

Engage Minds, Excite Senses

The season swells with a provocative panoply of visual art

BY ROBIN LAURENCE

Here and there, then and now, our town, their town, all around the town: if there's a theme common to the myriad exhibitions and performances that comprise the coming visual-art season, it *might* be identity, the built environment, and thronging urban populations. But sex and syntax, Prozac and tea parties, boats and Baudrillard, conceptualism and antisectarianism, moonshine and microbes, Cuban revolutionaries, Russian constructivists, and South Asian activists also duke it out in our museums, galleries, and artist-run spaces this coming fall and winter. Eclecticism rules, millennialism drools, feminism takes a little pill and goes quietly to sleep.

The season kicks off with SWARM 2: an evening of artist run culture, organized by the Pacific Association of Artist Run Centres (PAARC). This Friday night (September 7) will see simultaneous

openings at 15 alternative exhibition spaces across the city, and two commercial galleries, Catriona Jeffries and the Wall Gallery. Some artists and artworks to watch for: *The Underside of Shadows* at Artspeak, an image-text installation by Elizabeth MacKenzie and Jeanne Randolph, elaborating on metaphors of intestinal parasites, anxiety, and technology (until October 13); *the tiny kingdom* at the Or Gallery, an "architectural folly" on a theme of rusticity (think bare bums in the backwoods) by Myfanwy MacLeod (until October 6); Pop Song Covers at the Western Front, a group show that investigates some of the tensions between popular music's commercial and sociopolitical possibilities (until October 20); *Take a Pill*, a sound-and-video installation at the Gallery Gachet in which artists Laura Babak and Irene Loughlin look at the notion of female hysteria (until September 29); Robert Kozinuk's *Diffraction*, in which natural and synthetic patterns are projected onto the floor of

Exploring the visual-art scene this season, you'll find Paola Vanturennot's *Happiness: Sold Out* (below) at the Wall Gallery, and Myfanwy MacLeod's *the tiny kingdom* (right) at the Or Gallery.

Access (until October 6); and *Superstretch*, a one-night-only surround-sound video performance by Jonathan Wells, located in a stretch limousine that drives hither and yon and is sponsored by Video In (pickups at the Western Front, Artspeak/Access, and the Or Gallery; for info, call 604-872-8337).

Swarm or perform: the grunt gallery is presenting another high-powered, citywide performance festival, the LIVE biennial of performance art, from mid-October to the end of November. (For info, call the grunt at 604-875-9516.) LIVE is launched with Glenn Lewis's *Mondo Artie #6070* at the Vancouver Art Gallery on October 13 and tears through some 25 performances at 13 cultural venues. Among works at the grunt itself, look out for Rebecca Belmore's performance *Reservoir* (October 20) and Diane Landry's performance *La Morue* (November 11) and exhibition *Les Sedentaires clandestins* (November 9 to December 1). Another of LIVE's highlights has to be *A Country & Western Jam-boree*, with acts by New York's Larry Krone and Vancouver's own Rodney Graham, Judy Radul, and Michael Turner. This event is sponsored by the Or Gallery and will take place at the Anza Club on November 9. Be there with boots on.

Not to be outswarmed or -performed, Artspeak is also presenting *Syntaxerrors: A Series of Performed Lectures* by psychoanalyst



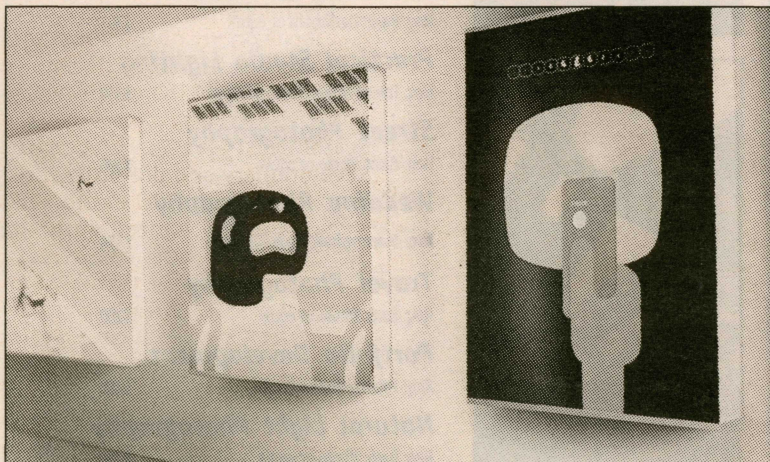
and critic Jeanne Randolph (October 23); visual artist and writer Margot Leigh Butler (October 30); and writer and archivist Aaron Vidaver (November 6). All will take place at SFU Harbour Centre. (For info, call 604-688-0051.)

And yet more swarms—of faces. In celebration of its 25th anniversary this fall, Presentation House Gallery will open its season with *Facing History: Portraits From Vancouver* (September 8 to October 28). Expect to be overwhelmed by this

vast survey of photographic images of Vancouverites (and a few significant visitors to our city) from 1950 to the present. "You'll walk into the room and there'll be a kind of explosion of faces, a population that you're confronted by," says the show's curator, former PHG director Karen Love. "I've stretched this term *portraiture* as widely as I can."

Her definition includes not only formal and studio portraits but also news photos of politicians

SEE NEXT PAGE



think it

lotigidDesign

do it

Discover the Digital Design Programs at Pitman College.

With your creative talents and our training you can become a:

Digital Communications Specialist
Computer Graphics Designer
Production Artist
Web Designer
Flash Artist

In 3-9 months you could be working in the career of your choice.

We specialize in diploma and certificate programs such as:

Computer Information Systems
Business Admin/Management
Computer Accounting
Electronic Commerce
International Trade...

image is everything

since 1898 **pitman** BUSINESS. TECHNOLOGY. DESIGN

604.685.7696
www.pitmancollege.com
3rd Floor, 688 W. Hastings St
Vancouver, BC V6B 1P1

Pitman Business College™ is a division of Mosala Technologies Corp.

ART
Among Our Shelves

INSIDE OUT
Surrey Art Gallery
Outreach Programs

The Surrey Art Gallery presents four artists' projects touring Surrey's libraries between September 2001 and June 2002. Join us at the premiere opening receptions and meet the artists.

Imagine...looking out a window through Surrey's Serpentine and Nicomekl river systems.

Reflections by Sylvie Roussel-Janssens
Saturday, September 8, 2-3:30pm
Cloverdale Library (5642-176A St.) Sept. 5 - Nov. 3

Imagine...picking up a book from a book cart and it starts whispering to you.

whispering volumes by M. Simon Levin
Saturday, September 15, 2-3:30pm
Whalley Library (10347-135 St.) Sept. 11 - Nov. 10

Imagine...walking through the stacks and discovering a bookcase that glows blue.

Spine by Robin Ripley
Saturday, September 22, 2-3:30pm
Newton Library (13795-70 Ave.) Sept. 18 - Nov. 18

Imagine...looking into a stack of books and finding a video screen that plays images and sounds of nature.

The Well by Valerie Durant
Saturday, September 29, 2-3:30pm
Port Kells Library (18885-88 Ave.) Sept. 25 - Nov. 24

Documentation of Art Among Our Shelves will be launched on the Gallery's website in October.

www.city.surrey.bc.ca/ParksRecCulture/artgallery
Phone: 604-501-5566

and celebrities, commercial photos of dockworkers and salmon derbyists, street photos of passersby—and artists' photos of, well, artists. More than 30 local, national, and international photo artists are represented in the show, ranging from Roy Kiyooka, Arnaud Maggs, and Jochen Gerz to Colette Whiten, Chick Rice, and Diane Evans. As well, Facing History comprises a number of "thematic groupings", including family, youth, the street, work and play, public life, and psyche and representation. "I've used these as organizing principles," says Love, "although there are lots and lots of crossovers." If an overarching theme emerges for the exhibition, it is one of social, cultural, and political identity: who we Vancouverites understand ourselves to be.

In addition to the works in the gallery, look out for commissioned billboard portraits at the Seabus terminals and at the corner of Homer and Georgia streets. To follow Facing History, PHG has programmed two powerful solo shows: the photomontage, film, and graphic-design work of Russian constructivist Alexander Rodchenko (November 3 to December 16); and a photographic project by Vancouver artist Jin-me Yoon, *Touring Home From Away*, in which she uses tourist sites on Prince Edward Island in order to investigate themes of body, subjectivity, culture, and place (January 5 to February 10).

Our relationship to place, and specifically to our urban environment, will be further explored in *Surround: Architecture, Public Space and Social Interaction*, curated by Cate Rimmer for the Charles H. Scott Gallery (October 3 to October 28). "It's about social use of space," says Rimmer, "and the kinds of tensions or relationships that are formed around that." Bringing together European and West Coast artists, this group exhibition ranges across video and still images of satellite dishes in Austria, decaying social housing in Brazil, and hostility to raves and skateboarders in Canada. "It's sort of an experiment in the ways people approach the subject," Rimmer observes of her show, "so there's quite a range of work."

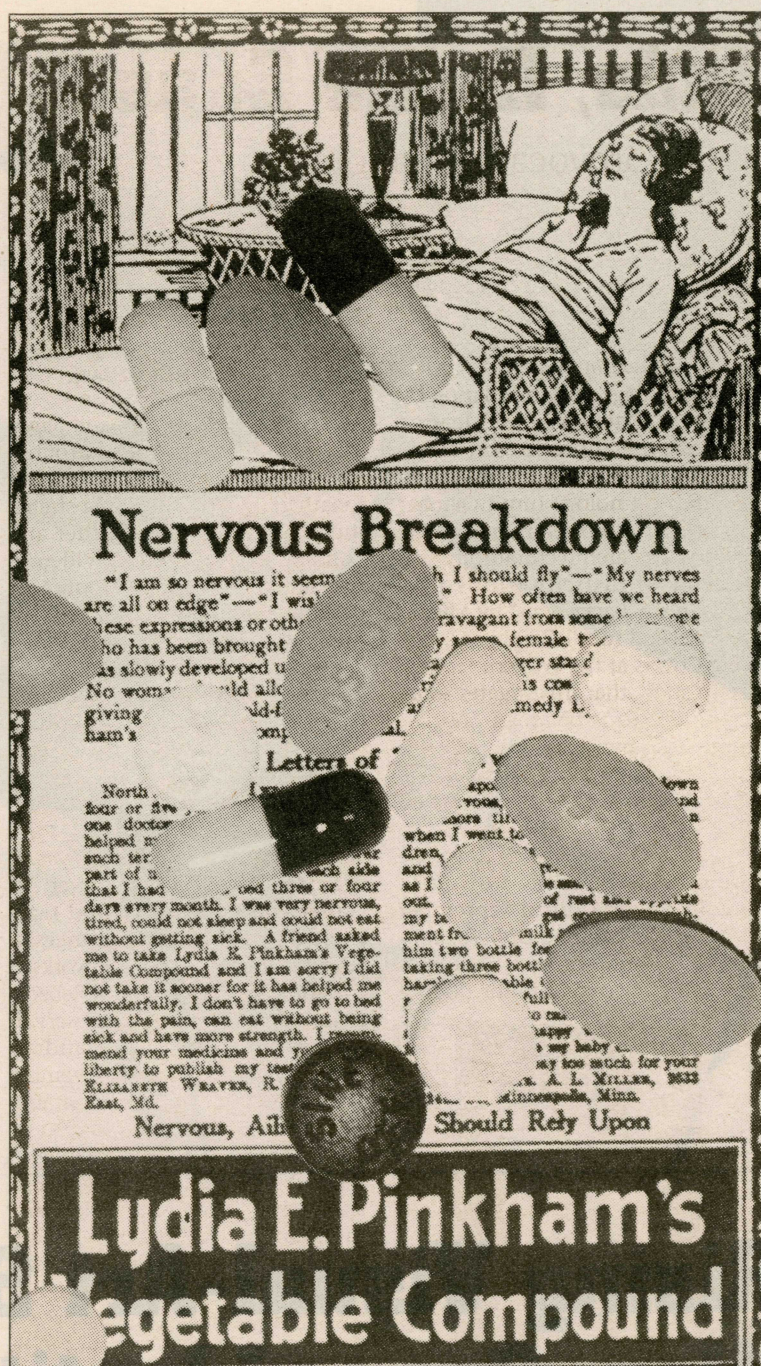
Also scheduled for the Scott Gallery this fall and winter are draw-

ings, marionettes, and books by the Italian futurist artist and designer Fortunato Depero (September 8 to October 8); photographs by French cultural theorist Jean Baudrillard (October 3 to October 28, with a lecture by Baudrillard at ECIAD on October 18; for info, call 604-844-3809); and *Secular Practice*, an exhibition of contemporary art from India (February 16 to March 17). The first of its kind in the country, this ambitious India-Canada project will extend to a number of other venues, including the Roundhouse Community Centre, the Contemporary Art Gallery, and Video In. Poverty, religious fundamentalism, sectarian violence, the caste system, urbanization, environmental degradation, colonialization and its aftermath: all these are issues addressed by contemporary Indian artists through a range of media.

Urbanization and postcolonial angst will also find expression at the Vancouver Art Gallery on September 21, with the launch of the first two projects in its millennial public-art program. Commissioned from among eight proposals (on public view last year), Ken Lum's *Four Boats Stranded* and Kim Adams's *Squid Head* will be sited on the gallery's roof and in front of its Robson Street entrance, respectively. Lum's work uses boat forms as metaphors for history, demographics, and race relations; Adams further investigates the role of art in the public sphere—on wheels and with characteristic humour.

"This is part of a project we started a number of years ago to really pay some attention to the outside of the building," says VAG chief curator Daina Augaitis. The intention of the VAG's public-art commissions (two more are to follow) is to integrate activities inside and outside the gallery and to break down the daunting image of authority and inflexibility the old courthouse building still conveys on the street.

Also opening at the VAG this fall is *Vancouver Collects*, a mega-exhibition covering two-and-a-half floors of the gallery. "It's a project we undertook to try to investigate and acknowledge the wealth of local collecting that's been going on in the private sector over the years," says Augaitis. The last *Vancouver Collects* took



Part of *SWARM 2*, Laura Babak and Irene Loughlin's *Take a Pill*, an exhibition exploring female hysteria, can be mused over at Gallery Gachet.

place in 1992; this one will be more than twice the size and will have three components: the Group of Seven, primarily large landscape paintings by the people who lodged northern-wilderness-as-national-identity in the Canadian psyche (October 20 to January 20); *Sun Pictures to Photoconceptualism* (September 28 to January 20), a survey of historic and modern

photography ("sun pictures" are calotypes, so-named because prints were developed using sunlight); and *Between Passion and Logic*, contemporary art with smudges of modernism (October 6 to February 10). And if *Vancouver Collects* doesn't sound exactly riveting, you can always look forward to VAG senior curator Bruce Grenville's survey of cyborg cul-

ture, *The Uncanny* (February 9 to May 26). Ranging from late-19th-century scientific photography to present-day Japanese *anime*, it should engage our minds and excite our senses.

Promises is the title of a group show at the Contemporary Art Gallery (October 5 to November 25); its theme is a bit mysterious, but Promises promises to reveal the curatorial taste of the CAG's new director, Christina Ritchie. "It's a group show, various media, looking at work that might exist somewhere between sculpture and photography," Ritchie explains. "Or between an everyday object and a more formal kind of execution, or between some sense of structure and the experience of space."

The Morris and Helen Belkin Art Gallery inaugurates its fall season with *Present*, an MFA grad show (September 14 to 30), then head-trips into *The Conceptual Document 1968-72*, a historic survey of early conceptualism, organized and circulated by England's Norwich Gallery (October 12 to December 2). "This is an interesting academic show," says Belkin director-curator Scott Watson, "but it hasn't got a lot of sexy stuff in it." Still, its photos, texts, maps, telegrams, films, posters, and sound recordings relate to the Belkin Gallery's archival holdings, and to its curatorial focus on art of the 1960s and '70s. Things should be livelier on the other side of the gallery, where you'll see drawings—some of them scatological—by Chago, a Cuban revolutionary and political satirist who fought with Fidel Castro, then became disenchanted with the regime. After Christmas, Watson has organized an exhibition of video works by internationally renowned performance artist Andrea Fraser (January 11 to March 10), of particular interest, he thinks, to students in the University of British Columbia's new curatorial-studies program. "Andrea's work is at the forefront of...what you might categorize as institutional critique," Watson says. "Her work questions the apparatus and frame of the gallery, the status, definition, and values that go with the world of art."

Critique and question, define and evaluate, shit and shine—and swarm. ■

10TH ANNIVERSARY ISMAILI WALK
FOR
THE CRISIS CENTRE
OF GREATER VANCOUVER

SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 9TH, 2001
LUMBERMAN'S ARCH, STANLEY PARK

FOR MORE INFORMATION,
PLEASE CALL THE CRISIS CENTRE
AT 872-1811

straight

MOUNT PLEASANT COMMUNITY CENTRE
3161 ONTARIO STREET (AT 16TH)

Offers many affordable programs including Meditation, Salsa dance, Iyengar Yoga, Japanese, Spanish, Art classes and much more! Registration on now!

OPEN HOUSE ON SAT. SEPT. 15, 2-5PM

Childrens entertainment, play and art areas, instructor demos and more.
Fun for the whole family - free of charge.
(604) 713-1888 INFO/ REGISTRATION

BARD ON THE BEACH
SHAKESPEARE FESTIVAL

ANTONY AND CLEOPATRA
Sponsored by MCL Motorcars
Tuesdays through Sundays
Under the tents in Vanier Park

THE TAMING OF THE SHREW
Sponsored by VanCity
604-739-0559
www.bardonthebeach.org

ONLY TO SEPT 23

TELUS AIR CANADA cbc radio ONE 690 VANCOUVER THE VANCOUVER SUN BCTV NEWS HOUR

THE 17TH ANNUAL VANCOUVER FRINGE FESTIVAL

theatre for everyone!
over 700 performances of 95 shows at 16 venues!

Sept. 6 - 16th on and around Granville Island

Buy tickets at festival box office Call 604.257.0366
or order online at www.vancouverfringe.com

programs available at Starbucks

Watch for PICK OF THE FRINGE Sept 19 - 22 at the Waterfront Theatre

17th ANNUAL Fringe FESTIVAL
theatre for everyone
Central

Granville Island ABSOLUT VODKA CBC radio ONE 690 VANCOUVER THE VANCOUVER SUN BC HERITAGE Canadian Heritage PATRIMoine canadien