can be called "cosmic conceptualism."

His decisive shift to anti-materialism came in 1964 with the legendary "revelation," after which he pursued diverse "acts of 'anti-civilization' engaged by humankind equipped with an 'omnipotence of sorts' under no restriction" throughout his life. His mantra of "vanishing" and command to mentally visualize "nothingness" took many forms and directed to all sentient beings.

Mail art was his choice of delivery, suitable in light of his remote residence in central Japan away from Tokyo, the center of contemporary art. An extensive use of the mail-art strategy made it possible for him to transmit his messages widely within the country, across the borders, and even to interplanetary distance. During the 1970s, when Japan's art world had an increasingly inward-looking tendency, Matsuzawa participated in the international networking of the Amsterdam-based Art & Project, contributing three Bulletins.

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REIKO TOMII is an independent scholar and curator who investigates post-1945 Japanese art in global and local contexts. Her co-curated exhibitions include Global Conceptualism (Queens Museum of Art, 1999) and Century City (Tate Modern, 2001). She co-authored with Eric C. Shiner *Making a Home: Japanese Contemporary Artists in New York* (Japan Society, 2007), and contributed to *Collectivism After Modernism* (University of Minnesota Press, 2007), *Art, Anti-Art, Non-Art* (Getty Research Institute, 2007), and *Hitoshi Nomura: Early Works* (McCaffrey Fine Art, 2010). She is a co-founder of PoNJA-GenKon, a listserv group of specialists interested in contemporary Japanese art.

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ANDREW KEAR – GORDON LEBREDT, IN THE TOWN THAT CONCEPTUAL ART
FORGOT

Today we remember places like Halifax and Vancouver as hubs of Canadian conceptualism. Conversely, Winnipeg's artistic legacy is often seen as being largely bereft of a conceptual phase; "the town that conceptual art forgot," in the words of one commentator. Winnipeg did however play backdrop to a vital artistic milieu throughout the 1970s, and some of its members did embrace diverging conceptual strategies. This paper focuses on one of the city's earliest and most exacting practitioners, Gordon Lebrecht.

After studying architecture in the late 1960s, Lebrecht majored in painting at the University of Manitoba's School of Art. His early "photorealist" canvases – routinely displayed incorrectly and misinterpreted until recently – are important for the way they presage later, more robustly conceptual, installations, wall drawings, and text works concerned with the visual representation of ideas related to demarcation and the breach of boundary. The focal point of this paper will be Lebrecht's return to architecture, or rather to a predetermined architectural sign system that served as the basis for a series of installations entitled *Point of No Return*. This series sought critical engagement with issues of institutional ideology, artists' complicit involvement in capitalist production and exchange, and, in Lebrecht's words, "failure, death, [and] madness."

Most of Gordon Lebrecht's output from the 1970s was made while he was still an art student. Moreover, the documentation that exists is sometimes sparse and incomplete. Nonetheless, an undeniable overall richness and complexity remains apparent. Many of Winnipeg's earliest conceptualists, including eventually Lebrecht, left the prairies during the 1970s and 1980s. However, the particular mixture of rigor and experimentation found in Lebrecht's work from this period provides clear indication that Winnipeg, even if it is the town that conceptual art forgot, did not itself forget about conceptual art.

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ANDREW KEAR is Associate Curator of Historical Canadian Art at the Winnipeg Art Gallery. He holds a BFA (Nova Scotia College of Art and Design), a Masters in Canadian art history (Carleton University), and a Masters in philosophy (University of Toronto). He has curated exhibitions on portraiture, Canadian abstraction, and the artist Thoreau MacDonald. His recent published essays include "Solitude's Paradox" in *Ann MacIntosh Duff: To Love and To Cherish* (Tom Thomson Art Gallery, 2008) and "The Vindication of the Bureaucrat" in *Paper Wait 10 + 11* (Ace Art Inc., 2009). He is currently working toward separate exhibitions on the sculptor Eva Stubbs and the painter William Kurelek; catalogue essays for both are forthcoming.

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KEYNOTE LECTURE
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BLAKE STIMSON – THE INTERIOR OF ART

This talk will consider the work of Vito Acconci in the context of a broad history of the container form that ranges from the art of the European Middle Ages up through the box art that was so prevalent in the 1960s. That history is marked by a progressive dissolution of the boundary between inside and outside culminating in, among other things, the strict constructivism of conceptual art. Acconci's art offers a critical alternative by reinvigorating the surface tension that distinguishes inside from outside. This artistic effort is significant for the world we find ourselves in today, it will be argued, because it draws our attention to the feeble and evermore spectral divide that founds the experience of, and hence the possibility for, public life.

This presentation is part of a larger study with the working title "Guilt as Form" that considers five artists whose mature work emerged in the 1970s: Hans Haacke, Vito Acconci, Mary Kelly, Dan Graham, and Jeff Wall. A version of the chapter on Wall's work was published a couple of years ago in the *Oxford Art Journal* under the title "The Artiste."

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 BLAKE STIMSON is Professor of Art History at the University of California, Davis. He is the author of *The Pivot of the World: Photography and Its Nation* (2004), and coeditor (with Alexander Alberro) of *Conceptual Art: A Critical Anthology* (2000), both published by the MIT Press.

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WITH AN INTRODUCTION BY BARBARA FISCHER

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RESPONDENTS
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Louis Kaplan
Sara Robayo Sheridan
William Wood
Grant Arnold
Ian Carr-Harris

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KEYNOTE
 —

Terry Smith

—
PAPERS
 —

Mark Cheetham
Anne Whitelaw
Leah Modigliani
Craig Leonard
 —
Dan Adler
Christof Migone
Sharla Sava
 —
Adam Lauder
Jamie Hilder
 —
Gordon Lebrecht
Jayne Wark
 —
William Wood
Hans Maria de Wolf
Fiona McDonald
Clive Robertson
 —

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PLACE AND SPACE IN THE GLOBAL VILLAGE (II)
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RESPONDENT: LOUIS KAPLAN

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 MARK CHEETHAM – PUTTING CONCEPTS IN THEIR PLACE: GI AND THE NATION QUESTION

The collective General Idea (1969-94) developed a potent strain of widely circulated internationally acclaimed conceptualist art from their base in Toronto. In part by redeploing the tactics of conceptualism's forefathers – especially Duchamp and Yves Klein – G.I. famously created a new and quintessentially postmodern art scene in Canada. While they acted locally by founding Art Metropole and publishing FILE, the many issues that their work address are anything but local or national. Copyright, AIDS, celebrity, the address of these and other of their hobbyhorses is international. Dissemination was their trademark.

I will explore the productive tensions between local and global in GI's work as a way to entertain the larger question of conceptualism's place in Canada. Ken Lum has written that "there is too much ignorance regarding the contextuality of historical events and practices in Canadian art." AA Bronson (developing a proposal for The Power Plant imagined by GI) was a pioneer in addressing this lack. The exhibition and book *From Sea to Shining Sea* (1987, The Power Plant) was a "metaphorical" history of artist-initiated activities in Canada. A discourse of the nation – which does not imply nationalism – is central to Bronson's mandate in this project. In his search for "the forms most unique to Canada," he looked at regional differences in artists' initiatives across the country. In addition to *From Sea to Shining Sea*, I will examine 'Canadian' imagery in GI's work, including the adoption of the CN Tower in the 'High Profile' event marking their 10-year anniversary, the Duchampian infection of Tom Thomson's famous image *Northern River* in 1994, and especially the world map showing an absent Canada in *A Mare usque ad Mare*, the companion to the 1987 The Power Plant exhibition.

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 MARK A. CHEETHAM writes on art theory, art, and visual culture from c.1700 to the present. Recent publications include *Abstract Art Against Autonomy: Infection, Resistance, and Cure since the 60s* (Cambridge UP, 2006) and *Editing the Image: Strategies in the Production and Reception of the Visual* (co-editor, University of Toronto Press, 2008). In 2006, he received the Art Journal Award from the College Art Association of America for "Matting the Monochrome: Malevich, Klein, & Now." In 2008, he was awarded the Curatorial Writing Award for Essay (Long) from the Ontario Association of Art Galleries for "The Transformative Abstraction of Robert Houle." Cheetham is a professor in the Department of Art, University of Toronto.

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 ANNE WHITELAW – THE LEGACY OF ABSENCE: CONCEPTUAL ART IN EDMONTON

In 1969, in celebration of the opening of its new building on Churchill Square, the Edmonton Art Gallery presented two exhibitions of conceptual art. *Air Art* and *Place and Process* were important events in the history of artistic production in Edmonton: first because they brought many of the central figures in the history of conceptualism to the city, and second because they constituted the last time conceptual art was presented in the city under the Gallery's sponsorship. Following closely on the conclusion of the exhibitions, the Director of the Edmonton Art Gallery Bill Kirby left his position to undertake graduate work, and the Gallery's Board of Trustees replaced him with curator Karen Wilkin and director Terry Fenton in a bid to fill the institution with work that was more in keeping with the Trustees' own collecting interests. The resulting permanent collection of American, British and Canadian modernist painting and sculpture is one of the strengths of the current Art Gallery of Alberta, and together with strong modernist tendencies in the Department of Art and Design at the University of Alberta, has been extremely influential on artistic production in Edmonton over the past 40 years.

This modernist art history is well known and it is not my intention to rehearse its narrative or to either bemoan the virtual absence of conceptual art in the city or find glimmers of its presence in unexpected places. Rather, this paper seeks to understand how the absence of a critical and engaged art practice in Edmonton during the 1970s and 80s shaped the institutional practices of art organizations in the city. In particular, this paper will examine the activities of the city's artist-run centre Latitude 53; the definition of "contemporary art" amongst Gallery staff and the city's artists; and the impact of changes in Canada Council funding structures on the Gallery's programming. As I will argue, the legacy of the absence of conceptual art in Edmonton was (and largely continues to be) separation from Canadian and international contemporary artistic practices and the development of an isolationist perspective on its own art history.

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 ANNE WHITELAW is associate professor in the Department of Art and Design at the University of Alberta. Her research examines the intersections of art historiography and cultural institutions in Canada, with a particular focus on practices of exhibition and collecting as a means of understanding the formation of nationhood and taste cultures. Dr. Whitelaw has published on the display of Canadian art at the National Gallery of Canada, on the integration of Aboriginal art into the permanent displays of national museums, and has curated two exhibitions on the collecting history of the Art Gallery of Alberta. She is the co-editor of *The Visual Arts in Canada: The Twentieth Century* (Oxford University Press 2010) and is currently completing a book on the development of art galleries and cultural policy in Canada.

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LEAH MODIGLIANI – SEEK AND YE SHALL FIND: SEXUAL POLITICS IN VANCOUVER’S DEFEATED LANDSCAPE

This paper addresses images and narratives of the eroticized female body that exist in conceptual artworks of NE Thing Co., Jeff Wall and Ian Wallace between the years of 1968 and 1971. It has been well established that these artists’ photographs of Vancouver’s industrial and urban zones served as a basis for the emerging discourse of the “defeated landscape” in that city’s history of conceptual art, but the influence of gender relations on such work has gone largely unremarked upon. This is especially surprising since the counter-tradition of Vancouver photography is said to begin in 1978 with Jeff Wall’s *The Destroyed Room* (1978) and *Picture for Women* (1979), photographs often discussed in the context of 1970s feminist theory. This paper analyzes the complex relationship between a number of factors at play in 1970s Vancouver: male artists’ articulation of an art historical discourse that supports their work, the influence of restrictions placed on figuration by a growing feminist movement, and the negative relationship of such conceptual artworks to expressionist landscape vis-à-vis the patriarchal example of Emily Carr.

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LEAH MODIGLIANI is an artist and writer living in Toronto. She earned a BFA degree from Concordia University (1993), a MFA from the San Francisco Art Institute (1997), and a PhD in Art History and Criticism at Stony Brook University (2010). Her visual work has been exhibited at Yerba Buena Center for the Arts in San Francisco, the Art Gallery of Nova Scotia in Halifax, the Museum of Contemporary Canadian Art in Toronto, and the Moore Space in Miami amongst other places. Her writing can be found online, in academic journals and contemporary art magazines such as *Art Criticism* and *C Magazine*. Her visual and written work is marked by an interest in critiquing the institutional context of art within contemporary economics and politics.

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CRAIG LEONARD – INVISIBILITY AND DISAPPEARANCE

Jean Baudrillard was interviewed by Guy Bellavance for *Parachute* magazine in June 1983 on a lecture he gave in Montréal on his recently published book *Les Stratégies fatales*. In this interview, Baudrillard describes a “mode of disappearance” which is meant to challenge conventional and functional aesthetic forms found in the “dominant modes of production.”

Applying Baudrillard’s strategy of disappearance as a mode of production that leads to new possibilities, this paper will discuss invisibility and disappearance in conceptual art as it occurred in Canada (and elsewhere to widen the scope) in the decade spanning 1969-79.

Leonard champions disappearance as the truest strategy of conceptual art, while locating invisibility -- from empathy to telepathy -- beyond its effective contrariness to aesthetic conventions. Works to be discussed include: Robert Barry’s *Telepathic Piece* (1969, Simon Fraser University), selections from David Askevold’s *Projects Class* (1969, NSCAD), selected projects from Lucy R. Lippards’s exhibition *955,000* (1969, Vancouver Art Gallery and UBC), James Lee Byars’ *One Hundred Questions* (1970, NSCAD), Robert Filliou’s *Telepathic Music, #2* (1973, Art Metropole and Western Front), Noel Harding’s *Dramatic Space for Internal Dialogue* (1976, Center for Experimental Art and Communication) and Gerald Ferguson’s *Relational Sculpture* (1970-2009, Halifax).

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CRAIG LEONARD is a Halifax-based artist and faculty member at NSCAD University.

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CONCEPTUAL ART IS DEAD. LONG LIVE CONCEPTUALISM (I)
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RESPONDENT: SARA ROBAYO SHERIDAN

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 DAN ADLER – LABOURING THE POINT: ‘CONCEPTUAL’ NOTES ON THE REVIEWING OF RECENT ART IN TORONTO

Surveying a range of recent exhibitions held in Toronto, I will argue that the notion of what constitutes “artistic labour” has been brought into question in particularly productive ways in the Toronto context. I will deal with artists known for labourious approaches to art-making, such as Kristan Horton, James Carl, and Kelly Mark, in terms time-consuming methods associated with ostensibly humble materials that are often simply at hand (taped from the television, lying around the studio). Second, I will consider how some artists, such as Ian Carr-Harris and Michelle Gay, evoke the activity of labouring within the contexts of the classroom or the office. Third, I will discuss the highly attentive depiction of subject matter that is assertively banal, as in the case of Roy Arden’s photographs of trash in the gutter, Zin Taylor’s videos about pieces of discarded wood, or Krista Buecking’s drawings of bricks. Finally, I will deal with some artists’ concern with representing “in-between spaces” identified with the preparation and processing of art objects, as in the case of Scott Lyall and Hadley + Maxwell. Such work critiques traditional ideas of artistic skill and importance in a manner that engages in a complex dialogue with conceptualist traditions.

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 DAN ADLER is an assistant professor of art history at York University. He has published in the London-based journal *Art History* and regularly contributes reviews to *Artforum* and *Frieze* magazines. He is the author of *Hanne Darboven: Cultural History, 1880-1983* (Afterall Books/MIT Press). An alumnus of the Whitney Museum’s Independent Study Program, he has taught previously at the University of Guelph, Hunter College, RISD, and the New School in New York. He was formerly senior editor of the *Bibliography of the History of Art* at the Getty Research Institute in Los Angeles. He is currently working on a book manuscript entitled *Tainted Goods*, which deals with the aesthetics of large-scale and sprawling exhibitions by several contemporary artists, including Liz Magor, Geoffrey Farmer, Rachel Harrison, Isa Genzken, and Thomas Hirschhorn.

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 CHRISTOF MIGONE – I THINK, THEREFORE I FOLLOW: THE SEQUITUR PRINCIPLE IN CONTEMPORARY CONCEPTUAL PRACTICES

Taking Vito Acconci’s *Following Piece* (1969) as a point of departure, and passing by Thérèse Mastroiacovo’s *Following Following Piece* (2008 - 2010), this presentation will address the genealogical and ontological implications at play in several recurring conceptual practices. From furtive performances to idiosyncratic bibliographies, from renegade citationality to disjunctive lineages, the current field is densely populated with the ever-widening scope of hyper-referential tactics which deny origin, abrogate expression and swallows its source materials whole. The result is a panoply of unrecognizable forms masquerading as facsimiles. The stark dichotomies implied here in order to amplify the polemical screen what would be more accurately described as nuanced and fine tuned projects. They don’t push, they nudge. They are panegyric acts which also prick to deflate aura and artifice. One step forward and backward at the same time.

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 CHRISTOF MIGONE is an artist, writer, and curator. He obtained an MFA from NSCAD in 1996 and a PhD from the Department of Performance Studies at the Tisch School of the Arts of New York University in 2007. He lives in Toronto and is a lecturer at the University of Toronto Mississauga and the Director/Curator of the Blackwood Gallery.

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 SHARLA SAVA – CHRISTOS DIKEAKOS’ OLYMPIC VILLAGE LANDSCAPES

“Christos Dikeakos’ Olympic Village Landscapes” examines a recent suite of photographs by Vancouver-based artist Christos Dikeakos. The aim of the paper is to uncover some of the reasons informing the artist’s approach to the urban landscape, and, in particular, his documentation of Vancouver’s Olympic Games. While photo-journalistic images of the Games highlight the spectacular beauty of the site, it is interesting to observe the way that Dikeakos’ work operates as a kind of visual glitch or interruption of this dominant logic. The paper returns to formative historical influences, considering Dikeakos’ current pictures in relation to the artist’s involvement in the Vancouver photo-conceptualist experiments of the sixties, and his contact with contemporaries including Jeff Wall and Robert Smithson.

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 SHARLA SAVA is currently Assistant Professor Adjunct at The Cooper Union for the Advancement of Science and Art in New York. She has lectured, curated exhibitions, and published a variety of articles about art after modernism, discussing the work of Robert Filliou, Antonia Hirsch, Ray Johnson, and N.E. Thing Co., among others. Her book manuscript, *Cinematic Pictures: The Art of Jeff Wall*, is under revision and will be published by McGill-Queens University Press.

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Business (Not) As Usual... (II) Session C

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N.E. THING CO. LTD.

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 RESPONDENT: WILLIAM WOOD

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 ADAM LAUDER – THE EXECUTIVE FICTION OF IAIN BAXTER&

In a recent essay, scholar David Tomas reads the seminal N.E. Thing Co. piece *Environment* (1969) as replicating “the material and symbolic trappings of a traditional corporate environment” (my emphasis) while simultaneously arguing that this environment responded to and visualized changing economic realities within the business world. This positioning of NETCO reproduces the non-transformative paradox at the heart of Benjamin Buchloh’s influential characterization of the practice of hiring third parties to execute works of Conceptual art as an “aesthetic of administration.” I argue that Buchloh’s paradigm presents an inadequate account of the phantasmatic features of the managerial culture embodied by IAIN BAXTER& in his undertheorized role as the “President” of the conceptual enterprise. Identifying himself neither as an “art worker” nor “administrator”—styling himself, rather, in the mould of the New Age executive promulgated by Marshall McLuhan in *Culture is Our Business* (1970)—BAXTER&’s supernumerary status subverts definitions of Conceptual art as bureaucratic labour and injects greater dynamism into representations of “the business model.”

Following Chris Gilbert’s assessment of the complex ways in which Conceptual art was informed by coeval theorizations (and popular fantasies) of liberated labour, I re-frame the operational logic of NETCO as a satirical exploration of 1960s representations of unalienated executive labour. Revisionist studies of NETCO have rightly recuperated the corporate activity of Ingrid Baxter; yet they have also obscured the operational logic of the Company by submerging the material specificities of Company ventures under a rubric of “collaboration.” It is significant that the Company, initially consisting exclusively of BAXTER&, only ever contained two members: both of them occupying “executive” positions. The complex ways in which these roles, as roles, were publicly negotiated (including the progressive promotions of Ingrid) represents an area for investigation that has been overlooked. My analysis focuses on IAIN BAXTER&’s travesty of codes of “business masculinity.”

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 ADAM LAUDER is W.P. Scott Chair for Research in E-Librarianship at York University. He is the author of a chapter on N.E. Thing Co. to be published in the forthcoming YYZ imprint, *Byproduct: On the Excess of Embedded Art Practices* (2010). His interest in N.E. Thing Co. develops out of his ongoing work as a co-editor of the IAIN BAXTER& catalogue *Raisonné*. Lauder has published writing in *Future Anterior* (forthcoming) as well as *Hunter and Cook* and *C Magazine* (forthcoming). He holds a Master of Information (University of Toronto, 2006) and is completing an MA in art history at Concordia University.

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JAMIE HILDER – THE ARTREPRENEURIAL SPIRIT: THE N.E. THING CO., AS A GOING CONCERN

“There is no such thing [as society]! There are only individual men and women and there are families.”

— Margaret Thatcher

My research investigates the intertwinement of business and art discourses in the familial work of Iain and Ingrid Baxter as the N. E. Thing Co. Concentrating on two exhibitions specifically – the installation of their corporate headquarters in the National Gallery of Canada in 1969 and the documentation of their joining of the Vancouver Board of Trade at the Sonabend Gallery in 1971 – I position the corporate activities of NETCO within larger discourses surrounding conceptual art as enterprise. I pose the question: did NETCO’s enthusiasm for a globally networked business environment and commercial vernacular result in a disengagement from ideas of the local and its politics? Nancy Shaw, in her 1991 history of collaboration-based artwork in Vancouver, argues that NETCO’s standing as a husband and wife partnership allowed it a freedom that a collective like the bureaucratically administered, Canada Council-funded Intermedia was structurally excluded from. I follow this line of thinking further, and examine the figure of the entrepreneur and the rhetoric of small business as it has come to function within economic discourse under neoliberalism. Has the figure of the entrepreneur usurped that of the artist as the locus of creativity, as we might glean from the popularity of a text like Richard Florida’s *The Rise of the Creative Class*? Has social entrepreneurship displaced the idea of collective responsibility? How has the very critique of capitalism that has its roots in the theory and art of the 1960s been recuperated by contemporary politico-economic discourse to strengthen the argument for de-regulation and productive freedom, and is it fair – or even possible – to locate a nascent form of that discourse at the business end of NETCO’s project?

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 JAMIE HILDER is a Vancouver-based artist and critic whose work engages with economics and urbanism. He received his PhD in English from the University of British Columbia in 2010, where he completed a dissertation on the International Concrete Poetry Movement, 1955-1971. His current research engages with the idea of the Economist’s Aesthetic, and traces the intersections of economic thought and modes of cultural production in the age of globalization. His most recent art project, *Downtown Ambassador*, played an integral part in a BC Human Rights Tribunal complaint brought against the Downtown Vancouver Business Improvement Association in 2010. He currently teaches in the English Department Simon Fraser University.

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Business (Not) As Usual... (II) Session D

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NSCAD

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 RESPONDENT: GRANT ARNOLD

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GORDON LEBREDT – SETTING THINGS STRAIGHT: COMIC RELIEF AND CRITICAL CIRCUMSTANCES IN THE WORK OF GARRY NEILL KENNEDY

Drawing extensively on the work of Garry Neill Kennedy and Freud’s 1905 text *Jokes and Their Relation to the Unconscious*, my intent is to play the “comic” off the “concept” with the hope of showing how Kennedy’s deployment of the Witz functions as a critical effraction, an explosive counterpoint to the “concept,” a leitmotif that I believe marks not as some would have it, a decisive gulf between aesthetics and art in general, but perhaps an impulse, a “theoretical Trieb” that works both sides of the street as it were.

I will argue that in many of his works Kennedy’s recourse to comic affect is strategic insofar as its intent is to initiate a diversion, or feint, a manoeuvre whose initial effect—that of suspension—offers him a means by which he can momentarily disarm his audience, if only to enjoin them to undertake a reading of the ideological implications of a particular context, an expenditure that he himself invariably declines to make. In Kennedy’s hands, the “joke-work” appears to function as an appeal to the very thing that he wishes to avoid: critical or theoretical expenditure. Given that in many cases Kennedy’s interventions can be considered tendentious, critical import is substantially reduced by this opening effraction; laughter, should thus become the most economical means with which to bring the viewer on side, to have he or she see things in much the same manner as the artist does—through the eyes of an Aufsitzer, a duplicitous trickster or joker. At the moment of exposure, the joke is as much on the viewer as it is on the institutional context and its protocols. Once exposed, the viewer is in effect re-inscribed—l’après coup—into the scene of critical analysis or theory. He or she is, in this instance, involuntarily in cahoots with the artist, which is to say, already in place in the set up, already attuned to the theoretical demands of his chosen “object.”

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 GORDON LEBREDT is an artist and writer who was born in Winnipeg and now lives and works in Toronto. His recent exhibitions include *2 Colossi for YYZ* (from one to the other), an intervention for YYZ Artists Outlet’s thirtieth anniversary (2009–2010), *Marchland* at the Christopher Cutts Gallery in Toronto (2010), *Giving Notice* at Halifax’s Dalhousie Art Gallery (2010), *Traffic: Conceptual Art in Canada 1967–1980* at the Justina M. Barnicke Gallery, the University of Toronto Art Centre and the Doris McCarthy Gallery (2010) and *Sally Späth, Josh Thorpe, Gordon Lebredt* at G Gallery in Toronto (2010). His book, *Gordon Lebredt: Nonworks 1975–2008*, will be published in the fall of 2010.

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JAYNE WARK – PRINTMAKING AS PERFORMATIVE AND CONCEPTUAL MEDIUM

This paper provides a brief overview of several prints that were produced with the Lithography Workshop that ran at the Nova Scotia College of Art and Design from 1969 to 1976. This selection from the Workshop's overall production comprises a group in which conceptual art principles merged with performance-based methods of execution. On the surface, these prints may appear not to accord with either the broad or narrow categorizations of conceptual art outlined above because, as prints, they do not constitute the dematerialized practice associated with the former, nor does the visually-oriented nature of their content conform strictly to the analytical or linguistic precepts of the latter. Moreover, the very premise of a convergence between conceptual principles and performance-based methods conflicts with what historian Benjamin Buchloh has described as conceptual art's denigration of those practices that "are of performance, of the body" (Buchloh, "The Reception of the Sixties," October 69 [1994], 18).

These caveats notwithstanding, I will argue that this group of prints not only demonstrates how the principles of conceptual art could be unexpectedly manifest in the traditional and labour-intensive medium of lithography, but also how they could be enacted through various forms of embodied performative practice. The selection of prints under discussion includes works by well-known American artists such as Sol LeWitt, John Baldessari and Vito Acconci as well as several by Canadian artists, including Joyce Wieland, Patrick Kelly and N.E. Thing Co. The paper concludes by considering how this historical convergence between conceptual principles and performative methods has resonated into the present through the example of contemporary Canadian artist, Jason Fitzpatrick. Fitzpatrick's work embraces the key principles of conceptual art in that it is generated by means of a set of verbal instructions, yet in its execution it veers decisively from the cerebral to the bodily through the endurance of extreme tattooing merged with the exaltation of hard-core heavy metal music.

JAYNE WARK is Professor of Art History at the Nova Scotia College of Art and Design. Her book *Radical Gestures: Feminism and Performance Art in North America* was published in 2006 by McGill-Queen's University Press. She is currently working on a book on the history of conceptual art in Canada and is curator of the Atlantic section of the exhibition *Traffic: Conceptual Art in Canada 1965-1980*.

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KEYNOTE LECTURE–
TERRY SMITH – ONE AND THREE IDEAS: CONCEPTUALISM BEFORE, DURING AND AFTER CONCEPTUAL ART
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It is a nice paradox that "conceptualism" came into existence after the advent of Conceptual Art – most prominently and programmatically in the *Global Conceptualism: Points of Origin, 1950s-1980s* (New York: Queens Museum, 1999) – mainly in order to highlight the fact that innovative, experimental art practices occurred in Japan, South America, and elsewhere prior to, at the same time and after the European and US initiatives that had come to seem paradigmatic, and to emphasize that these practices were more socially and politically engaged than the Euro-American exemplars. Retrospection of this kind has also shone spotlights on what once were minor movements in EuroAmerican art (fluxus, for example). More interesting is that it has thrown presumptions about essentializing art historical narratives into doubt. Triggered by remarks made at the time by some of the key artists (and, later, curators) involved, this paper will revisit the terms "Conceptual Art" and "conceptualism" as pointers to what was at stake in the unraveling of late modern art during the 1960s and in art's embrace of contemporaneity since.

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TERRY SMITH, FAHA, CIHA, is Andrew W. Mellon Professor of Contemporary Art History and Theory in the Department of the History of Art and Architecture at the University of Pittsburgh, and a Visiting Professor in the Faculty of Architecture, University of Sydney. He is the 2009 winner of the Mather Award for art criticism conferred by the College Art Association (USA). During 2001-2002 he was a Getty Scholar at the Getty Research Institute, Los Angeles, and in 2007-8 the GlaxoSmithKlein Senior Fellow at the National Humanities Research Centre, Raleigh-Durham. From 1994-2001 he was Power Professor of Contemporary Art and Director of the Power Institute, Foundation for Art and Visual Culture, University of Sydney. He was a member of the Art & Language group (New York) and a founder of Union Media Services (Sydney). He is the author of a number of books, notably *Making the Modern: Industry, Art and Design in America* (University of Chicago Press, 1993; inaugural Georgia O'Keeffe Museum Book Prize 2009); *Transformations in Australian Art*, volume 1; *The Nineteenth Century: Landscape, Colony and Nation*, volume 2; *The Twentieth Century: Modernism and Aboriginality* (Craftsman House, Sydney, 2002); *The Architecture of Aftermath* (University of Chicago Press, 2006) and *What is Contemporary Art?* (University of Chicago Press, 2009). He is working on *Contemporary Art of the World* (Laurence King and Pearson/Prentice-Hall, 2011). A foundation Board member of the Museum of Contemporary Art, Sydney, he is currently a Board member of the Andy Warhol Museum, Pittsburgh.

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WITH AN INTRODUCTION BY ADAM WELCH
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CONCEPTUAL ART IS DEAD. LONG LIVE CONCEPTUALISM (II)

RESPONDENT: IAN CARR-HARRIS

WILLIAM WOOD – TRAFFICKING IN CONCEPTUALISM

Given the propensity of conceptual art to mimic and inhabit administrative protocols and bureaucratic procedures, it seems important to examine the terms of the institutional art historical revision of phenomenon “conceptual art”. What relation did conceptual art have to notions of nation, movement and aesthetic categories, specifically in Canadian contexts? By looking to revise the concept of aesthetic geography I first outlined with regard to the N. E. Thing Co. some 20 years ago, I look to open up discussion about why conceptual art today carries a load of cultural capital and expanded reference when, historically, it was rather restricted and, often, notorious for its denial of convention. Concentrating on some activities in Vancouver and Halifax in the late-1960s and early 1970s—and especially their ties to international artistic currents—will lead to questions about Canada, conceptualism and the consecration of these activities. Threading the discussion through Pierre Bourdieu’s analysis of the field of cultural production permits a framework stressing relations of autonomy and heteronomy not yet applied to these activities yet eminently pertinent to their emphasis on inquiry into the autonomy of aesthetic experience and the heteronomy of novel materials and forms of artistic practice, not to mention current moves to comfortably fit conceptual art into nationalist art histories that seek to defuse its oft-times contradictory volatility.

WILLIAM WOOD is an art historian and critic. Since 1984, he has published on recent art in journals, anthologies, and exhibition catalogues, as well as held editorial positions with C Magazine, Public, Vanguard, and Parachute. Recent catalogue essays and articles have dealt with artists such as Billy Apple, Stan Douglas, Brian Jungen, Mike Kelley, Robert Morris, Becky Singleton, Robert Smithson, Ron Terada, and the entity known as the Vancouver School. He has taught art history, curatorial studies and critical theory at universities in Toronto and Vancouver in Canada and Brighton and London in the United Kingdom.

HANS MARIA DE WOLF – WHERE HAS IT GONE, THAT COMMON GROUND? JEFF WALL VERSUS CONCEPTUAL ART THEORY

The Vancouver-based Canadian photographer Jeff Wall is probably the most notorious example of an artist that, as soon as the mid-1970, turned his back to what many young artists then considered one of the major paradigms in the field of the visual arts: conceptualism. Leaving behind his personal ‘chapter one’ (Wall started as a conceptual artist) he abruptly moved away in order to engage in what he considered to be an ongoing evolution in the visual arts, called modernism, which sources all lay way behind in the 19th century, an epoch Wall then championed above all others. This idea of continuity, as opposed to the premise of the tabula rasa many conceptual artists believed in, allowed an open dialogue with sources and debates of the past, sources Wall openly displayed in publications from the very first moment his monumental pictures appeared.

From my experience – co-curating a major Jeff Wall retrospective exhibition in Brussels, including many hours of private interviews – I believe it’s time to leave behind a fierce debate that for decades has put Wall’s readings of modernism, in contrast to those of some hardcore conceptual theory, who insist on the structural legitimacy of conceptual art as a mental domain in its own right. To overcome this deadlock I suggest applying a recipe I found in one of Marcel Duchamp’s late notes calling for a “co-intelligence of the opposed.” As a student in London, Jeff Wall himself conducted in depth research on Duchamp’s oeuvre, an artist whose legacy is widely considered as being of crucial importance for the development of the paradigm of conceptual art. Could it be considered a move forward in this debate that Wall accepted *Landscape Manual*, an early conceptual piece of his, to be included in the Brussels exhibition?

HANS MARIA DE WOLF (1961) studied Art Sciences and Archaeology at the Free University Brussels and Columbia University New York (1997-98). He then worked in Berlin as a curator related to the Neue Nationalgalerie im Hamburger Bahnhof, Berlin’s Museum of Contemporary Art, and from 2002 on taught Art Theory at the Kunsthochschule Berlin-Weissensee. In 2004 he was appointed Professor for Aesthetics and Modern Art at the Free University Brussels. In 2005 he founded an institute (the Platform, “Doctorate in the Arts,” the Brussels model) as an attempt to create a legitimate environment for the implementation of the so-called “artistic research.” Many renowned artists joined the initiative. Since 2002 Hans Maria de Wolf has served as a counsellor to the CEO of Brussels Palais de Beaux-Arts, Belgium’s most prominent Art Institute, where a Jeff Wall retrospective exhibition he co-curated, will be opened in the spring of 2011. Recently he was appointed as curator of the cultural programme representing the Brussels Government for the World exhibition in Shanghai 2010.

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 FIONA MACDONALD – PROTOCOL AS DIFFERENCE: INTER-GENERATIONAL RELATIONS OF CONCEPTUAL ART

The return to conceptual art as a mode of practice has taken place through an art-historical focus on the period of 1960s-70s conceptualism, and through re-productions of “first-wave” practices. Both of these can be seen to have established a set of paradigms of conceptual art. What if we take a different view? What if we understand the “first-wave” as a continuing event where protocols, propositions, and structural frameworks/instructional artworks can be activated or corrected; revised or remediated? What acts of difference does this produce, not only as a contemporary set of differences, but as difference activated within the frames of the “first-wave” itself?

These engagements with “first-wave” conceptual art are articulated through the mediation of its documents as both (historical) evidence and artwork. To claim these documents and protocols for a remediation within contemporary practice, approaches conceptualism as a model of critical engagement developed through a collaborative thinking of inter-generational relations—of feminism (the discourse of the genre that is two,), of post-colonialism, (neutrality that is non-neutral) and postmodernism (the intertextuality of the work as text). Through the protocols of the artwork itself, these inter-generational relations also remediate the critiques and discourses of earlier conceptual art—relations of location (notions of provincialism, relations to the centre, and internationalism [globalism]), relations of language (notions of neutrality and distribution).

The paper will discuss two contemporary projects that are both a critique and a continuation of the program of conceptualist practice. They also propose that the activities and discourses of conceptualism are not closed.

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 FIONA MACDONALD is an artist and theorist currently based in Melbourne, Australia, where she is a lecturer in the Graduate Theory and Studio programs in Fine Arts at the Faculty of Art & Design, Monash University. Her practice embraces performative and remediated processes and maintains an allegiance to the possibilities of a critical conceptual practice through collaborative acts of discourse. Her work has been exhibited in Australia and internationally in museums, film festivals, and artist-run and off-site spaces. Recent exhibitions include *Access Restricted*, (with *Thérèse Mastroiacovo*) at Light Projects, Melbourne 2010; *(Re)Points of View (Remake 1)*, Optica, 2008; *Index Project (renovated)*, Open Space, 2009; and *What Happens in Halifax, Returns to Halifax (Remake 11)* 2010. She participated in the *Future[s] of Idea Art* residency at the Banff Centre in 2006, and her work was included in *Bureau de change* at the Walter Phillips Gallery in 2008.

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 CLIVE ROBERTSON – THE VOCATIONAL AND PROFESSIONAL POLITICS OF CONCEPTUALISM

Drawing on histories and literature from different sites, I would like to unpack three related observations/arguments:

1. Past and present inadequacies of the modernist models of minimalism or conceptualism, where both demonstrated an “at-oneness” with the traditional institutions of art.
2. Conceptual art and networking strategies at the beginning of the 1970s in Canada and elsewhere owed more to Fluxus and other DIY precedents than canonical American conceptual art practices.
3. That a history of the benefits and beneficiaries of networking as an aid to career success within the art field is worth examining in terms of conceptual art’s currency as a critical / political project.

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 CLIVE ROBERTSON attended art colleges in Plymouth, Liverpool and Cardiff before receiving an MFA (Performance Art Studios) from the University of Reading (UK). As an emerging artist, curator and publisher he worked with Fluxus artists Joseph Beuys, Robert Filliou, Dick Higgins and Alison Knowles while curating a number of defining national and international performance and video festivals in the 1970s. His performance, video and audio works have been seen and heard in North and South America, Western and Eastern Europe, Japan and Australia. Prior to teaching art history and cultural studies at Queen’s, for 25 years he worked as a theorist, practitioner and national policy spokesperson within the artist-run centre movement directing interdisciplinary spaces in Calgary, Toronto and Ottawa. An exemplar of multi-format electronic publishing, Clive is a founding editor/publisher of *Voicespence Audio Art Publishing* and *Centerfold/FUSE* magazine. His writings on art and culture have appeared in *Art & Artists*, *artsCanada*, *Parachute*, *File*, *Fuse*, *La Mamelle*, *Parallélogramme*, *Public*, and *Inter* with book chapters in many collections on Canadian performance, cultural politics and media arts. *THEN + THEN AGAIN: Practices Within An Artist-Run Culture, 1969-2006* is a touring archival retrospective exhibition and website of his individual and collaborative art, curatorial and publishing projects.

