

## COMPANIES ACT

No. 84030.

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that "N.E. Thing Co. Ltd." was incorporated under the *Companies Act* on the 16th day of January, 1969.

The Company is authorized to issue ten thousand shares without nominal or par value.

The address of its registered office is 1419 Riverside Drive, North Vancouver, British Columbia.

The objects for which the Company is established are:—

- (i) To produce sensitivity information:
- (ii) To provide a consultation and evaluation service with respect to things:
- (iii) To produce, manufacture, import, export, buy, sell, and otherwise deal in things of all kinds.

A. H. HALL,

ja30—9057

Registrar of Companies.

From *The British Columbia Gazette*,  
January 30, 1969



**N.E. THING CO. LTD.**







# INFORMATION

N.E. THING CO. LTD.

1419 Riverside Drive North Vancouver B.C. Canada

Date

1978

Project

JEAN-CHRISTOPHE AMMANN'S LETTER

Number

1.

Kunsthalle Basel

6 4 78

Kunsthalle Basel

6 4 78

N.E. Thing Company

N.E. THING COMPANY

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Iain Baxter ist unter jenen Künstlern, die ab 1966 den Begriff der Kunst in den Bereich der allgemeinen Wahrnehmung (konzeptueller und prozesshafter Art) erweitert haben, einer der erstaunlichsten Persönlichkeiten. Mit seiner Frau Ingrid hatte er 1966 eben die N.E. Thing Co. Ltd. geschaffen mit dem Hauptziel Wahrnehmungsprozesse (Sehen Hören Fühlen) aber auch soziale Interaktionsprozesse (Kommunikation auf verschiedensten Ebenen) in ihren Eigengesetzlichkeiten sichtbar und bewusst zu machen. N.E. Thing Company hat sich in der Folge als eine eigentliche Ideenfabrik entwickelt, die viel zu sehr mit der Produktion und Realisation neuer Ideen beschäftigt ist, als sich um deren Speicherung bemüht. Diesen Eindruck hatte ich, als ich Iain und Ingrid Baxter Anfang März 1977 in North Vancouver (B.C.) am Riverside Drive 1419 besuchte. Um das dokumentarische Material zu sichten und zu ordnen bräuchte es ein Jahr intensiver Arbeit und eine Gruppe von mehreren Leuten. Bei Iain und Ingrid Baxter liegt alles zufällig in Schachteln und Ordnern übereinander. Das wirkt sympathisch und ist nicht ein Hinweis darauf, dass die eigene Arbeit nicht ernst genommen wird, dass jedoch zwischen Produktion/Realisation und Auswertung ein grosser Unterschied besteht. Während es eben Künstler gibt, die sich intensiv der Auswertung und Verbreitung ihrer Ideen widmen, gibt es solche, die immer wieder neue in die Welt setzen.

Dass die N.E. Thing Company in einer Ausstellung mit einigen jüngeren kanadischen Künstlern vertreten sein müsste, war mir von Anfang an klar. Die Frage war nur wie! Die räumliche Präsentation von Dokumenten wäre einem Tapezieren von Wänden gleichgekommen. Das Herausstellen einer einzelnen Arbeit hätte diese im Sinn eines grössten gemeinschaftlichen Nenners allzusehr belastet. So entstand die Idee, ein Buch zu machen, eine Art Telefonbuch, sowohl was den Umfang als auch die Eigenart (Datenbank) betrifft. Die Zeit war knapp, die Mittel nicht vorhanden. Die Baxters arbeiteten zu diesem Zeitpunkt konzentriert an der Eröffnung eines Restaurants (auch eine Idee) und auch die Monate nach der Eröffnung verlangten vollen Einsatz. Dass das Buch nun doch erscheinen konnte, wenn auch nicht in der idealen, ursprünglichen Form, dazu wären wie gesagt ein Team, viel Zeit und beträchtliche finanzielle Mittel notwendig gewesen. Verdanke ich vorerst einmal Iain und Ingrid Baxter, die das Unmögliche möglich machten und dem Canada Council (Abteilung Bildende Kunst/Film/Video), deren Leiter Geoffrey James sich voll für das Gelingen dieses Unternehmens einsetzte.

■ Jean-Christophe Ammann

Iain Baxter is one of those artists who starting in 1966 began to expand the concept of art in the realm of general perception (Conceptual & Process Art) and in this field he is one of the most remarkable artistic personalities. He founded the N.E. THING COMPANY in 1966 and with his wife Ingrid began with the aim of exposing the perceptual processes of seeing hearing feeling as well as the process of social interaction (communication on different levels) and to make their inherent laws perceptible in their own ways. THE N.E. THING COMPANY has developed itself as a factory of ideas, which is far too preoccupied with the production and realization of new ideas to pay much attention to the archival end. This was my impression when I visited Iain & Ingrid Baxter in early March 1977 at 1419 Riverside Drive North Vancouver B.C. In order to view file and digest all the documented material I would need a year of intensive work plus the help of several assistants. At Iain & Ingrid Baxter's everything is casually heaped in boxes and files. The effect of this is positive and it is not at all an indication that they don't take their work seriously. However this observation indicates there is a large difference between production-realization and utilization-exploitation. Whereas there are artists who are intensively preoccupied with the exploitation and dissemination of their ideas, there are also those who forever enrich the world with new ideas.

I never had any doubt that the N.E. THING COMPANY would have to be represented in an exhibition of the younger Canadian artists. The only question was how! The spacial presentation of documents would have looked like the papering of walls and the selection of a single work by the N.E. THING COMPANY would not be representative of the total sum of work produced. Thus the idea to make a book was born. A sort of telephone book, in volume as well as in kind (data bank). Time was short and the means didn't exist. The Baxters were concentrating their efforts at that time towards the opening of a restaurant (also an idea) and also a month after the opening required all of their effort. That the book can now appear after all even though now not the ideal original form (to do a conventional book would have taken a team of researchers much money and a lot of time) I owe above all thanks to Iain & Ingrid Baxter who make the impossible possible and to the Canada Council department of Visual arts whose director Geoffrey James did all he could to make this undertaking possible.

Jean-Christophe Ammann

PLEASE COMPLETE AND RETURN

Description

N.E. THING COMPANY LIMITED

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# INFORMATION

N.E. THING CO. LTD.

1419 Riverside Drive North Vancouver B.C. Canada

Date

1978

Project

N.E. THING CO. LTD. BOOK

Number

1.

FOR MANY YEARS THE N.E. THING CO. LTD. HAS WANTED TO DO A COMPENDIUM OF COMPANY IDEAS, ACTIVITIES & WORKS. THIS BECAME POSSIBLE WHEN JEAN-CHRISTOPHE AMMANN OF THE KUNSTHALLE BASEL, WAS TOURING CANADA, SPRING OF '77, TO SELECT A SHOW OF CANADIAN ARTISTS FOR BASEL, SWITZERLAND, JUNE-JULY 1978.

ON MEETING JEAN-CHRISTOPHE AMMANN THE ORIGINAL IDEA OF THE COMPENDIUM WAS REKINDLED, BECAUSE HE FELT IT WOULD BE THE BEST AND ONLY WAY TO REPRESENT THE IDEAS, PROJECTS AND WORKS OF THE N.E. THING COMPANY IN HIS BASEL EXHIBITION.

THE FUNDING FOR THIS BOOK WAS MADE POSSIBLE BY A GRANT FROM THE VISUAL ARTS SECTION OF THE CANADA COUNCIL.

IAIN BAXTER MAY 30, 1978.

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# INFORMATION

N.E. THING CO. LTD.

1419 Riverside Drive North Vancouver B.C. Canada

Date

1978

Project

CREDITS

Number

1.

COVER DESIGN & BOOK DESIGN - IAIN BAXTER

DESIGN CONSULTATION - MARTY DOLAN & CHRIS DAHL

ORGANIZATION AND PRODUCTION - IAIN BAXTER & MARTY DOLAN

SPECIAL THANKS FOR ASSISTANCE - TO MY WIFE INGRID, CHILDREN TOR & ERIAN, SCOTT THOMPSON, AND THE STAFF OF EYE SCREAM EATERY, GEORGE SAUGHUK

PRINTED BY - SUPERIOR REPRODUCTIONS  
WITH SPECIAL THANKS TO DAVE COOPER, PETER YU, AND THE PRINTING STAFF.

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THE MATERIAL IN THE N.E. THING CO. LTD. BOOK CAN BE USED  
BY ANYONE, ANYTIME, ANYWHERE. PLEASE LET US KNOW WHEN  
YOU DO THIS:

EDITION: 500, 365 PAGES.

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# INFORMATION

N.E. THING CO. LTD.

1419 Riverside Drive North Vancouver B.C. Canada

Date

1936

Project

THE YEAR 1936

Number

1.



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Description





# INFORMATION

N.E. THING CO. LTD.

1419 Riverside Drive North Vancouver B.C. Canada

Date

1936

Project

IAN BAXTER BIRTH CERTIFICATE

Number

1.

D 490650

CERTIFIED COPY of an  
Pursuant to the Births and Deaths



ENTRY OF BIRTH.

Registration Acts, 1836 to 1929.

[Printed by Authority of the Registrar-General.]

B. Cert.  
R.B.D.

The Statutory Fee for this Certificate is 2s. 6d.  
If required subsequently to registration, a  
Search Fee is payable in addition.

Insert in this  
Margin any  
Notes which  
appear in the  
original entry

Registration District MIDDLESBROUGH										
1936 Birth in the Sub-District of MIDDLESBROUGH EAST in the COUNTY BOROUGH OF MIDDLESBROUGH.										
Columns:—	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
No.	When and Where Born.	Name, if any.	Sex.	Name and Surname of Father.	Name and Maiden Surname of Mother.	Rank or Profession of Father.	Signature, Description and Residence of Informant.	When Registered.	Signature of Registrar.	Baptismal Name, if added after Registration of Birth.
	1st. 77 Green Lane H.D.	Joseph Bain Wilson	Boy	Andrew Baxter	Annie Faulds Baxter	Primary Schoolmaster	Andrew Baxter, Father. 77 Green Lane Decemoid Middlesbrough 1936.		Adventist P.M. Thompson Registrar.	

I, *P.M. Thompson*, Registrar of Births and Deaths for the Sub-District of MIDDLESBROUGH EAST, in the COUNTY BOROUGH OF MIDDLESBROUGH, do hereby certify that this is a true copy of the Entry No. *34* in the Register Book of Births for the said Sub-District, and that such Register Book is now legally in my custody.

WITNESS MY HAND this *17th* day of *December*, 1936.

CAUTION.—Any person who (1) falsifies any of the particulars on this Certificate, or (2) uses it as true, knowing it to be falsified, is liable to Prosecution.

*P.M. Thompson*  
Registrar of Births and Deaths



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1938

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THE YEAR 1938

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# INFORMATION

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Date

1938

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ELAINE INGRID (HIEBER) BAXTER, BIRTH Certificate

Number

1

## Certificate of Birth



This Certifies that *Elaine Ingrid Hieber*  
was born to *Mr. & Mrs. George D. Hieber*  
Sacred Heart Hospital

in the City of Spokane, County of Spokane, State of Washington, at *6:15* p.m.  
on the *11<sup>th</sup>* day of *December*, 1938

In Witness Whereof this Certificate has been signed by the Attending Physician  
and a duly authorized official of the hospital who has caused the Official Seal of  
Sacred Heart Hospital to be affixed hereto.

*H. E. Wheeler M.D.*  
Attending Physician

*L. H. Blarins, M.P. R.N.*  
Superior  
*Sister Rose Ann, S.C.P. R.N.*  
Superior

### Family History

Father's name in full *George D. Hieber*  
Place of birth *Montana* Date of birth *Mar. 27, 1903*  
Mother's maiden name in full *Loise Rindgren*  
Place of birth *Idaho* Date of birth *May 16, 1905*  
Sex of child *Female* Weight at birth *7 lbs. 2 oz.*  
Length *18 in.* Duch. Weight *6 lbs. 12 oz.*



BABY'S LEFT FOOTPRINT



BABY'S RIGHT FOOTPRINT

Official Registration at *Spokane, Washington*

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# INFORMATION

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Date  
1953/63

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THE YEARS 1953 - 1963

Number

1.



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Seal



# INFORMATION

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Date

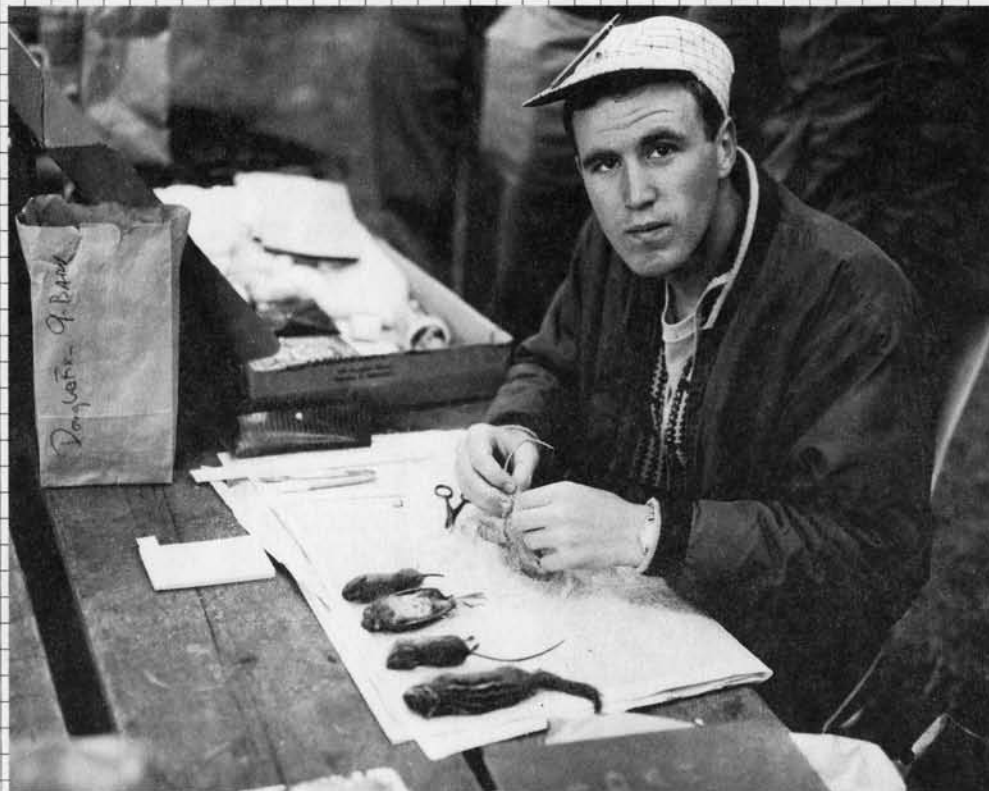
1953/63

Project

PERSONAL HISTORY

Number

1.



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Date

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PERSONAL HISTORY

Number

1.

## PNW Bird, Mammal Club to Meet

The Pacific Northwest Bird and Mammal society will sponsor a one-day meeting Saturday at the Finch Arboretum, 4344 Woodland boulevard.

George E. Hudson, Washington State college society president, said it is the first time it has met at Spokane for many years.

The sessions will start at 2 p. m. with Vee Nealey of the Spokane Bird club discussing birds of this area. Earl J. Larri-

son, University of Idaho, will present an illustrated lecture on the dietary food habits in south Idaho range rodents.

The group then will visit the Grace Campbell Memorial museum.

Warren Hall and Lynn LaFave, members of the Bird club, and the society, will discuss birds of the Washington as a feature of the 7:30 p. m. session. Iain J. W. Baxter, University of Idaho, will show color motion pictures of food quantity studies in south Idaho range rodents.

The group will make a field trip along the Little Spokane and Spokane river Sunday, starting at 8 a. m.

## Art Winners Given Prizes

With over 120 entries to choose from, art judges Mrs. Tom Armstrong, Lewiston, and Gaylord Hansen of the WSC art faculty, picked three division winners in the Student Art Contest Friday.

Prize winning entries and awards in the oils division included "Monday's Child is Fair of Face," by Sandra Summerfield, off campus, first, \$12.50; "Still Life," by Ron Goodwin, Delta Chi, second, \$7.50; and "Portrait," by Anne Kirkwood, off campus, third, \$3.50.

Watercolor winners included "Two Blue Eyes—One Red Dress," by Goodwin, first, \$10; "Group Portrait," by John Thamm, Phi Delta, second, \$3; and "The Village," by Duane Shinn, off campus, third, \$2.50.

In the mixed media division "J.

A. Prutrock," by Dave Burgess, off campus, took first, and won \$10; "Sketch," by C. Stoll, off campus, second, \$3; and "Animal Drawings," by Iain Baxter, off campus, third, \$2.50.

The exhibit will remain in the SUB until Wednesday when a solo exhibit by Thamm will be put up.



NOTE: CHECK!

UNIVERSITY OF IDAHO

No. 32372 C

Claim Information

Description of Payment

Req. No. 1692

Art Contest

\$2.50

P. O. No.

Dept. Student Union

Div.

Fund

PLEASE DETACH BEFORE PRESENTING FOR PAYMENT

UNIVERSITY OF IDAHO

No. 9370 C

Claim Information

Description of Payment

St. Union Art & Photographic Contest

1st place Watercolors: Ian Baxter \$10.00

MARCH 16, 1958.



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## 25 Men, 20 Coeds Win Straight 'A' Marks For Fall '59 Semester

The number of men and women receiving straight "A" grades the first semester at the University is nearly equal, Registrar D. D. DuSault announced yesterday.

Men earned 25 of the 45 perfect marks. To qualify for the list, freshmen, sophomore and junior students must carry 15 credit hours and seniors 12 credit hours.

Straight "A" students are Joseph Adick, and Donald Hauxwell, McConnell; Nancy Avery, French House; Everett Baily, Jack Mackel, and Stephen Colberg, Willis Sweet; Doris Gissel, Pi Phi; Dorothy Bauer, Susan Rutledge, and Patricia Beazley, Kappa; Carolyn Edwards, Margaret Remsburg and Kay Sawyer, Gamma Phi.

Bruce Cairns, Beta; Rosaline Hodgson, Ethel Steel; Ludel Boyd and Beverly Paul, Forney; Jerry Craven, ATO; Paul Jacobs, Gault; Judith Scanlan, DG; Virginia Mon-

son, Hayes; Edith Vandenberg, Tri Delta.

Donald Baldrige, Cecil Heick, William Moore, Wade Patterson, Sherman Snow, Robert Beardemphl Charles Brockway, Janet Gabbert Corwin, Delbert Fitzsimmons, Kenneth Keller, James Terrill, Carolyn Dempsey Mitchell, W. Morgan, Shirley Phillips Schneider, Marie Van Orman, Ian Baxter, William Orton, Anne Copithorne, Wayne Davenport, Eugene Mecherikoff, David Mickle Jr., Ronald Osborn, Thora Runyan, off campus.

Students with perfect marks registered for more than six credits but not sufficient number to be included on the list are Eleanor Blume, Elroy Brandt, Walt Hardin, Catherine Cannon Marboe, Kathryn Colburn Nabel, Jane Simmons and Merial Grimm, off campus; Gene Ax and Kent Peterson, Upham; and Robert Prestel, Teke.

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1953

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PERSONAL HISTORY

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IAIN BAXTER SKIING ON MT. NORQUAY, BANFF, ALBERTA.

INGRID BAXTER PARTICIPATING IN SYNCHRONIZED SWIMMING GROUP  
IN SPOKANE, WASHINGTON. SECOND FROM TOP.

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M63/  
63

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PERSONAL HISTORY

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1.

## Canadian Art Student Gives New Life To Byobu Painting



Baxter, at left, looking at one of his masterpieces.

KYOTO, Dec. 8.—A young Canadian art student who noticed the unique function of Byobu, traditional Japanese folding screen, adopts his abstract painting on it and gives a new life to Byobu painting.

Iain Baxter, 25, a graduate of the University of Idaho, had a vague idea about Byobu painting "in the back of his mind" when he came here in April this year under a Japanese Government scholarship.

While studying Japanese art in this cultural city, however, Baxter noticed the versatility and flexibility of Byobu as a means of artistic expression.

Byobu is movable—the Canadian artist terms it as a moving wall-painting—and is flexible. Byobu can form various kinds of prism-triangular, quadrangular, pentagonal, etc. as you please.

Baxter arranges Byobu in a revolutionary way which no Japanese has ever come to think up—to form a cave-like art gallery by itself.

His art is action painting belonging to the abstract school. His works are dynamic, vigorous and speedy but some are deep and philosophical, and have something to appeal both to the Oriental and Occidental minds.

Japanese see Byobu traditionally. To them, Byobu has been a piece of mere decorative furniture. But I have no tradition with Byobu. So I could discover the value of Byobu in modern painting," Baxter said.

In short, Byobu painting realizes what Baxter has been pursuing—"spontaneousness in art" or "art of time, space and sculpture" which he believes makes art more enjoyable to man.

He makes Byobu himself. "Some guy who are studying Byobu-making in Kyoto taught the technique to me. It was very difficult at first," Baxter said.

Prof. Teruo Ueno, of Kyoto University, one of the foremost art critics in Japan, holds in high praise Baxter's works and his originality.

"Before him, some Western artists became interested in Byobu. But they did not think of making the most of the function of the Japanese art piece as did Baxter.

"Baxter's works are bold, free, yet show harmony," said the professor who is introducing Baxter in a nationwide art magazine next year.

The painter whose one-man show wound up today at the Yamada Gallery at Furumonzon, Higashiyama-ku here, will leave for the United States at the end of this month to work for a master's degree at the University of Idaho.

"I will spend next summer painting and am looking forward to holding a one-man show in New York. After that I will visit Kyoto again," he said.

"My stay in Japan is indeed worthwhile. Byobu painting alone can be my life-long theme to pursue. Besides, my wife gave birth to a baby boy here," the Canadian artist said.

## 684 Hoods Nabbed By Tokyo Police

The Metropolitan Police Department had arrested a total of 684 gangsters in their extensive round-up started in November 3 to control intimidation and blackmailing in the year-end season.



FUN AND CHEAP — Cyclers Iain and Elaine Baxter, married students at the University of Idaho, turn to human power for campus transportation. The once-popular mode of travel is experiencing a revival on the Moscow campus.

## Bikes Due For Revival?

Even with the dazzle of new automobile models splashing on the market, a revival of a different transportation trend is beginning to make itself felt on the University of Idaho campus.

Some of the students are returning to bicycles as a preferred mode of travel. According to married students Iain and Elaine Baxter, there is no better way to get around this town of 12,000.

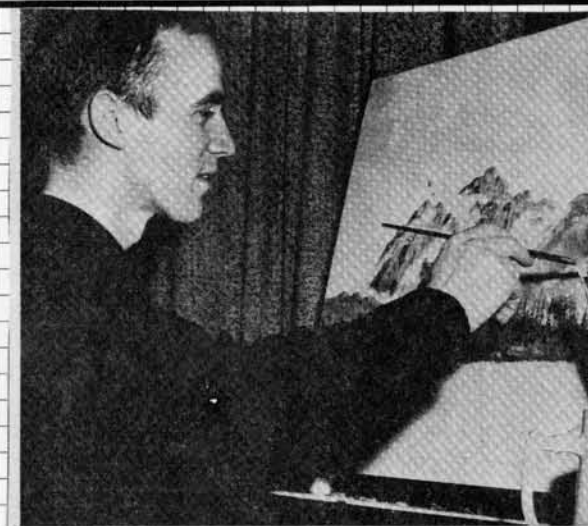
"If we need groceries we can pedal right to the front door of the store and be back in our apartment before a shopper in a car would be able to find a parking place," say the Baxters.

Other attractive advantages are the quick scoots from one end of

the campus to the other for a class and the fact that a bike takes nothing but ambition and energy to operate.

The Baxters, who were among the first to begin using the once-popular bike again, indicate the switch to the two-wheelers is growing.

"Every day we notice different bikes on the campus, so more students are using them."



STUDENT PAINTER — University of Idaho student Iain Baxter was photographed with one of his paintings. Two art shows — one at the Moscow university — may determine whether it was a break for Baxter that an auto accident diverted him from his ambition of being a champion skier.

## Accident May Have Diverted Idaho Student From Skiing Career To More Promising Field

MOSCOW — The sign on the door at the University of Idaho's Student Union Building says, simply, that Iain Baxter, graduate student, will exhibit 35 oil and water color paintings and drawings in a one-man show Jan. 9-14.

There have been at least a couple of times in Baxter's life when he fervently wished he could have his "druthers."

As an intense young man of 17 Iain aspired to become a champion skier. He awaited each winter with the same anticipation many of his friends yearned for summer—and fishing, boating and camping.

Having hitched his wagon, so to speak, Iain was named the outstanding junior skier of the 1954 Alberta championships. They gave him a little cup thusly engraved: "Iain" is Scottish for "John," there is a story—first of frustration and then of quiet, modest success.

But first — Iain Baxter is a 23-year-old Canadian from Calgary. He was born in England, has Scottish ancestors and is a graduate student in zoology at the university.

He and the former Elaine Heber, Spokane, met on a blind date when they were sophomores. They were married in September. Mrs. Baxter intends to complete her major in music. They reside at 405 Taylor St., where Iain helps defray

the costs of a collegiate education by caretaking for an apartment house.

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the costs of a collegiate education by caretaking for an apartment house.

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## Car Overturns, Two Injured

ROSETOWN — Two persons were injured when a car driven by a Kinsley juvenile went out of control on No. 7 highway two miles west of here on the evening of July 1 and overturned in the ditch. The car was damaged.

Iain Baxter, Calgary, a passenger, was injured with a fractured neck, and the driver, a broken arm.

Col. A. Tangle of the local RCMP detachment is investigating.

his talent came to light. Drawings of specimens in routine class work caught the eye of Earl J. Larrison, associate professor of zoology, who suggested the student do the art work for a new book.

He has done 173 detailed ink drawings of reptiles, mammals and birds for a forthcoming book entitled "Wildlife of the Northern Rocky Mountains." Co-authors are William H. Baker, head of the university biological sciences department, and Larrison.

The young artist-student uses several methods in reproducing the likenesses of his subjects. One is a camera-lucida which uses a prism to trace the outlines of birds and mammals. Also used for authenticity are specimens from the university's zoology collections.

Baxter now has his next few years mapped ahead. He is a teaching fellow in zoology at the university. Ultimately, he hopes to teach at the new university now being built at Calgary.

Then, there is another book in the planning stage: a one-man art show, and maybe some ski runs to try—this time for photographs and drawings of backwoods wildlife in Canada.

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Description

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# INFORMATION

N.E. THING CO. LTD.

1419 Riverside Drive North Vancouver B.C. Canada

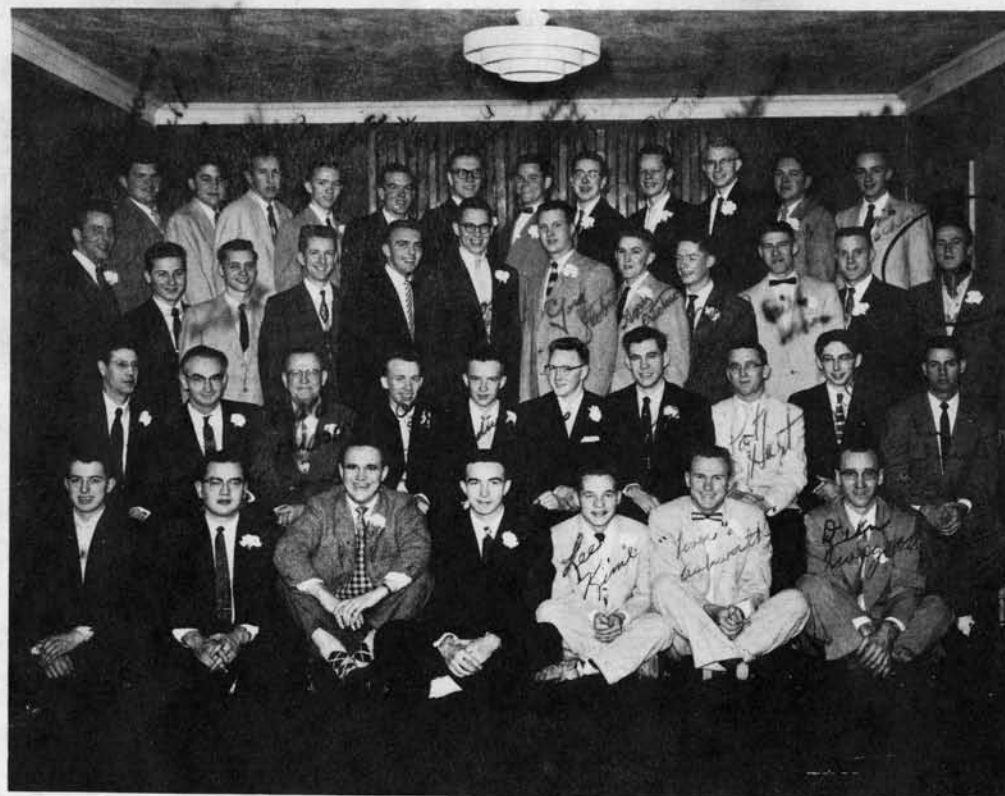
Date  
1953/63

Project

PERSONAL HISTORY

Number

1.



## Auto Mishap Changes Mind Of Nature Artist

But for an untimely auto accident which ruined an athletic career, a University of Idaho senior might never have experienced the thrill of seeing his artistry being readied for publication in a book.

Iain Baxter, a zoology major from Calgary, Alberta, is doing 175 detailed ink drawings of reptiles, mammals and birds for a forthcoming book entitled "Wildlife of the Northern Rocky Mountains." Co-authors are William H. Baker, head of the biological sciences department, and Earl J. Larrison, associate professor of zoology, at the University of Idaho. The book will be one of a series highlighting various geographical regions for Naturegraph publications.

### Studies Win

One of Alberta's top skiers several years ago, Baxter wanted to make Idaho's crack ski team, one of the best in the nation. Before he could achieve his ambition, an auto accident left him with a broken neck. After it healed, the lanky student weighed the risk of skiing against more study time. Studies won out.

Dropping competitive skiing allowed a choice of classes he would ordinarily not have had time to take. One of those was ornithology, the study of birds. Another was a class in painting.

The mixture of subjects fit him like a \$250 suit, and he changed his major to zoology where he did drawings of specimens as routine class work. The clarity of the drawings caught the eye of Dr. Larrison, who suggested Baxter do the art work for the coming book.

"It was quite a challenge," said the 22-year-old senior. "I had had only two years of art and was very surprised when Professor Larrison asked me to do it."

### Several Methods

The young artist-student uses several methods in reproducing the likenesses of the subjects for the book. One is a camera-lucida aid which uses a prism to trace the

outlines of birds and mammals. Also used for authenticity are specimens from the university's zoology collections.

Baxter has his next few years mapped ahead. He will be a teaching fellow in zoology and begin work leading to a doctorate. There is another book now in the planning stage, a one-man art show to plan and more ski runs to try—this time for photographs and drawings of backwoods wildlife at home.

TUESDAY, MAY 5, 1959

PLEASE COMPLETE AND RETURN

Description

DELTA SIGMA PHI FRATERNITY JUNIO. OF IDAHO. 1956.  
IAIN BAXTER WITH NECK BRACE

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**VERSATILE** — University of Idaho graduate student Iain Baxter is making a name for himself in the art world with his adaptation of the Japanese screen and modern art. He has just returned from a year of study in Japan. To prove his adaptability, Baxter's fine line drawings of animals and birds have appeared in several books.

## U. Artist Adapts Style To Create A New Art

A baby cried in the night and was dying. Its missionary parents were in a state of shock. The Rb factor was destroying the new born child's blood and a transfusion of type O negative blood — extremely rare in Japan — was needed.

Less than one tenth of one percent of the Japanese have O negative blood. Names of foreigners with it in the country are put on file in case of emergency. The doctor called several names on the list without success.

Finally, one of them received a message to call the hospital. A few hours later the man who answered the call and donated two pints of blood was home working to prepare for a one-man art show at Kyoto. Iain Baxter felt he couldn't rest — the show had to display his best work.

The University of Idaho student's show was a success. Tokyo and Kyoto newspapers featured stories on his new technique, and Japanese and a New York fine art collectors made purchases. The graduate student felt the giving of blood and working on paintings the same night was nothing unusual. . . so many unusual things happened during his year in Japan under a Japanese government scholarship and a grant from the Francis F. Reese Foundation of Calgary, Alberta.

Perhaps most unusual was the acceptance by the Japanese of Baxter's merging of the ancient Shoji screen into a vehicle of modern art.

The Japanese make their screens mostly with paper. I did several in wood and painted on them. Most houses cannot use a large painting; however, a screen

is something else. Its panels can be folded to produce many effects. Its use is up to the owner. It is more intimate than a painting on a wall," he explained.

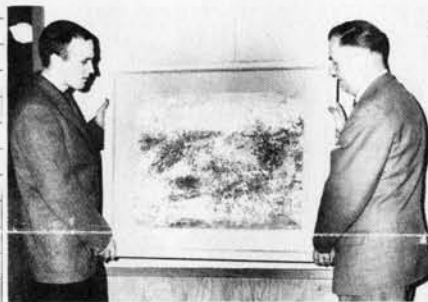
Baxter, who has a crew cut instead of long hair, has many plans for his adaptations of the screen.

"Surprisingly, many persons who are usually quite conservative when it comes to art seem to like them, and several are interested in buying one," Baxter said.

Baxter has just returned to the United States to attend the second semester at the University of Idaho to get a master's degree in June. He plans to take additional work in Fine arts.

Homecoming was full of humor. While Baxter and his wife, the former Elaine Heiber of Spokane, were in Japan their son, Tor, was born. When Mrs. Baxter stepped off the plane at the Spokane Airport with Tor in her arms she lifted his sweater and drew laughs from all within reading distance.

Written in lipstick across his sunny were the words, "Made in Japan."



Iain Baxter, at left, displays one of his water colours for father Andy Baxter, manager of mechanical products at the Alberta Branch. Iain and his wife leave for the Orient in April on a scholarship from the Japanese Government.

## Employee's Son to Study in Japan: Awarded Two-Year Art Scholarship

Iain Baxter, son of Andy Baxter, manager of mechanical products at the Alberta Branch, has been awarded a scholarship which will entitle him to two years study in the Orient.

The scholarship, which was awarded by the Japanese Government, embraces all fields in higher education with the choice being left to the successful applicant.

Mr. Baxter has chosen art and he tells why. A graduate of the University of Idaho with a bachelor of science degree in zoology, he feels he has gained an insight into nature which he wishes to interpret through his brush.

"Japanese philosophy is largely based on nature as exemplified in their gardens and their homes," said the award winner as he explained he wanted to make a deeper study of this philosophy.

Mr. Baxter had returned to university to take his master's degree in education, but returned home to Calgary when his wife telephoned him the good news. They will leave for Tokyo early in April.

Mr. Baxter, who has lived in Calgary since he was a year old, became interested in art at university.

He is one of two Calgarians to have paintings in the Young Contemporaries of Canada show which is currently touring Canada sponsored by the Public Library and Museums of London, Ontario, and has won many prizes for his water colours and oils in the United States. He has just had a water colour accepted by the Montreal Museum of Fine Arts.



## Idaho Book Off Press

UNIVERSITY OF IDAHO, MOSCOW, Jan. 7. — The first volume of the Journal of the Idaho Academy of Science is just off the press.

Unlike many scientific books, the journal can be read by the layman as well as the true scientist. The balance between the two types of articles was achieved by Editor Earl J. Larsson, associate professor of zoology at the University of Idaho.

Article interest is highlighted by drawings setting the tone of the writing by Iain Baxter, Idaho graduate student.



**WINTER SPORT** — Iain Baxter, University of Idaho graduate student in zoology, took advantage of recent snows for a skiing outing on the Idaho campus at Moscow. Baxter, who comes from Calgary, Alta., was Alberta junior champion before coming to Idaho. A 1955 automobile accident forced Baxter to give up active competition but he still likes to get out when the snow is right.



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## The University of Idaho DEPARTMENT OF MUSIC

Presents  
JANE LANGE, mezzo soprano  
in  
SENIOR RECITAL  
assisted by  
Elaine Hieber, pianist  
Mary Owl, accompanist

### PROGRAM

I  
The Praise of God . . . . . Beethoven  
With a Swanlike Beauty Gliding . . . . . Mozart  
She Never Told Her Love . . . . . Haydn  
The Mermaid's Song . . . . . Haydn

Miss Lange  
II  
Sonata in F sharp major, Op. 78 . . . . . Beethoven  
Adagio cantabile—Allegro, ma non troppo  
Allegro assai

Miss Hieber  
III  
To Music . . . . . Schubert  
With a Water-Lily . . . . . Grieg  
The Legend . . . . . Tchaikovsky  
To You . . . . . Strauss

Miss Lange  
IV  
Children's Corner . . . . . Debussy  
Doctor Gradus ad Parnassum  
Jimbo's Lullaby  
Serenade for the Doll  
The Snow is Dancing  
The Little Shepherd  
Golliwogg's Cakewalk

Miss Hieber  
V  
When I Bring to You Color'd Toys . . . . . Carpenter  
An Island Shelling Song (Hebridean) . . . . . Arr. Kennedy-Fraser  
Declaration of Independence . . . . . Dougherty  
This Day is Mine . . . . . Ware

### RECITAL HALL

Tuesday, May 13, 1958 . . . . . 8:00 p.m.  
Miss Lange is a candidate for the degree Bachelor of Science in Music  
Education, June 1958.

VOLUME 62. NO. 47

## Blood Listings Are Due Today

Blood Drive scheduling sheets signed by prospective donors are due by 4 p.m. today, co-chairman announced this morning. Assigning students to appear during their free class hours will be preliminary arrangements for the Drive, which begins Tuesday.

Co-chairman Elaine Hieber said the sheets must be returned by living group representatives at that time so that schedules can be delivered to houses Monday.

"At the moment, it appears that we'll hit the 850-pint goal," she said, "but we need more students to donate in the slack morning hours."

The three-day drive will end at 4 p.m. Thursday.  
Donors who are not scheduled

will have to make special arrangements with officials when they come to the SUB ballrooms to donate, she added. They can then be counted toward their living group's quota.

### Quota List

Co-chairman Jim Golden released this list of living groups and their quotas, which, he said, were figured on a percentage of the total number of students in any house:

Alpha Chi, 14; Alpha Phi, 20; Delta Gamma, 21; Pi Phi, 19; Tri-Delt, 16; Gamma Phi, 22; Theta, 19; Kappa, 25; Forney, 35; Hays, 32; French, 22; Ethel Steel, 22.

Beta, 28; Delta, 21; Sigma Chi, 10; Sigma Nu, 21; Delta Chi, 19; Kappa Sig, 20; Delta Sig, 20; Phi, 23; Phi Tau, 10; Phi Delt, 21; SAE, 23; ATO, 24; Teke, 18; Farm-House, 6; Willis Sweet, 74; Gault, 38; Campus Club, 49; Upham, 4; Lindley, 37; Chrisman, 42; McConnell, 46; LDS, 10; Lambda Chi, 6.

Golden explained that women's living groups would be asked to donate less proportionately than men's houses.

He added that local Red Cross officials had agreed to coordinate a city-wide drive with the University drawing and that they would donate at the SUB during the same hours. Faculty members have also been invited to participate.

### Two Awards

Miss Hieber said that each house which reached its 100 per cent quota would receive an award. She added that houses which filled their quotas would then be eligible for competition for two trophies which will go to the men's and women's living group that farthest exceed that quota. She emphasized, however, that the trophy competition would be computed only on students who actually donated blood. The 100 per cent quota includes all students who appear to donate blood, regardless of whether they are accepted or not.

IKs, Spurs and faculty wives will aid in staffing the drive facilities. Golden said. Coffee, fruit juice and cookies will be provided for all donors.

### Tours Monday

Six groups of touring entertainers will visit all living groups Monday during the dinner hour to advertise the drive and to inform students on procedures.

Miss Hieber said posters would be set up in the SUB to keep track of individual house competition and to indicate where the campus as a whole stands in meeting the quota.

A Red Cross Bloodmobile will arrive from Boise Monday evening to set up equipment for the Tuesday opening. A staff of five nurses will accompany the Bloodmobile. Nurses from Gritman Hospital will handle preliminary examinations. Volunteers from women's living groups will serve as typists in preparing donor cards and keeping records.

## Blood Quota Exceeds Goal, Officials Call Idaho 'Model'

Students donated a total of 900 pints during a three-day Blood Drive that ended yesterday, 50 more than co-chairmen had asked.

Chairmen Elaine Hieber and Jim Golden said at the end of the drawing, one of the largest in several years at Idaho, that "We're simply overwhelmed by student support. The committee couldn't ask for anything more."

Tri Delt and Lambda Chi won living group competition in the drive. Lambda Chi exceeded its quota with a tally of 274 per cent. Sigma Chi was second with 242 per cent and Phi Delt third with 228 per cent.

Tri Delt finished top in the women's division with 169 per cent. The drawing netted 289 pints the first day, 322 the second, and 289 the third to bring the total to exactly 900. Last year 840 pints were given during the same length of time.

Nineteen living groups, including 14 men's houses, hit 100 per cent of their quotas.

Phi Delt, Sigma Chi, Sigma Nu, Beta, Lambda Chi, LDS House, Teke, ATO, Delta Chi, Delta Sig, Phi, Kappa Sig, FarmHouse and Phi Tau all reached their quotas for the men. Alpha Chi, Tri Delt, Kappa, Gamma Phi and Pi Phi were the only five women's houses to meet their quotas.

### Trophies

Miss Hieber said the two trophies would be presented next week. She added that all houses which obtained 100 per cent of their quota would be given a filled blood bottle. Certificates will also be mailed to all living groups who participated.

Golden said that Red Cross officials had called Idaho's drawing "one of the most successful college drawings we've ever seen."

He said officials had indicated they would use Idaho as a model for other campus drawings.

## Four Evening Shows Given By Helldivers

Idaho's swimming group, Helldivers, presented its annual Spring Show, "I Wish I Was," for the first time last night. Four more shows are set for tonight and Saturday at Memorial Gym pool.

Performances are scheduled for 7:30 and 9 p.m. each night. Admission is 50 cents for adults and 25 cents for all students.

Jan Cooke, Delta Gamma, is show director, and Jesse Totten of the women's physical education department, is advisor.

Donna Gale, Theta, will direct Josephine Petrashek and Fran Baudek, Thetas, in the introduction number. Dave Damon, Campus Club, Sue Holmes, Delta Gamma, and Paula Harootunian, Alpha Chi, will team up under Helen Hanford, Alpha Phi, to do "Who's Afraid of the Big Bad Wolf?"

Director Pat Decker, Kappa, will swim with Betty Taylor, Delta Gamma; Linda Lewis, Theta; Kay Garten, Delta Gamma; Nancy Reading and Kay Bozarth, Kappa, in "Blue Bells of Scotland."

"Alice in Wonderland," directed by Carol Harvey, Forney, includes Miss Hanford, Pat Finney, Kappa; Bette Davis, Gamma Phi; Barb Wohletz, Ernie Woodruff, Dick Hughes, and Harry Stuntz, all off campus; Gay Merrick, Alpha Chi, and Lew Oring, Phi Tau. Ron Edwards and John Price, both off campus; Lorna Woolfel, Kappa; Jan Novak, Hays, and Director Ann Marie Berry, Alpha Phi, are in "Calypso."

"Blue Horizon," is directed by Con Ducey, Teke, and includes Sally Newland, Delta Gamma; Georgia Marshall, Gamma Phi; Miss Holmes, Don Slavin, off campus; Allan Hansen, Willis Sweet, and Dick Test.

Miss Baudek and Edwards, Cliff Lawrence and Jack Ayres, Tom Cypson, Gault, and Miss Muffet, Miss Edith Betts, assistant instructor of P.E., will direct her swimming class through a number.

"High on a Windy Hill" is directed by Jackie Wainwright, Tri Delt. The finale is executed by various members of the separate acts and is under the direction of Bernice Davis, off campus.

Diane Kail, and Jim Glenny, Phi, will narrate the program.

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## THE SPOKESMAN-REVIEW

SUNDAY MORNING.

AUGUST 2, 1959.



### Expert Synchronized Swimming Group Going Strong

Perched prettily at Manito County club poolside are members of the 1959 Silver Mermaids (left to right: Elaine Hieber, Dorothy Baggerly, Virginia Currier, Connie Vercoe, Lynda Milton, Karen Hord, Mary

Sawyer, Kathy Green, Cheryl Bombino and Terry Arrell. The organization has made a big hit since it was organized seven years ago by Mrs. Bess Milton.

### THEY'VE GOT RHYTHM

## Water 'Dancers' Still Performing

Ten attractive young women who don't mind a lot of hard work are in the Spokane public's watersports eye again this summer.

Mrs. Bess Milton's "Silver Mermaids" synchronized swimming group, organized seven years ago for a water show at Natatorium park, is still going strong. The Mermaids' most recent shows were given last week at the Amateur Athletic union swim meet at the Comstock pool.

What is synchronized swimming?

"It is a means of expressing your emotions and interpretations through music and rhythm, just as a dancer does," explains Mrs. Milton. "It is a challenge to the good swimmer, because the skills are much harder than they look."

Synchronized swimming, according to Mrs. Milton, is more difficult than competitive racing or diving. "It takes several months," she said, "to be able even to attempt some of the basic skills."

The sport-given its biggest boost, perhaps, by film star Esther Williams—increases the swimmer's endurance and skill in strokes, helps her learn body control and the ability to work in the water with ease, and increases interest and knowledge in rhythm and design.

"Synchronized swimming provides a means of creative rhythmic expression," said Mrs. Milton. "that a person might not find in any other sport. Besides having a little fun in the water, swimmers find they are doing something constructive—providing entertainment for themselves and others."

The Mermaids work out once

weekly during the off-season months at the Fairchild air force base pool. During the summer they congregate at the Comstock, Cannon or Hillyard pools for sessions under the watchful eye of Mrs. Milton (who has few peers in the synchronized swimming department). They have no sponsors; the girls are all amateur athletes and receive no pay for their work.

Because the Mermaids is a "show" group, Mrs. Milton has to be selective in choosing new swimmers. In general, applications must be between 5 feet, 3 inches and 5 feet 8 inches tall, weigh under 140 pounds, be between 14 and 21 and have a working knowledge of all swimming strokes. Newcomers are accepted by all the girls in the group after a probationary period. Because they must work closely, personality is a consideration.

The Silver Mermaids appeared in the first three sports shows conducted by Spokesman-Review Charities, Inc., at the Coliseum, at dedication ceremonies of the Fairchild pool and at the Spokane Country club and Manito Country club pools.

THE IDAHO ARGONAUT, UNIVERSITY OF IDAHO

### Helldivers



Gene Anderson and Gene Anderson do a coordinated dive as part of the three-day Helldiver water show at Memorial Gymnasium pool tonight and tomorrow. The show started last night.



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## Future Biology Teacher To Study Art In Japan

A detour in the career of a future high school biology teacher may start paying dividends for Canada in two years.

The aspiring teacher is 24-



IAIN BAXTER  
... to study in Orient

year-old Calgary Iain Baxter, and his detour is a two-year expenses-paid study of Japanese art which he has just been awarded by the government of that country.

Son of Mr. and Mrs. Andrew Baxter, 1209 20th St. N.W., he was raised here and graduated from Crescent Heights High School in 1955. After beginning the study of zoology at the University of Idaho, his drawings caught the eye of his professor and he was asked to illustrate a book on the wildlife of the northern Rockies.

### ONE-MAN SHOWS

After that start he began painting in earnest. During his university years he held one-man shows, and in his final year won the Sim award for outstanding creative scholarship.

It was while doing research in the natural history department of the Glenbow Foundation in Calgary last summer that he entered the contest for the Japanese fellowship. Announcement that he had won came last week.

"We're delighted," said Moncrief Williamson, director of the art department of the Glenbow Foundation.

What does Iain Baxter expect to discover in Japan? He isn't sure.

"You evolve as you learn," he said today at his temporary home where he is staying until April with his wife Elaine.

"I have quite a feeling for Japanese painting. I'll seek the Japanese philosophy of nature," said the tall, crew-cut Baxter.

"Then when I come home, I'll apply it to my paintings of Canadian nature."

"I hope to interpret Canada in my own way."

After living on approximately \$60 a month for two years, Mr. and Mrs. Baxter will return to Canada. He expects to teach high school in either Alberta or B.C.

With time out for painting, of course.

THE ALBERTAN, Thurs., Feb. 16, 1961

## Eavesdrop With Eva



EVA REID

**AWARDED SCHOLARSHIP:** Hot off the gridiron is the news that Iain Baxter, 1209-20 St. N.W., has been awarded a foreign scholarship by the Japanese government which will entitle him to two years study in the Orient. The scholarship embraces all fields in higher education with the choice being left to the successful applicant. Mr. Baxter has chosen art and he tells why. Graduated from the University of Idaho with his bachelor of science in zoology he feels he has gained an insight into nature which he wishes to interpret through his brush. "You know the Japanese philosophy is told through nature, it is seen in their gardens and homes..." said the award winner as he explained he wanted to study this philosophy and come back and apply it in Canada. Feeling Canadians are too materialistic, he hopes he can, in some small measure, through his paintings make them more conscious of the bird, animal, and plant life surrounding them. Mr. Baxter had returned to university to take his masters in education but came home when his wife telephoned him the good news. They will leave for Tokyo early in April. Mr. Baxter, who has resided in Calgary since he was one year old, is the son of Mr. and Mrs. Andrew Baxter, and became interested in art at university. He has won several prizes in the U.S. for his water colors and oils and last year won the \$100 purchase award in the Calgary Allied Arts regional show. He is one of two Calgarians to have his paintings chosen in the Young Contemporaries of Canada contest sponsored by the Public Library and Museum of London, Ont. The Albertan wishes you success, Mr. Baxter.

14 The Spokesman-Review Tues., April 12, 1955.

## Swim Ballet Ready for Sports Show



Eye-catchers, every one—and they can swim, too. These "Silver Mermaids," directed by Mrs. Bess Milton, will do a precision swimming ballet number in the Sports show, April 19 through 24 in the Coliseum. All Spokane area girls, they are (left to right),

Carol Jean Kraft, Bobbie Allison, Joyce Anderson, Peggy Clark, Dolores Craig, Elaine Heiber, Mary Ann Weir and Carol Armitage. Tickets may be obtained at the Coliseum's advance sale office in the Desert hotel. The act is one of the many features of the show.

## Artist Iain Baxter to Illustrate Wildlife Book



Iain Baxter, a student at the University of Idaho, will illustrate a new book "Wildlife of The Northern Rocky Mountains," co-authored by William H. Baker, head of the biological sciences department at the University and Dr. Earl J. Larrison, associate professor of zoology.

Iain is the son of A. Baxter, assistant sales manager at DB Calgary.

A 22-year-old zoology major, Iain is preparing a series of 175 detailed ink drawings of reptiles, mammals and birds for the forthcoming book. Despite only two years of training, his drawings attracted the attention of Dr. Larrison, who suggested he do the art work for the projected book. The volume will be one of a series depicting various geographical regions, for Naturegraph publications.

One of Alberta's top skiers several years ago, Iain turned to painting after an automobile accident left him with a broken neck.

For the next few years, he will be a teaching fellow in zoology and will also enter work leading to a doctorate.



**WATER TESTERS**—Testing the water (it was cold) as the pool at the Swim-Ko Swim clinic, 5109 Wall, was filled last week were (clockwise), Claudia Phelps, Bobbie Allison, Laura Crosby, Mary Ann Weir, Elaine

Heiber, Dolores Craig, Janet Novak and Carol Jean Smith. The girls will assist Dr. Kopet in free swimming instructions, which begin today at 10 a. m. Kopet also will train local swimming team.

THE SPAN, Sept.-October, 1959 Page 2

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10 The Spokesman-Review, Thursday, April 6, 1961

## Idaho Graduate to Delve Into Study of Japanese

Cultural mores, language barriers, philosophical foundations, art forms, and poetic expression—these and many more are the areas of thought and action into which Iain Baxter will delve as he begins a two-year program of art study under a Japanese government foreign scholarship.

Baxter and his wife, the former Elaine Heber, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. George B. Heber, W1923 Nora, left Tuesday for Japan. They expect to arrive in Tokyo Friday.

A 1959 graduate of the University of Idaho, Baxter, in receiving the scholarship, became the first Canadian in three years to win the award. Japan offers the scholarships—limited in number—to other countries of the world to "enhance the contribution that a person may make to his own society and to bridge the gap between his national culture and that of Japan" in his chosen field. Baxter's field is art.

Though Baxter graduated from the University of Idaho with a degree in zoology he was not inactive in what he now considers his chosen vocation—art. During his zoological studies he was asked to assist in illustrating a handbook on birds. Success led to further art study and a minor in art through the university.

### Many Invitations

Real interest in the media—he now calls himself a "modern" painter—resulted in invitations to exhibit across both Canada and the United States. He was winner of the "Purchase Prize" in the Southern Alberta Annual Art Show; he exhibited in the Lutheran Students Art Exhibition in Minneapolis, Minn.; his paintings were shown at the Pacific Northwest 14th Annual Art Exhibition at Spokane; he displayed his work at the Southern Alberta Annual Art Show at Calgary; was invited to exhibit at the Canada Art Exhibition in London, Ont., and his works were on view at the Montreal Spring Exhibition at Montreal, Que. One-man shows were held at both the University of Idaho and Washington State University by Baxter.

With his background in the sciences and his experiences in art, Baxter felt a real desire to dig deeper into Japanese art expressions—particularly those related to nature.

To understand the "oneness" that Japanese art forms of poetry, music and sculpturing have with nature is his goal. In turn, he plans to absorb those influences into his own form of artistic expressiveness. Then through the expressive art media he plans to apply his feeling in Canadian natural forms and environmental moods.

### Language Study

To this task Baxter will give the next two years in a study of the Japanese language, its philosophies, study of art forms and techniques in art galleries and monasteries throughout the countryside of Japan, as well as careful studies of Sumie, Zinga and Haiga forms of Japanese artistic expression.

Baxter said yesterday that following arrival in Japan he and his wife expect to leave for Osaka where, for the best part of a year, he will be studying the Japanese language and becoming acquainted with Japanese thoughts and feelings. Assignment to one of the major cultural centers of Japan, perhaps Kyoto, Nara or Tokyo will then follow, he said.

Mrs. Baxter plans to continue a teaching career begun two years ago. She has taught one year at Calgary, Alta., the home of her husband and one year at Coeur d'Alene, Idaho. She is better known locally as a swimming instructor at Comstock and Cannon Park pools for three years before her marriage in 1959.

### Funds Allowed

Monthly allowances for living expenses, tuition for study at the cultural centers, assistance with housing and limited amounts of travel expenses are included as part of the scholarship, Baxter said.

"We're thrilled with the opportunity to study in Japan," both the Baxters said. "With this study and knowledge behind me, it is my hope to aid in bridging the gap between the Canadian or Western cultures and that of the Japanese," he said.



Artist and Wife  
Mr. and Mrs. Iain Baxter will visit Japan.



IAIN & INGRID



BAXTER FAMILY



HALO OF PAINTINGS. A young artist from Calgary, Iain Baxter, has been attracting attention at the University of Idaho where he is a graduate student in zoology. Shown here with paintings up to his neck, Mr. Baxter's artistic style is based on a blending of realistic and abstract mediums. His first one-man show is now being held at the Idaho university. CALGARY HERALD, 1960.



INGRID WITH SON TOR

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THE ALBERTAN, Saturday, Jan. 27, 1962 11



IAIN BAXTER and MORIO YOKOYAMA  
... returned from Japan



ELAINE

## West In Danger Of Losing Japan

The West is in danger of losing Japan to the Communists unless the democracies radically change their thinking.

"You must help us fill the spiritual vacuum left by the war, rather than hand us money or platitudes," said Morio Yokoyama of Nishinomiya, who is en route to study business administration at the University of Idaho, Moscow.

Mr. Yokoyama returned to Calgary with Iain Baxter, who has been studying art in Japan on a Japanese government scholarship.

While western countries accept trade from Japan, the Japanese people will remain pro-Western, Morio said, but should trade become bad, Communism will be the only answer. The emphasis on militarism during the war destroyed the ancient religions which have supported the Japanese for thousands of years.

"When the war was over we had nothing to fall back on," Morio said. "Now we have only business, and if that goes Japan will become Red."

Communism holds a strong attraction for the young people of Japan, for press and radio are saturated with news on the joys of Marxism and the evils inherent in democracy.

Western movies and TV are no better, he added, for they give the impression that all westerners are rich and trying to get richer by exploitation.

Morio feels that exchange programs among students would dispel this erroneous impression both America and Japan have about each other.

"You think of Japan as pretty flowers and girls in kimonos," he noted. "But times are changing. We must get below the surface and understand each other."

In only 13 days in North America Morio feels his whole impression of western life has changed. That is his reason for studying here, to gain better knowledge of the people, as well as to get the best in education.

A graduate of Keio University in Tokyo, Morio added that the

west need not fear that Japan would saturate her markets with cheap goods.

"Heavy industrial machines are a top product and all our goods can compare favorably with any other country's goods," he said.

Mr. Baxter, the only Canadian chosen last year by Japan for the art scholarship, felt that the democracies must be more forceful in presenting their point of view.

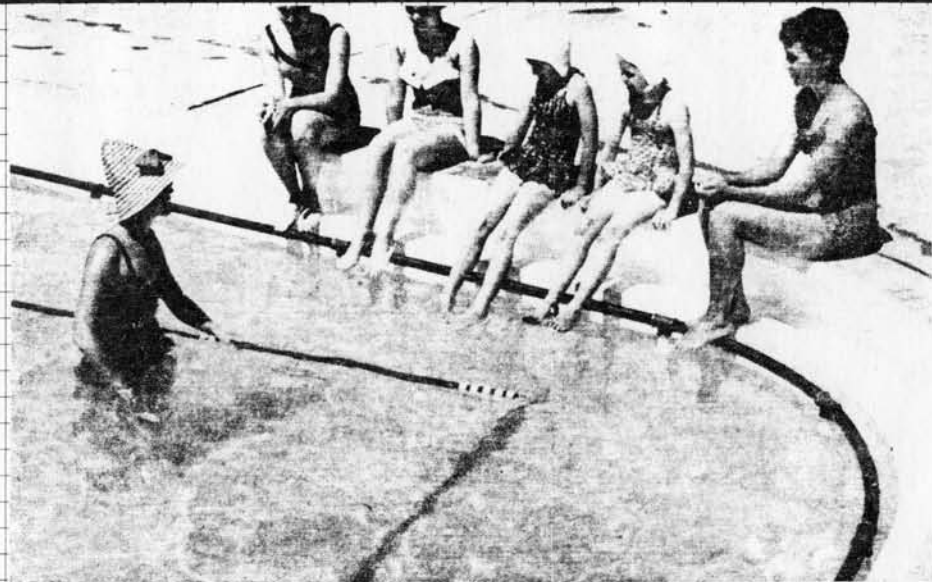
"We have to change our thinking," he said, "and we should send to Japan people who have something to offer, not just tourists."

Although Japanese art tends toward the traditional, Mr. Baxter noted that modern art was gaining a stronghold.

Both young men stressed that it was most important for the west to give Japan a spiritual boost, as well as a financial one, otherwise another ally could easily become an enemy.



Iain Baxter, a Canadian artist whose works have been shown in England, The U.S., Japan, and the Canadian National Art Gallery, has been appointed Assistant Professor of Fine Arts at UBC.



## Water Safety Course Is Popular

Five students in a mixed class at the Comstock park swimming pool listen attentively as instructor Elaine Hieber explains the next step in their progressive course of water safety tutoring. Miss Hieber, resplendent in a peaked straw hat, extends a red assistance pole to Miss

Chris Heggs as (left to right) Janet Kulje, Joanne Nason, Linda Green and Karen Hood look on. The classes are held daily, during the morning hours, from Monday through Friday, at the Comstock, Cannon and Hillyard pools.



## Baxter Slates One Man Show

University zoology graduate student Iain Baxter will exhibit 35 oil and water color paintings and drawings in a one-man show at the Student Union Jan. 9-16.

Baxter's subjects spring from nature studies and animal life. It

was in a zoology course that his talent came to light. Drawings of specimens in routine class work caught the eye of Earl J. Larrierson, associate professor of zoology, who suggested the student do the art work for a new book.

He has done 1753 detailed ink drawings of reptiles, mammals and birds for a forthcoming book entitled "Wildlife of the Northern Rocky Mountains." Co-authors are William H. Baker, head of the biological sciences department, and Larrierson.

The young artist-student from Calgary, Alberta, who is art director of the Idaho Academy of Science magazine, is currently doing preliminary work on another book. As a senior last year, he received the Swim award for outstanding creative scholarship.

## Music Confab To Be Here This Month

Music consultant Claudeane Burns of Chicago will take part in two of the workshops planned for the Music Education conference at the University Jan. 15 and 16.

Miss Burns, who taught music

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Description

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Seal





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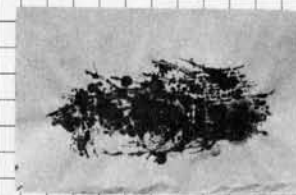
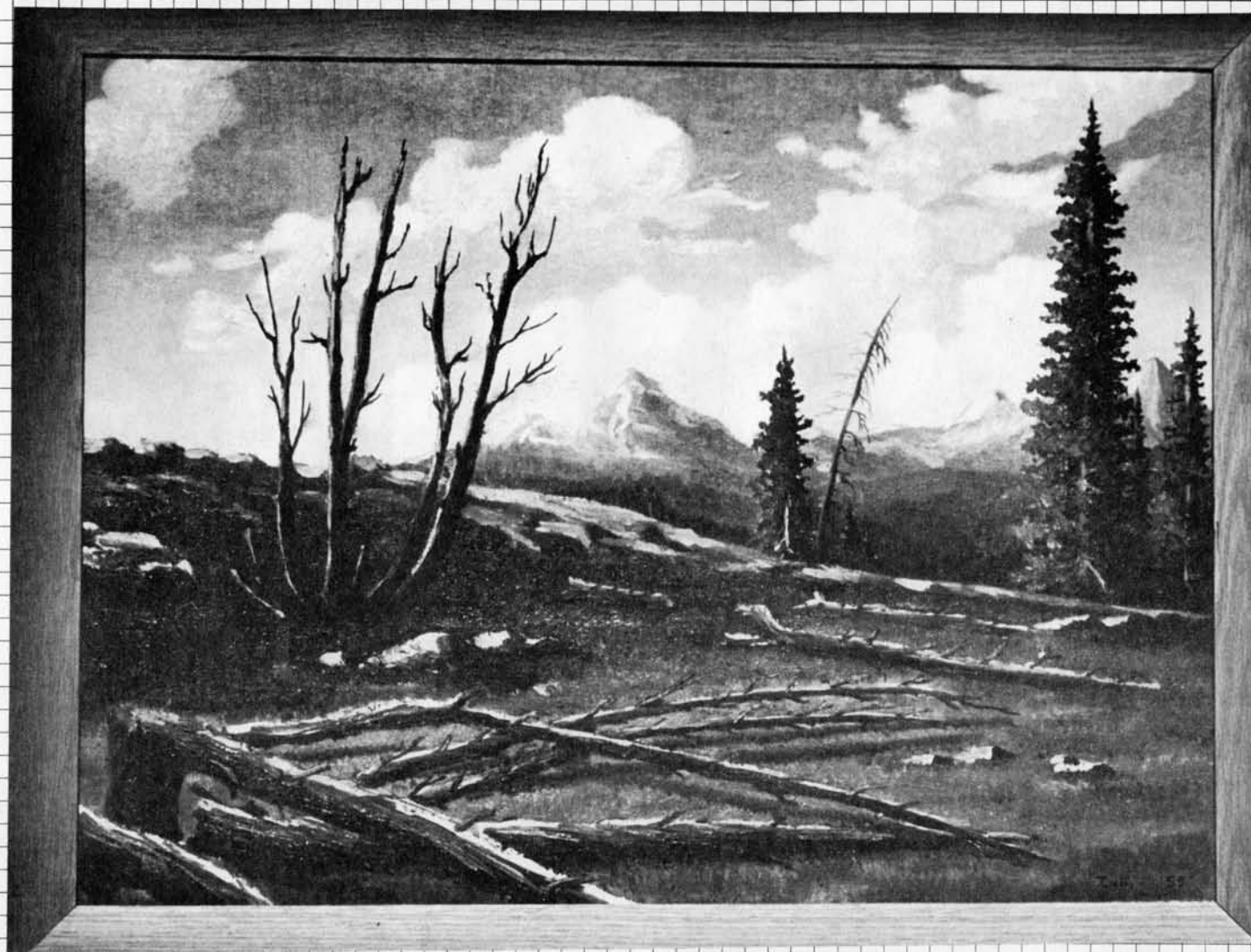
1959

Project

EARLY PAINTINGS

Number

—



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Description

IAIN BAXTER'S EARLY WORKS DEVELOPING OUT OF INTEREST AND STUDY IN ZOOLOGY AND ECOLOGY. THESE WORKS PLUS ANIMAL & BIRD DRAWINGS COMPRISED BODY OF WORK SUBMITTED WHICH ALLOWED WINNING JAPANESE GOVERNMENT SCHOLARSHIP IN 1961.



# INFORMATION

N.E. THING CO. LTD.

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1961

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WILDLIFE OF THE NORTHERN ROCKY MOUNTAINS

Number

2

## WILDLIFE OF THE NORTHERN ROCKY MOUNTAINS

With Over 400 Illustrations



By WILLIAM BAKER,  
EARL LARRISON, CHARLES YOCOM  
and IAIN BAXTER

### 56 CHIPMUNKS, TREE SQUIRREL, GOPHER, MOUSE

TCM  
Cont'd.  
Sub-Alp.  
Rocks

27. NORTHWESTERN CHIPMUNK (*Eutamias amoenus*). 5"; 4"; rat-. Black (or dark brown), and white stripes on back. Sides yellowish or light brownish; under parts whitish or buffy; tail brownish above, light brownish or grayish below. Distinctive size and rich colors. Prefers open forests.

TCM  
Sage  
Cont'd.  
Juni-Mts.

28. LEAST CHIPMUNK (*Eutamias minimus*). 4"; 3 1/2"; mouse+. General grayish or light-brownish coloration. Small size and the brownish dark dorsal stripes distinguish this variable species. Gray form usually found in sagebrush, darker form in brush of coniferous forests.

TCM  
Cont'd.  
Sub-Alp.  
Rocks

29. RED-TAILED CHIPMUNK (*Eutamias ruficaudus*). 5"; 5 1/4"; rat-. Large dark-colored chipmunk. Shoulders and sides reddish; dorsal stripes black and white (mixed with reddish); under side of tail red; belly white. Prefers dense forests of northern Idaho and northwestern Montana.

CH  
Cont'd.  
Sub-Alp.

30. UTAH CHIPMUNK (*Eutamias umbrinus*). 5"; 4"; mouse+. Large dark chipmunk with brownish-gray sides, grayish head and rump, and broad brownish dorsal stripes; belly white. Extreme e. Ida., w. Wyo., n.e. Utah.



31. Red Squirrel



34. Flying Squirrel



35. Northern Pocket Gopher



36. Western Harvest Mouse



38. Deer Mouse

### 104 SPARROWS

line over the eye, a white line through the center of the crown, and notched tail. Call: a soft "tsit". Song: faint insect-like "tset-tset-tsa-wzzzzzt-subut" or tset-tset-tsa-tzee-tsay". Summer resident; a few in winter.

219. GRASSHOPPER SPARROW (*Ammodramus savannarum*). 4-5". Small sparrow with short tail, similar to Savannah Sparrow, but no streaks on breast. Back strongly striped. Song: insect-like "tset-tset-tzee."

220. VESPER SPARROW (*Poocetes gramineus*). (Picture on p. 102). 5-6". A bird of meadows and open farm lands, resembling pale Song Sparrow or Savannah Sparrow, but showing conspicuous white outer tail feathers in flight. Song: similar to Song Sparrow's, but opening notes not hurried (first 2 soft and low; second 2 higher in pitch). Summer resident.



222.



224.



226.



225.



229.



230.

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Description

IAIN BAXTER DID OVER 200 BIRD & ANIMAL DRAWINGS FROM  
1958-61 FOR THIS WILDLIFE GUIDE BOOK.

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Trade Mark C





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WILDLIFE OF THE NORTHERN ROCKY MOUNTAINS

Number

2

108

## REPTILES AND AMPHIBIANS

9. COMMON GARTER SNAKE (*Thamnophis sirtalis*). Length, 24-30". Slender medium-sized snake, dark grayish or brownish above with 3 longitudinal light stripes running along the back and sides. Conspicuous red blotches along sides. Under parts yellowish or grayish anteriorly, becoming darker posteriorly. Pugnacious but harmless, though often releasing foul-smelling contents of anal glands. Usually near water.

TC  
Riv. Wd.  
Marsh



TCB  
Grass  
Marsh

10. WESTERN GARTER SNAKE (*Thamnophis elegans*). Length, 18-24". Small slender snake with brownish upper parts conspicuously marked by 4 rows of blackish or dark brown spots; pale yellow mid-dorsal and side (lateral) stripes; under parts mottled with dusky. Prefers moist areas.

TCB  
Rocks  
Grass  
Sage



11. WESTERN RATTLESNAKE (*Crotalus viridis*). Length, 24-28". Stout-bodied snake, with grayish or greenish or brownish upper parts conspicuously marked with a mid-dorsal row of dark brownish blotches bordered laterally by smaller dark spots. Tip of tail with rattle. Dangerously poisonous, feeding on small mammals, ground birds, lizards, etc.

## COMMON AMPHIBIANS

Frogs, toads and salamanders are distinguished by moist slimy non-scaly skins. They frequent water or moist places and usually lay their eggs and spend their larval lives in water. All are harmless and feed mainly on insects and other invertebrates. Figures refer to body lengths.

TCB  
Marsh  
Rocks  
Conif.



1. LONG-TOED SALAMANDER (*Ambystoma macrodactylum*). 2 1/4-3 1/4". A small slender salamander, dark brownish or blackish above with a broad irregular tannish, yellowish, or greenish stripe down center of the back. Sides speckled with white and under parts blackish flecked with small white spots. Under logs, rocks, etc.

60

## WOLF, FOX, BEARS



CHA  
Conif.  
Sub-Alp.

53. GRAY WOLF (*Canis lupus*). 40"-20"; raccoon +. Looks like large German Shepherd dog. Colors variable, being grayish, brownish or blackish on back and sides and somewhat lighter below. Ears short, muzzle heavy; when running, carries tail at angle from body (see illustrations). Utters long drawn-out howl. Wild areas.

CH  
Sub-Alp.  
Conif.  
Rocks

54. RED FOX (*Vulpes fulva*). 30"-16"; raccoon +. Slender dog-like mammal with long slim legs and long bushy tail. Colors variable; red phase: black ears, reddish-yellow body, black legs, red tail with white tip; silver phase: black with white-tipped guard hairs and black tail with white tip; black phase: black, except white tip on tail. Cross phase: brown with a blackish "cross" over shoulders. White tip on end of bushy tail distinctive for all.



TCB  
Conif.  
Sub-Alp.  
Meadow  
Marsh

55. BLACK BEAR (*Ursus americanus*). 5-6'; 2-3' at shoulder. Colors variable, ranging from black to brown, cinnamon, or "blond". Tail very short; pelage relatively long and shaggy; toe nails short and black; no well developed hump on shoulders; common in forests. Usually shy.

TCB  
Conif.  
Sub-Alp.  
Meadow

56. GRIZZLY BEAR (*Ursus arctos*). 6-8'; 3-4' at shoulder. A large heavy-bodied bear, sometimes reaching half a ton in weight. Hair long and shaggy, giving woolly appearance; color variable, from yellow to brown or blackish, but hairs usually tipped or "grizzled" with whitish. Obvious hump on shoulders, heavy large size, and long yellow or brown claws distinctive. Shy and seldom seen; a few scattered through wilder areas.

110

## AMPHIBIANS

CH  
Water  
Str. Wd.

8. TAILED FROG (*Ascaphus tui*). 1 1/2-2". Small frog characterized by vertical eye pupil, no eardrums, and tail-like copulatory organ in ♀. Upper parts reddish or brownish, marked with darker streaks and blotches; prominent eye-stripe; under parts pale yellow. Tadpoles blackish with white fleck on tail; often found clinging by sucker to the under sides of rocks in streams. Occurs in or near shallow white water in northern part of region.

T  
Meadow  
Marsh

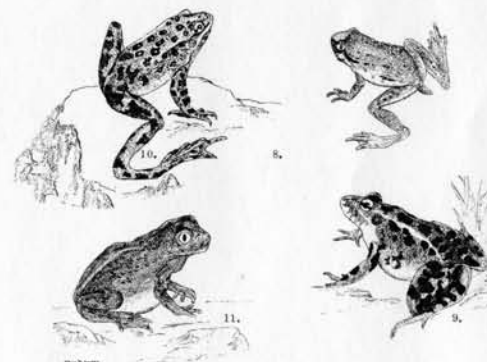
9. LEOPARD FROG (*Rana pipiens*). Smooth-skinned frog with greenish or brownish upper parts conspicuously marked with large round or oval black spots which are margined by light-colored bands; hind legs marked by black cross-bars; under parts yellowish or whitish. Croak of a low throaty grunting sound. Usually found in low open areas near water.

TCB  
Water  
Marsh  
Str. Wd.  
Meadow

10. SPOTTED FROG (*Rana pretiosa*). 3-4". Upper parts roughened with small tubercles; color above light brown, darkening to almost black, with small black spots; pale yellow or whitish stripe from nose to shoulder; dark brownish eye-mask. Under parts varied: creamy to yellow or red, often spotted and mottled; inner side of hind legs often reddish.

T  
Grass  
Water

11. WESTERN SPADEFOOT TOAD (*Scaphiopus hammondi*). 1 1/2-2 1/2". Small squat toad with a greenish or grayish skin roughened by numerous small tubercles and mottled by irregular spots or blotches of brownish or blackish; an irregular band of lighter color extending back from each eye; under parts whitish or grayish. Characteristic field mark is black rounded sharp-edged tubercle or "spade" on underside of hind foot. Nocturnal. Voice: low-pitched snoring sound; buries itself in sand in dry times.



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Description *FEW SAMPLE PAGES.*

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WILDLIFE OF NORTHERN ROCKY MTS.

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Description

SAMPLES OF PLATES IN BOOK. DONE 1954-61

Seal





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1961

Project

ARTICLE IN JAPANESE MAGAZINE

Number

1.

ONE MAN SHOW of painting by IAIN BAXTER  
イアン バクスター 個展 12. 4 ~ 7. 1961

カナディアン アーティスト Canadian Artist  
ラッカー、コラージュ、水彩画 lacquers and collage watercolors



Yamada Gallery  
ahinmonzen street  
kyoto tel. 6-5382  
山田画廊  
新町通和山崎内入北側  
10:00 am. 6:00 pm.

→ ANNOUNCEMENT OF SHOW.



作品 1

バクスターは二十代の事はをわす  
かにこえた青年画家で、カナダから  
アメリカのイデホ大学に留学して  
絵を学び、戦後、日本政府の奨学金  
を得て来日した。従って画壇はまだ  
知らないが、一九五九年以来、毎年カ  
ナダやアメリカでの展覧会に出展  
し、個展も毎年おこなっている。日本  
では前半の道西十六回二科展に出展  
し、さらに京都の山田画廊で個展を  
開いて注目された。

若さに似合わぬ深つきと腕力をも  
つているのが、彼の人間から  
得たもの印である。作品からはま  
だ決定的なものを窺えない。しか  
し、同年輩の日本の画家の多くには  
見られないような表現の自由さがある。  
画面をつくろうとする意にそ  
らたれて自分自身を失った、材  
質感にたわって、その面白さだけ  
に満足したりするような所がない。  
原色のなまなましいラッカーを大



屏風を見直す  
イアン  
バクスター

上野照夫

Canadian Artist  
ONE MAN SHOW  
of painting by  
IAIN BAXTER  
12. 4~7, 1961  
lacquers  
and collage  
watercolors

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Description

1ST ONE MAN SHOW BY IAIN BAXTER







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Date

1961

Project

EXHIBITION AT YAMADA GALLERY, KYOTO, JAPAN.

Number

1

Iain Baxter

## A New View of the Japanese Folding Screen

Iain Baxter, from Canada, in his late twenties, studied at the University of Idaho. In 1961 he came to Japan on a Japanese Government foundation grant. His work has appeared widely in the U.S.A. and Canada since 1959 and he has had regular one-man shows since then also. In Japan he participated in the Nikakai group show in Tokyo and had a one-man show at the Yamada Gallery in Kyoto where the reviewer first saw his work.

Baxter's work, at first sight, struck me as being almost too sure and too forceful for his years, and at the same time rather vague in its intentions. Nonetheless I felt and still feel he has a relative freedom of expression compared to his contemporaries in Japan whose intentions, though generally much clearer, often lack spontaneity and verve.

His use of lacquer is brilliant and fresh, though perhaps the freshness in the feeling of free movement of line and color depends largely upon the fluidity of the lacquer itself. Yet it is to the artist's credit that he can so seize upon the medium's nature to express his own. Indeed, he is engrossed in and alive to what is happening as he paints, so that the emotional push becomes a visual component. All this might pass as sheer automatism, but, in fact, a sense of control is maintained. For despite my original impression of vagueness, I gradually came to see structural intentness in his careful alternations of forms in color and line.

As the black and white reproductions on these pages show, forms and lines are quite clear, clearer than the actual paintings themselves as I recall them and stronger, which suggests that the

color element is less important to the work than at first seems the case.

But essential, at least for us in Japan, to the impact of his work is the use he has made of the Byobu (folding screen), often seen in Japanese homes standing at the edge of a room. It was not, oddly enough, the painting on the byobu that interested Baxter, but the form of the byobu itself, the screen as a multiform frame.

In Japan, you will understand, the byobu has always been used as an architectural appurtenance. It functions as a portable partition and the painting on it was (and is) essentially a decoration in keeping with whatever its usual occasion. The painting invariably has been done separately and simply mounted on the screen.

But if you will glance at the plates of Baxter's byobu, you will see at once how he has altered the use of it to his own sense of it. In plate 3a you see the screen as it is customarily set in Japan. Plate 3b, however shows a new way that at once creates a fresh dimension for the painting on the screen. And plate 3c again, another way, shows two panels as one with the other two panels as hidden wings, unseen but still relating to what is seen and effecting a new sense of space. The possibilities suddenly are many. And Baxter, not surprisingly, has also in mind new shapes, instead of the vertical panel, to use as units in the folding screen.

The artist spent six months learning for himself the craft of making these difficult paper hinged screens. The hingeing, unlike that in the West, is so fine as to allow no break in the surface and immediately offers an excellent surface for the painter. And Baxter, as it happens, works directly on the prepared screen.

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Description

1<sup>ST</sup> ONE MAN SHOW BY IAIN BAXTER AT YAMADA GALLERY, KYOTO, JAPAN. ARTICLE APPEARED IN ART, A CONTEMPORARY ART MAGAZINE.

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1961

Project

EXHIBITION AT YAMADA GALLERY, Kyoto Japan

Number

2

Perhaps he created byōbu for himself out of that world where the triptych, the cyclorama (not to mention cinerama), and the mobile have established themselves. Perhaps it was only natural for him to have found such a format with his highly flexible and fluent style of art. But from the Japanese point of view, from within the tradition, it is startling and refreshing, showing us possibilities within our own world that we hadn't imagined, heretofore, existed. In any event, the folding screen has at once become a new painting ground, a ground that can metamorphose before our eyes and transform our view of what a painting may be in terms of that view.

Teruo Ueno

Professor of Aesthetics, and Critic  
Kyoto University, Kyoto, Japan.

( translated by Tetsuo Yamada, gallery  
owner, and Cid Corman ).

Article appeared in ART a quarterly  
magazine of contemporary Japanese Art.  
May issue, Vol. 10 No. 2 1962.

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Number

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AUG • 62



AUG • 62



AUG • 62



AUG • 62



AUG • 62



AUG • 62

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Description

WITH FOLDING SCREEN GONE IN JAPAN

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See



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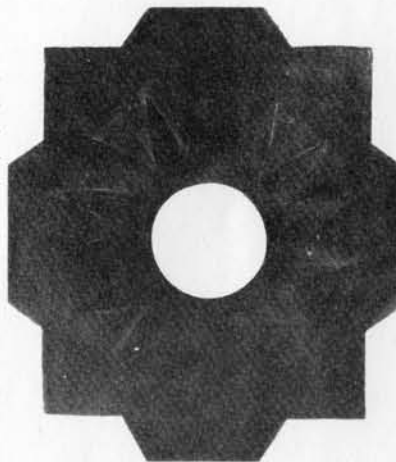
1963

Project

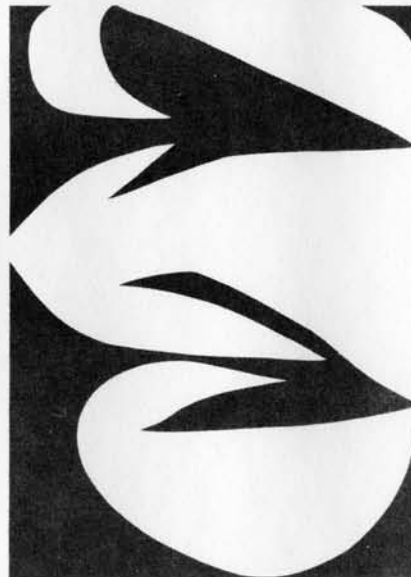
EARLY PAINTING WORKS

Number

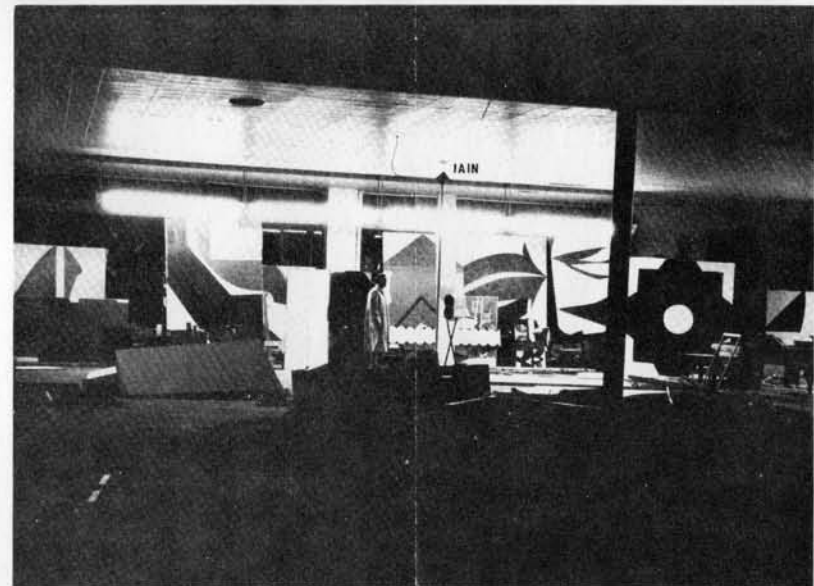
1.



7



8



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Description

WORK DONE WHILE AT WASHINGTON STATE UNIV., PULLMAN, WAS H. WHILE WORKING ON MASTER OF FINE ARTS DEGREE.

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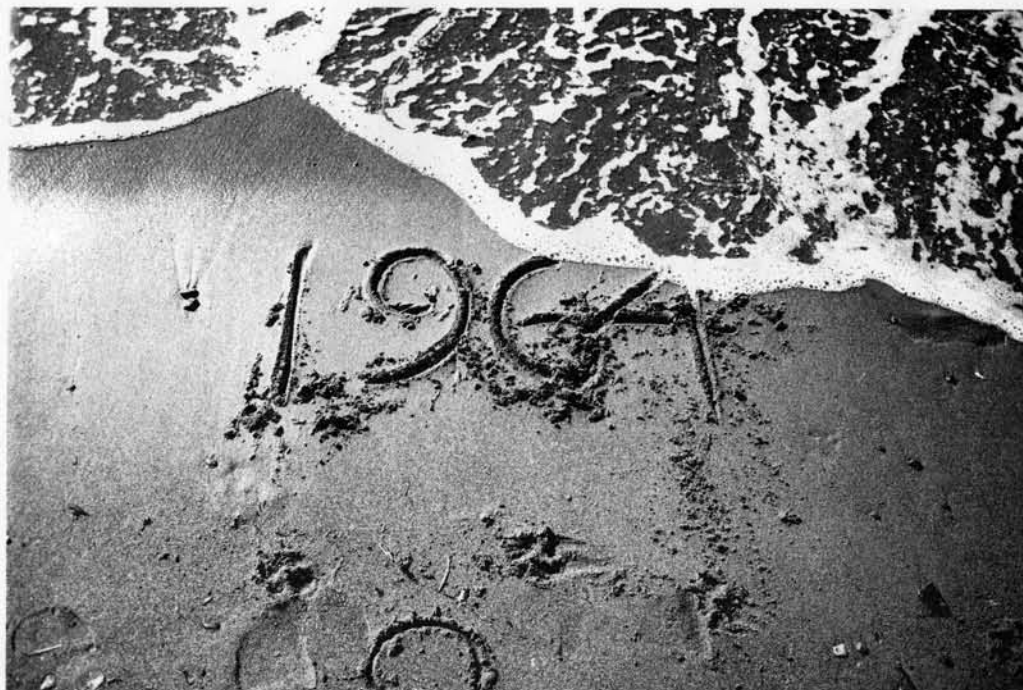
1964

Project

THE YEAR 1964

Number

1.



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1964

Project

2 TONS OF ICE SCULPTURE

Number

1.



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Description

Project CARRIED OUT AT UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA, 1964, BY IAN BAXTER  
Sculpture presents concepts of DISAPPEARANCE, IMPERMANENCE, CHANGE & DESTRUCTION.



# INFORMATION

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1964

Project

TEACHING CLASSES AT UNIV. OF B.C.

Number

1.



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Description USING NON-VERBAL TECHNIQUES TO TEACH ART CLASSES AT UNIVERSITY OF British Columbia.  
IAN BAXTER - FOREGROUND  
IAN WALLACE - BACKGROUND

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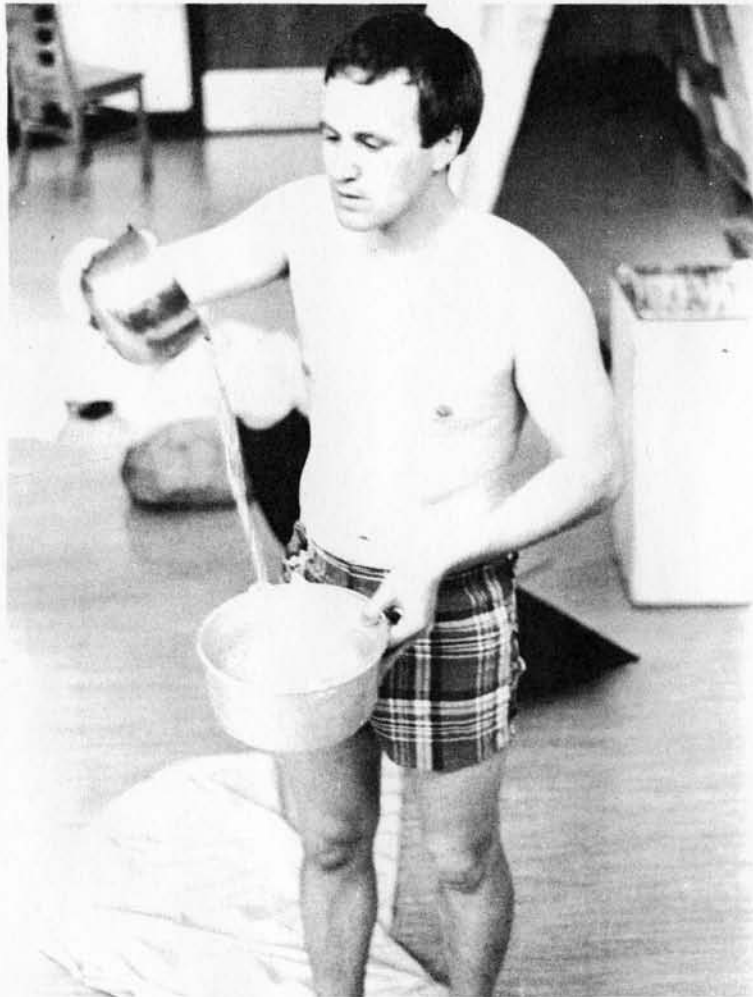
1964

Project

PERFORMING SWIMMING ON DRY LAND.

Number

1



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Description

CO-PRESIDENT OF N.E. THING CO. PERFORMING ACT OF SWIMMING ON LAND. ALSO  
USED AS TECHNIQUE FOR TEACHING NON-VERBAL ART CLASSES.

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1964

Project

TEACHING CLASSES AT UNIV. OF B.C.

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Using Non-verbal teaching techniques

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THE YEAR 1965

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STILL LIFE DRAWING

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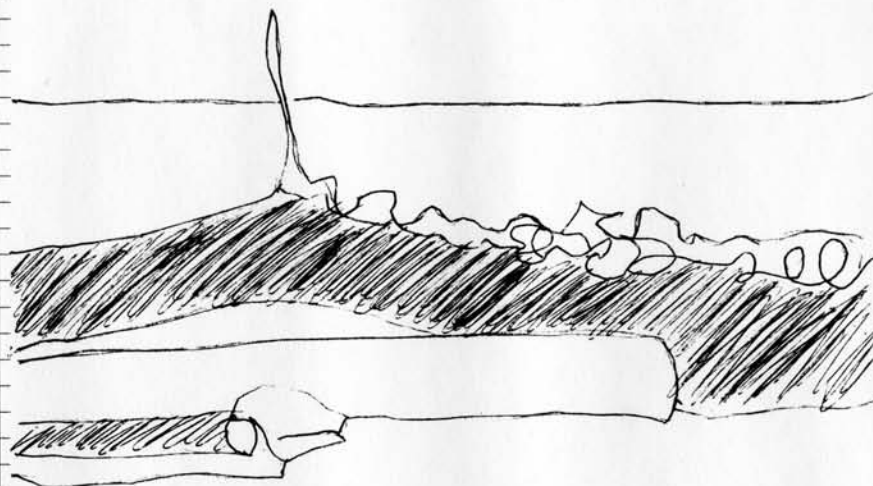
1965

Project

DRAWINGS

Number

1



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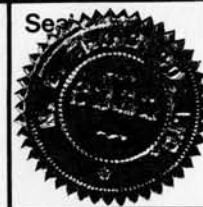
Description

LANDSCAPE DRAWING

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Seal



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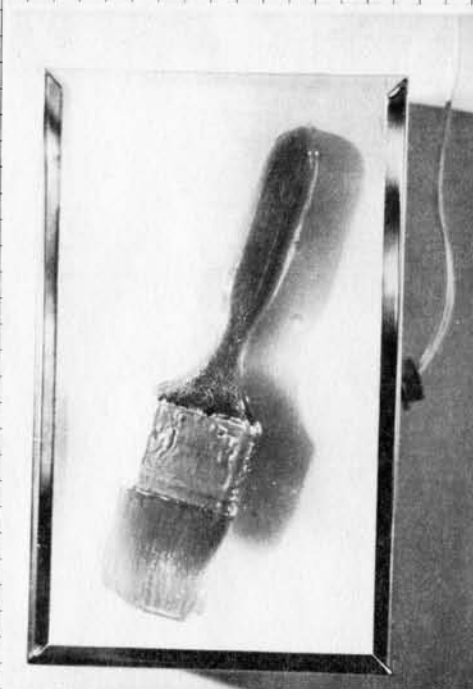
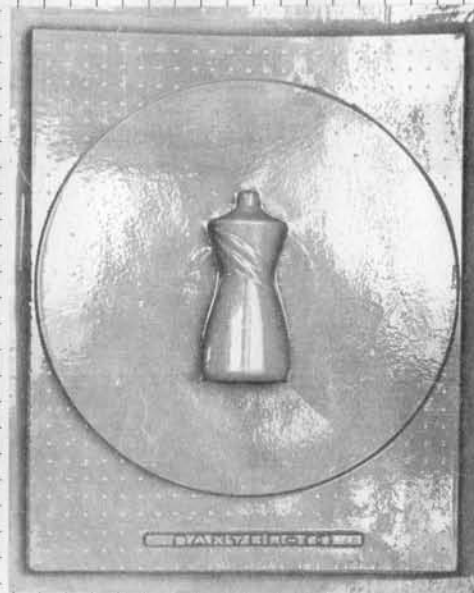
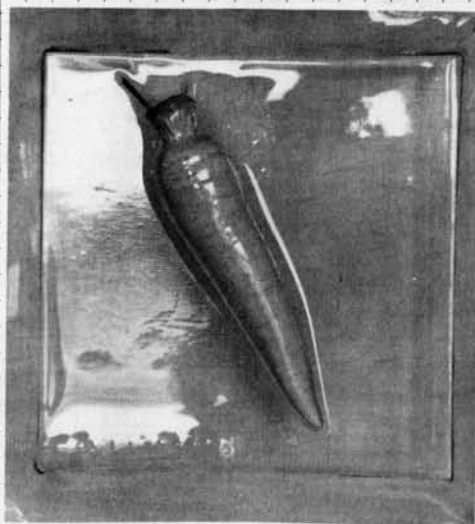
1965

Project

VACUUM FORMED PLASTIC WORKS

Number

1.



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Description

Vacuum formed plastic still lifes & landscapes

Seal



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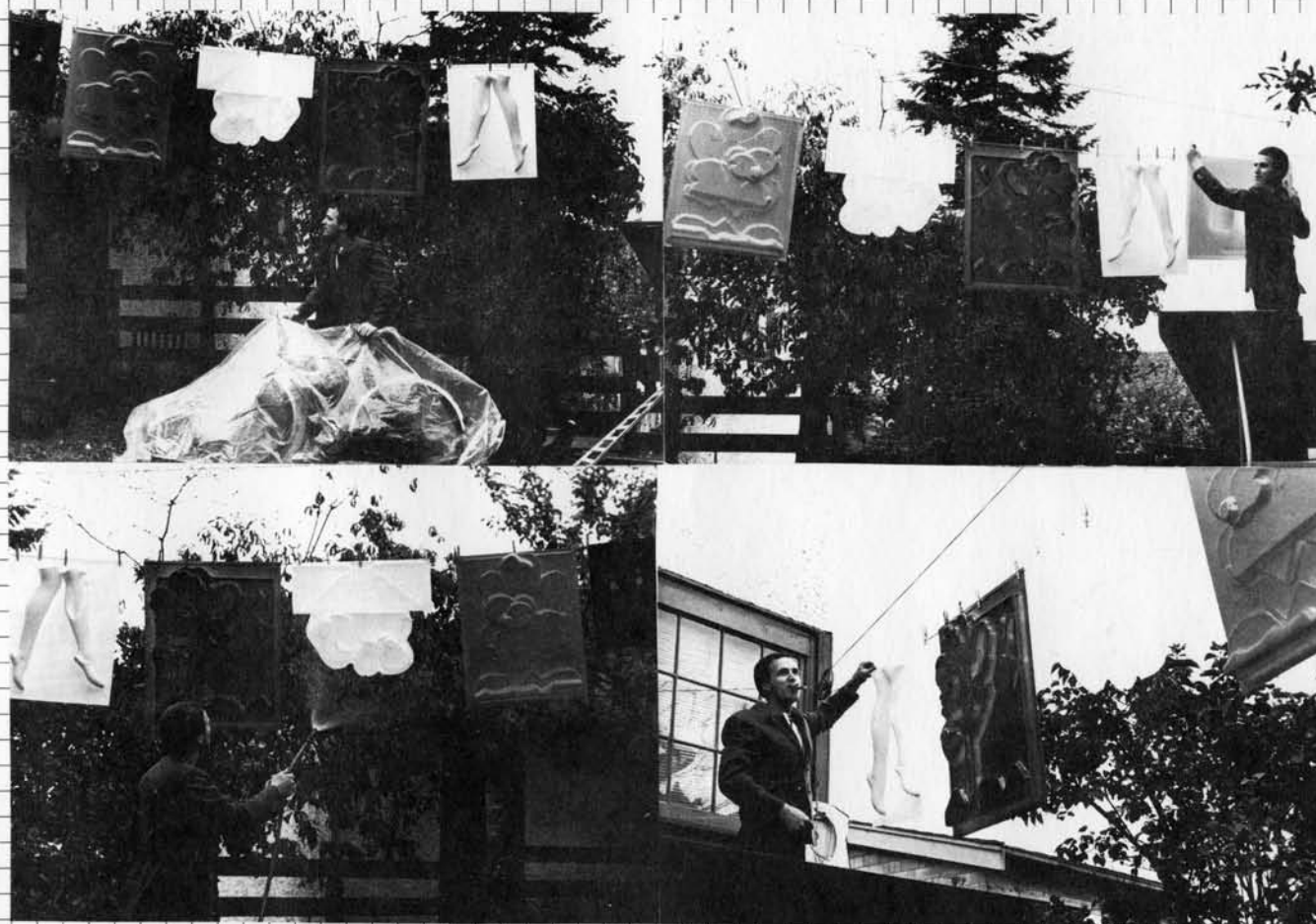
1965

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VACUUM FORM WORKS

Number

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IAIN BAXTER HANGING UP VACUUM FORMED PLASTIC WORKS.

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DRAWINGS

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BAXTER 35 STILL LIFE POTTERY WORK IN A PLASTIC POT  
LIMITED MAY 65



1419 BAXTER

Still Life

STILL LIFE POT  
LIMITED MAY 65

Description

SAMPLE OF DRAWINGS FROM THIS PERIOD. THEY WERE INVOLVED WITH PLASTIC BOTTLES ETC., WHICH I FEEL IS THE COMMON POTTERY OF TODAY.

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See



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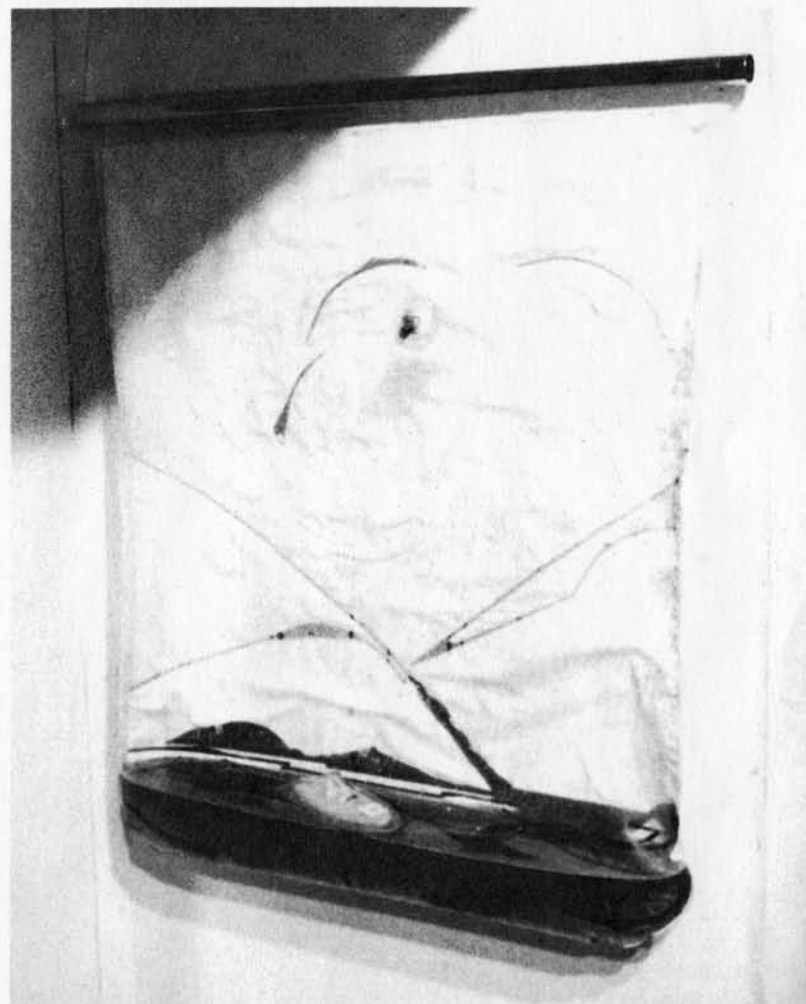
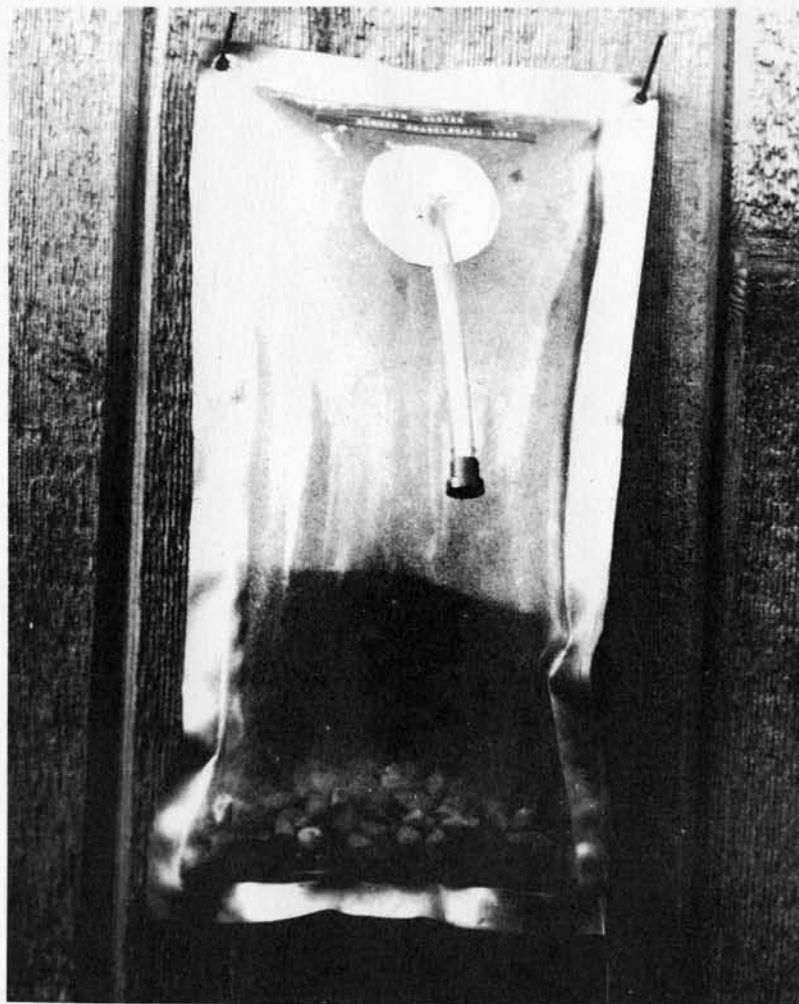
1965

Project

INFLATED BAGGED WORKS

Number

1



PLEASE COMPLETE AND RETURN

Description *LEFT: BAGGED GRAVELSCAPE - 1965*  
*ALVIN BALKIND (COLLECTIONS)*

*RIGHT. BAGGED LANDSCAPE WITH H<sub>2</sub>O & BOAT - 1965*

N.E. THING COMPANY LIMITED

Trade Mark ©



# INFORMATION

N.E. THING CO. LTD.

1419 Riverside Drive North Vancouver B.C. Canada

Date

1966

Project

THE YEAR 1966

Number

1.



PLEASE COMPLETE AND RETURN

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N.E. THING COMPANY LIMITED

Trade Mark ©

Description

Seal







# INFORMATION

N.E. THING CO. LTD.

1419 Riverside Drive North Vancouver B.C. Canada

Date

1966

Project **N.E. THING CO. LTD.**

**Glossary**

Number

/.

- SSI - Sound Sensitivity Information (music, poetry [read], singing, oratory, etc.)
- MSI - Moving Sensitivity Information (movies, dance, mountain climbing, track, etc.)
- ESI - Experiential Sensitivity Information (theatre, etc.)
  - It should be recognized that there are categories where certain types of sensitivity information are combined with others to provide their form, but for the most part the categories above have been established because the "arts" tend to have a particular emphasis on one kind of information characteristic.
  - We find that by setting up a new set of definitions like this that people are better able to see the cross-relationship between the "arts" and in so doing can become much more involved and supportive of the new types of "arts activity" — Sensitivity Information — SI — that are going on.
  - The idea of comprehending "all arts as information handled sensitively" breaks the historical chains that keep them apart from each other and grossly misunderstood.
- VSI - Visual Sensitivity Information

A term developed and used by the N. E. Thing Co. to denote more appropriately the meaning of the traditional words "art" and "fine art" or "visual art". Refers to the handling of visual information in a sensitive manner. Also refers to the "artist" as a VISUAL INFORMER, as someone who knows how to handle visual information sensitively.

- SI - Sensitivity Information
 

A term developed by NETCO to denote all forms of cultural activities, i.e. dance, music, theatre, film, fine art, poetry, novels, etc. It is based on the theory that there are all types of INFORMATION around in the world. INFORMATION is usually, or tends to be, confronted with and dealt with in either a practical or sensitive manner. Thus INFORMATION which is handled in this pure or sensitive way culminates in SI (Sensitivity Information) in general context, and eventually leaves its mark on our life as culture. The divisions within SI are based on the dominant characteristic of that particular area of information, for example: Vision - VSI - Visual Sensitivity Information (painting, sculpture, architecture, books, etc.)

PLEASE COMPLETE AND RETURN

Description **Vancouver, B.C. 1966**

*NETCO. TERMINOLOGY USED TO DESCRIBE CULTURE AND THE VARIOUS ARTS FUNCTIONING INSIDE THE IDEA OF CULTURAL KNOWLEDGE.*

N. E. THING COMPANY LIMITED

Trade Mark ©



# INFORMATION

N.E. THING CO. LTD.

1419 Riverside Drive North Vancouver B.C. Canada

Date

1966

Project

N.E. THING CO. EARLY BUSINESS CARDS  
& STATIONARY.

Number

1.

## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE MESSAGE DU PRESIDENT

As a company vitally involved with sensitivity information, the C'est en tant que compagnie impliquée de façon vitale dans le N. E. THING CO. offers this display to the many millions of people domaine de l'information sensitive que la N. E. THING CO. offre who see. It is the visual unknown that challenges the N. E. cette présentation aux millions de gens qui voient.

THING researchers. Like researchers anywhere, they seek to C'est l'inconnu visuel qui lance un défi aux chercheurs de la add to the world's store of knowledge — by exploratory research N. E. THING CO. Comme partout ailleurs, ces chercheurs cher- on the frontiers of basic theory, by product research for results chent à ajouter à la connaissance mondiale par une recherche in specific, tangible forms, by production research for processes exploratrice aux frontières de la théorie fondamentale, par une that yield precise end-products. These probings of the why and recherche dans les produits pour trouver des résultats dans des how of visual things and their combinations are efforts to discover formes spécifiquement tangibles, et par une recherche dans distinct properties or effects and the means of putting them into la production pour trouver des processus qui produiront des operation. This, the research contribution to the N. E. THING produits précis comme fin. Ces coups de sonde dans le pourquoi CO.'s progress, grows from imagination, intuitive daring, and et le comment des choses visuelles et leur combinaison sont des persistence as well as technical competence. efforts pour découvrir des qualités ou des effets propres et pour découvrir les moyens de les mettre en fonctionnement. C'est bien cette contribution de la recherche au progrès de la N. E. THING CO. qui doit son origine à l'imagination, à l'audace intui- tive et à la persévérance ainsi qu'à la compétence technique.

### Mitteilung des Präsidenten

Als Gesellschaft, die mit sen- sibler Information befaßt ist, bietet die N.E.T. Co. den vie- len Millionen Menschen, die es sehen, dies Display an. Es ist das visuell Unbekannte, das die Forscher der N.E.T. Co. heraus- fordert. Wie alle Forscher be- mühen Sie sich darum, das Wis- sen der Welt zu erweitern: durch Erforschung der Grenzen der Grundlagentheorie, durch Produktforschung nach Ergebnis- sen spezifischer, faßbarer For- men, durch Produktionsforschung nach Prozessen, die präzise Ender- gebnisse erbringen. Diese Un- tersuchungen des Wann und Wie visueller Gegenstände und ih- rer Kombinationen sind Bemühun- gen, ihre charakteristischen Eigenschaften und Wirkungen und die Mittel, die sie wirk- sam machen, zu ermitteln. Die- ser Beitrag der Forschung zum Fortschritt der N.E.T. Co. er- wächst aus der Vorstellungs- kraft aus intuitivem Amt und aus Beharrlichkeit ebenso wie aus technischem Können.

Iain Baxter  
Der Präsident

*Iain Baxter*

PRESIDENT

N. E. BAXTER THING CO.

DEPARTMENT:

ITEM:

PRICE:

Things and Services — Anything Does It

PRESIDENT:  
IAIN BAXTER

1419 RIVERSIDE DR.  
NORTH VANCOUVER, B.C.  
CANADA. Ph. 929-3662

N. E. THING CO. LTD.

IAIN BAXTER  
co-president

1419 RIVERSIDE DRIVE NORTH, VANCOUVER, B.C., CANADA  
(604) 929-3662 CABLE: ANYTHING VANCOUVER

PLEASE COMPLETE AND RETURN

N. E. THING COMPANY LIMITED

Name in Full ..... Date .....

Business Address .....

Information..... THE N.E. THING CO. IS INVOLVED IN PROVIDING A SERVICE IN THE CONSULTATION AND EVALUATION OF SENSITIVITY INFORMATION.

YOUR WORK IN THE FIELD OF VISUAL SENSITIVITY INFORMATION (V.S.I.) HAS NOT MET THE STRINGENT REQUIREMENTS OF SENSITIVITY INFORMATION, AS SET FORTH BY THE N.E. THING CO., AND BECAUSE OF THIS HAS BEEN AWARDED AN ART CITATION BY THE ART DEPARTMENT OF THE N.E. THING CO.

IT IS OUR HOPE THAT YOUR UNDERSTANDING OF THIS PROBLEM IN ART WILL BRING ABOUT AN UNDERSTANDING OF THE POINT BEING MADE BY THE N.E. THING CO.

YOURS SINCERELY,

Firm or Company Name N. E. THING COMPANY LIMITED (NEICO)

Company Address. 1419 Riverside Drive, North Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada

Cable Address " ANYTHING " Phone ( 604 ) 929-3662

List Company Departments THING, RESEARCH, MOVIE, PROJECT, ACT & ART, SERVICE, COP,

PRINTING, PHOTOGRAPHY, COMMUNICATIONS, CONSULTING

Describe Company's Business PRODUCERS & CONSULTANT SPECIALISTS IN: Ideas, Planning

Sensitivity Information (specialty Visual - V.S.I.), Name Development, Design, Ecology,

Communications, Architecture, Aesthetics, Things, Photo-V.S.I., Work, Anything

(over)

(Signed) ..... President, Iain Baxter

PLEASE COMPLETE AND RETURN

Description EARLY COMPANY CARDS AND PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE.

NEW COMPANY BUSINESS CARDS. DESIGNED BY ALAN FLEMING, 1969.

N. E. THING COMPANY LIMITED

Trade Mark ©









# INFORMATION

N.E. THING CO. LTD.

1419 Riverside Drive North Vancouver B.C. Canada

Date

1966

Project

BAGGED PLACE

Number

3



PLEASE COMPLETE AND RETURN

Description *INTERIOR SHOT*

N.E. THING COMPANY LIMITED

Trade Mark ©

Seal





# INFORMATION

N.E. THING CO. LTD.

1419 Riverside Drive North Vancouver B.C. Canada

Date

1966

Project

RAGGED PLACE

Number

4



PLEASE COMPLETE AND RETURN

Description

VIEW OF TOILET & T.V. & T.V. TRAY AND DINNER.

N.E. THING COMPANY LIMITED

Trade Mark ©



# INFORMATION

N.E. THING CO. LTD.

1419 Riverside Drive North Vancouver B.C. Canada

Date

1966

Project

BAGGED PLACE

Number

5



PLEASE COMPLETE AND RETURN

Description *VIEWS OF KITCHEN & KITCHEN TABLE.*

N. E. THING COMPANY LIMITED

Trade Mark ©



# INFORMATION

N.E. THING CO. LTD.

1419 Riverside Drive North Vancouver B.C. Canada

Date

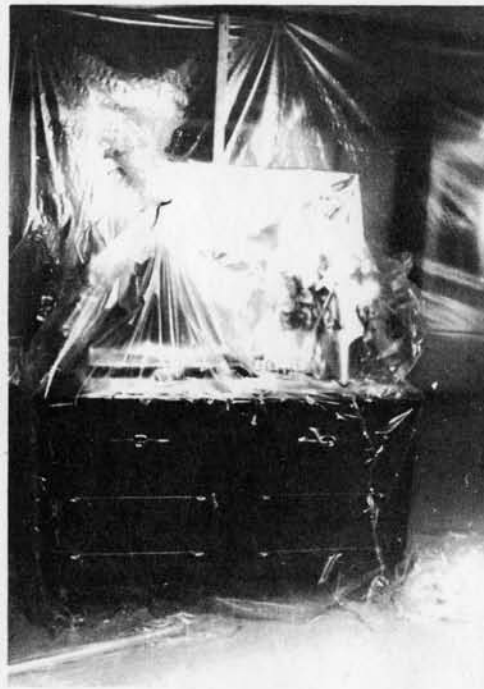
1966

Project

RAGGED PLACE

Number

6.



PLEASE COMPLETE AND RETURN

Description

VIEWS OF BEDROOM AND KITCHEN TABLE

N. E. THING COMPANY LIMITED

Trade Mark ©





# INFORMATION

N.E. THING CO. LTD.

1419 Riverside Drive North Vancouver B.C. Canada

Date

1966

Project

BAGGED PLACE

Number

7



PLEASE COMPLETE AND RETURN

Description

2 VIEWS OF REFRIGERATORS AND HALLWAY

N.E. THING COMPANY LIMITED

Trade Mark ©



# INFORMATION

N.E. THING CO. LTD.

1419 Riverside Drive North Vancouver B.C. Canada

Date

1966

Project

BAGGED PLACE

Number

8



PLEASE COMPLETE AND RETURN

Description

TAIN BAXTER RELAXING ON A BAGGED BED READING A BAGGED NOVEL & SITTING IN BAGGED CHAIR EATING A BAGGED COOKIE AND HOLDING A BAGGED BEER.

N.E. THING COMPANY LIMITED

Trade Mark ©



# INFORMATION

N.E. THING CO. LTD.

1419 Riverside Drive North Vancouver B.C. Canada

Date

1966

Project

BAGGED PLACE

Number

1.

THE UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA

VANCOUVER 8, CANADA

FINE ARTS GALLERY

February 3rd, 1966

Mr. Tor Baxter,  
4564 West 1st Avenue,  
Vancouver 8, B. C.

Dear Mr. Baxter,

Many people made many contributions of  
furniture, time and physical labour to the production of your  
father's bagged place.

But I consider your contribution to be  
the most original, the most individual, the most unique,  
and beyond that, the one ~~providing~~ <sup>EVOKING</sup> the greatest emotional response  
from the public.

On behalf of the Fine Arts Gallery and the  
Fine Arts Department, may I offer you my profoundest thanks;  
and may I wish that similar contributions may continue to  
emanate from you daily. This is the essence of creativity.

Cordially yours,

*Alvin Balkind*

Alvin Balkind,  
Curator

AB/cag

PLEASE COMPLETE AND RETURN

Description

SPECIAL LETTER TO TOR BAXTER, FROM ALVIN BALKIND, ON THE OCCASION OF  
THE BAGGED PLACE ENVIRONMENT & TOR'S CONTRIBUTION.

N. E. THING COMPANY LIMITED

Trade Mark ©





# INFORMATION

N.E. THING CO. LTD.

1419 Riverside Drive North Vancouver B.C. Canada

Date

1966

Project

BAGGED PLACE - CONTRIBUTORS

Number

1.

## THE FINE ARTS GALLERY

Expresses its gratitude to:-

Wosk's Ltd. \_\_\_\_\_ Furniture

Union Carbide \_\_\_\_\_ Plastic

Hewer Hardware Ltd. \_\_\_\_\_ Sundry Items

Fred Welsh Ltd. \_\_\_\_\_ Bathroom Fixtures

Crestwood Kitchens \_\_\_\_\_ Kitchen Unit

PLEASE COMPLETE AND RETURN

Description

FOR SHOW BAGGED PLACE: UNIV. of BRITISH COLUMBIA, B.C. ALVIN BALKIND, CURATOR  
FIRST AUTHOR

N.E. THING COMPANY LIMITED

Trade Mark ©

Seal



# INFORMATION

N.E. THING CO. LTD.

1419 Riverside Drive North Vancouver B.C. Canada

Date

1966

Project

BAGGED PLACE

Number

2.




February 18th, 1966.

TO BE PICKED UP FROM:-

Fido Arts Gallery,  
Main Hall, Downstairs Library,  
U.B.C.

- 1-5-pc. Dale 490/400 walnut dinette suite
- 1-3-pc. Palethorpe 245 bedroom suite 4/6
- 1-4/6 Posture Slumber unit, 1-blanket, 2-boudoir lamps, 2-pillows,
- 1-bedspread white, 1-2-pc. H&S 5000 chesterfield suite two piece
- 2-Dale #12 step tables, 1-Dale #10 coffee table, 2-table lamps,
- 1-footstool, 1-6x9 Promenade rug, 1-Progressive 1965 Polo lamp,
- 1-H&S 855 rocker, 2-throw cushions.
- 1-Marconi 4572 stereo
- 1-Philips 6002M TV on base
- 1-pr. rabbit ears.
- 1-McClary 3324-56 copper-tone electric range
- 1-McClary DM10-56 copper-tone refrigerator
- 1-McClary 420 auto washer
- 1-Sillex 60916 ironing board and cover
- 1-Hoover 446 vacuum cleaner
- 1-Universal 1950 steam & dry iron
- 1-Sunbeam 813 mixer
- 1-Toaster #25 toaster
- 1-Universal 4380 coffee percolator
- 1-Toaster 663 frypan

Received 



PLEASE COMPLETE AND RETURN

Description *LIST OF FURNITURE KINDLY LOANED FROM WOSK'S FOR THE N.E. THING CO. BAGGED PLACE ENVIRONMENT. MIRIAM WOSK HELPED ORGANIZE THIS ASPECT OF THE EXHIBITION.*

N.E. THING COMPANY LIMITED

Trade Mark ©



# INFORMATION

N.E. THING CO. LTD.

1419 Riverside Drive North Vancouver B.C. Canada

Date

1966

Project

ARTICLES

Number

1.

## VANCOUVER SUN (EDITORIAL)

out those of the faithful in the final tally. This could be bad for candidates such as Mr. Alsbury and Mr. Rankin who customarily rely on heavy support in NDP territory.

control the decisions of its victorious standard-bearers. The belief is chiefly held by those defeated by the N-PA and no evidence has ever been adduced to substantiate it.

## ...And Thank the Losers

In the school and park board contests, opposition to the N-PA comes almost exclusively from brave and rugged individualists with regional rather than city-wide backing. Most of them, and sometimes all of them, go down to defeat but none of them needs to feel anything but satisfaction in a race well run. Indeed, the city is fortunate that so many citizens are willing to serve in all the election categories. Campaigning isn't easy even when the odds are short but

many work hard at it when they must know that their chances are hopeless.

The least reward that a grateful public can give them is the satisfaction of knowing that somebody was listening and that their policies had a hearing.

The only way that the public can show its appreciation is by using its franchise tomorrow. The winners will rejoice and the losers will console themselves in the knowledge that democracy can't work without them.

## Fun's Fun, But Not at \$500

Two outstanding developments in the art world occurred in Vancouver last week. One was the recognition of Emily Carr as a first rank artist given in the flattering \$18,000 paid for her work at an auction. The other was the prize of \$500 awarded for an inflated vinyl cushion as the best new B.C. painting of the year.

The waterlogged bag, on display at the art gallery's Painting '66 exhibition, is bound to arouse controversy. There's nothing wrong with that. But it is not all right that \$500 of the public's money has been spent in the name of the centennial to reward such frivolity.

The exhibition, an annual event, has this year been given a centennial slant and public visitors, including those who put up the money, might get the impression that what they see and what the

money's been spent on have official blessing. But while the Vancouver centennial committee provided \$1,500 for the prizes, it did not have any say in the selection made by Toronto critic-juror Arnold Rockman from more than 600 entries.

Perhaps this is as it should be. But the committee's trust, we feel, was misplaced and its money—our money—could have been better spent, even for fun.

Now the gallery is left holding the bag, which courtesy of the centennial committee, becomes its property. Whether or not Inflated Vinyl and Water will hang alongside the Emily Carrs will be a difficult decision for the permanent collection committee to make. They might sit on it for a while until the centennial is over, then pour it quietly down the drain.

## Another Job for the UN

For a country that has just sought readmission to the United Nations, Indonesia shows a shocking disregard for the duty it owes the UN, as well as for the rights of a minority people.

The Indonesian home office has renounced the pledge it made to the Dutch in 1962 to hold a plebiscite in West Irian, the former Dutch New Guinea, by 1969.

The airy excuse offered is that the native Papuans don't want a plebiscite, that they are quite happy under Indonesian rule. This recalls President Sukarno's equally easy assurance, at the time the agreement was signed, that no test of public opinion would be necessary. The facts seem to be, judging from

stories in the Indonesian press and the findings of a parliamentary commission, that the Papuans are discontented and economically depressed. At least one serious outbreak has occurred.

The treaty with the Dutch was made under UN auspices and debated in the UN itself. Several countries raised the question of a plebiscite and U Thant explained that there would be UN participation in such a test.

If, as Jakarta claims, the Papuans are happy under its rule, then a plebiscite should be easy for everybody to take. But after all, that is what plebiscites are really for.

Obviously the UN has a duty to put Indonesia in its place quickly.

FEB 4, 1966

THE UBYSSON

Vancouver, B.C.

IN THE

PLASTIC BAG

## Love affair bags place

art

By IAN WALLACE

Baxter's bagged place.

We are so conditioned to the opinion that artists are supposed to make works of art, that when an artist wants to just do a thing there is bound to be a reaction from those who like to see artists keep in line.

Iain Baxter (Bagster), currently having a love affair with plastic, has pulled off a

Bagged Place, by Iain Baxter. Fine Arts Gallery, for two more weeks. With the Edge of Pop.

"thing" that will have skeptics wondering what has happened to art.

It doesn't hang from the wall, it doesn't sit on the floor, it isn't "there". You are "there", you move through it.

It is brand-new, perfectly familiar, technically known as an "environment" in which the viewer is surrounded by the thing, he acts in it, does his everyday things, he creates his own time. This is distinct from a happening which is theatre-art; it begins and ends; but the bagged place is just there.

The bagged place is an apartment complete with furniture, utensils, food in the fridge, taters in the sink, turd in the can.

Absolute realism! Completely representa-



FOR PLASTIC PEOPLE, furniture from the Wosk Modern Arborite period . . .

tive. Except for one fact. Everything is bagged in plastic. Bagged coffee, bagged rug, bagged water in bagged sink, bagged room.

The uniqueness of concept and the anti-intellectual nature of the "environment" defies interpretation — how can one discuss his living room?

The choice of such tasteless decor is undoubtedly purposeful but whether or not the plastic makes it more attractive is a matter of opinion.

Is it a satire on pop art, which chooses to glorify the common and inane? Is it satire of our sterilized plasticized super-valu society where everything comes packaged and bottled?

Whatever the case, there is no "anger" involved, just fun, and the opening night crowd had a great party at Bagster's "bagged place."

For an escorted tour of the apartment turn up at the Fine Arts Gallery noon Friday.

The Fine Arts Gallery is also showing a collection of paintings and sculpture titled **The Edge of Pop**. This means that practically anything that bears resemblance to pop art is included, and the connection in some cases is close enough to be termed plagiarism.

The pop master, Rauschenberg, suffers little at the hand of his third-rate imitators.

Most of the exhibition is gimmicky and consciously arty and fails to excite interest for very long.

theatre

PLEASE COMPLETE AND RETURN

Description

N.E. THING COMPANY LIMITED

Trade Mark ©





# INFORMATION

N.E. THING CO. LTD.

1419 Riverside Drive North Vancouver B.C. Canada

Date

1966

Project

ANNOUNCEMENT FOR EXHIBITION

Number

1.



GAS, PLASTIC &  
BAGGED WORKS  
recent things by  
IAIN BAXTER  
art gallery of  
greater victoria,  
1040 moss street,  
victoria, b.c.  
canada.  
ph. EV 4-3123  
MARCH 8 - 26, 1966

PLEASE COMPLETE AND RETURN

Description

N.E. THING COMPANY LIMITED  
Trade Mark ©



# INFORMATION

N.E. THING CO. LTD.

1419 Riverside Drive North Vancouver B.C. Canada

Date

1966

Project

ARTICLE

Number

## Display Mockery of Art, Gallery

Effect Sort of Lane, 'Sick'



- Ian Baxter

Curator Colin Graham waters pop art

By JERRY BOUTREE

As if the plastic conglomeration of what we see from day to day isn't enough, we either must (or may) now see it in all its artistic form at the Art Gallery of Greater Victoria.

Ian Baxter, an instructor at University of British Columbia, has assembled this display.

Surely one can't legitimately call it a one-man art show, even though it does purport to be the first one-man exhibition by the artist in Canada.

**WORK OF ARTIST:**

One might also hesitate to refer to the display as the work of an artist, or to mention the fact that Baxter's particular form of instruction at UBC is as assistant professor.

One's initial reaction is that the display is "sick."

And so, indeed, it might be, when one considers it is being displayed in an art gallery and is supposed to be an art form.

If it were displayed in a theatre or confined to a university campus, it would serve a wider and better purpose as a caustic and amusing commentary on "our plastic age."

In a university or theatre such a display could even appear artful, in a sense.

But in an art gallery, complete with high price tags attached, the work simply

makes a mockery of "art," the artist and the gallery.

Its total effect is sort of lame.

Bottles are moulded, painted and attached to a background—all in plastic.

**REPULSIVE:**

A cake, ghastly pink in color and with a slice removed from it, hangs in a plastic bag. It's gooey and repulsive to look at.

A laminated super market shopping bag is priced at \$50.

There's a mouldy bun in a plastic bag.

And a stone in a plastic bag with water.

The professor has done his best to be both sensational and obvious, when in fact he's simply making the comment

that "there's artistic form in everyday things."

Like a bleach bottle under the sink.

But one should take the display in stride, and not display either shock or scorn. To do so might encourage the artist to do more of the kind and the gallery to show more equally far-out displays.

**IN VOGUE:**

But poppishness is in vogue, especially among the young university crowd—into which category the professor undoubtedly fits.

This reviewer would have been a deal more impressed and amused had the display appeared in the McPherson Playhouse foyer.

The Times  
Victoria  
Mar. 9/66

PLEASE COMPLETE AND RETURN

Description

N.E. THING COMPANY LIMITED

Trade Mark ©



# INFORMATION

N.E. THING CO. LTD.

1419 Riverside Drive North Vancouver B.C. Canada

Date

1966

Project

ARTICLES

Number

1.



By JOAN LOWNDES

Directions '66 at the Vancouver Art Gallery inaugurates a series of exhibitions presenting three or four young Canadian artists at a time.

The members' bulletin adds that "special, but by no means exclusive attention will be given to artists who are producing works of a serious experimental nature."

The first trio comprises Donald Harvey of Victoria, and Gary Lee Nova and Iain Baxter, both of Vancouver. In a sense it is misleading to include Harvey's work with that of the two younger men, who are indeed venturing in new directions, with some fun and some failure along the way, because Harvey has the authority of a mature artist.

His six paintings fill the small Emily Carr gallery with their majestic presence.

The big, simple images, often separated from the framing edge by white borders, ride easily in space and the cruciform motif, which tended to become monotonous in Harvey's earlier work, is now transformed into (but intersecting wires that hold aloft a circular form or an abstract bouquet near the centre of the composition).

The color is voluptuous but controlled, combining for example in Blue Riser vivid red, blue, two high-keyed greens, aqua and mauve.

Harvey has profited from

## World of art

### A promising trio

the re-discoveries of op art to make his red appear slightly different in hue as it borders on blue or green. He has painted certain areas smoothly but conveyed movement in others by visible brush strokes, which emphasize the swelling curves of the blue forms.

Again, entirely free of dogma, he is not afraid, as in *Interference or Breaker*, to apply paint in a small central section in calligraphic style, with some impasto. Yet no dichotomy mars these marvellous abstractions of natural growth and landscape.

Gary Lee Nova is dealing mainly with hard-edge and op concepts in diamond or hexagonal frames. His op art is of the purely mechanistic variety, inducing after-images which make spots or stripes dance before the eyes, but offering nothing for the spirit.

However, two fine pictures show his promise. One is a large hexagonal with undulating abstract landscape forms in the middle, above which are realistic clouds in an idyllically blue sky.

Most intriguing, a hollow cube at the heart of the composition floats freely in space. The title is *Fresh Southerly Winds* — a Long Time Ago (acid test No. 1).

The other picture is a smaller hexagonal enshrining a talismanic image which belongs, not surprisingly, to that subtle painter Jack Wise.

Iain Baxter has been experimenting during the past year in the field of plastics.

His odd-shaped plastic balloons, as used in an environment to suggest clouds, have an appealing, child-like quality, but the total effect is spoiled by an over-rigid adult adherence to system in covering even the rocks with plastic bags.

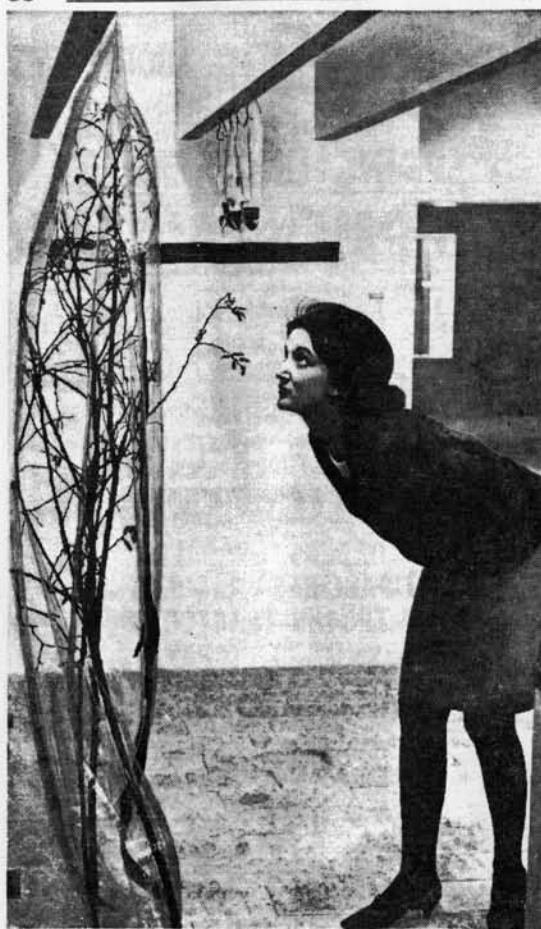
Iain Baxter has also thought imaginatively about the translucence of plastic, hanging goldfish in a bag in mid-air to make live kinetic art or capturing deep blue crescent wavelets. His bag of mouldy sliced bread, however, is a reductio ad absurdum.

In working with solid plastic as low-relief sculpture, he has done well to largely abandon white, with its insistent connotations of a drug-store display. Both Iain Baxter and Donald Harvey were represented in the 1965 Canadian Biennial.

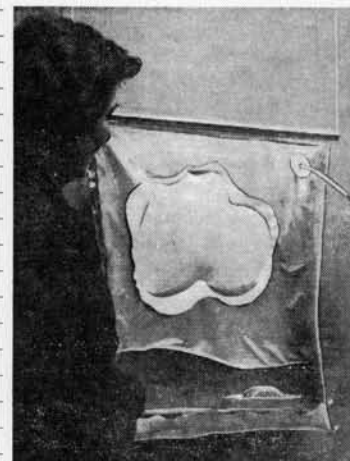
Those who seek a haven from such vanguard art in traditionalism will find it in the yachting scenes of Robert McVittie at the Dutch Galleries.

McVittie knows ships from his own years at sea and can convey their detail and movement. He tends, however, to over-fracture the lower part of his canvas in handling in rendering muted light, as in reflections. He is at his best in Fraser River — Winter.

56\*\*\*The VANCOUVER SUN: Sat., Mar. 5, 1966



**PUZZLED VIEWER** Carol Fisher ponders plastic art titled Zipper Bagged Still. Life by Iain Baxter at Vancouver Art Gallery's Directions '66 show.



—Chuck Jones photo

### Bagged, by gad!

**BAGGED LANDSCAPE**—"plastic landscape heat-sealed in an inflated vinyl bag which contains water" is the actual description—has been bought for \$500 by the Centennial Commission of Vancouver for the Vancouver Art Gallery's permanent collection. Here, Mrs. Alex Campbell eyes the landscape as it hangs at the gallery. The landscape was executed by the N. E. Baxter Thing Co., whose president is Iain Baxter. Company also has a bagged show in Los Angeles.

Linda Curtis

### Much Ado about Anything

The other day I received a letter in the mail bearing the return address: N.E. Thing Co., North Vancouver.

There was N.E. Thing on the outside, but nothing inside. Later a news release arrived saying that the president of the N.E. Thing Co. would reveal everything about N.E. Thing at a product demonstration at Simon Fraser University Theatre Thursday.

I had a luncheon engagement Thursday, so was unable to attend. But, according to the release, the president was going to draw on several of the 10 departments of his N.E. Thing Co. for the program, including Thing, Research, Cop, Service, Photography, Film ACT (Aesthetically Claimed Things), Printing, Projects and Fashion.

This revealed nothing about N.E. Thing. If he was trying to start something, he did absolutely nothing to inspire me to try, with everything I've got, to discover anything about N.E. Thing. Maybe there's nothing to it anyway. Until they tell me something, that's everything I have to say about N.E. Thing.

PLEASE COMPLETE AND RETURN

## Description

N. E. THING COMPANY LIMITED

Trade Mark ©





# INFORMATION

N.E. THING CO. LTD.

1419 Riverside Drive North Vancouver B.C. Canada

Date

1966

Project

ARTICLES

Number

1.

## AT GALLERY

### Playful Plastics Please

By DAVID WATMOUGH

Directions '66, the first in a series of exhibitions sponsored by the Vancouver Art Gallery to promote the work of younger artists, particularly those with an experimental flair, is an interesting assemblage.

The most radical works are the plastic contraptions of Iain Baxter, which in their harnessing of synthetic materials to such natural elements as gravel, mouldy bread and a trio of moribund turtles, suggests pop art as a point of departure.

But Baxter—in this show at least—is more lyricist than satirist. He offers in playful and benign terms a healing tribute, to man and his organic environment rather than a dour emphasis on our schismatic tendencies.

#### SCHOOLBOYISH

Working on a frontier of art has its dangers, of course, and there are times when in his indifference to technical finesse and in an excessively arbitrary association of images he proves tendentious rather than stimulating, and schoolboyishly cute rather than maturely witty.

But by and large such items as his pussy willow encased in a zipper-bag, or his tableau-mobile affair, Moon, Clouds And Bagged Rocks, are rich in suggestion and illustrative of a truly fertile imagination that is quite aware of where it is going.

We enter a somewhat less venturesome world with the opulent canvases of Garry Lee Nova.

Synthesis rather than exploration marks an amalgam of pop, op and hard-edge as in The Ballad of a Wire Etc. with its illuminated pink ice cream as a surface prominence.

#### SPRIGHTLY CONCEPT

To Mandrake from Narda, Rainbow Trap Dream, together with the Bruce Connor-styled encased head. Macie Mieror. Approximately, all testify to a sprightliness of concept that earns Nova a proper place in this show.

Victoria's Donald Harvey offers more exclusively painterly concepts, and with his six canvases of hard-edge contexts broken by areas of fluid and quite intense activity, suggests a third form of synthesizing activity.

Unfortunately the will exceeds the deed.

There is none of the assurance over this particular concern that Takao Tanabe evinced in his recent show, or the group of young Chicago painters who use a similar abstract expressionism as a basic term of reference.

Similar attempts to collate trends and find an integrated voice are today a commonplace across the continent, but they frequently offer more excitement and less heavy-handed pedantry than with Donald Harvey's current half-dozen.

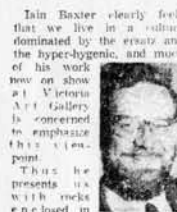
THE VANCOUVER SUN: Tues., Mar. 8, 1966 \*\*\*\*\*4.

36-VICTORIA DAILY TIMES, SAT. MARCH 12, 1966

## LOOKING AROUND AT ART

# Dada-Esque Gallery Show Makes Amusing Commentary

By ROBIN SKELTON



Skelton

Iain Baxter clearly feels that we live in a culture dominated by the ersatz and the hyper-hygienic, and much of his work now on show at Victoria Art Gallery is concerned to emphasize this viewpoint.

Thus he presents us with rocks enclosed in plastic bags, as if to suggest that our appetites are also qualified by sophistication and artifice.

He places plastic bowls floating on real water and backed by a plastic landscape in plastic bags, the even offers us mist and bolts, scissors, a penis, a white carrot, a paint

brush, and a series of bottles (some squashed some not) in plastic, each forming the central motif in a plastic plaque.

In the air, suspended by wires are plastic plants, a black plastic tree, and several indeterminate air-filled plastic shapes.

The colours of the non-transparent plastics are bright, gay, anodyne, or chilling—black or shiny white. The whole exhibition point challenges one with its vibrant colours, its absurdity, and its closeness with the chosen medium.

art, implying that the category "art" is itself absurd, and all the phenomena are equally deserving of attention or derision.

This challenging of accepted categories is also part of the effect of the plastic landscapes, which, by their cheaply vivid coloration and their glossy surfaces, suggest the sophistication of a modern child's toy and the raw crudeness of the sensuality that can be attracted by such conventional simplicities.

The bottles, however, are more easily related to twentieth century non-representative art.

One white bottle on a white plaque reminds me, by its bald simplicity of the early White Reliefs of Ben Nicholson, quite as much as it reminds me of the "oblique

traces" of the Surrealists.

These bottles have not been in any way reshaped by the plaque-maker: they are pristine, untouched, and altered only by being presented to us in a strange context.

Like the soup-tins and comic-strips of the "Pop" artists, they suggest to us that our most familiar objects are perhaps also our most significant symbols.

We live our days, not in terms of Greek myth or archetypal imagery, but in terms of bottles, bags, and the commonplace glossiness of our washable, expendable, infinitely reproducible household familiar.

When we turn from the whole to the squashed bottles, however, there is a change in effect and an increase in aesthetic pleasure.

These crushed shapes have a random conformation, a clutter of shine and wrinkle, that gives them a much more interesting, because less predictable, rhythm and texture.

Moreover, while the play of light upon the smooth surfaces of the well-rounded shapes is fairly limited in its range, the play of light upon these wrinkled surfaces is much more varied.

Thus streaks, pools, diagonals, patches, and blurs shift as one walks past them. They are more vital because they respond more completely to the altering viewpoint of the beholder.

Thus the crushed bottles alone in this exhibition strike me as performing a significant number of the functions

of orthodox work in sculpture and relief.

Such a sober account of this show may, I am afraid, give the impression that I regard Mr. Baxter's work as being notable for its achievements rather than interesting and amusing for its exploratory vitality.

I must make it clear that I do not think Mr. Baxter has achieved very much as yet. His work lacks, finally, any overall coherence of approach. The Dadaist, the Abstract, the Expressionist, and the Constructivist approaches seem to me to be mingled together here and to produce a sense of confusion.

Nevertheless the confusion is itself stimulating. I feel that the medium has obsessed

Mr. Baxter to the point where he feels compelled to use it in every way he can imagine.

This is great fun for him, and, as he is adequately ingenious, it is also great fun for us. It is always enjoyable to see an artist exploiting a medium to the full, and being careless of accusations of frivolity or obscurantism.

Nevertheless before Mr. Baxter really makes his plastic world a world in which we can wander with profit, he must, it seems to me, decide whether he is bent upon creating objects which are important because satirical or symbolic, or whether he is more intent upon making objects that reward us visually in the way that "art" is supposed to reward us.

Maybe he can, like some pop artists, do both jobs at once and by means of the same object. Perhaps, indeed, he has done so already.

I liked that little plastic cloud. It was very cloud-like, very ersatz, very hygienic, very casual, and contained its own small sculptist atmosphere. It had, curiously, a quality of presence.

Mr. Baxter is clearly a man worth watching. So many painters attempt to present us with a face-to-face image of our world; he is concerned to make us look through plastic darkness, and to admit we know only in part.

PLEASE COMPLETE AND RETURN

## Description

N.E. THING COMPANY LIMITED

Trade Mark ©









# INFORMATION

N.E. THING CO. LTD.

1419 Riverside Drive North Vancouver B.C. Canada

Date

1966

Project

ARTICLES

Number

1

## Nothing serious about Baxter show at gallery

By KATIE FITZRANDOLPH  
Staff Reporter

The exhibition opening Thursday at 8:30 p.m. at the Norman Mackenzie Art Gallery is a far cry from the Kienholz show which closed Saturday. This one doesn't take itself seriously.

All works are products of the N. E. Baxter Thing Co. of Vancouver, Iain Baxter president. The company, with the motto Anything Does It, offers things and services.

The things are produced by the thing department. Other departments are cop, duplicating, services and research, project, and a publishing department is expected in the future.

The things themselves tend to be three-dimensional vacuum-moulded plastic works—for hanging on walls like paintings, although painting does not seem the correct word to describe them.

Most of the ones on exhibit make use of plastic bleach bottles, either whole or collapsed, and moulded in plastic sheets. Mr. Baxter, in his position as president of the company, said "Plastic bottles are the common pottery of today. I am collecting for a plastic museum and have several pieces already."

There is also a small pink cloud in a case in the cop division. This is entitled Predicted Margery Strider Cloud with Lavender Carrying Case. (She does large styrofoam clouds.)

The firm is also involved with print-making, but not in the sense of woodcuts or silk-screens. These are slide prints—a colored slide is made of the original and duplicated and the slide becomes the print. Prints fall under the duplicating department.

Of cop works, Mr. Baxter said, "There is a large landscape in and on other people's works. I work with others whether they like it or not." The phrase "cop art" has overtones of keeping a watch on the art world, of stealing, or even copying, all of which are involved in the works themselves. It also follows logically from the pop and op art of today.

As far as the services rendered by the N. E. Baxter Thing Co., they are anything anyone wants, or even consultation, the president said.

Another of the things is a slipped "S" moulded in plastic. He also does plastic three-dimensional landscapes, such as Landscape with Clouds, Bushes and Lawns.

For understanding works in the cop division, a knowledge of what other artists are doing is essential.

One of the major cop pieces is a large floppy bag with ravelled handle containing an inflated sac. It is titled Carrying Case for an Andrew Warhol Pillow—meaningless unless one knows that the American pop painter Warhol has been working on silver vinyl pillows filled with helium.

Another large bag with handles, on each side is entitled From get to go Harold Town's Optical Numbats. It is measured to exactly fit the painting for which it is designed. Whether the two ever get together is another question.

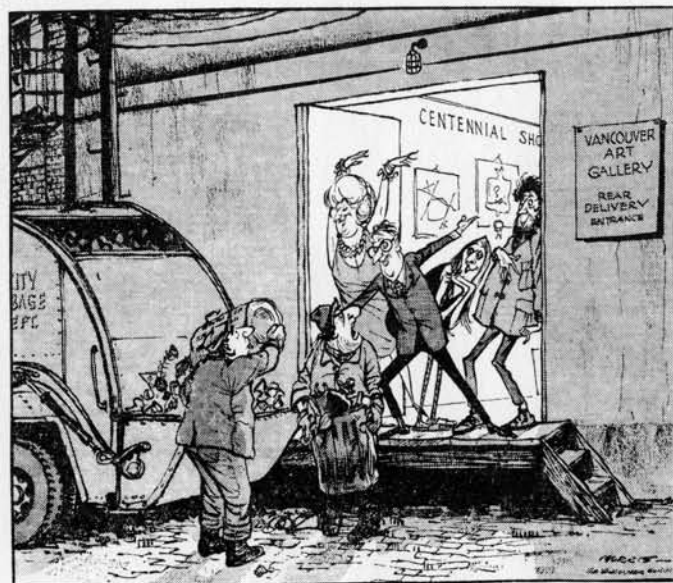
Another of the things is a pained Carrying Case for a Lightning Bolt—complete with zippers and a zipper for removing the flame-colored lightning bolt it encloses.

Deflating Larry Bell Box, a cop work, is a transparent vinyl cube (Bell does glass ones) with an intentional leak. It needs blowing up again every few days.

Ocean-Going Freighter—Disorder is a small boat in a long narrow tube of water. The boat originally floated, but now has become waterlogged. This doesn't bother the company president a bit. "Art is a continuous process and if something goes wrong I just change the title," he said, adding Disaster to the name of this work.

Three Regina purchasers of tickets on Saturday's Irish Hospital Sweepstakes, based on the running of the Cambridge-shire Handicap, will probably stay close to their radio or television sets.

The three, along with six other Saskatchewan residents, hold tickets that were among the list of Canadian tickets drawn Wednesday in the first two days of drawing in the Irish Hospital Sweepstakes.



"Hold it chum! Hold it! We're pickup, not delivery."

VANCOUVER NEWS DEC 21/66

### \$135 taken in break-in

About \$135 in cash was stolen in a break-in at 3037 Reti-luck St. Tuesday night, city police reported Thursday.

Entry was gained by forcing a rear door.

Wednesday night an attempted break-in was reported at 2822 23rd Ave., and another attempt was discovered Thursday morning at Webber's TV and Radio at 3th Ave and Rae St.

About \$2 worth of pennies was stolen from 2116 Garret St. some time Tuesday night.

### Three drawn

Three Regina purchasers of tickets on Saturday's Irish Hospital Sweepstakes, based on the running of the Cambridge-shire Handicap, will probably stay close to their radio or television sets.

The three, along with six other Saskatchewan residents, hold tickets that were among the list of Canadian tickets drawn Wednesday in the first two days of drawing in the Irish Hospital Sweepstakes.

OCT 13/66



COP ART: Iain Baxter, president of the N. E. Baxter Thing Co. of Vancouver, demonstrates the practical value of the Carrying Case for an Andrew Warhol Pillow—one of the company's works on display at the Norman Mackenzie Art Gallery.

REGINA LEADER PRESS.

PLEASE COMPLETE AND RETURN

Description

N. E. THING COMPANY LIMITED

Trade Mark ©



# INFORMATION

N.E. THING CO. LTD.

1419 Riverside Drive North Vancouver B.C. Canada

Date

1966

Project

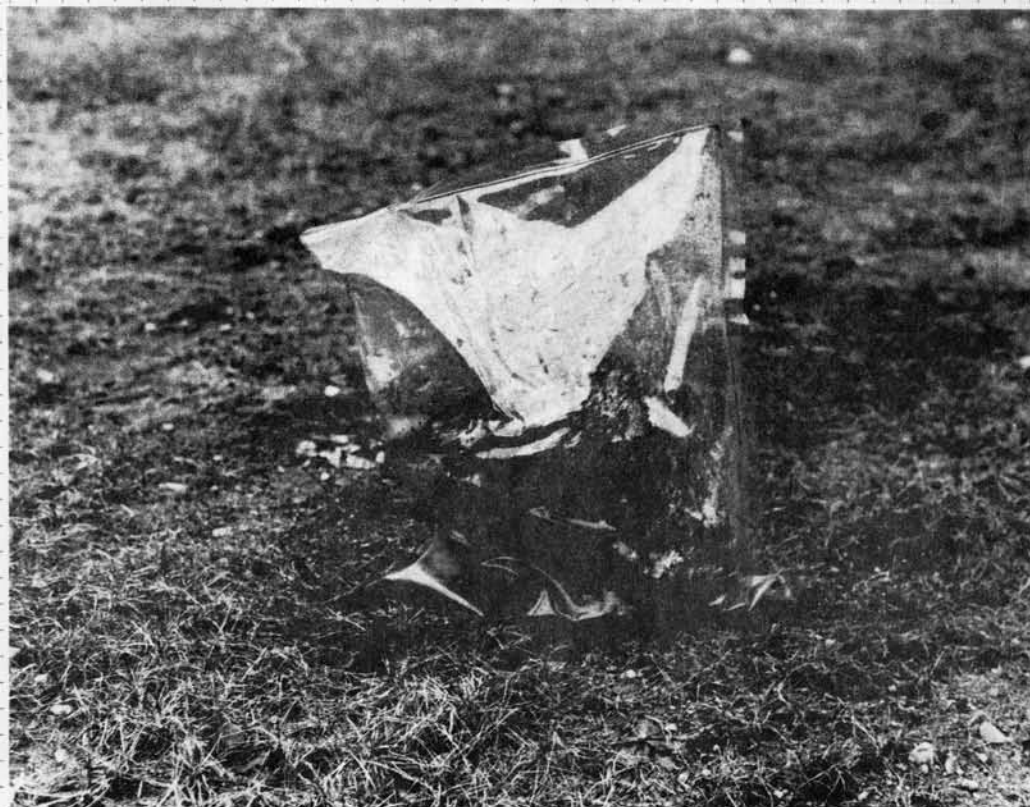
INFLATED & BAGGED WORKS

Number

1.



(A)



(B)

PLEASE COMPLETE AND RETURN

Description *BAGGED LANDSCAPE WITH WATER (A)*  
1966  
*BAGGED LOG (B)*  
1965

N.E. THING COMPANY LIMITED

Trade Mark ©



# INFORMATION

N.E. THING CO. LTD.

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Date

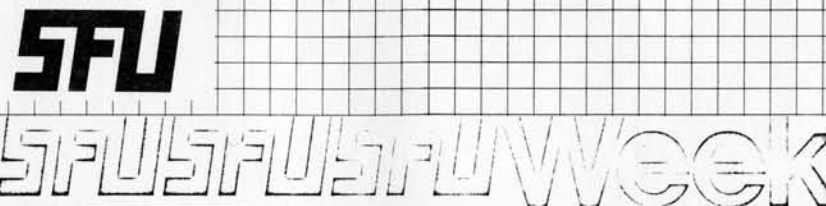
1966

Project

SIMON FRASER LOGO DESIGN  
UNIVERSITY

Number

1.



No. 39

October 31, 1966

## NEW LOOK FOR WEEKLY BULLETIN

Simon Fraser University's weekly bulletin comes to you this week with a distinctive new format designed by Iain Baxter, Visual Arts Co-ordinator of the Communications Centre.

The "SFU" monogram used in this design was created by Baxter and has already made its appearance in other Simon Fraser publications. Baxter says:

"I believe the use of this monogram and careful attention to our graphic image will help eliminate for Simon Fraser the multiplicity of design experienced by many other universities. The result of this multiplicity is a low-level of typographic quality -- and Simon Fraser, still in its early days, can avoid the mistakes of other universities and set a high standard in graphic design to reflect the progressive, forward-thinking attitude of SFU."

Baxter, whose background includes a B.Sc. in biological science and an M.Ed. from the University of Idaho, received his Master of Fine Arts degree (painting) from Washington State University in 1964. He has worked as assistant to the Curator of Canadian Art at the National Gallery in Ottawa and as assistant professor of fine art at UBC.

He has had one-man shows in Canada, the U.S. and Japan, he has exhibited in all major exhibitions in Canada, such as the Biennial Canadian Art, and his work is included in the permanent collections of the National Gallery of Canada, Norman McKenzie Art Gallery, University of Victoria, Montreal Museum of Fine Art, Calgary Art Centre and Washington State University.

In 1961 he won the Japanese Government Foreign Painting Scholarship and in 1963 received an Honorable Mention in the Canadian Flag Design Competition. This year he received a Canada Council grant.

## CRITIC ARNOLD ROCKMAN VISITS SIMON FRASER

Toronto Critic Arnold Rockman will visit Simon Fraser University on Saturday, November 5, to participate in Sensitivity OOI, an experimental course in sense perceptions being offered by the Centre for Communications and the Arts. R. Murray Schafer, University Lecturer in music, says:

"Rockman is a critic who realizes the arts of the twentieth century have been merging progressively with one another in what might be called a 'synaesthetic

PLEASE COMPLETE AND RETURN

Description

IAIN BAXTER DESIGNED SIMON FRASER UNIVERSITY LOGO WHEN HE WORKED AS A UNIVERSITY RESIDENT IN VISUAL ARTS 1966-71.

N.E. THING COMPANY LIMITED

Trade Mark ©





# INFORMATION

N.E. THING CO. LTD.

1419 Riverside Drive North Vancouver B.C. Canada

Date

1966

Project

SIMON FRASER UNIVERSITY GRAPHIC DESIGNS

Number

1.

## SFU SFU SFU Week

**SFU**  
ANNUAL  
REPORT  
1965-66

**SIMON  
FRASER  
UNIVERSITY**

SIMON

FRASER

UNIVERSITY



PRESIDENT'S RESIDENCE

SIMON FRASER UNIVERSITY

BURNABY 2 / BRITISH COLUMBIA

BURNABY 2/B.C. CANADA

Editor: Edwin Turner / Information Office.  
Designer: Iain Baxter / Communications Centre.  
Photographers: Peter Knowlden / Audio-Visual Centre.  
Roy Beaumont / Year Book.

Simon Fraser University

Aerial Photos: George Allen  
Portraits: Fred Schiller  
Lithographer: Evergreen Press Limited/Vancouver.

Oct. 1966

PLEASE COMPLETE AND RETURN

Description

IAIN BAXTER, WHILE AT SIMON FRASER UNIVERSITY, DESIGNED THE S.F.U. LOGO, AND ALSO  
DESIGNED SEVERAL BROCHURES, ANNUAL REPORT, THE WEEKLY NEWS LETTER FORUM AND THE  
15TH YEAR ANNIVERSARY BROCHURE.

N.E. THING COMPANY LIMITED

Trade Mark ©



# INFORMATION

N.E. THING CO. LTD.

1419 Riverside Drive North Vancouver B.C. Canada

Date

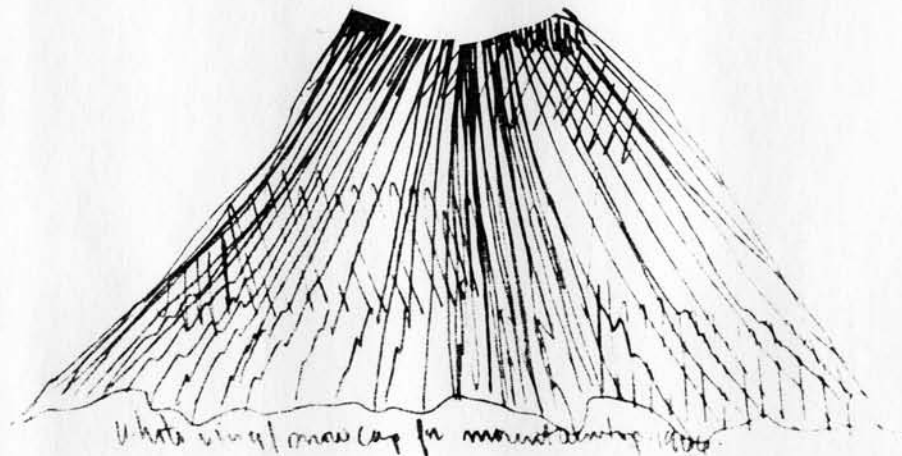
1966

Project

WHITE VINYL CAP FOR MOUNTAIN TOP - 1966

Number

1.



PLEASE COMPLETE AND RETURN

Description

PROPOSED FOR MOUNTAIN TOP IN SUMMER SO AREA OF PEAK HAD APPEARANCE OF CONTINUAL SNOW.

N.E. THING COMPANY LIMITED

Trade Mark ©



# INFORMATION

N.E. THING CO. LTD.

1419 Riverside Drive North Vancouver B.C. Canada

Date

1966

Project

SMOKE VOLUME PROJECT

Number

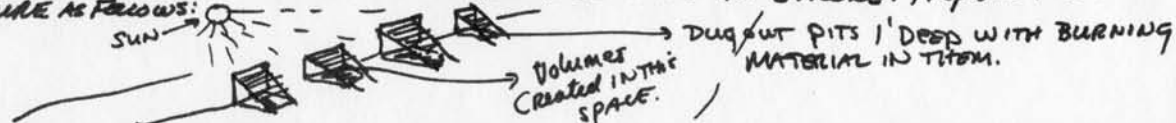
1.



PLEASE COMPLETE AND RETURN

N.E. THING COMPANY LIMITED  
Trade Mark ©

Description A BUILDING AT N.E. THING CO. WAS BURNED DOWN THUS CREATING A TRIANGULAR VOLUME OF SHADE AS SUNLIGHT STREAKED THROUGH SMOKE. PROPOSAL FOR LAND SCULPTURE AS FOLLOWS:





# INFORMATION

N.E. THING CO. LTD.

1419 Riverside Drive North Vancouver B.C. Canada

Date

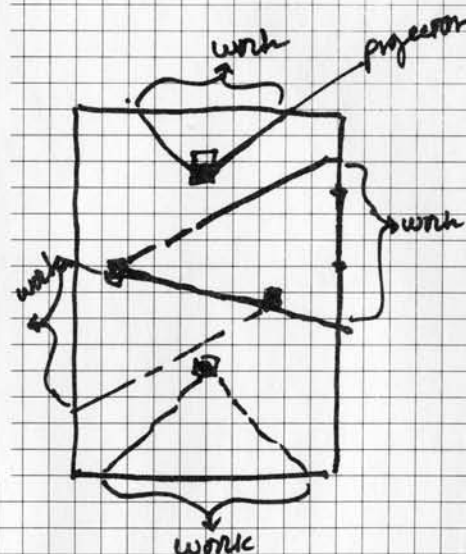
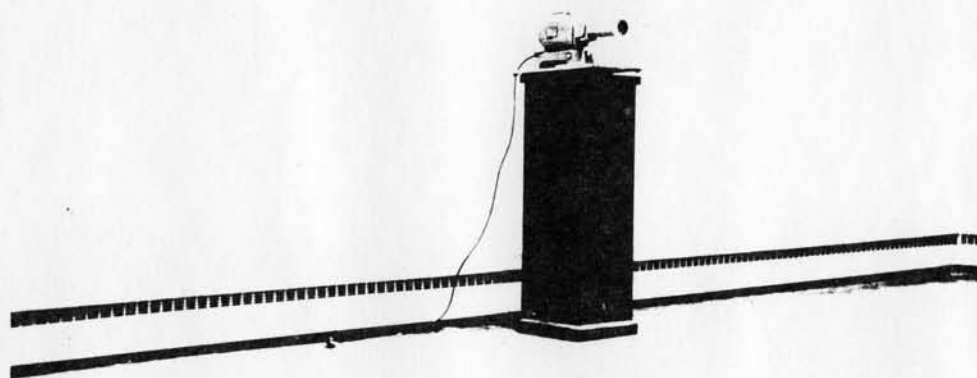
1966

Project

PROJECTED ART WORK

Number

1.



PLEASE COMPLETE AND RETURN

Description

PROJECTED ART WORK. THIS PIECE WAS EXECUTED AND PRESENTED AT NORMAN MURPHY'S ART GALLERY, Regina, Sask. AS PART OF A LARGE N.E. THING CO. SHOW. THIS PART OF THE SHOW CONSISTED OF 4 SLIDE PROJECTS EACH PROJECTING 1 SINGLE WORK ONTO THE WALL AS THE WORK OF ART. THE FINISHED WORK IS THE PROJECTOR, THE SLIDE, & PROJECTED & ENLARGED TO THE SCALE REQUIRED TO COMPLETE IT. EACH WORK WAS 10 X 15". THE SLIDE AND PROJECTOR IS WHAT IS FOR SALE AND COMPRISES THE TOTAL WORK. ROOM/DISPLAY WAS KEPT DARK EXCEPT FOR PROJECTOR LIGHT.

N.E. THING COMPANY LIMITED

Trade Mark ©



# INFORMATION

N.E. THING CO. LTD.

1419 Riverside Drive North Vancouver B.C. Canada

Date

1966

Project

Cumulus Cloud with Tartan Carrying Case-1966

Number

1.

N. E. Thing Co. (Iain Baxter, President)



The photo on this page shows the city of Vancouver, the workshop of the N.E. Thing Company. NETCO was formed a few years ago to cope with a broad variety of art projects. It has many concerns: a vacuum-formed plastic shop, a fencing division, an extension service, printmaking, photography, and plastic bagging works, a publications bureau and interests in both SIS (Sensitivity Information Services) and VIS (Visual Sensory Information). The aim of the company is to be as good as its name.

The President of the Company and the author of these multifarious enterprises is Iain Baxter (Time dubbed him a 'bagster'), a young art executive who left a promising career in academic science to become the west coast's mini-McLuhan and one of the country's major art influences. He is provocative and fresh with ideas, and mildly satiric, if not slightly outrageous, in his work. He finds the art scene a target for some of his 'put ons' and 'put-downs', as when he executed a series of extensions to other artists' works: water for Oldenberg's toilet, ribbons to extend No-land's chevrons to ceiling and floor, one more

square to frame an Albers, a funeral bag for a Harold Town.

Basically his work revolves around landscape and still life in a realistic and traditional manner which is radical only in the use it makes of contemporary materials. He makes Xerox prints, his still lifes of detergent bottles and vegetables are in vacuum-formed plastic, his inflated landscapes have real water and floating toy boats, and may on occasion stretch out for 50 feet with perhaps a plastic moon in a tree. He has put a whole exhibition in a suitcase for shipping and inflated it on arrival. Since canvas with the new technology is no longer for painters, he has used canvas to make tents.

The N. E. Thing Company's recent exhibition in Vancouver was of 'Piles'-piles of salt, hair, tin cans, egg shells. The catalogue directed the viewer to sites in and around Vancouver where other piles could be seen: logs, sawdust, garbage, and even one of the local mountains. Vancouver, come to think of it, is itself as much of a pile as anything.

*Cumulus Cloud with Tartan Carrying Case 1966*  
vinyl, air and cloth  
infl. 129 x 72 x 36 inches  
defl. 24 x 48 x 2 inches  
lender: N. E. Thing Co.

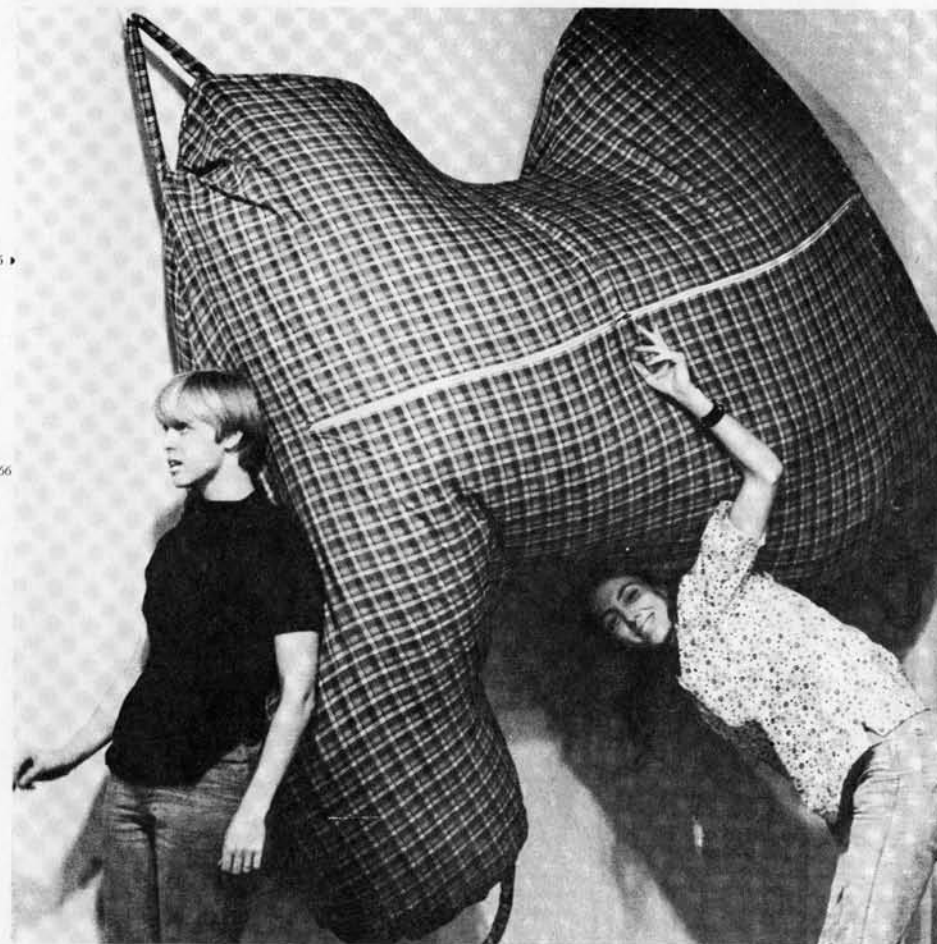
*Bagged Landscape with four boats 1966*  
vinyl, air, water and plastic boats  
infl. 48 x 40 x 8 inches  
defl. 24 x 10 x 2 inches  
lender: N. E. Thing Co.

*Bagged Landscape with two hills and two boats 1966*  
vinyl, air, water and boats  
infl. 40 x 30 x 17 inches  
defl. 15 x 10 x 2 inches  
lender: N. E. Thing Co.

*Sunset Landscape 1967*  
vinyl, air and water  
infl. 80 x 72 inches  
defl. 72 x 12 inches  
lender: N. E. Thing Co.

*Inflatedscape 1968*  
vinyl, air and metal  
infl. 60 x 84 x 15 inches  
defl. 60 x 12 x 2 inches  
lender: N. E. Thing Co.

*Inflatedscape 1968*  
vinyl and air  
infl. 84 x 84 x 20 inches  
defl. 84 x 12 x 2 inches  
lender: N. E. Thing Co.



PLEASE COMPLETE AND RETURN

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.....

N. E. THING COMPANY LIMITED

Trade Mark ©

Description

INCLUDE AS PART OF CANADIAN ARTS SHOW organized by DAVID SILCOX FOR ENGLAND. 1968.



# INFORMATION

N.E. THING CO. LTD.

1419 Riverside Drive North Vancouver B.C. Canada

Date

1967

Project

THE YEAR 1967

Number

1.



PLEASE COMPLETE AND RETURN

Description

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# INFORMATION

N.E. THING CO. LTD.

1419 Riverside Drive North Vancouver B.C. Canada

Date

1967

Project

ARTOFICIAL BUTTON

Number

1

The Secretary of State  Le Secrétaire d'Etat  
Canada

OTTAWA, July 21, 1967.

Dear Mr. Baxter,

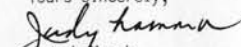
Many thanks indeed for your thoughtfulness in sending to me the "Artofficial" Button, which the Vancouver award winners in Perspective '67 unanimously asked you to do.

I appreciated the kind words which each of the Vancouver winners sent to me along with the pin. Please extend to each and every one of them my warmest thanks.

I was very sorry that business in the House prevented me from fulfilling my original plan to officiate at the opening of Perspective '67, and trust that my absence did not create too much inconvenience. Needless to say I was extremely disappointed at not being able to be with you and present the awards.

With kindest regards,

Yours sincerely,

  
Judy Lawmar.

Mr. Iain Baxter,  
1419 Riverside Drive,  
NORTH VANCOUVER, B.C.



N. E. THING COMPANY  
(Iain Baxter, President)  
17. Artofficial

PLEASE COMPLETE AND RETURN

N. E. THING COMPANY LIMITED

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Description





# INFORMATION

N.E. THING CO. LTD.

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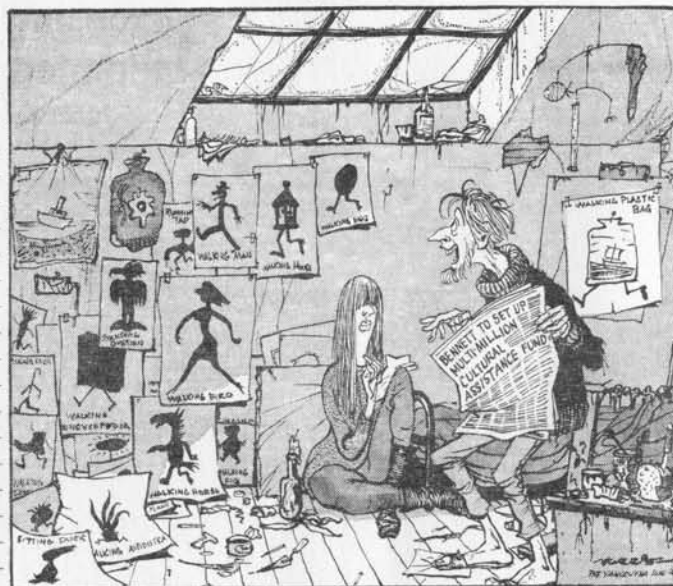
Date  
1967

Project

ARTICLES

Number  
1.

VANC. SUN- FEB 1/67



"Get a dozen plastic bags . . . six large boxes of bird sand . . . twelve plastic boats . . ."



Robert Fulford

TORONTO STAR, THUR. FEB 2,  
A reward #67, pg 3.  
for frivolity

WHEN IAIN BAXTER won a \$500 prize at the Vancouver Art Gallery, a couple of months ago, he became the centre of one of those artistic brouhahas which afflict most communities from time to time.

Arnold Rockman, who was judging the gallery's Centennial art exhibit, gave one of three purchase prizes to Baxter's "Bagged Landscape," a vinyl bag containing a plastic cloud, a plastic boat, and real water. Rockman admired it—"a witty and whimsical method of commenting on landscape painting"—but Vancouver people were not amused. "Fun's Fun, But Not at \$500," said the heading on the editorial page of the Sun.

"The waterlogged bag," the Sun said, "is bound to cause controversy. There's nothing wrong with that. But it is not all right that \$500 of the public's money has been spent in the name of the centennial to reward such frivolity."

The Sun's editorial huffing and puffing was echoed in several places. A Len Norris cartoon showed garbage men being mistaken for artists when they arrived at the gallery. There were letters from "Puzzled Taxpayer" and several of his friends. Jack Shadbolt wrote in to defend the prize. Himie Koshevoy of the Province called Baxter's work "slop Art." In general, everyone gave his opinion and had a good time.

Baxter has peculiar ideas about everything from art merchandising to art teaching. He has called himself, for some time in the past, the N. E. Baxter Thing Co. but now he's changing his corporate name to "Sensinfodym," a truly horrible word which is intended to suggest "sensitivity-information-dynamics." He wants to get other artists to work with him, anonymously, putting all their work under the Sensinfodym name.

EVEN BAXTER. He had several reasons to be pleased, not the least of which were the \$500 and the fact that the Vancouver Art Gallery—which has never much favored his work—was now stuck with one of his objects. When I spoke to him at his house in North Vancouver recently, he expressed a certain enjoyment of the whole incident. "People don't realize when they get mad about these things," he said. "That they're getting involved in a good way."

What his art is about, in fact, is involvement—involvement in the new materials, involvement in new technologies, involvement in the idea of art itself. Baxter, a 30-year-old Canadian who spent eight years studying at Washington State and the University of Idaho, is an artist who is about to make a considerable impression.

He has been working hard towards this end for more than a year. Last January, at the University of British Columbia, he exhibited a whole houseful of objects in which everything, from refrigerator to bits of food, was wrapped in a plastic bag. In March, at the Vancouver Art Gallery, he had a show in which he used live creatures—turtles and gold fish, among others—living in plastic "environments." In April he had a one-man show at the Victoria Art Gallery ("Makes a mockery of 'art', the artist and the gallery"—Jerry Boultbee, Victoria Times).

In May he had a show at the Albert White Galleries in Toronto, anonymously. Under the byline "It," he exhibited parodies of various American and Canadian artists. In June he did the same in Los Angeles. He had another show in October in Regina and still another in Los Angeles in December. The same month he was represented in the Art Gallery of Ontario's toy show by "disaster toys," including one plastic-covered tableau of a sea disaster. This month he has a show at the University of Western Ontario.

At Simon Fraser University, where he teaches, Baxter plans a unique experiment. Since he has to teach 26 hours per semester, he's decided that at the next semester he'll teach them all at once—26 hours straight of lecturing, talking and arguing with the students. He wants to find out what happens when a university group spends that much time together.

He plans to produce more of his parodies of well-known artists. For instance, he sometimes completes a painting—by, say, Ellsworth Kelly or Frank Stella—that seems to him unfinished in some way. When Andy Warhol exhibited plastic pillows, Baxter exhibited a carrying case for a Warhol pillow. (In Los Angeles the galleries showing Warhol's pillows and Baxter's case were side by side.)

One of the many Baxter plans that pleases me involves a whole show of animals—rabbits, guppies, anything else he can lay his hands on—in Pop Art settings. His theory is: "If you go to a zoo you look down on animals as lower in the evolutionary scale, but if you go to an art gallery and see them there you might see them as a fine thing."

THE BEST of Baxter's art is fresh and engaging. I don't think most of the enraged citizens in Vancouver could have seen his "Bagged Landscape" before they attacked it. When I finally got to the gallery—after hearing and reading about this affront to everything holy—I found it was a naive and charming work of art.

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# INFORMATION

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1.

## Teaching art without words

by Matthew Baigell

Everybody knows that art cannot be taught. Yet the question remains - how do you teach art?

In answer to this perennial dilemma, two young artist-teachers are exploring a method that is opening new approaches to this question and may even revolutionize classroom methods. In any event, it can make the teaching of art quite a lively thing.

While members of the staffs of two nearby schools in 1963-64, Canadian-born Iain Baxter, at Washington State University, and Joel Smith, at the University of Idaho, came to believe that verbal instruction hindered creative responses on the part of their students. More often than not, they found, students simply gave back what the teacher asked for. Searching for a means of breaking out of the "straight-jacket" of vocal communication, the two men studied perception psychology, symbology and linguistic analysis. They hoped to find in their

readings clues for establishing closer contact with their students, guidelines for providing them with increasingly rich sources of visual imagery and means for provoking a heightened intellectual awareness of the assigned problems. One idea led to another, and soon Baxter and Smith were experimenting with non-verbal techniques - demonstrating by gesture, action and sound the instructions their students should be following.

The results were excellent. By comparison with control groups taught by traditional means, students responded with works that were more personal in meaning and richer in content. They were completed in a greater variety of media and reflected an increased measure of concentration, self-assurance and achievement. In short, Baxter and Smith were getting more from their students, and if they were not turning out great artists, they were at least making them more rapidly aware of the processes of making art. What more can a teacher ask for?

So pleased were the two men that they decided to continue their experiments after leaving their respective universities for other positions. Both agreed then, as now, that a considerable amount of research remained to be done, particularly in regard to combining verbal with non-verbal instruction, and that techniques and procedures still had to be developed and tested before non-verbal methods could

enter traditional curriculums of instruction. To these ends Baxter is working at Simon Fraser University and Smith at Ohio State.

Employed in introductory as well as in advanced courses, non-verbal instruction has been used to teach elementary principles of design as well as upper-level problems involving specific, or unrelated, types of subject matter. Students observe their instructor "demonstrate" the problem for ten to fifteen minutes and then proceed to work out its implications in any number of media. During that period of time they have been bombarded with a host of images on many levels of meaning and projection - visual, auditory, symbolic, personal, community - reflecting simple or complex patterns of thought.

Both Baxter and Smith, for example, have presented sessions concerned with the subject of war. To emphasize its destructive aspects as well as its impersonality, Baxter has pushed a rocket around a dismembered mannequin. Illuminating similar points of view, Smith has painted on sheets of cardboard and immediately destroyed them; both have set fire to paper churches. Quite often, appropriate background sounds or music have accompanied the action taking place.

Such moments, of course, are parts of developmental sequences that may run smoothly or change abruptly, depending upon the theme being presented or the particular focus of the moment. Needless to say, controlled spontaneity and guided improvisation mark many sessions, and whether these qualities should be retained or eliminated is still one of the many problems to be solved. But it has been noted that students seem less responsive when the deadening effects of a "script" are overly apparent.

Limited only by their ingenuity, budgets and the laws of gravity, Baxter and Smith still re-invent, as it were, their demonstrations. Although they move about and gesture considerably, they also paint and show slides of art objects. At times the visual imagery becomes very complex, particularly when in a darkened room Baxter, standing with his back to the class, allows a slide's image to play across his body. Or Smith will dab and scratch with his fingers at two or three paintings at once. Nor are sister arts left out. Music is often heard on tapes or records, but more specifically, to suggest rhythmic possibilities, Baxter has silhouetted moving dancers so that abstract patterns continually occur.

Both Baxter and Smith enjoy preparing non-verbal sessions. It gives them the opportunity to invent, juxtapose and explore, in compressed fashion, a series of related images, shapes and symbols. Per-



Joel Smith hurls an egg at a target painted on a figure (Photo John de Lillo)

haps from so actively cross-pollinating their substantive ideas with visual images and vice-versa, they find their own work affected for the better. They wonder and hope that during demonstrations their students, too, are mixing freely image with idea, thus eliminating the creative bottleneck often caused by the teacher's verbal instructions.

Since the purpose of non-verbal sessions is to make the student search for meaning in the action taking place as well as to provide him with a variety of visual suggestions, demonstrations are often kept purposefully ambiguous. Baxter has developed one which may suggest rhythm, water, birth, closure and frustration among other things: at one moment, dressed in boots and fluorescent-coloured raincoat, he sloshes water in a pan; a few seconds later, stripped to the waist, he struggles and "swims" under a plastic sheet. Such actions, containing a great number of implications, point up one of the key aspects of non-verbal instruction, indeed perhaps the major reason for experimenting with this mode of teaching. By eliminating the reasonably clear, simple, one-dimensional verbal directions given by the teacher, the student is no longer able to follow instructions; he must invent. Instead of feeding back, he must create.



Iain Baxter, suggesting the sensuous properties of fluids, wraps himself in a plastic sheet (Photo John McLeod)

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ARTICLE ON EARLIER TEACHING RESEARCH USING NON-Verbal means AS method of teaching.

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Matthew Baigell with Joel Smith

## Happening in the Classroom: Non-Verbal Art Instruction

The art historian who teaches in a large art school or department enjoys the privilege of meeting artists daily. He is exposed to attitudes and opinions he does not normally encounter in his own discipline, and, to a certain extent, he allows them to modify his own approach to his subject. Sometimes he becomes sidetracked into areas of study with which he is unfamiliar and in which perhaps he should not become involved. Yet the prospects of jumping the boundaries of his own specialty are often too tempting to ignore. Such is the case here.

Among the many topics that art teachers discuss, there is one that recurs very often—what type of instruction allows the student a maximal amount of creative response in the classroom. While any number of approaches have been used and discarded, there is one, so far untested, that may be of significant help to both teacher and student. It is the teaching of art by non-verbal, or to put it affirmatively, sensory means. As either name implies, classes are conducted without benefit of verbal instruction, but rather by visual, auditory and even olfactory instruction. At least two teachers of art are experimenting with this method. Joel Smith and Ian Baxter, and although neither one has yet established systematic modes of presentation, both believe that it is well worth the efforts of further experimentation and exploration.<sup>1</sup>

So far, both men have conducted introductory art classes by non-verbal techniques, but Smith and Baxter believe that this approach can operate more effectively in advanced courses where problems of content and meaning are introduced. Just how does non-verbal teaching work? Among the various themes presented in class, war has been used and with minor modifications it has been introduced in the following way.

Students are told that the presentation of the particular theme will be given non-verbally. No words will be spoken other than "begin" and "stop." Comprehension is to be gained by observing the teacher's actions, and, like the teacher, students are invited to move randomly about the room during the presentation.

Music by John Cage is played throughout at loud volume. Mounted photographs illustrating a variety of ideas about war are passed around; war as destruction, as

glory, as group action, as individual reaction, as business. Photographs of animals in conflict are shown as well as illustrations evoking fear, such as grizzled apes' heads. Slides are projected reflecting a host of attitudes toward war including the Battle of the Centaurs and Lapiths from the Parthenon, David's *Oath of the Horatii*, Delacroix's *Massacre at Scio*, Evergood's *American Tragedy*, Kline's *Garcia and Paintings of World War II from Life*. While a slide of Motherwell's *Elegy for the Spanish Republic* is shown, the instructor exhibits four reproductions mounted on a large board of Lincoln, young lovers, a menacing snake and an old, rusted automobile moving "aggressively" out of the photograph. To the portrait of Lincoln, the instructor adds green, then blue and then black paint, suggesting decay and death. The teacher then alters the positions of the lovers, finally destroying the photograph. From the snake's head he draws radiating lines, and on the grill of the advancing automobile he paints a large eye. The instructor then returns to the screen where the Motherwell painting is projected and draws rapidly on several sheets of large paper a boy at first in a realistic style but progressively reduced to symbols of fear. The drawings are torn from their mountings and thrown on the floor. To cap the presentation, the teacher who had previously made a paper model of a church with matches serving as the cross atop the steeple, ignites the model. As it burns, slides suggesting self hatred are shown such as German Expressionist self-portraits. The instructor then turns off the musical accompaniment and asks the students to begin. The time elapsed is 12-15 minutes; the images shown ranged from the obvious to the indirect. At the end of the class meeting, the students are asked to stop.

Concurrent with the experimental sessions, control groups have received traditional directions by traditional means. What has been the outcome? Students in the non-verbal classes have invariably made triple or quadruple the number of works made by those in the control groups. Mixed media is used to a much greater extent by the non-verbally directed students. Invariably absorbed more completely in their efforts, these students use, in addition to their tables, floors and walls as the "mood" and images seem to demand. These images seem, as well, to be considerably more probing and personal, and are less dependent upon traditional notions of war. Among the works produced by the experimental groups for instance, a crying child cradled by his mother has yet to appear. The students in the non-verbal groups are less concerned with representational images than with indicating, as one student said, "an overall view not limited to the particular." Other students have suggested that recognizable forms might occur later after personal opinions, sometimes considered for the first time, are more clearly established.

Smith and Baxter were drawn to the idea of non-verbal instruction because they became particularly aware of the inhibitory qualities of words in the university environment. Words, as carriers of tradition and culture, tend to restrict innovation. They are often used to describe "rational" thought or to promote discipline and, because particular meanings are attached to them, they can often hinder free ideational associations.<sup>2</sup>

While Smith and Baxter will not, and cannot, deny the image-provoking nature of certain combinations of words, they find that the type of verbalization which generally takes place in a classroom is just the sort that denies the student that atmosphere so often sought in the studio classroom—the freedom to explore fully his own creative responses to given situations or problems. With regard to the teaching of art, both men agree, therefore, with the social psychologist, Irving A. Taylor, that "non-verbal forms of communication may be more effective in transmitting human thoughts and feelings than the familiar verbal and formal types. . . ." And as Reusch and Kees have pointed out:

"Words tend to be treated as absolutes. The fact that words are sounds referring to ideas or events is frequently overlooked altogether; in the act of speaking or writing, words are invested . . . with substance and body, so that words become things in themselves. Then too, the assumption is often made that words are the only means of communication, whereas commonplace silent actions are not interpreted as having communicative value."<sup>3</sup>

Since verbal explanations or directions in regard to visual materials can obscure the things perceived or the ideas imagined, why confuse, then, to paraphrase Rene Huyghe, the language of images with the language of words? Why not allow colors, shapes, textures, movement, aural sensations and emotive symbols to evoke sequences of ideas unimpeded by direct verbal communication? Perhaps the mind, in this case the student's mind, less constricted by intellectual control, might be able to translate emotions and feelings more easily to canvas or drawing paper. Perhaps the images thus brought to the surface of consciousness might actually be more meaningful to the student. Furthermore, the images thus created might be, in a certain sense, more "real" because the student can respond to the given stimuli with more than one of his senses. Finally, the student might be able to engage in symbol-making more richly since there would appear to be an easier give-and-take between the sights and sounds of the moment and the images in his mind.<sup>4</sup>

Smith and Baxter realize, of course, that non-verbal instructional methods will not necessarily turn out great artists in the classroom. Nor do they believe that such methods are even viable without many more experiments

joined perhaps by art educators, psychologists and physiologists. For the better performances recorded by the non-verbally instructed students might simply be caused by the exuberance of the two men. Nevertheless, they do feel that such techniques are, in principle, correct, in the sense that art is visual expression and communicates in a visual and emotional manner. Why not, then, use these modes of communication extensively in the classroom, they ask. Might they not provide the student with both a heightened sense of empathy and esthetic sensitivity to his subject matter? Might they not allow him to engage in the making of art more directly, short-circuiting, so to speak, the process of intellection? Smith and Baxter do not maintain that this process is necessarily bad, but in the inevitable tension that exists between intuition and logic, they find that students more often than not subordinate the former to the latter. The results are usually academic and derivative. The student is also less apt to learn what he is capable of doing or explore the range of his feelings. Why not redress the balance? In regard to verbal instruction, it was Rubens who said " . . . those things which can only apprehend by words may easily disappear, even if we triple our effort . . . and all our hopes have then been in vain. I speak from experience."<sup>5</sup>

There is at least one important by-product resulting from non-verbal instruction. Too often, the art teacher is aware that his advanced students might be taking his courses only for credit since their best work is done, so they feel, in the privacy of their own studies. Here, they say, it is much easier to link ideas with feelings and to allow certain emotions to develop spontaneously. This attitude suggests that art classes are good primarily for learning basic techniques of composition and color, but not for provoking the student's imagination. Might we say, then, that non-verbal instruction can provide the student with a classroom atmosphere more nearly approximate to that of the studio? That it is capable of allowing him those freedoms we know are traditionally missing?

<sup>1</sup> H. G. Collingwood, *The Principles of Art* (New York: 1958), Chapt. XI, *Language*, pp. 225-60.

<sup>2</sup> Irving A. Taylor, "The Nature of the Creative Process," *Creativity*, ed. Paul Smith (New York: 1959), p. 71. See also Taylor's essay "Psychological Aspects of Visual Communications," *Symbology*, ed. Elwood Whitney (New York: 1960), pp. 123-38.

<sup>3</sup> Jurgen Ruesch and Weldon Kees, *Nonverbal Communication* (Berkeley: 1956), p. 1.

<sup>4</sup> Rene Huyghe, *Ideas and Images of World Art* (New York: 1959), p. 101.

<sup>5</sup> See Arnold Whittich, *Symbol, Sign and Their Meaning* (Newton, Mass.: 1960), p. 9.

<sup>6</sup> Richard Friedenthal, *Letters of the Great Artists* (London: 1963, I, p. 164).

<sup>1</sup> Smith has employed it at the University of Idaho and The Ohio State University; Baxter, who now teaches at the University of Vancouver, at Washington State University. Both authors teach at Ohio State.

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## Description

ARTICLE ON NON-VERBAL Teaching methods Developed by IAN BAXTER & Joel Smith at Univ. of Idaho & Washington State University. 1963/64



# INFORMATION

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ARTICLES

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## THOUGHTS ON A BAGGED LANDSCAPE 1967 Can You Smash Your Own Statue?

By JOHN MILLS

I see by the smoke arising from the letters-to-the-editor columns that Bagged Landscape is still inflaming the public.

A colleague of mine at Simon Fraser University, Iain Baxter, won a \$500 award in an art contest with the work which is basically a transparent bag containing tap water and strips of colored plastic which represent land, sky and cloud. A dime store model boat floats on the water.

Some feel that Mr. Baxter is much less an artist than he is a coman of a fairly high order. Others express a sense of outrage that a piece of basement tinkering assembled in 10 minutes or perhaps less should be ranked higher than the works of "serious" artists which have cost time, technique and agony to produce.

I do not want to discuss Bagged Landscape itself beyond saying that it is not a work of art and that Mr. Baxter is far too clever a man to have intended it as such.

Its importance lies, however, in the way in which it is appropriate to the supermarket world in which we live. Let me tell you a story.

This happened at UBC in 1964 during the fall - that time of year when Vancouver becomes almost habitable for the grounds have just dried out from the rains of the previous winter and have not yet been Pasheddaled into mud by the rains to come.

I began to notice, during my lunch hour strolls, that a number of pieces of sculpture had been erected around the campus.

Few people noticed them since most students have better things to do than use their eyes. It is needless to point out that they went utterly unobserved by 95 per cent of the faculty.

★ ★ ★  
WHEN THESE OBJECTS SUNK INTO my awareness they struck me as incredibly bad, even by today's standards. They were bad enough to be memorably so and therefore, paradoxically, became almost good.

One in particular stands out in my mind - a vast, foetus-like blob of some white material which seemed, in an odd way, to absorb light rather than reflect it. Like its fellows, it was untitled, but I remember thinking an appropriate name for it might be Spirit of Vancouver.

The others were similar in style and material so that most assumed they'd been created by the same charlatan or possibly bought from him at close to cost prices and stuck on campus by some newly-hired landscape architect of the "progressive" school. I did not mind them too much since they fitted their environment well and seemed to symbolize the process of education we were undergoing.

The motions came early that year and with them winter's boredom and desperation. No one was surprised to see that the engineers were on the march again.

The students of engineering, for those who don't know, are not, as is often supposed, men who would have a hard time racking up a score of half-a-dozen on an I.Q. test. On the contrary they are, individually, people of moderate intelligence or even, in a few cases, somewhat better.

But collectively they form a subterranean mass of the destructive potential of a napalm squadron. One lunch hour this mindless, red-jacketed horde came rampaging down the mall carrying sledgehammers, pick-handles, and bicycle chains.

★ ★ ★  
THEY SET ABOUT THE STATUES with a zest for life I'd thought non-existent this side of the Laurentian Shield and within 20 minutes had reduced the artifacts to rubble.

The assailants looked frighteningly like those you see of Mosley's boys raiding the East End, or of Vancouver policemen "arresting" teen-age hoods in a downtown riot. Even the empty-handed, the spectators, seemed to approve for they



IAIN BAXTER

were grins of an imbecility rare outside the pages of Vancouver Life.

There was a terrible outcry about all this. A spokesman for the Department of Fine Arts called the escapade the worst act of vandalism he's ever encountered; the editor of Ubysey, delighted to find an opportunity of attacking the engineers, condemned them as fascists, hooligans, barbarians and Philistines.

Some English professor told me that while he did not like these sculptures himself they were products of the human mind and were their own justification (whatever he meant by that) and that the ringleaders should be identified and expelled.

After everyone had had his say, the engineers replied that not only had they smashed the statues but that they had a perfect right to do so since they had created them in the first place and distributed them over the campus during the summer.

This turned out to be true. The English professor tried to get out of it by quoting a tenet of Benedetto Croce's to the effect that all expression is art, the artist by precluding that he'd been party to the hoax all the time, and the Fine Arts spokesman to maintaining a discreet silence.

It was, I think, a splendid, multi-dimensional hoax. Not only had the engineers satirized the pompous world of art and art appreciation, but they had heartily parodied their own activities.

★ ★ ★  
WHICH BRINGS ME BACK TO THE professor of English. His point was that once these statues had been created, no matter by whom, and for whatever reason, then they were works of art and belonged to posterity. No one, not even an engineer, or a department chairman, had the right to destroy them.

What he may have wanted to imply was that these plaster - of - paris objects belonged to the same world as the works of a Rodin or a Henry Moore and it is this sort of implication that seems to be at the centre of the Iain Baxter controversy.

On the one hand we have art as measured by traditional standards which involve training, technique, and an idiosyncratic vision of reality. On the other, the world of pop or democratized art of which Bagged Landscape is an example.

The emergence of pop is an important and soothing phenomena since people have become conscious that creativity is not restricted to a talented and well-trained elite but is open to anyone with enough junk lying around in the backyard.

I say soothing because it is demonstrable that even a city cop or an MLA, once given a hobby like making ships in bottles or writing bad sonnets, becomes a happier and better man and less of a threat to his fellow citizens.

Chairman Mao turns out weak imitations of Li Po but what has President Johnson got? Beagle - breeding is creative only vicariously and I for one would feel much more comfortable if he'd take to his palette, even if he has to paint by numbers.

★ ★ ★  
CROCE'S DICTUM SHOULD THEREFORE read "all pseudo-artistic expression is therapeutic" and the matter ought to rest there.

But the confusion between therapy art and "serious" art continues and Bagged Landscape, which belongs in the first category, is compared with and preferred to works which belong in the second.

Were it not for the fact that there is enough ugly and meaningless clutter around, I'd say hold two contests, one for genuine art and the other for pop ephemera.

Playful backyard sculptures like Spirit of Vancouver or Bagged Landscape could in such a contest go about their business of encouraging aldermen and cinema usherettes to splash paint and whistle birch without diverting rash away from serious artists.

But this, of course, supposes that you can find somebody in our culture who is still capable of making distinctions between the two categories.

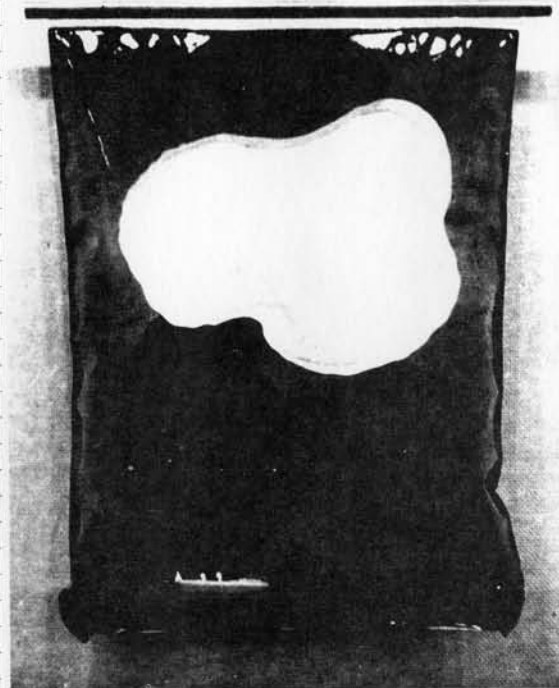
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Head Office, 1419 Riverside Drive, North Vancouver, B.C.  
(604) 929-3662.

President, Iain Baxter.

19 Thing Dept. Bagged Landscape With Boat, Air and Water, 1966 28" x 36" x 8"

20 Thing Dept. Chain - Link, Alberta, 1967 28" x 36" x 8"

**BAGGED LANDSCAPE SHARES CENTENNIAL AWARD** A bagged landscape by SFU Visual Arts Co-ordinator Iain Baxter will share the \$1500 Painting Purchase Award offered by the Centennial Committee. Mr. Baxter's work is a 'plastic landscape heat-sealed in an inflated vinyl bag which contains water.' It forms part of the Painting '66 show at the Vancouver Art Gallery through January 8. The Painting '66 show was juried by Arnold Rockman, Toronto critic who recently visited Simon Fraser



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## Review of Art 67

# Year of the big breakthrough on the art scene

The visual arts have now reached such a pitch of excellence that they should be considered, along with the mountains, the sunsets and the flowers, as one of the amenities of life in Vancouver.

In 1967 we really turned on as an art centre, both nationally and at times internationally.

Eastern Canada, long accustomed to assume its superiority, was jolted when 11 of the 27 works accepted in Perspective '67, a national competition-exhibition organized for artists under 35, were by Vancouverites. Artists from this city also won four of the prizes.

Another breakthrough came with our appearance in the Canadian art pages of Time. The 10-year retrospective of Gordon Smith at the UBC Gallery, Iain Baxter's one-man show at the Douglas Gallery, and the superb Arts of the Raven mounted by the Vancouver Art Gallery, were all reviewed.

Arts of the Raven, with its gala opening attended by distinguished museum personnel from the U.S. and Canada, as well as Indian artists, undoubtedly marked the high point of the year.

The exhibition catalogue even attracted the attention of John Canaday, who gave the Gallery an unprecedented accolade in the New York Times.

More international recognition came in the October Artforum, which contained two articles about Canada by Canadians.

Vancouver also surfaced in Art News and in Art International whose Los Angeles correspondent, Kurt von Meier has mentioned Iain Baxter and Gary Lee-Nova.

The reason for this is that Kurt von Meier has been invited to lecture here, thus affording him an opportunity to meet our most dynamic artists and see their work.

In fact our West Coast isolation has vanished rapidly as the two universities, the Vancouver Art Gallery and the Burnaby Art Gallery, entertained a constant stream of jurors and lecturers.

Names that come to mind are Michael Snow, the Toronto painter who now lives in New York; Buckminster Fuller; Maurice Tuchman of the Los Angeles County Museum and Kenneth Tyler of the Gemini print workshop also in L.A.; Brydon Smith of the National Gallery and Sir Anthony Blunt of the Courtauld Institute of London.

The Douglas Gallery has also shown great enterprise in bringing artists here for openings, the most eminent being Robert Rauschenberg, winner of the Grand Prize at the 1964 Venice Biennale.

Our artists themselves are highly mobile. They fly to sit-out openings of their shows in Winnipeg, London, Toronto and Montreal, or down down for a visit to L.A.



by **JOAN LOWNDES**

Thanks to Canada Council grants print-maker Marianna Schmidt went to Brazil and ceramist Glenn Lewis to Japan.

All these stimulating contacts help to make our artists part of a world community. They have dissipated that insecurity which so puzzled Toronto critic Arnold Rockman when he was here to jury the Vancouver Art Gallery's Centennial award exhibition just a short year ago.

Everything moves so fast that even the article by Philip Leider in Artscanada of June-July, so often referred to: "Vancouver: scene with no scene," is no longer accurate.

In it Leider deplored the fact that "none of the best local artists have local galleries." There are now galleries for everybody.

Show places for art stretch from UBC to

SFU, taking in such new outlets as the Richmond Arts Centre, the Griffiths Galleries, and the delightful old mansion which has become the Burnaby civic gallery.

The pivotal institution remains, however, the Vancouver Art Gallery, where important changes in leadership took place.

Upon Richard Simmins' resignation, Doris Shadbolt became acting director, carrying out the planning for the Gallery's most ambitious endeavour, Arts of the Raven.

She also brought to the Gallery her concept of a "multi-directional, multi-dimensional" centre, where a special intensity was reached with the mounting of the kinetic light sculpture by Michael Hayden of Toronto, with his poet and composer associates, as well as by the Art in Action film week-end. Both events attracted

a large inter-generation audience and foreshadowed Intermedia.

On July 1 Anthony Emery, well known critic and associate professor at the School of Fine Arts, U of Victoria, was appointed director. He arrived upon the crest of the last two Centennial shows — rather good timing, as he remarked jokingly to the delegates of the Western Association of Art Museums.

In another way the timing was not so good, as an inevitable lull has been evident in the past few months. However, I hope to discuss next week the program for the spring.

The year saw us take spurts in two important fields of contemporary art: the intermedia idea, already mentioned, and printmaking.

The intermedia workshop on Beatty St., financed in part by a \$40,000 grant from the Canada Council, is a magnet for young dancers, artists, light impresarios, film makers, students of architecture, electronic composers and the like. Many visiting art experts envy us this facility, which bids fair to put us in the forefront in Canada of a new composite art form.

In printmaking the impetus has come from a variety of factors: the Douglas Gallery's exhibition of lithos by Rauschenberg and Stella; the appointment of Bob Bigelow, master printer, as visual arts instructor at SFU and the showing in the foyer of the SFU theatre of prints by 13 leading contemporary artists; the Burnaby Print Show; the UBC print show; and finally the Vancouver Art Gallery's Print International.

The result has been that a number of local artists are now turning to prints as a fresh medium of expression.

All was not euphoric, however, in the past year. There was that sculpture show at the QET.

If Rothmans, which is estimated to have spent \$40,000 on it, had only taken one scintilla of the trouble it goes to before entering a business deal in the way of expert counselling and research, such a fiasco would never have happened.

Then, closer to us and still causing repercussions, is the Vancouver Art Gallery's 36th Annual Exhibition and subsequent Chat-In.

In my view, the juror acted wrongly in seeking works outside the submissions. And the Gallery, panicky over the smallness of the show, gave fuel to the eternal charge of favoritism by waiving its entry rules for Tom Burrows.

In the aftermath the Gallery has lost prestige. Even more damaging, the friendliness that existed between artists of the community has suffered severe strain.



**ANTHONY EMERY . . . change in leadership**



**DOUGLAS CHRISTMAS . . . shown great enterprise**

**IAIN BAXTER . . . became an international name**



**GORDON SMITH . . . with 10-year retrospective**

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# INFORMATION

N.E. THING CO. LTD.

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Date

1967

Project

ARTICLES

Number

1.

The message is—VSI

## The plastic world of Iain Baxter

It's constantly alive  
... kind of a fun thing  
in a sad world

By JOAN LOWNDES

A rose by any other name would smell as sweet, but contemporary art would be acceptable to far more people if it were called visual sensitivity information—or VSI.

"As soon as you mention art, people think Picasso, Brahmachari, Manet and they get hung up, right? But you say, here's some visual sensitivity information and they make an instantaneous connection the way they do on TV."

The speaker is Iain Baxter, the artist whose tagged landscape of inflated vinyl and water was one of the three award winners in Painting '66 at the Vancouver Art Gallery and who is currently sharing an exhibition with Gary Lee-Nova in the SFU Theatre foyer. Baxter is also Lecturer in Visual Arts at the University of British Columbia.

His conversation pulsates with terms like intermedia, interdisciplinary, the cross-fertilization of art and industry, synergism, the electronic world, for he is not only an admirer of Buckminster Fuller but an ardent Melancthamite.

He believes his understanding of the post-Gutenberg project is an outgrowth of his own multi-faceted experience. He trained as a biologist, taking his B.S. at the U. of Idaho, and it was through making drawings for a wild life guide of the Northern Rockies that he became involved in art.

In 1961 he won a Japanese Government Painting Scholarship — "the greatest thing about it was that I didn't have to do anything except find out about myself" — returned to take his master's degree in Education at his alma mater, then went on to acquire a second master's degree in Fine Arts and Painting at Washington State University.

In 1964 he came to Vancouver to join the Fine Arts Department at UBC. At this time he was painting retraced still lifes in black and white, or dark blue and white, of which one was purchased by the Montreal Museum of Fine Arts and another accepted in the last Canadian Biennial.

The story of how he moved off the canvas and into the new field of plastic, which he has suddenly brought him one-man shows in Regina, Toronto, Victoria, Los Angeles

and most recently London, Ont., is a curious one. He says: "I'd always gone to dumps and I noticed all kinds of plastic throwaways. It became real to me that we lived in a plastic world, that everything we see, touch, drink from, the artificial realm for the heart, is plastic."

"It was a revelation of the plastic world that goes on around the electronic revolution. And I wanted to make these things."

But how? He began by saving plastic bottles and making drawings. Then he went to see Ted Sroog of Diamond Neon Products — "a very enlightened kind of man who spent time with me" — and between April and the summer of 1965 he did about 40 or 50 vacuum-molded still lifes from scraps of plastic.

The first one hangs above the fireplace in his home by a rushing stream in North Vancouver. It is a jug in what I would call barbed wire, pure white, with a classical quality.

Baxter believes that these vacuum-molded wall sculptures could be developed into a new type of multiple print, with an edition of 10,000 bringing the retail price down to somewhere between 30 cents and \$1.

But the revelation at the dump brought further results. He showed me a beautiful drawing done in 1963 and titled "Still Life" — Pulled Wheat in a Plastic Pot. He explained that he felt that plastic was the poetry of today and tomorrow, the new disparity.

He had long been covering his drawings with plastic and then having them laminated as an inexpensive alternative to glassing and framing. He now begins to put everything into polyethylene bags, inquired about Baxter, curator of the UBC Gallery, asked him to create a plastic environment for last year's Festival of the Contemporary Art.

Baxter produced a test like affair — merely with a few holes for ventilation — which spread over the floor plan of an entire house in which every article, from furniture to food, was bagged.

I asked what implications this had. Did it signify that glamorous plastic has intruded itself between us and reality, as is most evident when we shop for food? Baxter replied: "I just got



IAIN BAXTER ... revelation at the dump

real excited about bagging. Then this activated all kinds of thinking on the part of other people about sociological or psychological meanings. I just wanted to do it."

At a subsequent show at the Vancouver Art Gallery he exhibited moodily beaded and twigs in plastic bags, in what seemed to me mere eccentricity, but also "closed" — inflated plastic balloons — that recognized innocent wonder.

Hanging as so to catch the light were some of the contemporary vinyl bags. One, "closed" in sealings and filled with blue water, was like a little girl's memory of the ocean. Later, in the Children's Gallery, a could be squeezed to produce a most satisfactory squishy sound.

The Los Angeles Times, in reviewing Iain Baxter's work, spoke of his "breezy". In my view this is too strong a term. It is at most a gentle lulling, through which is evident the old spell of the Vancouver landscape.

Reindeer, Iain Baxter really loves plastic. He says: "It's constantly alive, shiny and new all the time, kind of a fun thing in a sad world."

But what about those leaks — aren't they a fault in craftsmanship? Baxter utters the charge: "It's a built-in part of the process. Like I'm ignorant of leaking or not leaking, like a real person that was bleeding."

"I've told every one all over the country: if the bag leaks, there's no problem. Air mail it to me and within three days I'll mail it back."

The patching will be done at Arrow Tent and Awning, Baxter's "studio" where he works at night often, if he is preparing a show. From 7 to 9 p.m. in the morning, he was

ready to demonstrate to me the high-frequency welding machine which so readily "stitches" together the plastic and by means of which, he points out, he can make a new type of line. It is literally a matter of drawing with electricity.

I remarked that I liked the fact that he calls what he makes things — not "objects" — "closed" — inflated plastic balloons — that recognized innocent wonder.

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THE PROVINCE, Friday, February 4, 1967 \*\*\*3

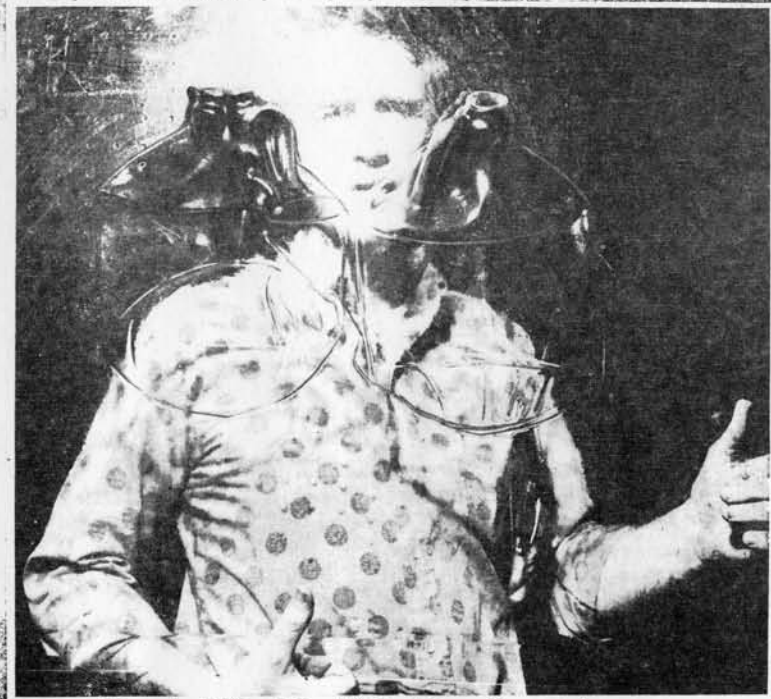
THE PROVINCE

Friday, August 25, 1967

SPOTLIGHT

ART — MUSIC — TV — MOVIES — DRAMA — BOOKS — RADIO — NIGHTLIFE

In this issue



The art of Visual Sensitivity Information—centre pages

The amazing John Stark

— see page six

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# INFORMATION

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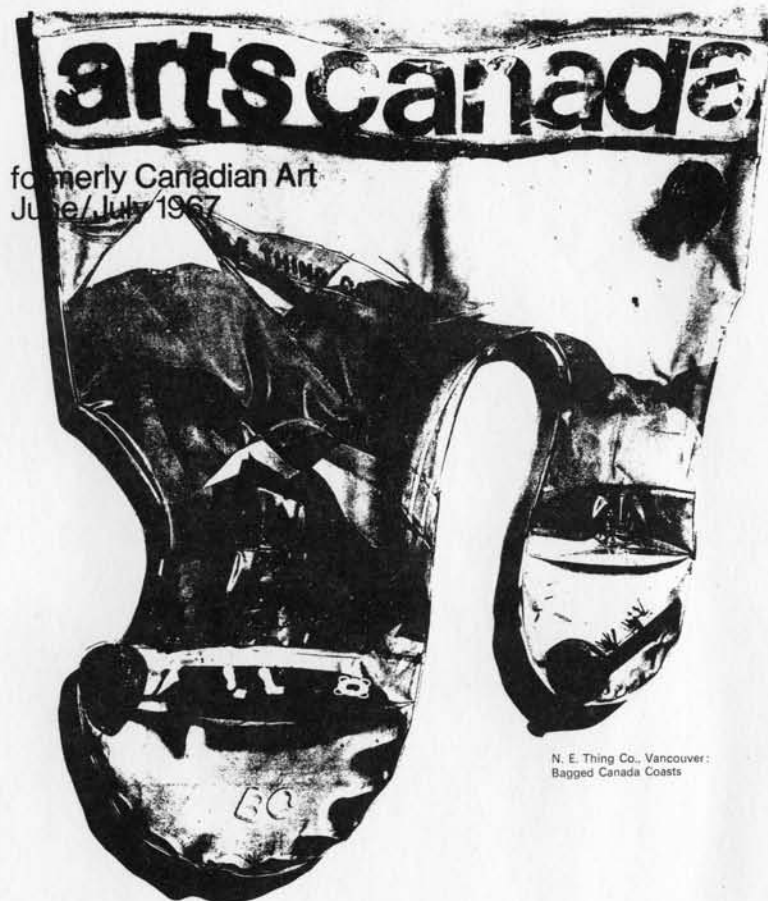
Project

ARTICLES

Number

1

(A)



big bag-splitting double  
Dominion day issue no. 109/110  
West-coast/East-coast art

\$1.50

N. E. Thing Co., Vancouver:  
Bagged Canada Coasts

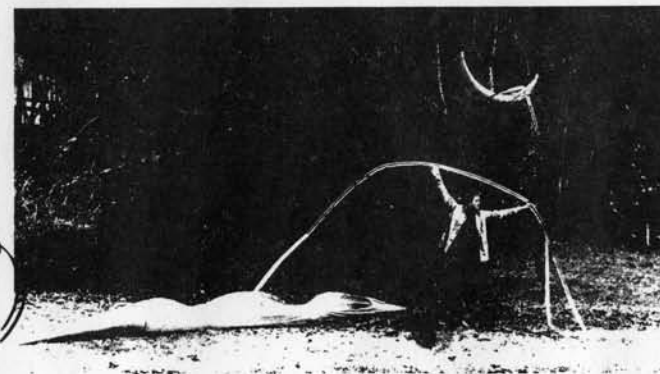
Simon Fraser University  
(Photo: John Ficker)

N.E. Thing Co.  
Cloud Moon, vinyl, air  
conditioning, blue glass,  
oil, 12' x 12' x 12',  
12' moon, 1967

## Vancouver: scene with no scene

by Philip Leider

arts/canada sent the editor of artforum,  
the leading U.S. art magazine, to examine  
the Vancouver scene. Here is his report.



(B)

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Description (A) COVER FOR SPECIAL ARTSCANADA MAGAZINE ISSUE 1967

(B) MAJOR ARTICLE WRITTEN BY PHILIP LEIDER, FORMER EDITOR, ARTFORUM,  
FOR ARTSCANADA.





# INFORMATION

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Vancouver: scene with no scene

left:  
Roy Kiyooka  
Mira  
Acrylic, 97" x 67", 1964  
The Vancouver Art Gallery  
(Photo: William Bros.)

bottom-left:  
Claude Breeze  
Medallion (Far R.K.)  
Acrylic on canvas, 82" x 54", 1966  
(Photo: William Bros.)



N. E. Thing Co.  
top: Pneumatic Judd  
infused vinyl 1962  
middle: Chasseboud Diderburg's  
Spontaneous Spinning Potatoes 1963  
bottom: Extended No and 1966



The development of a regional art that is at the same time an ambitious art — that is, an art which acknowledges and attempts to contribute to the most important art being created — appears to be virtually an impossible task. In visiting any regional area — and today this means any area outside New York, as for a hundred years previously it meant any area outside Paris — one is impressed with the difficult series of choices that confront serious artists attempting to work away from the geographical centre of their trade. The artist must first of all reconcile himself to the fact that he is working in a state of deprivation, that the very artifacts which make up his tradition are accessible only in the treacherously imperfect form of reproductions. Secondly, he must accept the limitations that accompany the loss of a milieu, that climate of exchange and excitement that arises when a substantial group of artists, dealers, collectors, publications, museums and critics intermingle, exalt one another, quarrel, bite each other's backs, gossip and, above all, constantly elevate the level on which the meaningful dialogues take place, constantly press the level of quality in the production of art higher. To be thus deprived is tantamount to trying blind, which is why so many younger artists have traditionally felt it a part of the decision to become an artist to move to Paris or more recently, New York, where all that seemed to be important in art was happening.

The alternatives open to those who have chosen not to make this move have traditionally taken one of several forms. The attempt to sustain a serious relationship with the most advanced art of the times is virtually abandoned in favour of a more idiosyncratic mode, as was witnessed, for example, in the disastrous history of the San Francisco figurative school or the Chicago "monster" school during the 1950s. Or, as in the more recent development of the San Francisco "luna" artists, a history parallel to, often congruent with and just as often subversive of the main direction of contemporary art may be evolved. Another alternative lies in the deliberate cultivation of a regional art, an art consciously seeking to draw its strength from the surroundings, arts and traditions of a given region. Such movements relate only tangentially to the main thrust of modern art, at least in its history so far, but often result in works of considerable strength and beauty. Alvin Balkind, writing presumably of that group of British Columbia regionalists which would include artists like Jack Shadbolt (probably the foremost regionalist artist working in Vancouver today), Don Jarvis, Gordon Smith, John Komer and Molly and Bruno Bobak, described the style this way in the U.B.C. Fine Arts Gallery exhibition catalogue *Beyond Regionalism* (1965):

"its mystique was romantic, inescapably involved as it was with the coniferous mountains, fir-de, logs and rain forests of this part of the coast; its intellectual basis was essentially school of Paris.



N. E. Thing Co.  
Bagged Place  
University of British Columbia Art Gallery  
February 1966



from Cézanne on, with a background scrim — like a racial memory — on which was projected a slide of English landscape painting."

Another possibility — and, one suspects, the one most in the minds of young artists working in Vancouver today — is the evolution of an art which is international in character, and which would be capable of being absorbed into the mainstream of contemporary painting and sculpture. One thinks here of the examples of Louis and Noland, working in Washington, D.C., and of such artists as Robert Irwin, Billy Bengtson, Larry Bell, Edward Ruscha and Joe Goode, working in Los Angeles.

Such a situation involves a unique set of attitudes, and a unique style of life. For one thing, we find young artists commonly more interested in perusing the international art magazines than in visiting the local museums, and a four-colour reproduction of, say, a new painting by Frank Stella becomes a subject of more intense scrutiny than an entire exhibition of some local artist of esteem. For another, travel becomes a standard feature in the artist's life. Almost all the young artists in Vancouver travel extensively and frequently, and one senses a circuit including London, San Francisco and Los Angeles more or less regularly paced out by one artist after another. Lastly, a system of congenial and informal relations is cultivated with as many artists and persons in the art world outside the city as possible; during the few months before and after my own visit to Vancouver, for example, one group or another of local artists had hosted and converted with John Coplans, Kurt von Meier, Maurice Tuchman and Walter Hopps, among others.

It is interesting to note that with differences yet to be discussed, the attitudes described above are strikingly similar to those that prevail in Los Angeles, and equally dissimilar to those that prevail in San Francisco. The perpetual stream of visitors that pour into Los Angeles from New York and Europe almost never travels the extra 500 miles to San Francisco; the close friendships that exist between Los Angeles artists and New York artists are not duplicated in San Francisco, and the reasons for this are based on a series of decisions made by the artists themselves in each community. San Francisco artists, for the last decade or so, have remained consistently indifferent when not hostile to developments in painting as they have manifested themselves in the east, while pop art, for example, as well as the structuralist paintings of Stella, Noland and company were accepted with immediate enthusiasm by the younger artists in Los Angeles. With the museums, as with the artists, although the first museum exhibition of pop art ever mounted was organized at the Pasadena Art Museum by Walter Hopps, San Francisco artists, despite the area's four museums, have probably seen less post-1960 art than, say, the artists of Toronto. If the attitudes and life-style of young Vancouver artists have much in common

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Description

CONTINUATION OF PHILIP LEIDER ARTICLE ON VANCOUVER ART SCENE.



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Vancouver: scene with no scene



top:  
Glen Lewis  
Untitled  
Polymer 1967

bottom:  
Reg Holmes  
Untitled

couver to visitors. Until quite recently, he operated the now-legendary New Design Gallery, which at one time or another held work by all of the most important artists in the region, as well as providing a centre for discussion and evaluation; at the current moment, if there is a single archive of the art history of the present and recent past in Vancouver, it is in the head of Alvin Balkind.

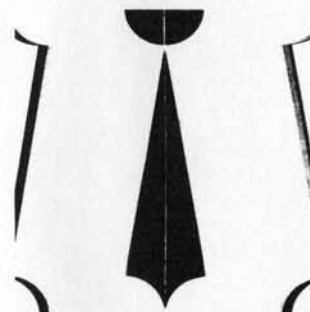
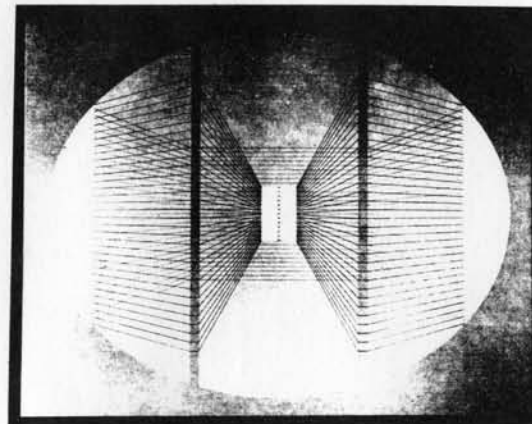
Although he is evidently given as free a hand as he might need in the U.B.C. art gallery, Balkind works with the impossible handicap of an absurdly small budget: thus, as in the case of the Vancouver Art Gallery's Painting '66, many of the important art events that occur (with remarkable frequency) at the university gallery go without documentation, publicity, or extensive notice outside the local art community. Aided by the existence of such organizations as the Western Association of Art Museums and the A.F.A., Balkind has been able to import exhibitions of work by artists who interest him, such as Bruce Connor, Hubert van den Berg, and Claude Breeze. Brian Fisher, Ann Kipling, David Mavris, Gary Naim, Marianna Schmidt, and Jack Wise with the statement that "a new internationalism steps to the fore-front." In February 1966, Balkind mailed an announcement which arrived in a plastic bag like a head of lettuce.

## FOR RENT BAGGED PLACE

4 rm. self-contained furn. ste., double bed, plastic bagged, sterilized, scenic view close to U.B.C., no students, non-smoker, non-drinker, no pets or children, parking in rear. Open for insp. daily except Sunday from Feb. 2. For info. call 228-2759.

The announcement heralded the exhibition of Iain Baxter's extraordinary four-room apartment, in which not only the rooms themselves, but every object in them — mops, brooms, towels, cans, compact, clocks, pictures, vegetables, chairs, tables, beds — were carefully bagged in plastic. (The phrase in the announcement "close to U.B.C." is especially piquant: the Fine Arts Gallery is located in the basement of the library building.) What is tragic — and might be hopelessly discouraging to one with something less than Balkind's even temperament — is that the exhibition of the Bagged Place went, for all practical purposes, utterly unnoticed in the world of art. To my knowledge not a single publication reviewed it, nor has a single reproduction of it been seen except for those which accompany this article.

Activities like Balkind's take the edge off the lack of commercial galleries in Vancouver, and in good measure one suspects that the general lack of bitter-



top:  
Brian Fisher  
Barred Passage  
Drawing collage, 1967  
(Photo: Joanne Leonard)

left:  
Bodo Pfeiler  
Untitled  
Acrylic, 61" x 78", 1967  
Courtesy Douglas Gallery, Vancouver  
(Photo: Williams Bros.)

ness that seems to characterize younger artists working in Vancouver can be traced to their knowledge that in what they do have — the U.B.C. Gallery and the Vancouver Art Gallery — there are people like Balkind and Mrs. Shadbolt who are sympathetic to what they are doing, and who, in their turn, do what they can.

The sensibility of Vancouver art is informed more by Los Angeles and San Francisco than it is by New York, but more relevant than this is the over-riding, enriching quality of parody which one finds everywhere in Vancouver painting and sculpture. Parody at its best is at once acknowledgement and criticism, a tip of the hat on the one hand, a tweak of the nose on the other. An avant-garde almost always gives notice of itself first by extensive parody of existing forms, and then by the creation of new ones. It is also one of the most accessible types of action available to the artist working away from the centre of the art world, one of the first ways at hand for an artist to declare his understanding of what has been accomplished. In a sense new art always looks at least in part like a parody of what immediately preceded it: this holds for the appearance of Stella's first black stripe paintings as well as for the more obvious example of pop art.

Perhaps the most radical example of the uses of parody in Vancouver art is the work of Iain Baxter, which also appears under the rubric of the N.E. Baxter Thing Company, the Arrow Tent and Awning Company, or, most recently, the N.E. Thing Company. Underlying Baxter's playfulness is an intense involvement with the various messages of Marshall McLuhan, and his conversation is heavily larded with terrifying McLuhanesque linguistic horrors: "information retrieval" (in part at least a simple reference to library science), "intermedia," "visual sensitivity information," "sensivity information dynamics," etc., etc. In part, the critical function of his parodies turns on a McLuhanesque understanding of what a particular artist is about. Thus, Baxter understands Dan Flavin as exploring light as a medium, in McLuhan's sense of the term, and is appalled that no-one pays attention to the fact that the overhead lights in the gallery are on during a Flavin show. His own involvement in plastic is partly formulated in McLuhanesque terms: "the plastic coating that goes on around the electronic revolution," and in a throw-away idea worthy of McLuhan himself, understands plastic as "the pottery of today and torn plastic the new d'apery."

At his best, Baxter imposes a witty, incisive, comic logic on his subjects. Working almost entirely from photographs (this is one of the few cases in which there seems to be no drawback), he adds bands of coloured cloth stripes to a "Notand," thus extending his chevrons a ludicrous distance off the picture plane. Using dimensions given in an art magazine, he stitches a polka-dot "up-prover"

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CONTINUATION OF PHILIP LEIDER'S ARTICLE ON VANCOUVER.



# INFORMATION

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## About Town

**I**t was a big night for Iain Baxter at the Douglas Gallery for he was showing off his soft pottery — his bagging. It was just two years ago that he started thinking about putting in an art gallery — water as art.

He began experimenting with things to bag it in. He glued plastic together but it wouldn't hold water — literally. Polyethylene breaks easily.

But by his Bagged Places show in February 1966 at UBC's Fine Arts Gallery, Baxter had bagged a whole home environment, with borrowed furniture, including beds, and tables, bathtub and toilet, even a kitchen counter top, from Wook's.

He wrapped everything in plastic and sealed the tops with big twists, like bags of puffed wheat.

And now he's creating landscapes. To his delight, his landscapes fog up in the mornings and clear during the day. Like a new version of Hudson River School, he uses water, air, sky, land, dirt, clouds and boats.

His art deflates and says Iain, he's carried a whole art show around in a suitcase. Baggage, so to speak.

Now he's interested in fencing, building fences for people with their own materials. And he would also like to do a major piece for every province in Canada.

And why not?



Practically plastic — Carol Fisher, whose husband is hard edge painter Brian Fisher, is a whimsical comment about the art of Baxter.



Wieners debagged — hot dogs and pink champagne for Glen Toppins, served by Teresa Bjornson at the camp-out bag-in opening night.



The bagman hangs onto a cloud as Sun columnist Jack Wasserman shoots the questions. Like, where does art go from here?

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VANCOUVER LIFE MAGAZINE ARTICLE ON SHOW AT DOUGLAS GALLERY,  
VANCOUVER, B.C.

OPENING SERVED WIENERS AND CHAMPAGNE.

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## Baxter bewilders with gaiety

By JOAN LOWNDES

Despite barbecued frankfurters and pink champagne, Vancouverites still feel shy and bewildered as they face the art of Iain Baxter.

A large number of fellow artists attended the opening of his one-man show at the Douglas Gallery, built around the theme of centennial camping across Canada. Many sported the buttons that were sent in instead of the usual invitation cards to a preview, and the wife of Brian Fisher, as a compliment to Baxter's fascination with plastic, wore a dry-cleaner's bag over her dress.

Collectors, however were rare. No leaks from the water-filled vinyl bags disgraced the floor, but only six small works were sold.

People are suspicious of an art that is gay. This probably goes a long way back in our subconscious, for originally art was associated with magic and religion. An attempt to desecrate it seems a desecration.

Yet surely in our present world, where we are bludgeoned every morning with bad news, and with the sour taste of the double-talk forecast by Orwell already in our mouths, a little gaiety is a precious thing.

The Douglas Gallery took unprecedented pains to create the right atmosphere for this exhibition, illustrating the degree to which the visual arts and the performing arts, like that of theatre, are now merging.

Douglas Christmas, the gallery owner, the artist and one of his friends worked all through Thursday until 6 a.m. on the "set", collapsed in the gallery for a couple of hours

sleep, then went at it again all Friday.

The tent in which Douglas Christmas is to sleep for the duration of the exhibition, as a demonstration of a human being living in sculpture, is slung from the ceiling like that of some Oriental prince.

This may seem a pure publicity stunt, but actually Baxter wants us to think about the fact that architecture and sculpture are drawing closer together.

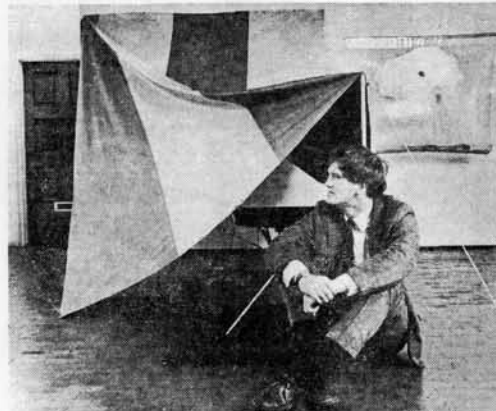
The new Toronto city hall, what are they but sculpture in the Canadian pavilion at Expo, the sky? The relation between contemporary sculpture and architecture was made very clear in a recent color section of Time devoted to Expo, showing an eroded sphere by the sculptor Pomodoro on the roof of the Italian pavilion, repeated in the background by Buckminster Fuller's geodesic dome.

Thus behind what seems put-on there is always with Baxter a philosophic idea.

I shall review the exhibition in depth next week but it is evident, even in crowded opening-night conditions, that he has made impressive progress in his vinyl-inflated works containing water since the one with which he won an award at the Vancouver Art Gallery's Painting '66 last December.

The two perimeter maps of Alberta and Saskatchewan of galvanized chain-link fencing are suspended from the ceiling like screens. This is a material, I predict, whose possibilities Baxter has only just begun to discover.

The exhibition also includes drawings for fountains, cloth sculptures dangling from wires, and a clear plastic phallic symbol, discreetly hung in the corridor.



LIVE SCULPTURE — To demonstrate human beings living in sculpture, gallery owner Douglas Christmas (above) will sleep in the tent which is part of the Iain Baxter show now at the Douglas Gallery

## Gallery Exhibit A Change

Viewers agreed almost unanimously that invasion of the first floor of the National Gallery by N. E. Thing Co. was not a change of pace but sheer fun.

Iain Baxter, Vancouver artist and president of the company, and his attractive blonde wife Elaine, were in workmanlike garb just prior to the opening Tuesday afternoon when they changed into more conventional attire.

N. E. Thing Co. Environment, it is explained, is a month long series of events operating out of the National Gallery into Ottawa and its suburbs.

National Gallery Director Jean Sutherland Boggs said the Baxter enterprise is intended to parallel the first festival of the National Arts Centre.

"Many of my responsibilities involve the relationship between

the corporation and the consumer, and it seems to me that Mr. Baxter and the N. E. Thing Co. are exploring this relationship with humor and imagination," said Consumer Affairs Minister Basford in opening the exhibition.

"The fact that he has incorporated himself to do this simply underlines the fact that Iain Baxter is determined to take the artist out of isolation and put him right in the thick of our present everyday environment."

He defined the major product of the company as "visual sensitivity or new ways of looking at familiar objects."

Every noon hour there will be demonstrations of plastic products such as inflated dresses, inflated clouds.

There is a deep frozen environment, a series of freezers

with frozen sculpture inside. These involve viewer participation.

A telecopier receives and sends out information to tuned-in individuals in other cities.

Another feature is an ever-changing photographic exhibit as Baxter roams Ottawa and district and photographs "aesthetically claimed things (ACT), buildings, objects or views" which he designates as aesthetically pleasing, meeting "the stringent requirements of sensitivity information as set forth by the N. E. Thing Co." He will also keep records of "aesthetically rejected things."

The project was arranged by Pierre Theberge, assistant curator of Canadian Art at the Gallery.

Mr. Baxter recently received a \$7,000 grant from the Canada Council to enable him to un-

dertake "visual research along the highways."

There is an attractive catalogue with beautiful illustrations in color. In his message the president alternates the lines of the text in English and French. —W.Q.K.

OTTAWA JOURNAL JUNE 4 1969

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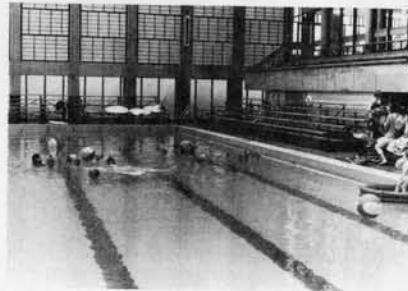
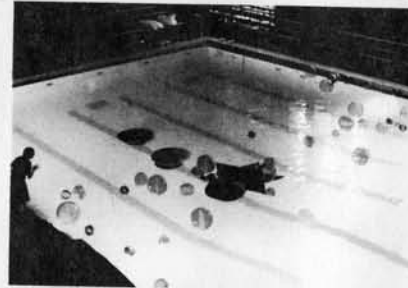
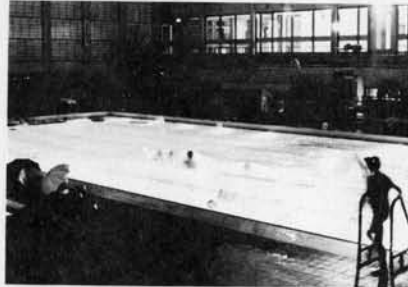
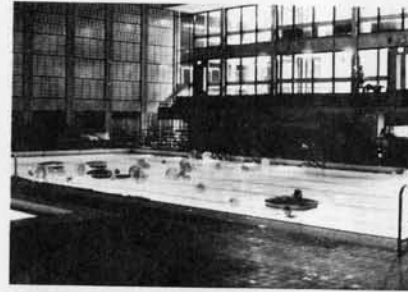
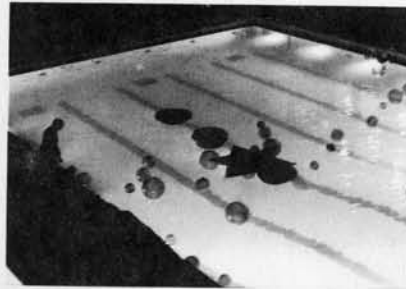
Date  
1961/1967

Project

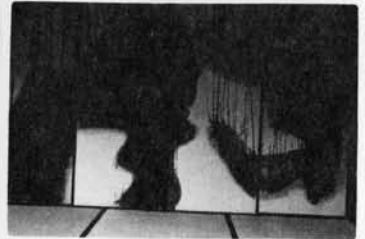
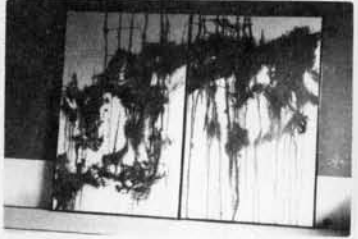
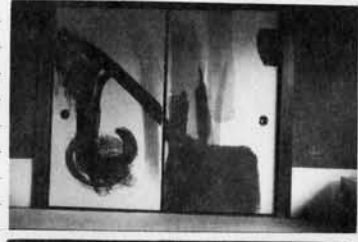
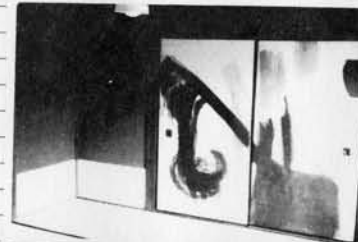
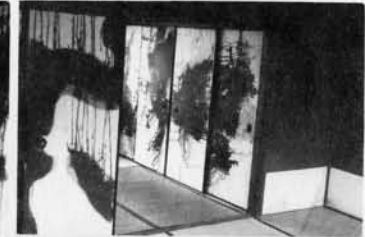
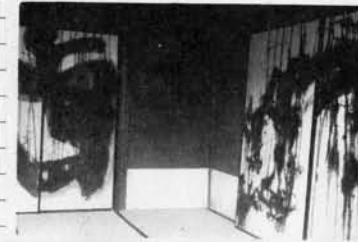
CENTENNIAL AQUATIC EVENT. 1967  
PAINTED SHoji SCREENS, KYOTO, JAPAN. 1961

Number

1.



(A.)



(B.)

PLEASE COMPLETE AND RETURN

N.E. THING COMPANY LIMITED

Trade Mark ©

Description (A.) Centennial Aquatic event staged at S.F.U. Pool. Combined water VSI. using plastic to swim under, candles & water, clock band concert with people diving in the pool, Nigel Baxter Co-ordinated this event. Bryan Smith, (left) Fire crackers.  
(B) Series shows number of Shoji screens in a house 1419 Baxter lived in in Kyoto where he was allowed to paint Sumi works on all available surfaces. the painting had to remain in the house when he left for Canada.



# INFORMATION

N.E. THING CO. LTD.

1419 Riverside Drive North Vancouver B.C. Canada

Date

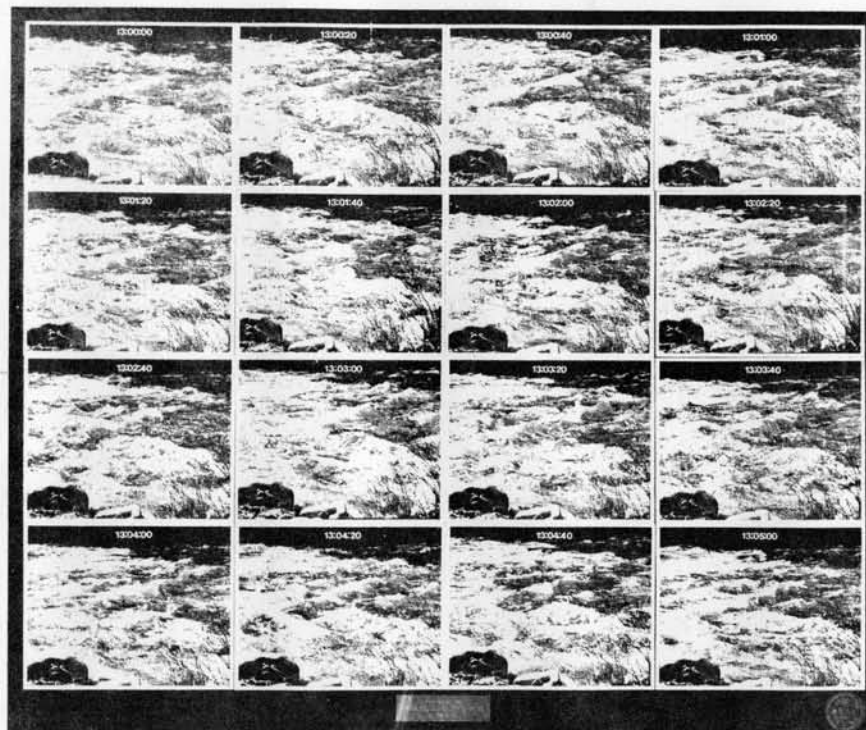
1967

Project

APPROXIMATELY 1,200,000 GALLONS OF WATER - 1967

Number

1.



PLEASE COMPLETE AND RETURN

Description

WORK DONE USING CAMERA TO DOCUMENT A DIFFERENT PIECE OF H<sub>2</sub>O  
AT precise intervals but from the exact same position. the resultant  
amount of H<sub>2</sub>O = approx 1,200,000 gallons.

Observed Seymour River, North Vancouver, B.C.

Collection: CANADA COUNCIL ART BANK.

N.E. THING COMPANY LIMITED

Trade Mark ©





# INFORMATION

N.E. THING CO. LTD.

1419 Riverside Drive North Vancouver B.C. Canada

Date

1967.

Project

5000 MILE MOVIE OR VIDEO.

Number

1.

## THE IDEA

5,000 MILE MOVIE - The Longest Movie in the World

This film epic will record visually every inch of the Trans-Canada Highway, depicting all aspects of Canada from St. John's, Newfoundland to Long Beach on Vancouver Island, British Columbia. The sound track will record the sounds of the highways and cities, and the opinions of Canadian people from all walks of life.

5,000 MILE MOVIE: © Iain Baxter, N.E. THING CO  
1419 Riverside Drive  
North Vancouver, B.C.  
929-3662

## The History Of The Idea

Since Iain Baxter conceived the 5,000 Mile Movie, in 1967, he has planned and analyzed every imaginable aspect of its production. The Canada Council, in 1969, felt this movie to be so significant and beneficial to Canadians that they honoured him with a Senior Canada Council Grant, giving him funds to do extensive preliminary research. Working with a major film processing company, he evaluated the cost of the movie and actually travelled the distance, discussing the merits of this exciting movie concept with important people across the nation.

The film to date has received overwhelming recognition. It has attracted national as well as international attention. The film will generate goodwill for the sponsor and affection for the Canadian people from the nations of the world.

## What The Movie Is

It is a film measuring Canada's life-line along the longest and most spectacular paved highway in the world. The film will take the viewer from the extreme easterly point of North America, on the Atlantic Ocean at St. John's, Newfoundland, across the length and breadth of the Trans Canada Highway and will end in the extreme west, on Long Beach, Vancouver Island, with the sun setting in the Pacific Ocean.

The film shows geographical, cultural and ethnic variations and will give to Canadians who have never driven across their country a feeling for its potential, and a better understanding of its people and their differing life-styles. It also gives other countries, particularly those smaller in size, some idea of just how large Canada is.

The viewer will be able to wander in and out of the movie for eight days. As one watches the movie it will be possible to experience the enormity and vastness of this country. It is unique in that it views and listens to a great nation at one particular point in its development. Not only is it the longest movie in the world and the most sincere travelogues ever made, but the most significant historical and social document of all time. It will be viewed and experienced by future generations.

Such a straight forward look at a country is in complete accord with man's progressive, yet at the same time realistic state of mind. The movie is an unparalleled epic of one of the most dynamic and beautiful countries in the world.

PLEASE COMPLETE AND RETURN

Description IDEA & PROPOSAL FOR 5000 MILE N.E. THING CO. MOVIE. IT IS PROPOSED FROM CAPE Spear, NEW FOUNDLAND, TO LONG BEACH, B.C. THE FILM (OR VIDEO) WOULD BE THE LONGEST VIDEO OR FILM IN THE WORLD. IT WOULD RECORD THE WIDTH OF A CONTINENT, BE AN IMPORTANT HISTORICAL DOCUMENT & PULL A COUNTRY LIKE CANADA TOGETHER BECAUSE IT CELEBRATES THE ORDINARY - SOMETHING ALL CAN UNDERSTAND.



N.E. THING COMPANY LIMITED

Trade Mark ©

# INFORMATION

N.E. THING CO. LTD.

1419 Riverside Drive North Vancouver B.C. Canada

Date

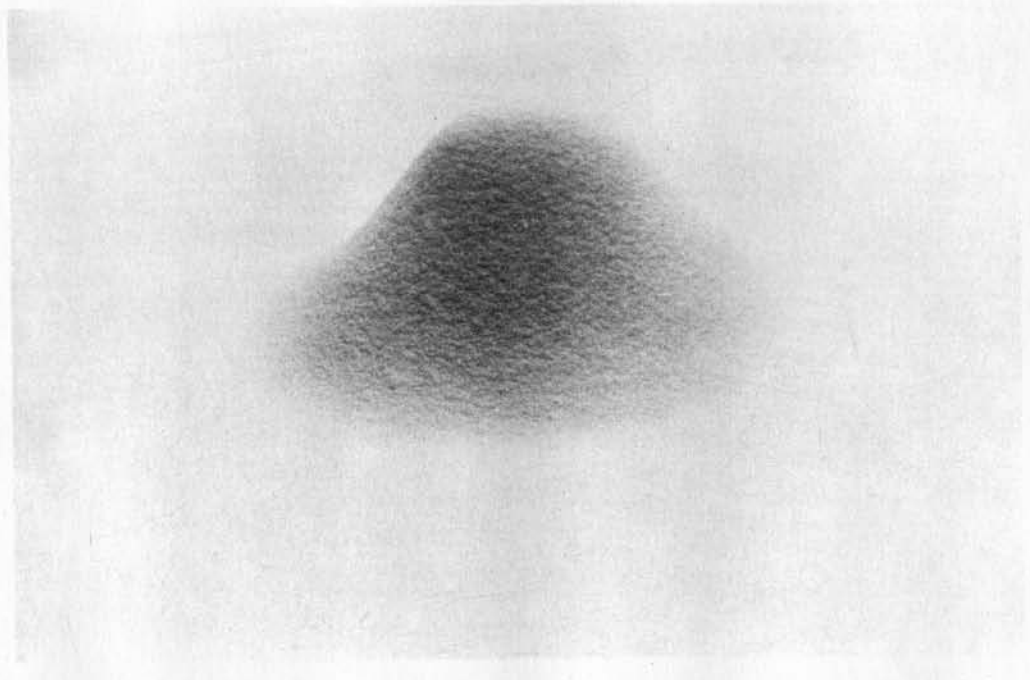
1967

Project

SCULPTURE - 1967

Number

1.



PLEASE COMPLETE AND RETURN

Description

UTILIZING OBJECTS AND SNOW TO CREATE SCULPTURES. NETCO HAS SEVERAL  
 PROPOSALS FOR PUBLIC SCULPTURE IN PARKS WHERE THERE IS LOTS OF SNOW.

N.E. THING COMPANY LIMITED

Trade Mark ©



# INFORMATION

N.E. THING CO. LTD.

1419 Riverside Drive North Vancouver B.C. Canada

Date

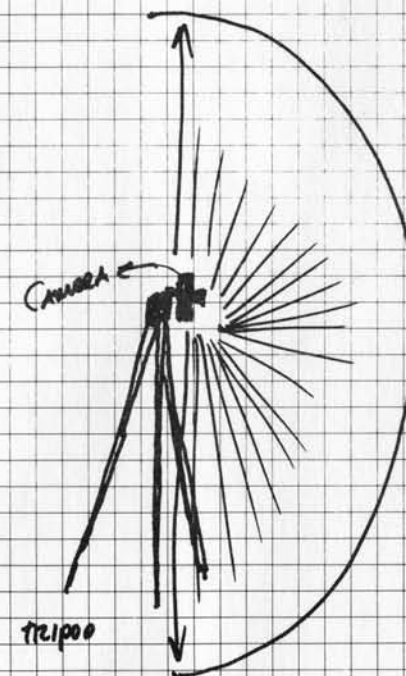
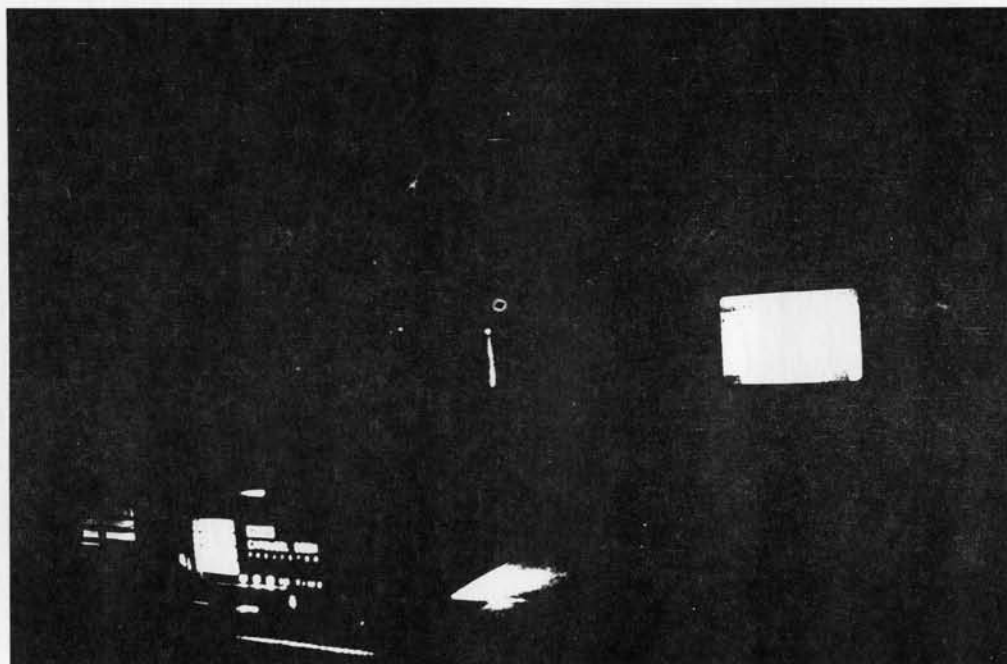
1967

Project

180° VERTICAL LANDSCAPE-1967

Number

1



60 PHOTOS, ONE EVERY  
3° = 180°

PLEASE COMPLETE AND RETURN

Description

180° Vertical Landscape is made up of 60 slides each 3° apart. First slide starts straight downward and the rest are taken at 3° intervals until the last shot is taken straight upwards.

Project done at: PEYTO LAKE, BANFF NATIONAL PARK, ALBERTA

N.E. THING COMPANY LIMITED

Trade Mark ©





# INFORMATION

N.E. THING CO. LTD.

1419 Riverside Drive North Vancouver B.C. Canada

Date

1967

Project

PAINTING ON SNOW

Number

1.



PLEASE COMPLETE AND RETURN

Description

SPRAY PAINT SPRAYED IN SNOW. DOCUMENTED (30X40 PHOTO HAND TINTED)

N.E. THING COMPANY LIMITED

Trade Mark ©



# INFORMATION

N.E. THING CO. LTD.

1419 Riverside Drive North Vancouver B.C. Canada

Date

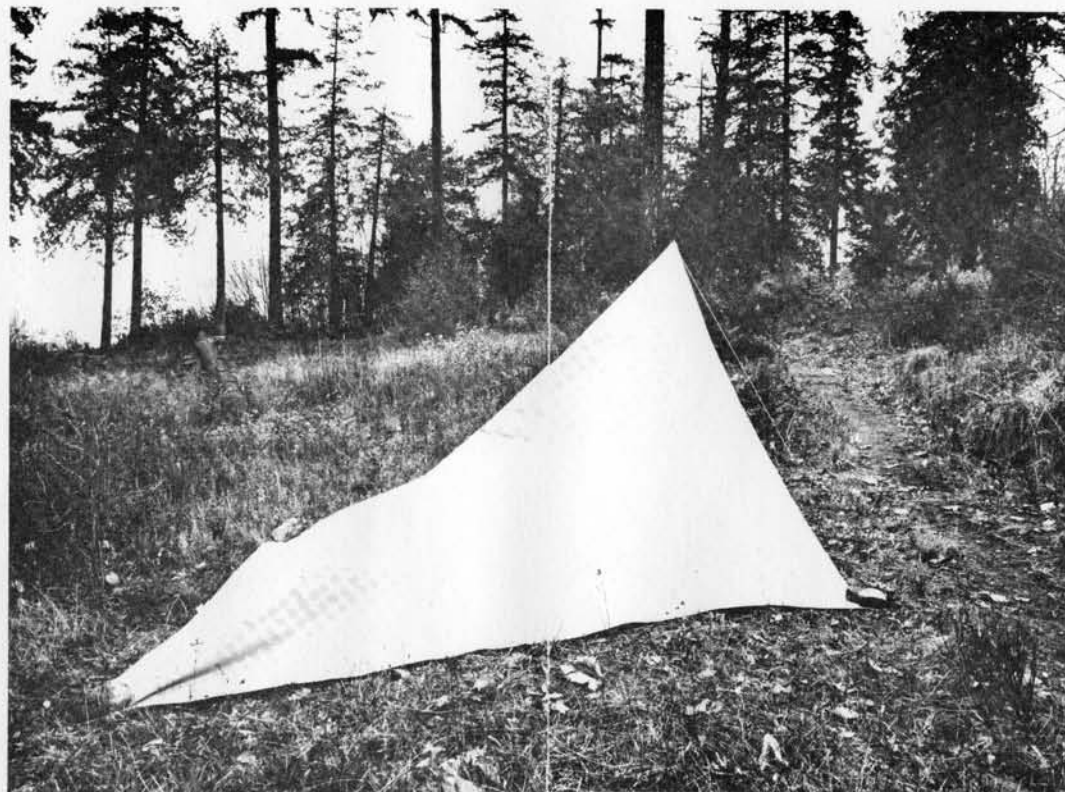
1967

Project

SCULPTURE - TENT 1967

Number

1.



PLEASE COMPLETE AND RETURN

Description

EARLY sculpture work, trans portable AND variable. exhibited at Douglas Gallery AND various places around B.C. while camping.

N.E. THING COMPANY LIMITED

Trade Mark ©



# INFORMATION

N.E. THING CO. LTD.

1419 Riverside Drive North Vancouver B.C. Canada

Date

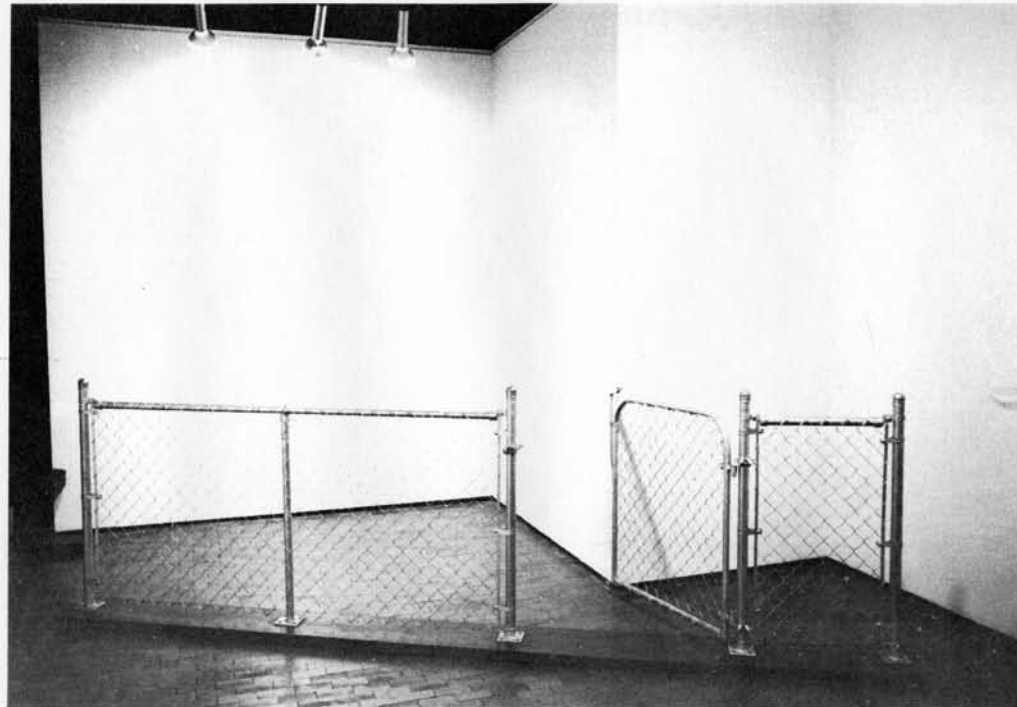
1967

Project

SCULPTURE - FENCE & GATE

Number

1.



PLEASE COMPLETE AND RETURN

.....  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....

N.E. THING COMPANY LIMITED

Trade Mark ©

Description

EXHIBITED AT DOUGLAS GALLERY. 1967





# INFORMATION

N.E. THING CO. LTD.

1419 Riverside Drive North Vancouver B.C. Canada

Date

1967

Project

ROCK LINE LAND TO WATER.

Number

1



PLEASE COMPLETE AND RETURN

Description WORK DONE AT BRACK CREEK, ALBERTA. IS APPROXIMATELY 300' LONG.

N.E. THING COMPANY LIMITED

Trade Mark ©



# INFORMATION

N.E. THING CO. LTD.

1419 Riverside Drive North Vancouver B.C. Canada

Date

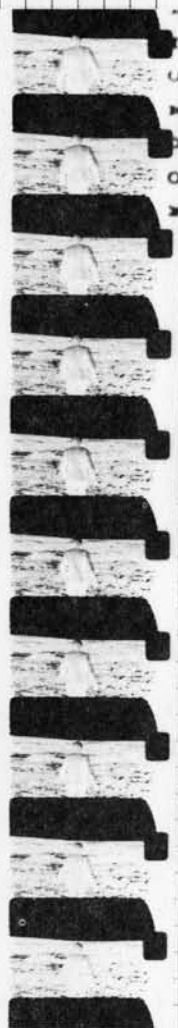
1967  
69

Project

FILMS

Number

1.



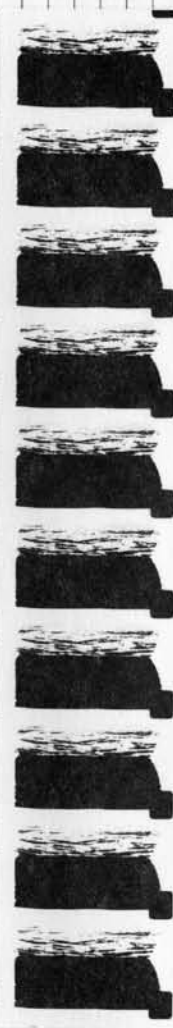
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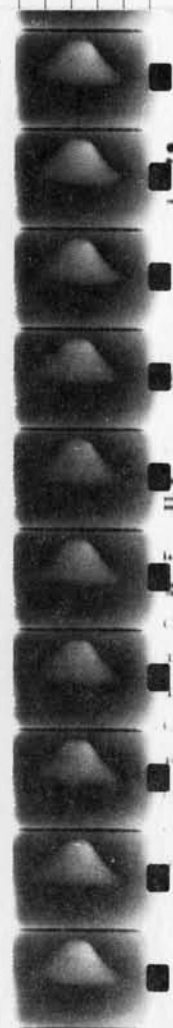
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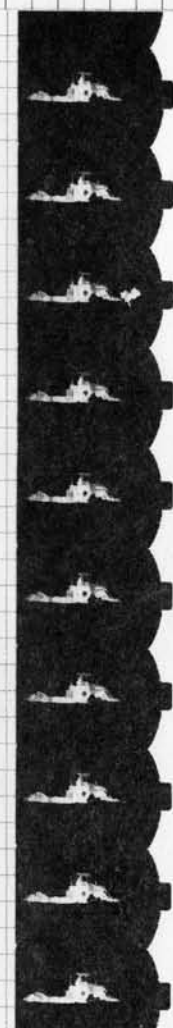
3



4



5



6

PLEASE COMPLETE AND RETURN

Description *SOME N.E. THING CO. FILMS*

1. WALKING TOWARDS NORTH, 1965
2. STILL LIFE: WINTER LANDSCAPE 1968
3. ARCTIC SUNSET, INUVIK, 1965
4. CIRCLE FILM, ARCTIC, 1965

5. STILL LIFE: SNOW 1967

6. BURYING AN OBJECT DURING WINTER, 1968

N.E. THING COMPANY LIMITED

Trade Mark ©







# INFORMATION

N.E. THING CO. LTD.  
1419 Riverside Drive North Vancouver B.C. Canada

Date  
1968

Project

THE YEAR 1968

Number

1.



PLEASE COMPLETE AND RETURN

Description

N.E. THING COMPANY LIMITED  
Trade Mark ©



# INFORMATION

N.E. THING CO. LTD.

1419 Riverside Drive North Vancouver B.C. Canada

Date

1968

Project

NEWPORT HARBOUR EXHIBITION - TOM GARUER

Number

1.

The N.E. Thing Co., Ltd.

Iain Baxter, President

The N.E. Thing Co., Ltd., was registered in the province of British Columbia in 1966 and incorporated there in January, 1969 as a firm devoted to the organization, interpretation and dissemination of visual data. At the core of the company's intent is Visual Sensitivity Information or VSI, a company acronym. Visual information of importance to the company is selected and made available to the public at large through the various departments of the corporation in one of several forms. The N.E. Thing Co. may call attention to the visual importance and richness of essentially anonymous creations and endeavors to be found throughout the world. Such mammoth things as engineering works, dams, bridges, or mines, natural phenomena, too — glaciers, waterfalls, etc. — or works of art by other artists, are singled out in unaltered form by the company's ACT department and given an award for its merit. ACT, another company acronym, stands for Aesthetically Claimed Thing, the object having been aesthetically claimed by the company, thus suggesting to the public that an intensification of visual awareness is warranted.

On occasion, however, certain objects or events will not meet the standards of the company and become Aesthetically Rejected Things, or ART. These objects' events also warrant public attention as having failed to meet company standards.

The ACT and ART departments respectively handle these decisions, but there are several other important departments, among them the Thing department, which is the most all-encompassing division, for it is involved with all aspects of company production involving the manufacture of things. On occasion the president of the firm, Iain Baxter, may feel it necessary to alter an environment or construct an object to intensify the VSI experience. In this event the Thing department handles all aspects of construction, manufacture or alteration. In this exhibition the environmental sculpture to be constructed on land made available to the Museum by the Irvine Company and the City of Newport Beach, will be made by the Project department under the supervision of the Thing department. Also important is the COP department, currently rather inactive but at one time much concerned with the manufacture of modifications of the works of other artists, made from photos of the originals as seen in national art magazines. Such works have included an *Extended Noland*, a *Carrying Case for a Warhol Pillow* and a *Pneumatic Newman*.

Important to the COP department and to the operations of the N.E. Thing Co., Ltd. generally is the concept of the communications media as a transmitter of "reality" and converter of that reality into certain symbolic abstractions. This abstraction of another artist's work, as found in a magazine illustration, a reduction in scale, a shift of medium, depersonalizes it to the point where The N.E. Thing Co. feels that modifications and changes of the original concept made to its own design are permitted.

The N.E. Thing Co.'s founder and first president is Iain Baxter, and his wife, Elaine, serves as vice president. Baxter arrived in Vancouver in 1964 where he taught art at the University of British Columbia for two years before joining the faculty at Simon Fraser University. Baxter was originally trained as a zoologist and educator, becoming involved in art only after taking two other degrees in science and education. He wanted to be a forester but changed to zoology when a fortuitous contact with a professor in that department resulted in Baxter's illustrating a book on small field animals. After graduation his interest in zoology waned and he took a graduate degree in education and counseling, intending to teach school, but a Japanese scholarship permitting a year's study in that country allowed Baxter time to study another culture and to reflect on his real interests. When he returned to North America he again changed his major and studied for a Master of Fine Arts Degree which he received in 1964.

Baxter moved quickly from the concerns of a painter to those of designer and interpreter. In 1964 he painted still lifes (he admired Morandi) but by 1966 he had constructed *Bagged Place*, a fully furnished home interior in which every single object was individually bagged in plastic. Exhibited at the Art Gallery of the University of British Columbia, it was the first major environment constructed and shown in Canada. Finding increasing fascination with modern technologies applied to common, utilitarian ends, Baxter began constructing objects and sculpture from heat-sealed vinyl plastic. Regarding molded plastic bottles of the sort used for detergents, bleach and shampoo as the "common pottery of our time," Baxter began copying them in relief, using vacuum-formed plastic. He is, through the N.E. Thing Co., trying to persuade plastics manufacturers to establish a museum of these objects.

The N.E. Thing Co.'s commitment to the landscape itself rather than to abstractions of landscape have led to Baxter's most far-reaching proposals. Baxter interprets "landscape" in its broadest sense, regarding technological advancements and the urban matrix into which we are submerged as being as important as natural phenomena. This includes such relatively invisible things as electronic communications media, and the N.E. Thing Co. has been influenced by McLuhan to the extent that an event of Visual Sensitivity Information through the media is referred to as "Trans-VSI." It should be noted that Baxter obtains an enormous amount of data for the company by Trans-VSI through radio, television and the printed page. This material is then interpreted, redirected, and then retransmitted to the public again through the communications media.

In the spring of 1969, The N.E. Thing Co. transmitted various visual phenomena — drawings, photographs, etc., from Vancouver and other Canadian cities to a New York gallery via Xerox Telecopier, a machine that can transmit and reproduce visual materials instantly via telephone. The N.E. Thing Co. now also proposes to film a trans-Canada automobile tour, photographing from the car every foot of the trip from Nova Scotia to British Columbia. The film, to be shown at Expo 70 in Japan, would take as long to project as the trip took, approximately seven or eight days. Both events, the Telecopier material, instant Trans-Visual Sensitivity Information which has been transmitted by electronic medium, and the extended film, a linear VSI, will intensify one's experience of the intervening distance

of landscape. The Telecopier, by instantaneousness of transmission and reception, intensifies one's intellectual perception of distance. The film, by its very length, also intensifies one's actual perception of traveling that distance. Both events are of course sensed at second hand, through an intervening medium of communication. Baxter has said, "Communication resensitizes one to the environment" and the company strives to change perceptions of both one's psychic and physical ecologies.

While Baxter's wit is not to be underestimated, the corporate image of the N.E. Thing Co., Ltd. must not be regarded merely as an aesthetic joke, for it serves to free the artist from the responsibilities of an individual style (and what better way to do so than to incorporate) and frees him to explore a wide range of activities. It also permits him to seek advice and suggestions from others without fear of plagiarism. Elaine Baxter, as vice president of the company, plays a very important role here, both in suggesting ideas and offering advice and project refinements to Baxter.

It might not be unreasonable to compare Iain Baxter and the N.E. Thing Co. to Buckminster Fuller. Fuller, who denies he is an artist, expands upon natural structural principles which are beautiful in their structure and are universal in application. Fuller has realized that his structural percepts have been latent within the natural order, but it has been necessary for someone to isolate and refine them, to sensitize others to their existence. Baxter, too, through his corporation, works to change concepts of reality rather than reality itself. He tends to make universal applications of his visual information in such a way as to minimize the difference between reality and art as an artificial construct, the two being brought together within the realm of sensitivity and universal education.

The N.E. Thing Co., Ltd. logo. Designed by Allan Fleming

PLEASE COMPLETE AND RETURN

N. E. THING COMPANY LIMITED

PRODUCERS AND  
CONSULTANT SPECIALISTS IN:  
Sensitivity Information  
(Specialty Visual - V.S.I.)  
Name Development, Planning, Ideas, Communication, Ecology, Architecture/Environments, Things, Photo-V.S.I., Design, Aesthetics, Plastic, Anything.  
1419 Riverside Dr., N. Vancouver,  
B.C. Canada. Cable: "ANYTHING",  
Phone (604) 929-3682  
IAIN BAXTER, PRESIDENT,  
B.S.C., M.Ed., M.F.A.  
Professor of Visual  
Perception and Design

COMPANIES ACT

No. 84030.  
NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that "N.E. Thing Co. Ltd." was incorporated under the Companies Act on the 16th day of January, 1969.

The Company is authorized to issue ten thousand shares without nominal or par value.

The address of its registered office is 1419 Riverside Drive, North Vancouver, British Columbia.

The objects for which the Company is established are:—

(i) To produce sensitivity information;  
(ii) To provide a consultation and evaluation service with respect to things;  
(iii) To produce, manufacture, import, export, buy, sell, and otherwise deal in things of all kinds.

A. H. HALL,  
Registrar of Companies.

From The British Columbia Gazette,  
January 30, 1969

PLEASE COMPLETE AND RETURN

N. E. THING COMPANY LIMITED

Trade Mark ©

Description ARTICLE BY TOM GARUER ON THE N.E. THING CO. LTD.



# INFORMATION

N.E. THING CO. LTD.

1419 Riverside Drive North Vancouver B.C. Canada

Date

1968

Project

ARTICLES

Number

1

1968 EDMONTON



BUILDERS POUND AWAY AT MUSIC

... while Brenda McCuaig and Groene Moorhouse, 7931 156th St., admire statue

## Carpenters do their 'thing'

Two carpenters on Monday unwittingly danced, sculpted and made music with two-by-fours and half-inch shiplap.

Acting on instructions from Ian Baxter of the NE Thing Company, North Vancouver, B.C., the two construction virtuosos built a 12-foot-square house, leaving the six parts of their sculpture — four walls, floor and gabled roof — on display in the courtyard of the new art gallery.

The dance? The carpenters' movements: carrying lumber, measuring, squaring and trimming the boards, driving the nails—all performed efficiently and effortlessly.

The music consisted of the scream of the power saw, the thud of hammer pounding home nails, the crash of wooden board falling on the surface of the courtyard.

Producer Ian Baxter says he discovered the esthetic configurations of house construction while building his own home. By his own credo, Baxter is a "visual informer," not an artist in the traditional sense.

Similarly, Monday's house-building experiment was not a traditional work of "art," but

rather what Baxter calls a "thing."

A "thing" is anything esthetically informative, but Mr. Baxter classifies them into three types: ART, or esthetically rejected things; ACT, or esthetically claimed things and ANT, or esthetically neutral things.

Egyptian pyramids, a hole in the Eiffel Tower, Hadrian's Wall and zebras (termed "kinetic op art" by Baxter) are four of the many objects claimed by the NE Thing Co. for their esthetic appeal.

By bringing his house-building thing to the gallery, Mr. Baxter was being more than an esthete. He was also an informer.

Watching carpenters build a house in a new subdivision usually inspires little appreciation for the carpenter's grace or precision. But watching the same activity out of its normal context, may stimulate visual sensitivity.

And this is what Baxter, the "visual informer," is striving for.

This is also the raison d'être of the NE Thing Co. The company, Baxter says, "is basically

involved with producing sensitivity information."

And who produces this sensitivity? "Guys . . . who can handle things sensitively."

After this, it is up to the individual to respond to the information. Many people probably saw the carpenters working in the gallery courtyard and thought nothing of it. It wasn't a painting on the wall, so why bother with it?

This attitude, Mr. Baxter says, is one reason why the artist "isn't respected for what he understands and knows."

This attitude, he argues, might disappear if artists were given more opportunity to venture beyond the traditionally-defined province of art.

If more artists were paid by department stores, TV stations and corporations, to esthetically refine every day objects in our environment (Mr. Baxter singles out billboards as one of the worst offenders), people would become more receptive, or sensitive to the efforts of others.

The visual informer, Baxter adds, should be hired by corporations as a consultant — comparable to a systems anal-

yst, marketing consultant, or time-efficiency expert.

The artist is a specialist in his own right, specialist in sense perception, with a skill to offer others. But he is not able to offer it, with a few exceptions, because of society's attitudes.

Baxter hopes the NE Thing Co. can break through some of these attitudes, getting people to "look at their environment in a new way."

Two projects which the company has brought to fruition are inflatable plastic clothing and portfolios of "pies." The "pies" portfolio is a collection of 59 photographs, illustrating how different objects, by their own qualities, fall into different sorts of pies.

Baxter is now preparing a second portfolio—this one of front yards "showing how an individual organizes his shrubbery."

The company, Baxter notes ruefully, does not provide him with enough money to live on. Last year's sales were only \$3,000.

To supplement his income, Baxter teaches in the communications centre at Simon Fraser University.

PLEASE COMPLETE AND RETURN

Description

N.E. THING COMPANY LIMITED

Trade Mark ©







# INFORMATION

N.E. THING CO. LTD.

1419 Riverside Drive North Vancouver B.C. Canada

Date

1968

Project

N.E. THING CO. LTD. "WEARABLES"

Number

1.



It's a wild, way-out, world of fashion. But when designers and artists get together it's even wilder. Commissioned by Burnaby Art Gallery to let loose his "inflatable wearables", Vancouver artist Iain Baxter unveiled this immense put-on pup tent modelled by Celeste McLeod Thursday. For added

versatility, it float! It is probably the first time a Canadian art gallery has combined talents of fashion designers and fabric artists. Artists in Fashion goes on show for the public October 22 at the Gallery. Presentations range from mad to mod to courtier.

—Columbian photo by Basil King

## Art

### Clothes that turn a woman into an art object

By JOAN LOWNDES

An art critic, a representative of the Canada Council, an artist at a fashion preview?

Yes and quite legitimately, for the setting was the Burnaby Art Gallery which has taken what is, as far as I know, a unique step in Canada: It has commissioned costumes which will be modelled at two shows in the Gallery next Tuesday and will subsequently be displayed as works of art.

This marks another nar-

rowing the gap between art and life, between fine art and once despised applied art.

Recognizing the current need to escape anonymity through clothes that turn a woman into an art object the Burnaby Art Gallery, with the assistance of the Canada Council, gave grants of \$500 each to Mary Chang and Iain Baxter.

Mary Chang has been a

freelance designer for 12 years and was invited to contribute to the International Collection of Dupont of Canada.

She took her cut-out garments to local fabric makers, asking them to, as it were, illustrate and enrich them.

Penny Goldstone, associate professor at the Faculty of Education at UBC, used the ancient technique of tie dying to create cream sunbursts on an earth brown fabric.

For a matching dress and cape in romantic mood, Mary Chang called upon Elaine Altdorf, a graduate of the Vancouver School of Art who specializes in batik.

Two other artists who collaborated with Mary Chang were Douglas Mikkelsen, who placed bold black and red silkscreen motifs on a white sports ensemble, and Violet Belsham, a highly accomplished weaver.

But smashing though these outfits were, recognizing what Paris has known for centuries — that you cannot have fine clothes without fine materials — it was Iain Baxter who surprised and captivated by his invention.

His "wearables" of inflated vinyl are sculptures for the human body. A model manipulated the poles of a crescent 16 feet long, the "tunic" and "sleeves" of opaque silver, the rest transparent with a border of bright red.

A minimal "wearable" consisted of two sealed bands of pink vinyl, forming a bra and bikini that stretched around the model like a second skin.

But Baxter's tour de force awaited outside on the lawn in front of the Gallery. There a model crouched in a kind of helmet and sweeping clear buoy of clear vinyl, from plastic cape, matches Baxter which flowed green plastic in its extravagant fancy, drapery.

As she rose slowly the drapery billowed in the wind. She ran over the grass, making swooping motions with her arms, obviously enjoying to the full this "fun thing in a mad world."

It made one realize that Baxter is a resource too long neglected by our local theatre and dance groups. A Mid-Summer Night's Dream with sets and costumes by Baxter, or a choreography with his human sculptures on the Great Steps at SFU, would be exciting events.

Among the six other designers taking part in the Burnaby Art Gallery's Artists in Fashion, special mention should be made of Evelyn Roth, whose work has already been shown at the UBC Gallery.

Her chain mail tunic, made awaited outside on the lawn in front of the Gallery. There a model crouched in a kind of helmet and sweeping clear buoy of clear vinyl, from plastic cape, matches Baxter which flowed green plastic in its extravagant fancy, drapery.

Description *N.E. THING CO. INVENTED INFLATED CLOTHING AS SCULPTURE AND AS WEARABLES — OR EXTENSIONS OF THE BODY WHICH REACH INTO SPACE AND CAUSE THE WEARER TO BECOME MORE AWARE OF HIS BODY AS AN ARMATURE FOR SCULPTURAL POSSIBILITIES.*

PLEASE COMPLETE AND RETURN

N.E. THING COMPANY LIMITED

Trade Mark ©



# INFORMATION

N.E. THING CO. LTD.

1419 Riverside Drive North Vancouver B.C. Canada

Date

1968

Project

CARTOONS

Number

1.

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 14TH, 1968

THE PEAK



The VANCOUVER SUN: Fri., Feb. 9, 1968

PLEASE COMPLETE AND RETURN

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N.E. THING COMPANY LIMITED

Trade Mark ©

Description

CARTOONS ON IAIN BAXTER





# INFORMATION

N.E. THING CO. LTD.

1419 Riverside Drive North Vancouver B.C. Canada

Date

1968

Project

ACT & ART DEPARTMENTS

Number

1.


N. E. THING CO.

**ACT**

NOTE

ALL MEN ARE TO RECOGNIZE AND NOTE FOR POSTERITY THAT:  
 ACT #000 *A Great thing - the Acme Glacier.*  
*Cold town N.W. T. Canada.*  
 ON THIS 16<sup>th</sup> DAY OF NOVEMBER 19 68 HAS  
 MET THE STRINGENT REQUIREMENTS OF SENSITIVITY  
 INFORMATION AS SET FORTH BY THE N. E. THING CO.  
 IT IS HEREBY AND HENCEFORTH ELEVATED FOR ETERNITY TO  
 THE REALM OF AESTHETICALLY CLAIMED THINGS.  
 IT IS TO BE KNOWN FROM THIS DAY ON BY ALL MEN AS AN ACT.  
 \* THE N. E. THING CO. RESERVES THE RIGHT TO REDO OR  
 DUPLICATE ANY ACT AS A FUTURE PROJECT.

*J. B. Baxter*  
 SIGNED, PRESIDENT, IAIN BAXTER  
 N. E. THING CO.  
 ACT DEPARTMENT



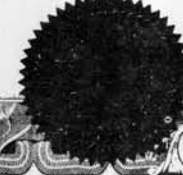
N. E. THING CO.

**ART**

NOTE

ALL MEN ARE TO RECOGNIZE AND NOTE FOR POSTERITY THAT:  
 ART #000 - *AN INTERIOR THING JOHN DOE'S*  
*Painting "Summertime" 1955*  
 ON THIS 16<sup>th</sup> DAY OF NOVEMBER 19 68 HAS NOT  
 MET THE STRINGENT REQUIREMENTS ON SENSITIVITY  
 INFORMATION AS SET FORTH BY THE N. E. THING CO.  
 IT IS HEREBY AND HENCEFORTH BANISHED FOR ETERNITY TO  
 THE RANK AND FILE OF AESTHETICALLY REJECTED THINGS.  
 IT IS TO BE KNOWN FROM THIS DAY ON BY ALL MEN AS ART.

*J. B. Baxter*  
 SIGNED, PRESIDENT, IAIN BAXTER  
 N. E. THING CO.  
 ART DEPARTMENT



PLEASE COMPLETE AND RETURN

Description

*CERTIFICATES WHICH ACCOMPANY AN ACT OR AN ARTWORK,  
 THESE ARE MAILED OUT TO RECIPIENTS.*

N. E. THING COMPANY LIMITED

Trade Mark ©

Seal



# INFORMATION

N.E. THING CO. LTD.

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Date

1968

Project

ACT & ART DEPARTMENTS

Number

1.



PLEASE COMPLETE AND RETURN

Description

N.E. THING COMPANY LIMITED

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ACT - AESTHETICALLY CLAIMED THING  
ART - AESTHETICALLY REJECTED THING

Seal



# INFORMATION

N.E. THING CO. LTD.

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Date

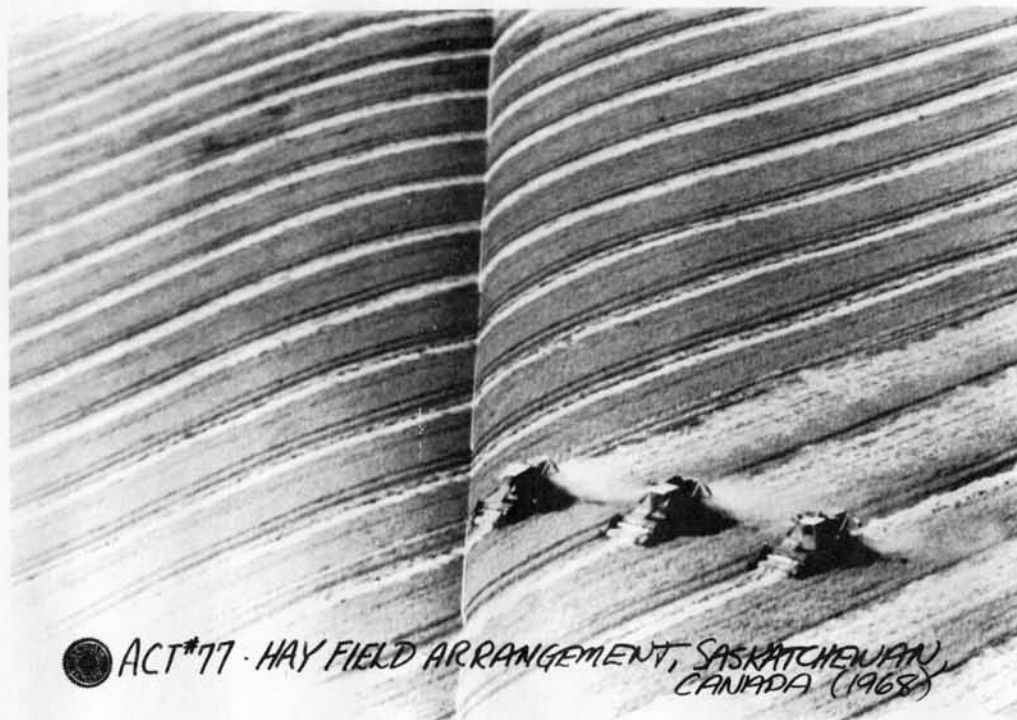
1968

Project

ACT DEPARTMENT

Number

1.



● ACT#77 - HAY FIELD ARRANGEMENT, SASKATCHEWAN, CANADA (1968)

PLEASE COMPLETE AND RETURN

Description

N.E. THING COMPANY LIMITED

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Seal





# INFORMATION

N.E. THING CO. LTD.

1419 Riverside Drive North Vancouver B.C. Canada

Date

1968

Project

ACT DEPARTMENT

Number

1.



ACT#150 - GEORGE S... K, NOK...  
ACT#151 - GEORGE S... STEEL PIPE (1968)

PLEASE COMPLETE AND RETURN

Description

ACT#150 - GEORGE SAWCHUK OF N. VANCOUVER B.C. (person between trees)  
(CANADIAN SCULPTOR)  
ACT#151 - "STEEL PIPE" ONE OF SAWCHUK'S WORKS.

ACT - AESTHETICALLY CLAIMED THING

N.E. THING COMPANY LIMITED

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Seal



# INFORMATION

N.E. THING CO. LTD.

1419 Riverside Drive North Vancouver B.C. Canada

Date

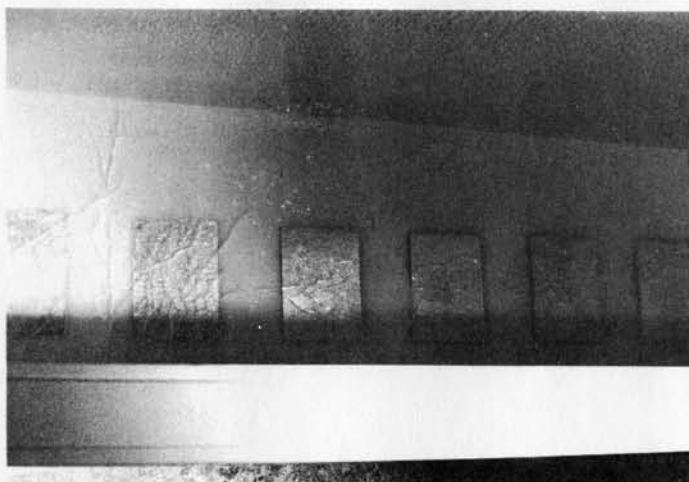
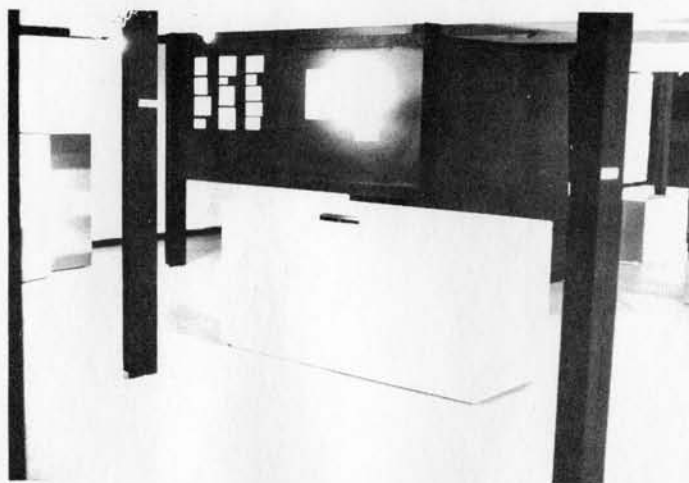
1968

Project

6 REFLECTIVE SURFACES FROZEN

Number

1.



PLEASE COMPLETE AND RETURN

TO: N.E. THING CO. LTD.  
1419 RIVERSIDE DRIVE  
NORTH VANCOUVER B.C. CANADA

N.E. THING COMPANY LIMITED

Form NTC-1

Description

EXHIBITED AT U.B.C. GALLERY, VANCOUVER.

$\frac{3}{4}$ " H<sub>2</sub>O FROZEN SOLID OVER 6 MIRROR SURFACES PLACED IN BOTTOM OF FASLER.



# INFORMATION

N.E. THING CO. LTD.

1419 Riverside Drive North Vancouver B.C. Canada

Date

1968

Project

ARTICLE

Number

1.

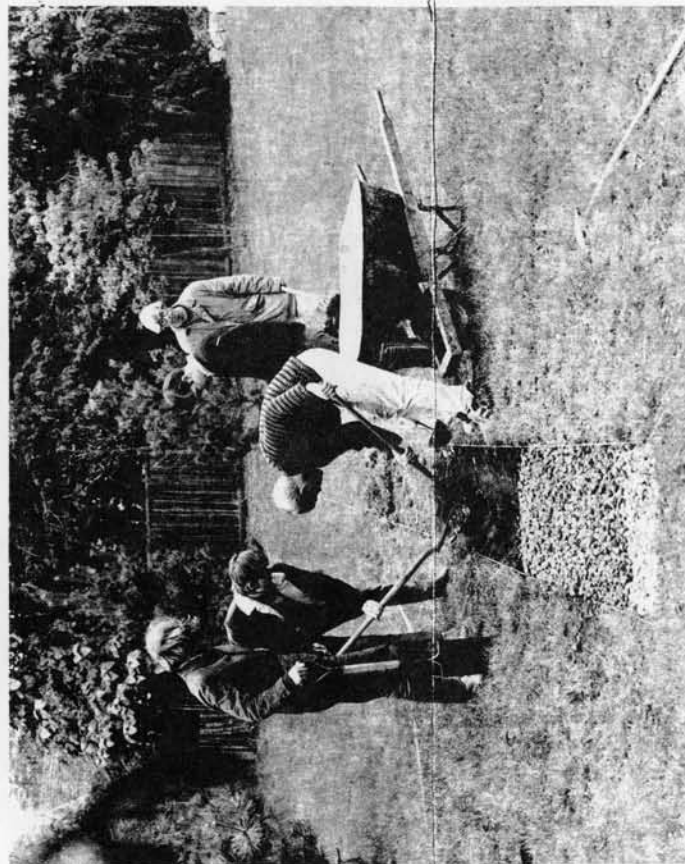
PAGE 7

THE PEAK

WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 20TH, 1968

WHAT IS THE

# N.E. THING GO.



Working on 33' V-trench, gravel-filled THING

—Photography Department  
N. E. Thing Co.

FIND OUT

12:30 P.M. THEATRE

TOMORROW

Iain Baxter, President,  
Will Demonstrate Products.

PLEASE COMPLETE AND RETURN

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N. E. THING COMPANY LIMITED

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Description

Seal





# INFORMATION

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Date

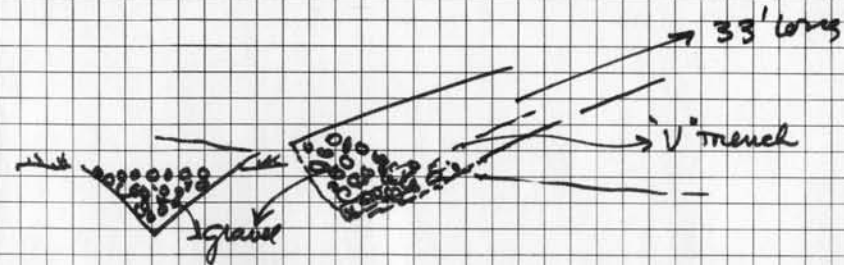
1968

Project

33' "V" TRENCH GRAVEL FILLED

Number

1.



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Description

N.E. THING COMPANY LIMITED

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# INFORMATION

N.E. THING CO. LTD.

1419 Riverside Drive North Vancouver B.C. Canada

Date

1968

Project

12' x 12' Floor  $\frac{1}{2}$  SHIPPED - 1968

Number

1.



PLEASE COMPLETE AND RETURN

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N. E. THING COMPANY LIMITED

Trade Mark ©

Description

DONE AT SIMON FRASER UNIVERSITY. SEEN HERE WITH WINTER SNOW OVER IT.

Seal



# INFORMATION

N.E. THING CO. LTD.

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Date

1968

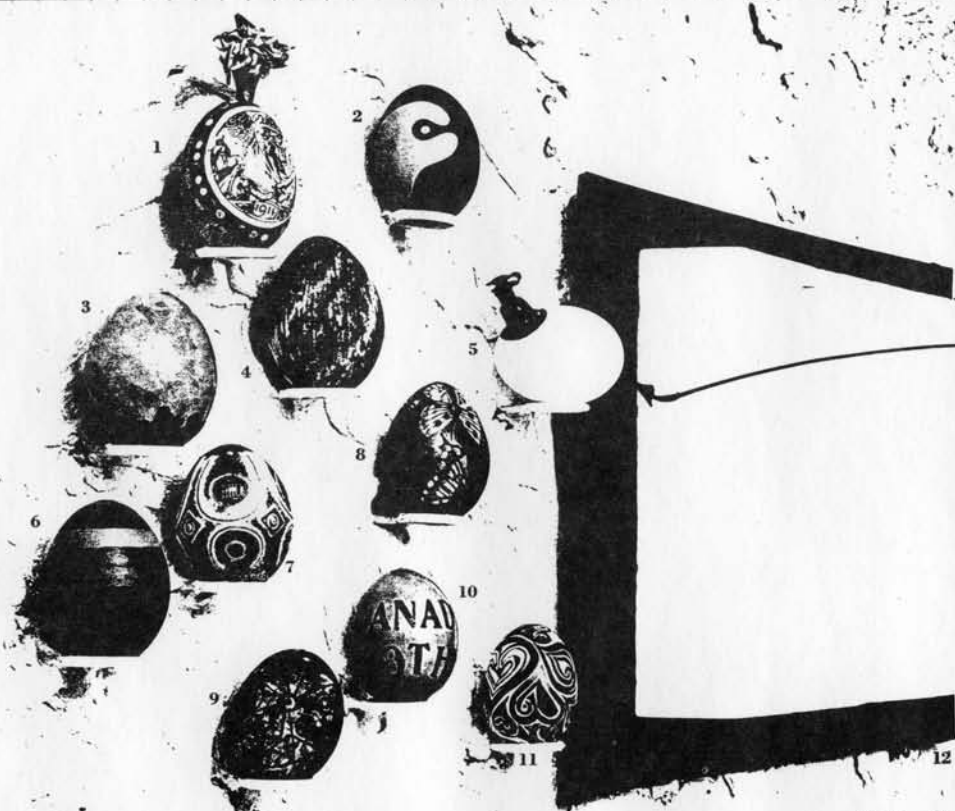
Project

EASTER EGG PROJECT

Number

1.

**EASTER  
EGGS  
\$1,800  
PER  
DOZEN**



By Patricia Welbourn  
Weekend Magazine

ONE of the nicest things about painting eggs is that you can eat your mistakes. While masters in their own media, the 12 artists whose eggs form the art collection on these pages and on our cover encountered certain difficulties in working on an eggshell.

"It's so small, so difficult to hold," says Montreal artist Jori Smith, who used inks on oil paint to create a moody, mosaic design. "It took two days before I even got one properly blown. They kept breaking—and I got so sick of eating scrambled eggs

and omelets!" Jori finally got a friend to blow them.

The collection, called The Paris Glove Collection, was commissioned by Mrs. Lilly Monk, a vivacious, Czechoslovakian-Canadian who collects paintings and *objets d'art* in addition to designing gloves. "I was curious to see what contemporary artists would do with a given, fixed shape. The egg is the most perfect and primitive shape." She intends to donate the collection to a museum.

Winnipeg's George Swinton broke

about five eggs—before taking his to a Ukrainian friend. "I found out I didn't have to blow it at all," he says. "You just leave it raw. As long as some of the shell is uncovered so it can breathe, it will eventually dry up."

Gita Caizerman-Roth, another Montrealer, created a gay, multi-colored egg, brightly decorated with butterflies. "When the idea was suggested to me I was so sick with a cold, I couldn't even blow," she says. "So I had to suck it—it's not as bad as it sounds—I always liked raw

eggs as a child. It was fun, but I don't think I'll do any more."

Tobie Steinhouse, also from Montreal, said her egg is called Oval City and "it's very much like what I usually do. I wanted to get a luminous effect of city lights so I used colored inks."

Bruce Parsons, from Regina, has often painted eggs for his artist friends at Easter. "We get together and come up with some fantastic eggs—but hard-boiled ones."

Montreal's Jacques de Tonnancour

was in the midst of painting an immense collage for the University of Montreal when he began his egg, also a collage. "It struck me as ridiculous to be working in the same way on grains of sand on an eggshell in this enormous studio," he laughs.

Iain Baxter in Vancouver, who works a lot with inflated things and plastics put—naturally—a blue and red plastic valve in his egg and called it Inflated Eggs 1968. "It was kind of fun," he concedes. Iain used a power drill to pierce the eggshell before

blowing it.

Two of the brightest eggs in the collection come from Montreal. Marken Joslin painted a beautiful "art nouveau" egg which she calls Ballou. Claude Tounignant painted multi-colored stripes in a deceptively simple-looking pattern. He calls it *Homage à Ionesco*.

Alfred Pinsky, chairman of the department of fine arts at Sir George Williams University in Montreal, created a sculpture using chicken eggs on shaped styrofoam and added,

amusingly, a tiny house wren's egg. Greg Curnoe, from London, Ont., drew inspiration for his egg from watching the Russians trounce Canada in the final Olympic hockey game. He painted the egg grey, and on one side he drew the words, CANADA NOTHING, and on the other side, USSR 5.

Harold Town, of Toronto, created the second collage of the collection. One side is three figures in black and white with "1911" written under them. "The idea was to create a vinyl-

age egg," he says. "Like the 1,000-year-old Chinese eggs." The other side is black-and-white painted dots and the whole thing is capped with a blue paper sleeve off a lamb chop. "It was kind of a lark to do the egg but I can think of a lot of things I'd rather do."

Certainly, the reactions and the results were varied. But Mrs. Monk had a point when she said (she paid each artist \$150 for their egg). "It's the most expensive dozen eggs I ever bought."



Top left: closeup of Vintage Egg by Harold Town. Top right: the artist puts finishing touches on egg in his Toronto studio. Above: Jacques de Tonnancour, in Montreal studio, with Ovogeneity, a collage. On our cover: Jacques de Tonnancour's egg sits in the special stand he made of wood and plastic. Marken Joslin's colorful creation, Ballou, rests against the stand.

1. Harold Town, Vintage Egg.
2. Marken Joslin, Ballou.
3. Bruce Parsons, untitled.
4. Tobie Steinhouse, Oval City.
5. Iain Baxter, Inflated Eggs 1968.
6. Claude Tounignant, Homage à Ionesco.
7. Jacques de Tonnancour, Ovogeneity.
8. Gita Caizerman-Roth, untitled.
9. Jori Smith, Not Yet Free.
10. Greg Curnoe, The All Canadian Egg.
11. George Swinton, Heart-Egg.
12. Alfred Pinsky, Easter Eggs.

Photos, including cover, by Charlie King—Weekend Magazine

Weekend Magazine No. 15, 1968 • 15

PLEASE COMPLETE AND RETURN

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N.E. THING COMPANY LIMITED

Trade Mark ©

## Description





# INFORMATION

N.E. THING CO. LTD.

1419 Riverside Drive North Vancouver B.C. Canada

Date

1968

Project

PORTFOLIO OF PILES

Number

1.

## A PORTFOLIO OF PILES N.E. THING CO. 1968

**FROM OUR PRESIDENT:** I would like to thank Alvin Balkind, Curator, Fine Arts Gallery, University of British Columbia, without whom the Portfolio of Piles could never have been made. The Canada Council, for providing the funds necessary to do the whole project. Fred Herzog, Duane Lunden, Ivar Asmussen for their help in picture making. Elaine Baxter, my wife, for her encouragement of the Portfolio and for accepting all the piles around. To George Sawchuk for discussions about things and the burning of piles. To Kurt von Meier for his article on pilogy. To Mr. Balkind's Museology class for their constant help in this project. To Imperial Oil for kindly donating a Vancouver map — the necessary ingredient for finding the piles. Finally to all of us who are the true pile makers. **Iain Baxter, President, N.E. Thing Co.**

©Copyright. 1968 by Fine Arts Gallery, U.B.C. and the N.E. Thing Co.

**ACKNOWLEDGMENTS:** Although many people played a role in the presentation of the PORTFOLIO OF PILES and the PILES exhibition, to whom we would like to offer our general thanks, a more particular expression of our gratitude will have to be confined to those who played the most direct parts. They are:

Iain Baxter, president, N.E. Thing Co., who conceived and guided the entire idea.

The Canada Council, which provided the money for this PORTFOLIO.

Kurt von Meier, of Venice, California, who wrote the introduction to the PORTFOLIO OF PILES. Imperial Oil Limited, which donated the maps of Vancouver enclosed herein, and by so doing, encouraged the public to become involved in the entire PILES concept.

Mr. and Mrs. John Breukelman, who acted in the capacity of liaison between Mr. Baxter and the printer.

The sixteen students of the course in museology at the University of British Columbia, as noted below, with special thanks to two of them, Andy Woo and Karen Rowden: Dianne Brehm, Rosalind Coleman, Katre-Ann Masak, Maureen Morris, Evelyn Nagai, Joyce Patterson, Ann Pollock, Vincent Rickard, Frances Robinson, James Shearer, Allan Watchorn, Dennis Wheeler, Janice Wislaw, and Muriel Wolverton.

ALVIN BALKIND Curator

### ADDRESSES OF PILES

\*N.B. Numbers are significant.

1. End of Barrow Street, North Vancouver, B.C. Canada.
2. Deep Sea Terminals, end of Capilano Road, North Vancouver, B.C.
3. Wilbur's Grill, 59 Lonsdale, North Vancouver, B.C. "100% of our Customers Dine at Wilbur's."
4. Corner of Brooksbank and Keith Road, North Vancouver, B.C.
5. Granville Island, Vancouver, B.C.
6. Seymour Sawmills, 14 Mountain Highway, North Vancouver, B.C.
7. North Vancouver Fish Supply Company Limited, 2817 Dollarton Highway, North Vancouver, B.C. "Fresh Cooked Crab for Sale."
8. Shearwater Drive, North Vancouver, B.C.
9. Canadian Park and Tiford Distilleries Limited, corner of Brooksbank and Main, North Vancouver, B.C.
10. Pyramid Machine Works Limited, 276 East Esplanade, North Vancouver, B.C.
11. Deep Sea Terminals, end of Capilano Road, North Vancouver, B.C.
12. Dollarton Highway, North Vancouver, B.C.
13. N.E. Corner Main Street and Mountain Highway, North Vancouver, B.C.
14. Lynn Terminals, 121 Harbour Avenue, North Vancouver, B.C.
15. 2793 Dollarton Highway, North Vancouver, B.C.
16. Harbour Board Burning Dump, Dollarton Highway, North Vancouver, B.C.
17. Paine Hardware Limited, 84 Lonsdale, North Vancouver, B.C.
18. Deep Sea Terminals, end of Capilano Road, North Vancouver, B.C.
19. 1430 Columbia, North Vancouver, B.C.

20. Columbia Street near 2nd Narrows Bridge, North Vancouver, B.C.
21. Corner of Chesterfield & Semish, North Vancouver, B.C.
22. Active Trading Limited, 935 Cordova Street, Vancouver, B.C. "We Pay More."
23. S.E. Corner of Powell and Gore Streets, Vancouver, B.C.
24. Deep Sea Terminals, end of Capilano Road, North Vancouver, B.C.
25. Paine Hardware Limited, 84 Lonsdale, North Vancouver, B.C.
26. Harbour Board Burning Dump, Dollarton Highway, North Vancouver, B.C.
27. Hooker Chemicals & Plastics, end of Amherst Avenue, North Vancouver, B.C.
28. Wilbur's Grill, 59 Lonsdale, North Vancouver, B.C.
29. Seymour Sawmills, 14 Mountain Highway, North Vancouver, B.C.
30. Deep Sea Terminals, end of Capilano Road, North Vancouver, B.C.
31. International Paint Company, corner Dominion & Harbour, North Vancouver, B.C.
32. Master Retreaders, 1625 Railway Avenue, North Vancouver, B.C.
33. Lynn Terminals, 121 Harbour Avenue, North Vancouver, B.C.
34. Lynn Terminals, 121 Harbour Avenue, North Vancouver, B.C.
35. Paine Hardware Limited, 84 Lonsdale, North Vancouver, B.C.
36. Pier 94, Low Level Road, North Vancouver, B.C.
37. Pier 94, Low Level Road, North Vancouver, B.C.
38. Corner Dollarton Highway and Seymour Boulevard, North Vancouver, B.C.
39. 1436 Columbia, North Vancouver, B.C.

40. Stanley Park, English Bay Side, Vancouver, B.C.
41. Hooker Chemicals and Plastics, end of Amherst Avenue, North Vancouver, B.C.
42. "Seek and Ye Shall Find."
43. Deep Sea Terminals, end of Capilano Road, North Vancouver, B.C.
44. Home Gas Station, Corner 13th and Lonsdale, North Vancouver, B.C.
45. Corner of Chesterfield and 3rd Avenue, North Vancouver, B.C.
46. Nova Lumber Company Limited, end of Burrard Street, North Vancouver, B.C.
47. Pyramid Machine Works Limited, 276 East Esplanade, North Vancouver, B.C.
48. Lynn Terminals, 121 Harbour Avenue, North Vancouver, B.C.
49. Doug's Boats Limited, 740 Marine Drive, North Vancouver, B.C. "Canada's Largest Boat Broker."
50. Ocean Cement Company Limited, Esplanade West & Semish Avenue, North Vancouver, B.C.
51. Pier 94, Low Level Road, North Vancouver, B.C.
52. Pier 94, Low Level Road, North Vancouver, B.C.
53. Riverside Drive, North Vancouver, B.C.
54. Pier 94, Low Level Road, North Vancouver, B.C.
55. Lynn Terminals, 121 Harbour Avenue, North Vancouver, B.C.
56. Cotton Road, North Vancouver, B.C.
57. Pier 94, Low Level Road, North Vancouver, B.C.
58. Lynn Terminals, 121 Harbour Avenue, N.Vanc., IAIN BAXTER, Photographer.
59. End of Barrow Street, North Vancouver, B.C., Canada.

\*Due to the nature of piles, the N.E. Thing Co. cannot guarantee that all the piles will remain at these addresses.

PLEASE COMPLETE AND RETURN

Description

ADDRESSES OF PILES.

N.E. THING COMPANY LIMITED

Trade Mark ©



# INFORMATION

N.E. THING CO. LTD.

1419 Riverside Drive North Vancouver B.C. Canada

Date

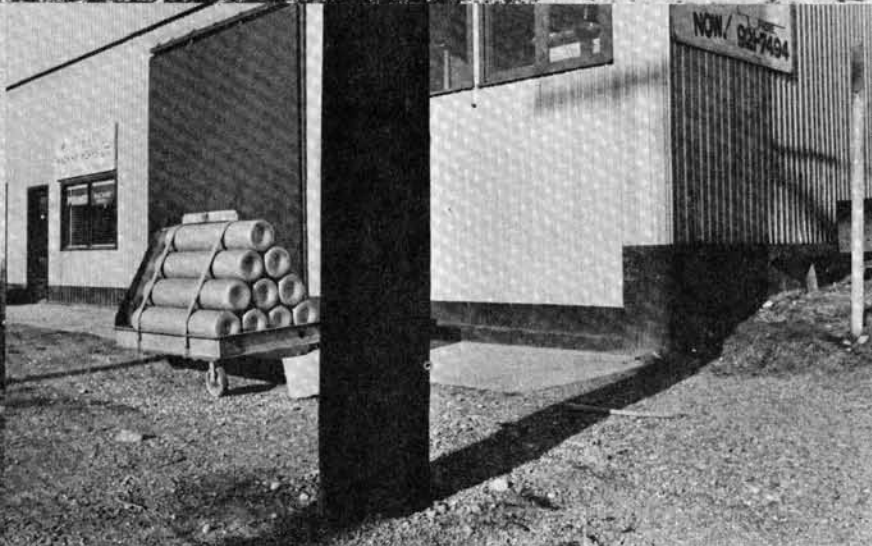
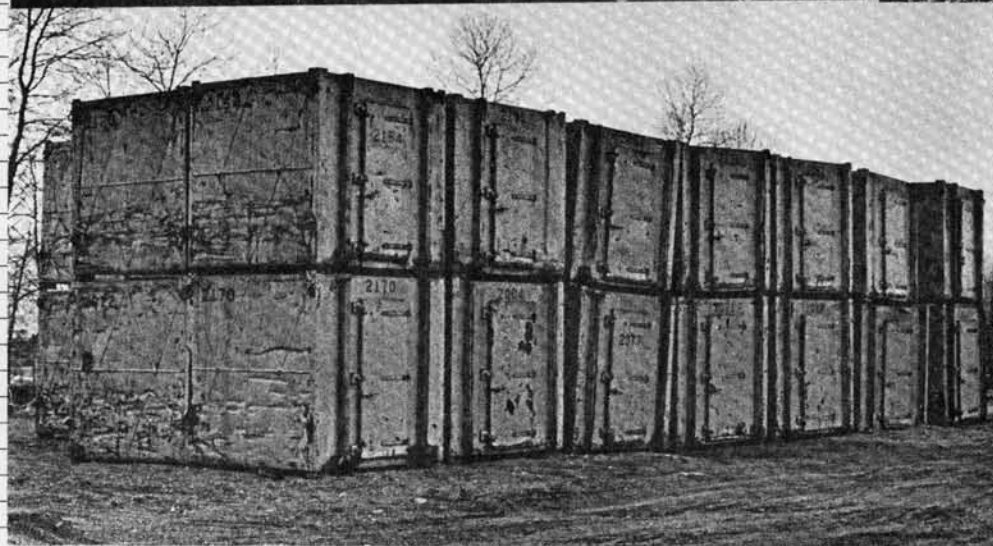
1968

Project

PILES - 1968

Number

1.



PLEASE COMPLETE AND RETURN

Description

SOME SAMPLE PLATES FROM PILE CATALOG. DONE AS EXHIBITION & AS PROJECT WHERE PUBLIC COULD TRAVEL THROUGH CITY & FIND PILES BY USING A MAP THE "PILE CATALOG" DOCUMENTED WHERE THE PILES WERE & WHAT THEY LOOKED LIKE.

N.E. THING COMPANY LIMITED

Trade Mark ©



# INFORMATION

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Date

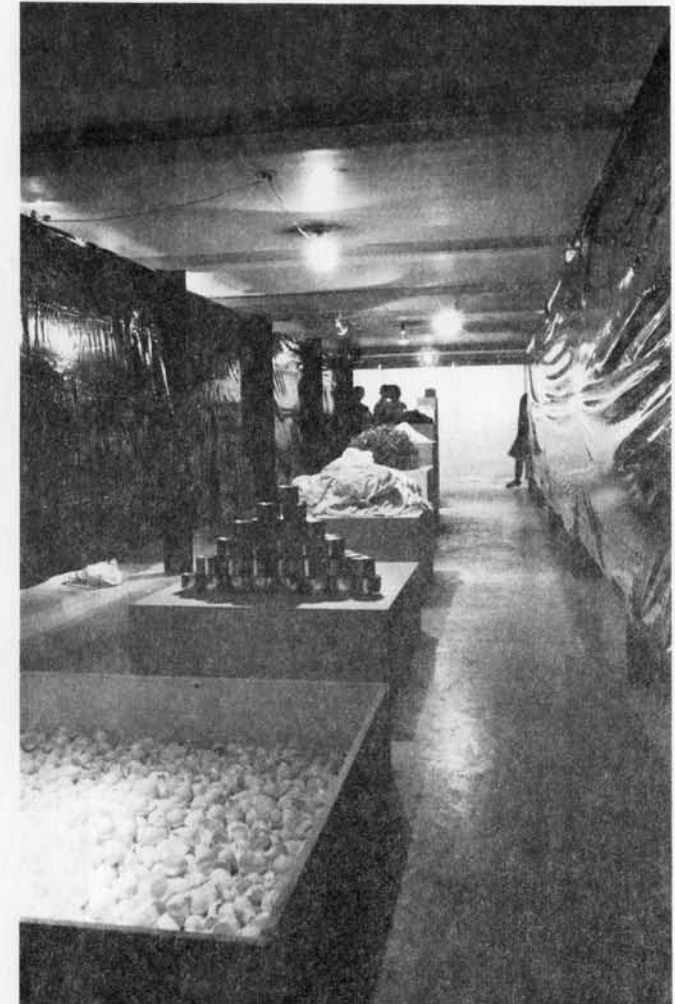
1968

Project

PILES EXHIBITION

Number

1.



PLEASE COMPLETE AND RETURN

Description This exhibition was done in University of B.C. Fine Arts Gallery, under Art in Parkland. Exhibition by N.E. THING Co. consisted of 2 parts. The Piles as seen here, exhibited in descending expanding scale (All materials were white, gray, or black). The other part of the show resulted in a major book called Piles. This book had a map & allowed the viewer to visit all the piles documented and as a result get an overall view and feeling for the structure of piles in the city of Vancouver. It represents another in the projects of N.E. THING Co. which "celebrate the ordinary." (See show book for Piles book)

N.E. THING COMPANY LIMITED

Trade Mark ©





# INFORMATION

N.E. THING CO. LTD.

1419 Riverside Drive North Vancouver B.C. Canada

Date

1966/68

Project

PAINT INTO EARTH

Number

1.



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Description

ONE quart of white outdoor paint poured into a circular hole of ONE quart Capacity. Simon Fraser University site.

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# INFORMATION

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Date

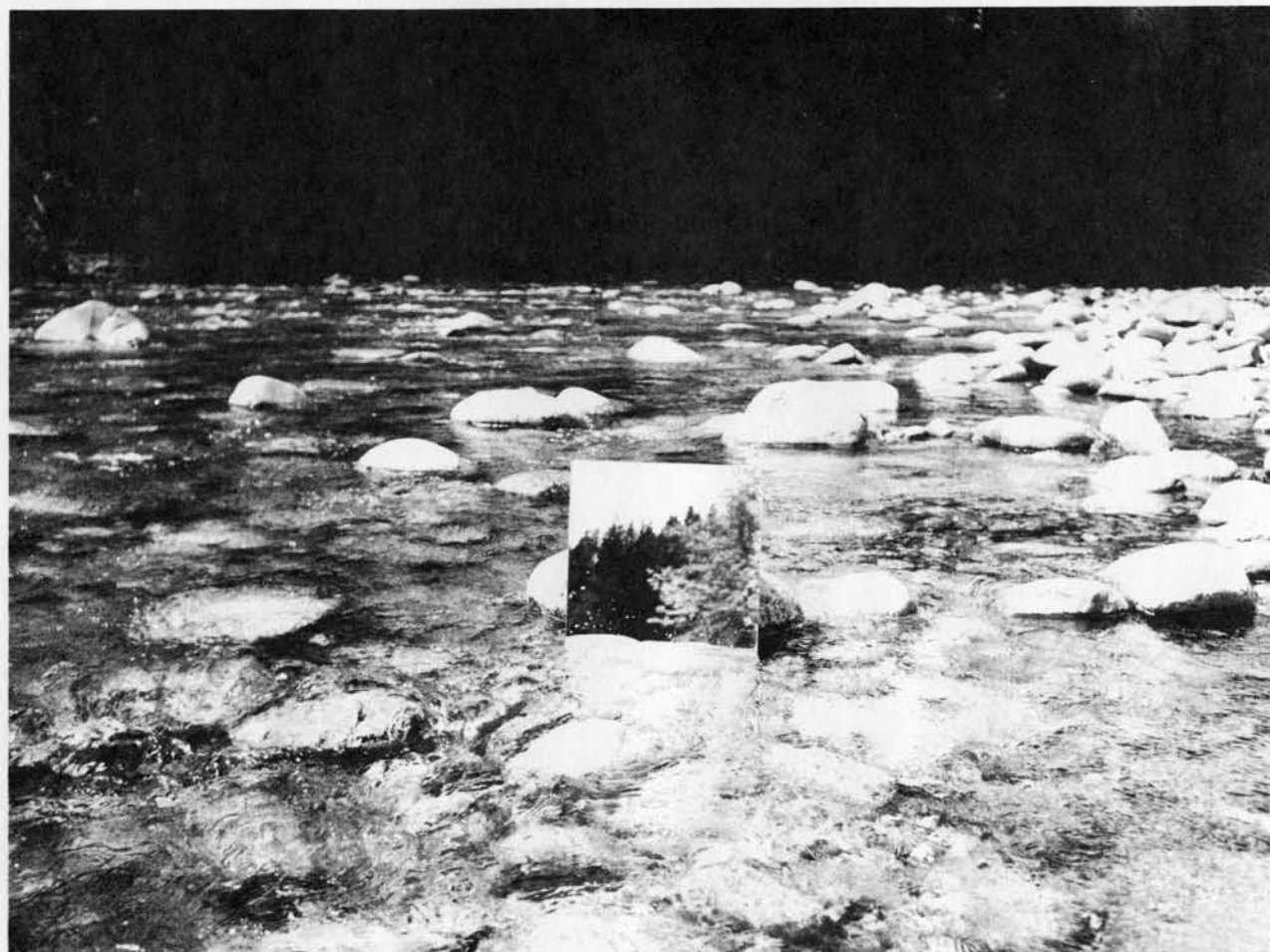
1968

Project

REFLECTED LANDSCAPE - 1968

Number

1.



PLEASE COMPLETE AND RETURN

Description

WORK DONE IN SEYKOUR RIVER, N. VANCOUVER, B.C.  
EXISTS AS LARGE BLACK & WHITE PHOTO HAND TINTED.

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# INFORMATION

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Date

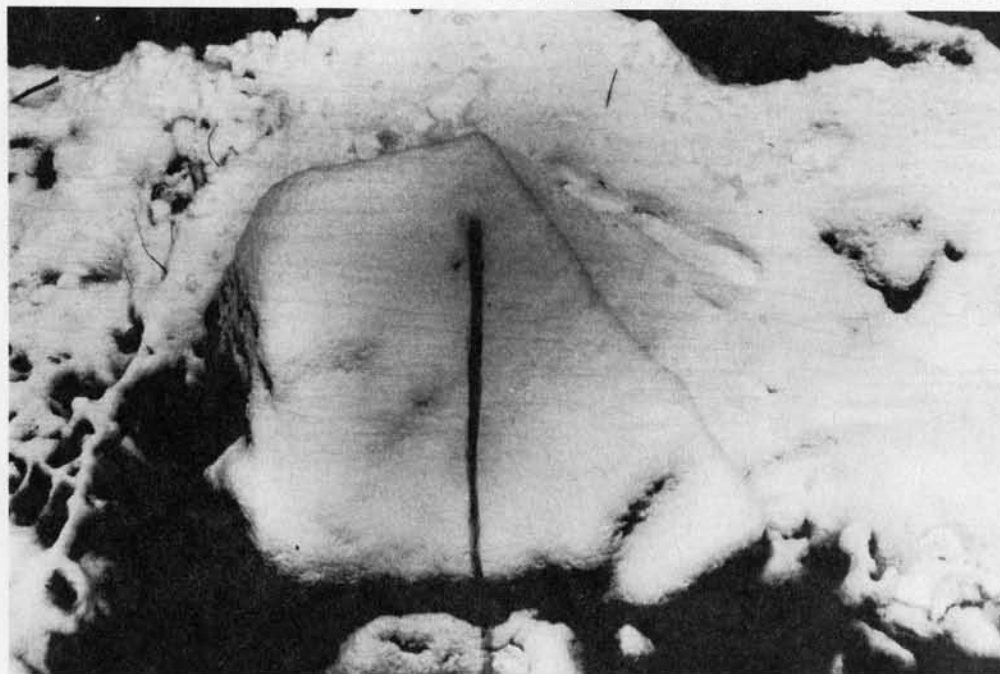
1968

Project

P-LINE STRAIGHT-1968

Number

1.



PLEASE COMPLETE AND RETURN

Description

A FORMAL MINIMAL WATER COLOUR IS CREATED ON A WHITE SURFACE (SNOW)  
USING BODY FLUIDS.

N.E. THING COMPANY LIMITED

Trade Mark ©





# INFORMATION

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Date

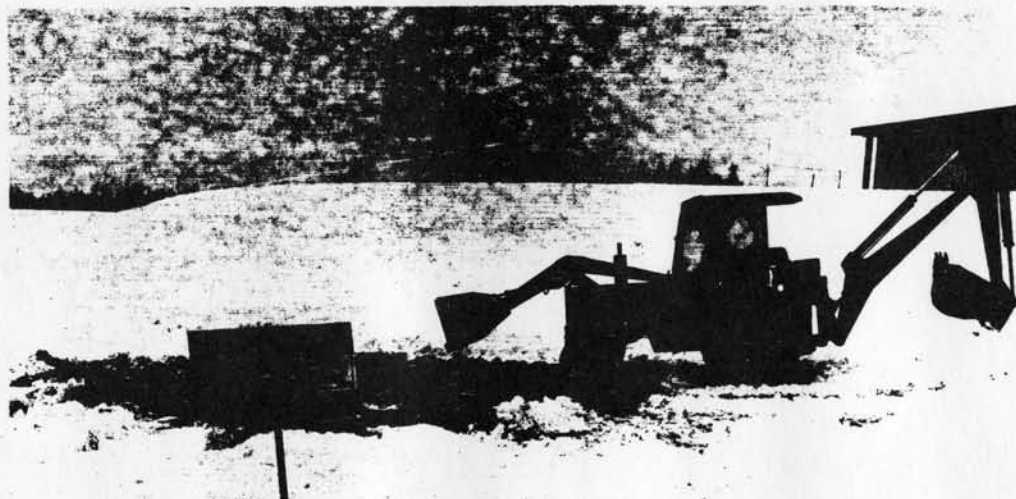
1968

Project

CENTENNIAL CELEBRATION & PROLIFERATION - 1968

Number

1.



PLEASE COMPLETE AND RETURN

N.E. THING COMPANY LIMITED

Trade Mark ©

Description

A deflated object buried at Simon Fraser University, Burnaby, B.C. It is to be unearthed after 100 years, inflated, and duplicated in quantities determined by the number of planets that can be reached by man, then buried on each of these planets. The process is repeated in another hundred years (according to the time structure of each planet) for other planets etc..

Seal



# INFORMATION

N.E. THING CO. LTD.

1419 Riverside Drive North Vancouver B.C. Canada

Date

1968

Project

SNOW - 1968

Number

1.



PLEASE COMPLETE AND RETURN

Description

Photograph of SNOW reproduced to exact size (3' x 2') from where taken. The photo is exhibited on the floor with bullet proof glass over it. This allows people to walk over it as if it is snow.

N.E. THING COMPANY LIMITED  
Trade Mark ©

Collection of NATIONAL GALLERY OF CANADA, OTTAWA.



# INFORMATION

N.E. THING CO. LTD.

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Date

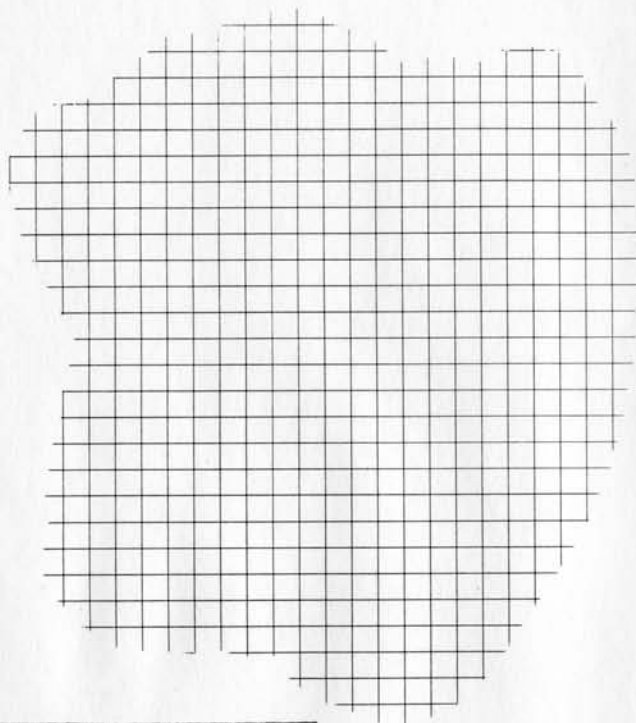
1968

Project

TELECOPIER WORKS

Number

1.



TWO SPOTS



N.E. THING CO. TRANSV.S.I. INFORM

TITLE FILL IN A HOLE - 1968

PRODUCER N.E. THING CO. LTD.

TRANSMISSION RECEIVING  
PLACE VANC. PLACE Balboa, Calif.  
TIME 2:10pm PST  
BY NETCO NHAM, Balboa  
BY Telecopier Telecopier

Hole is located at the N.E. Thing Co. Offices, N.Vancouver, B.C., and FILL IN IS IN YOUR HAND.

N.E. THING CO. TRANSV.S.I. INFORM

TITLE SEND A LIE RECEIVE THE TRUTH

PRODUCT NETCO  
TRANSMISSION RECEIVING  
PLACE VANC.B.C. CAN PLACE NHAM, BALBOA, USA  
TIME Oct, 22/69- 1:30 PM Oct. 22/69-  
BY NETCO NHAM -  
BY Telecopier Telecopier

A)

PLEASE COMPLETE AND RETURN

Description A) FILL IN A HOLE - 1968.

WHEN SENT THROUGH PHONE THE PAPER ON THE OTHER END IS FILLED IN BLACK WHERE HOLE WAS AT ORIGINAL PLACE OF SENDING

B). TWO SPOTS EXISTS AS A LIE ON ORIGINAL BUT WHEN SENT THERE EXISTS THEN 2 SPOTS THUS THE TRUTH EXISTS.

N.E. THING COMPANY LIMITED

Trade Mark ©





# INFORMATION

N.E. THING CO. LTD.

1419 Riverside Drive North Vancouver B.C. Canada

Date

1968

Project

CONVERGING DRAWING-1968

Number

1.



PLEASE COMPLETE AND RETURN

Description

2 SKIED TRACKS WERE MADE IN THE SNOW UNTIL THEY CONVERGED TO A POINT.

(30x40 HAND TINTED PHOTO)

N.E. THING COMPANY LIMITED

Trade Mark ©



# INFORMATION

N.E. THING CO. LTD.

1419 Riverside Drive North Vancouver B.C. Canada

Date

1968

Project

6 FRUIT TREES WITH PAINTED SHADOWS

Number

1.



PLEASE COMPLETE AND RETURN

Description

Executed on N.E. THING CO. property. Black spray paint was sprayed on snow to form shadow in snow.

N.E. THING COMPANY LIMITED

Trade Mark ©



# INFORMATION

N.E. THING CO. LTD.

1419 Riverside Drive North Vancouver B.C. Canada

Date

1968

Project

$\frac{1}{4}$  MILE LANDSCAPE

Number

1.

(A)



(B)



(C)



PLEASE COMPLETE AND RETURN

Description WHEN DRIVING ALONG THE HIGHWAY THE DRIVER SEES A SIGN WHICH SAYS SEE (A) THEN SHORTLY HE SEES (B) START VIEWING, THEN FOR THE NEXT  $\frac{1}{4}$  MILE HE IS DRIVING ALONG SIDE A  $\frac{1}{4}$  MILE DESIGNATED N.E. THING CO. LANDSCAPE. THE LANDSCAPE IS TERMINATED WHEN HE SEES (C.) STOP VIEWING. THE  $\frac{1}{4}$  MILE LANDSCAPE ABOVE IS IN S. CALIF NEAR NEWPORT HARBOR. ANOTHER ONE WAS DONE IN PRINCE EDWARD ISLAND.

N.E. THING COMPANY LIMITED  
Trade Mark ©





# INFORMATION

N.E. THING CO. LTD.

1419 Riverside Drive North Vancouver B.C. Canada

Date

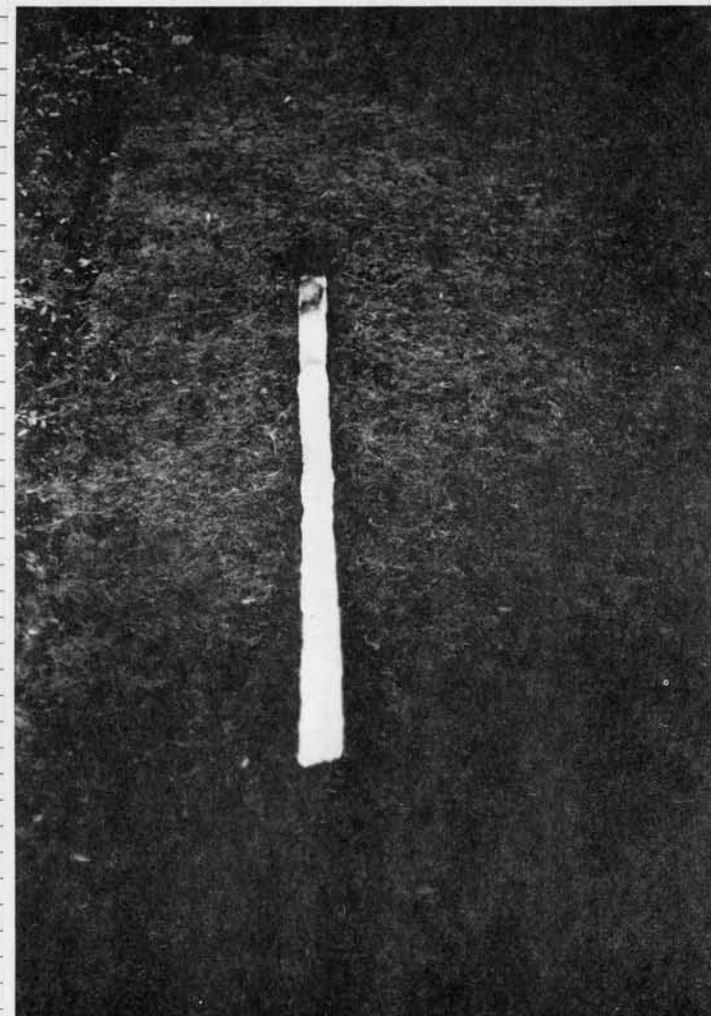
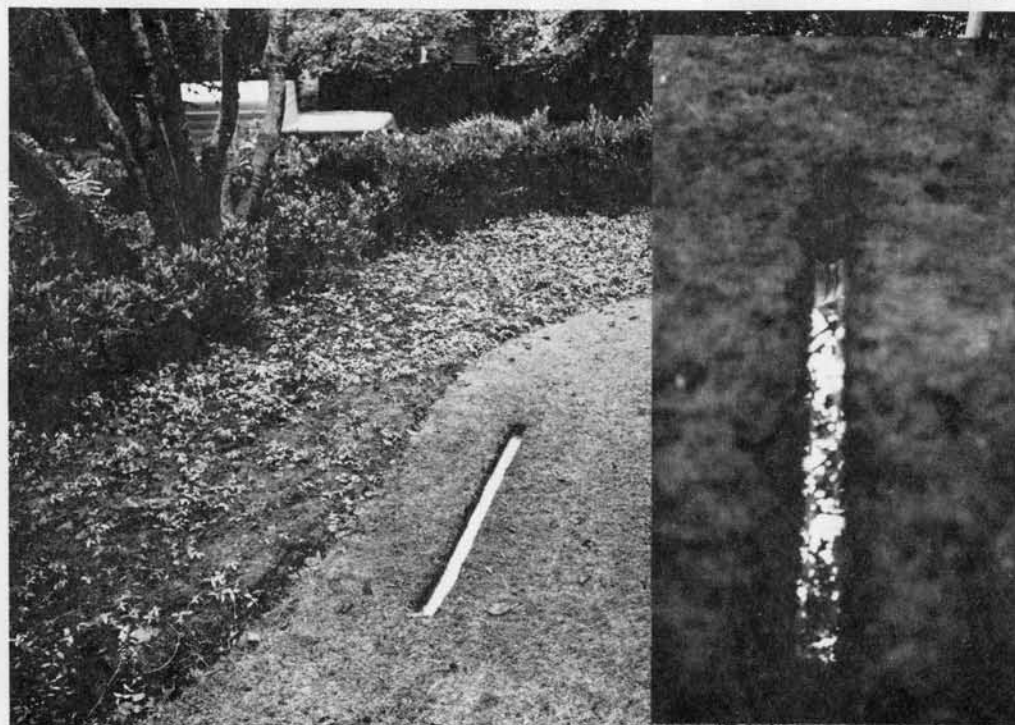
1968

Project

MIRROR SLOT - 1968

Number

1



PLEASE COMPLETE AND RETURN

Description

DONE IN DR. KEN MORTONS YARD, PART OF EXHIBITION WHICH REQUIRED people TO FOLLOW map TO FIND N.E. THING CO. SCULPTURES IN VARIOUS PARTS OF CITY.

MIRROR BURIED IN GROUND 3".

N.E. THING COMPANY LIMITED

Trade Mark ©



# INFORMATION

N.E. THING CO. LTD.

1419 Riverside Drive North Vancouver B.C. Canada

Date

1968

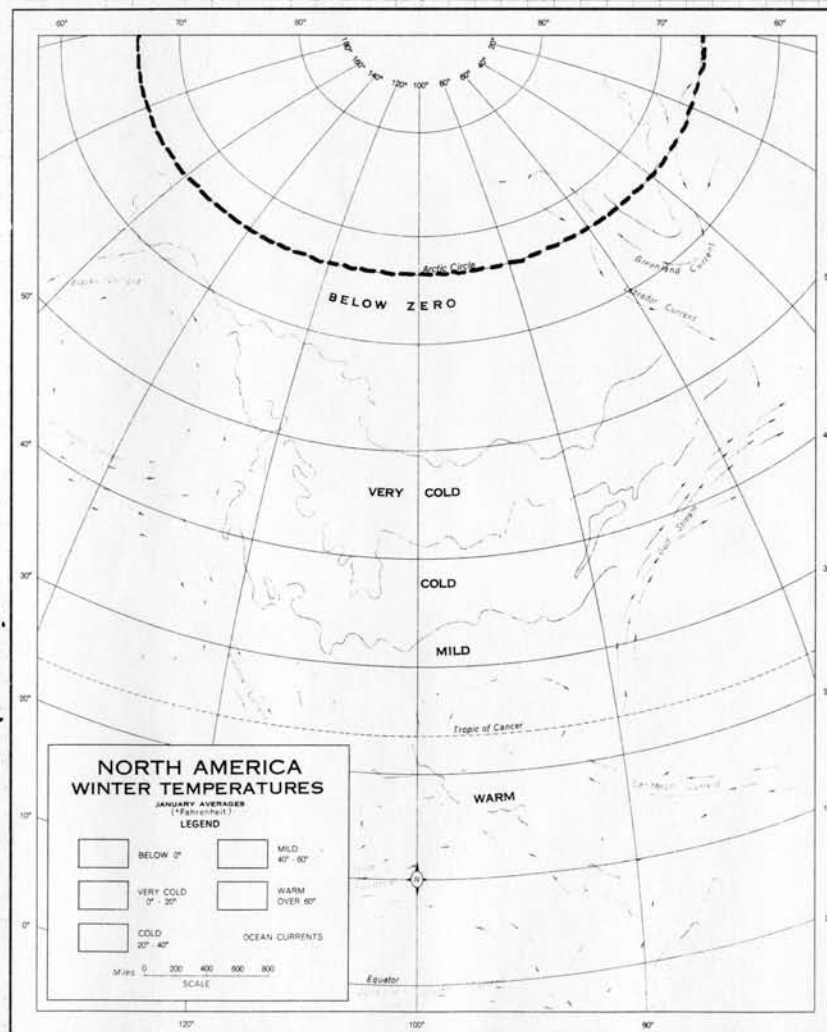
Project

BLACK ARCTIC CIRCLE PROJECT

Number

1.

A LOW FLYING JET PLANE IS TO BE EQUIPED WITH A DYE DISPENSING DEVICE WHICH WILL LET OUT A CONSTANT STREAM OF HIGHLY CONCENTRATED BLACK DYE. THE DISPENSING DEVICE WILL BE TIMED TO SHUT OFF AND TURN ON IN ONE MINUTE INTERVALS THUS LAYING DOWN THE ARCTIC CIRCLE AS IT APPEARS ON MAPS. PLANE WILL LEAVE ALASKA AT 1000 FT. AND FLY WESTWARD UNTIL THEY ARRIVE BACK AT ALASKA. THIS WILL BE DONE DURING WINTER SO THE LINE WILL APPEAR ON THE SNOW.



PLEASE COMPLETE AND RETURN

Description

N.E. THING COMPANY LIMITED

Trade Mark ©



# INFORMATION

N.E. THING CO. LTD.

1419 Riverside Drive North Vancouver B.C. Canada

Date

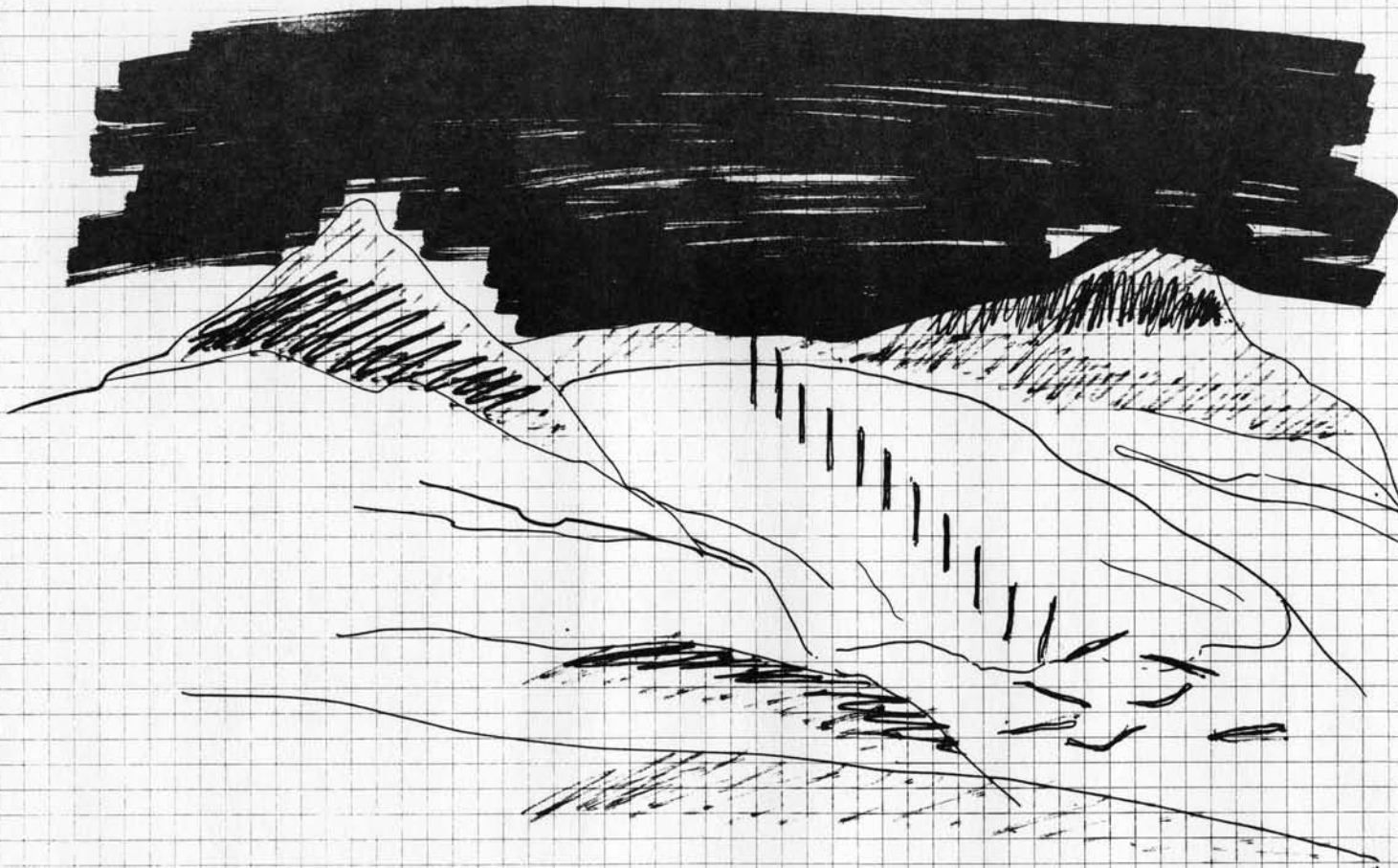
1966/68

Project

CHROME POLES MOVE

Number

1.



PLEASE COMPLETE AND RETURN

Description

Chrome poles to be inserted into drilled holes in the glacier to a depth of 50 ft. These poles are to be left in the glacier for the life of the glacier. When they are deposited bent & twisted at the Terminal moraine, they are then to be fixed permanently in position and left to posterity.

N.E. THING COMPANY LIMITED

Trade Mark ©





# INFORMATION

N.E. THING CO. LTD.

1419 Riverside Drive North Vancouver B.C. Canada

Date  
1968

Project

TREE SPRAYED WITH ARTIFICIAL SNOW

Number

1.



PLEASE COMPLETE AND RETURN

Description

IN the Fading winter IN Northern IDAHO, this tree was sprayed  
afresh with artificial snow, thus perceptually prolonging the  
Scene of winter.

N. E. THING COMPANY LIMITED

Trade Mark ©

Seal



# INFORMATION

N.E. THING CO. LTD.

1419 Riverside Drive North Vancouver B.C. Canada

Date

1968

Project

SCULPTURE - 2 RODS

Number

1.



PLEASE COMPLETE AND RETURN

Description

2 RODS ARE INSERTED INTO GROUND AS SEEN IN POSITION (A). WHEN MOVING AROUND THIS WORK THE RODS APPEAR IN DIFFERENT ARRANGEMENTS (B) NETCO PLANS TO DO A NUMBER OF THESE PUBLIC SCULPTURE WITH APPROPRIATE PATHWAYS TO WALK AROUND SO ONE CAN SEE THE CHANGES.

N.E. THING COMPANY LIMITED

Trade Mark ©



# INFORMATION

N.E. THING CO. LTD.

1419 Riverside Drive North Vancouver B.C. Canada

Date

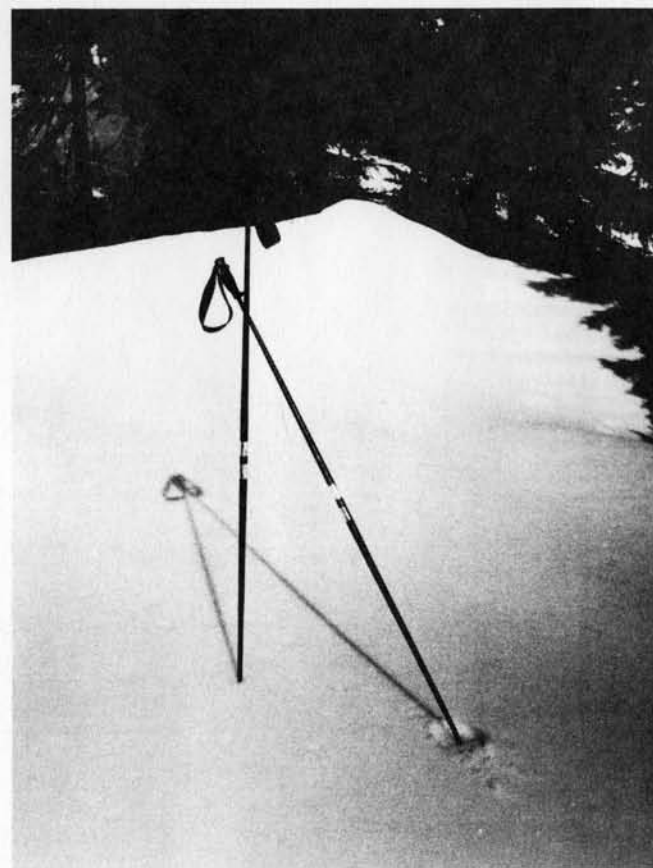
1968

Project

CROSSED SKI POLES TOUCHING SHADOWS - 1968

Number

1.



PLEASE COMPLETE AND RETURN

Description

poles were crossed but photo was taken from an angle which makes ski pole shadows touch at the Apex. Mt. Seymour, N. Vancouver B.C.  
(30x40 HAND TINTED BLACK & WHITE)

N.E. THING COMPANY LIMITED

Trade Mark ©





# INFORMATION

N.E. THING CO. LTD.

1419 Riverside Drive North Vancouver B.C. Canada

Date

1968

Project

ONE MILE SKIED LINE - 1968

Number

1.



PLEASE COMPLETE AND RETURN

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.....

N.E. THING COMPANY LIMITED

Trade Mark ©

Description

A LINE WAS MADE BY SKIING A MILE THROUGH FRESH SNOW. A DRAWING  
EXECUTED BY THE ENTIRE BODY RATHER THAN JUST THE HAND.  
ON MT. SEYMOUR, N.VANC. BC.



# INFORMATION

N.E. THING CO. LTD.

1419 Riverside Drive North Vancouver B.C. Canada

Date

1968

Project

DRAWING - MT. SEYMOUR, N.VANC. B.C.

Number

1.



PLEASE COMPLETE AND RETURN

.....  
.....  
.....  
.....

N.E. THING COMPANY LIMITED

Trade Mark ©

Description

LARGE NATURAL DRAWING WAS DONE USING SKIS AND BODY AND SNOW HILLSIDE.  
DONSON MT. SEYMOUR. N.VANC. B.C. EXECUTED BY IAIN BAXTER



# INFORMATION

N.E. THING CO. LTD.

1419 Riverside Drive North Vancouver B.C. Canada

Date

1968

Project

ARTICLE # TELEXED WORK

Number

1.

## ART

Three years ago Iain Baxter started the Vancouver art audience by exhibiting vinyl bags filled with water.

Now he has moved into conceptualism, riding the communications network for play, poetry and G.N.G. — Gross National Good.

He has installed in his home at 1419 Riverside Dr. in North Vancouver not only a telecopier but a Telex. He is concerned at the degree to which we are U.S.-dominated and believes that communications represent a field in which we can win international prominence.

Perhaps two quotations from McLuhan: Hot and Cool can help to shed light on what he is doing. The first is by Tom Wolfe: "But... McLuhan will remain a major figure in the social sciences if for no other reason than that he has opened up the whole subject of the way the new technologies are changing people's thinking, reactions, life styles, everything."

And from the same book, McLuhan on McLuhan: "Throughout my work, however, I am saying that awareness is being pushed more and more out into the environment. Art becomes environment."

So we have Iain Baxter working not at an easel in a studio but sitting in front of his Telex in an incredibly cluttered little room that is the head office of the N.E. Thing Co. And he is using this machine as a whole new art form, as intellectual play and potential for group play, not to place orders or transact business but for Trans-S.I., Transmitted Sensitivity Information.

One kind of S.I. he wants to transmit is concrete poetry. "There are a number of possibilities, like you could have a one-sentence poem that could be sent to each country in the world, because you can send it wherever you want."

The fact is that the only places at the moment that do have Telexes are companies or organizations, but it doesn't matter to me whether it's a person or a company

## 'Easel' is a Telex

by  
Joan Lowndes

that receives it. If it's a person then you're phoned like for a telegram, right?

"But you could send a concrete poem to a company and say: 'please put this on your bulletin board' — so your poem is being read by 500 employees who go by."

The beauty of the Telex to Baxter is that it needs no receiver.

"It's an open channel. No one can stop the Telex from working because it's a 24-hour-a-day communication hookup. As soon as you dial the number you're really into that office and then, depending on the personality of the people and their attitudes and so on, well it's up to them what happens."

Poems can penetrate offices; art can infiltrate business. But what if whoever tends the Telex just tears the paper off and throws it into the waste paper basket? It's the chance you take for working on a gigantic environmental scale and it doesn't bother Baxter a bit.

The information has been completed in terms of its own essence. Moreover he has a record of it from the Telex itself — "It's like instant history" — and he may also record it on microfilm.



—Photo by Dave Paterson

Baxter and his Telex machine:  
"It's like instant history"

Telex gives you a free day before you go on the meter, and Baxter used it to announce his presence on this particular network to all the major corporations in North America that he could think of, including Texaco, B.A., Gulf, Standard Oil, ITT, RCA Communications, Kaiser, Pepsi-Cola, Newsweek, Time, Bell Telephone, CP and CIL.

He also contacted 60 major museum curators, critics and artists involved in conceptualism.

Baxter is genuinely intrigued by the Telex, which he believes he is one of the first artists on this continent to use conceptually. He is not interested, like Hans Haacke, in "information that flows out like the daily news that you can tack on the wall. That to me is very obvious. I'd like to find out what the machine can do, what are

the processes inside it that can provide new ways of looking at our total environment.

"You can go to St. John's, Newfoundland and back in seconds," he exulted. "Also the machine will advance paper and it has a key to do that. So that's interesting as far as I'm concerned because I can advance it 30 feet, I can advance to a certain linear distance."

"Like you can also contact a station that's 5,000 miles away. So that gets you working on the idea of why not contact it 10 times in a row, which would then amount to say 10 times 5,000 which would be 50,000 miles — which is exciting in terms of an idea of contact and location."

Baxter is also experimenting with composing music on the Telex. To be with him for a short time is like quaffing a draught of optimism. He says: "A lot of artists have antagonistic feelings about big organizations. I as a person tend to believe in joining and changing."

So one can imagine the Telex at General Motors sounding a sprightly prelude of bell ringing, followed by the N.E. Thing Co. logo ("the world's only telexable logo"), then the admonition: DON'T LOOK AT THIS UNLESS YOU ARE READY FOR ANYTHING", followed by an invitation to consult the N.E. Thing Co. on "IMAGINATION... THE G.N.G. ... GROSS NATIONAL GOOD... IDEAS... ANYTHING," at their offices in Vancouver or Ottawa.

And it might just catch the fancy of some company president. After all, who would have thought that executives would be taking week-end seminars from McLuhan?

Meanwhile, an increasing number of galleries have been giving Baxter recognition. He was included in Conception at Leverkusen, Germany; in The Highway at the U of Philadelphia; in Art by Telephone at the Museum of Contemporary Art, Chicago; and in the spring will have a one-man show at the Edmonton Art Gallery.

In the immediate future, of course, he will be contributing to the VAG's "955,000".

THIS STATEMENT WILL BE, IS BEING, HAS BEEN SENT BY TELECOPIER

N.E. THING CO. TRANS-S.I. INFORM

THIS statement willbe, is being, has been sent by telecopier

RECEIVED N.E.Thing Co. Ltd. 1968

TELEXED FROM VANCOUVER TO CHICAGO

PLACE N.Vanc.B.C.Can. Chicago Ill.USA

TELEX Nov 5,69 PST CST

BY NETCO telecopier Telecopier

CCV-1015

PLEASE COMPLETE AND RETURN

Description

N.E. THING COMPANY LIMITED

Trade Mark ©





# INFORMATION

N.E. THING CO. LTD.

1419 Riverside Drive North Vancouver B.C. Canada

Date

1969

Project

THE YEAR 1969

Number

1



PLEASE COMPLETE AND RETURN

Description

N.E. THING COMPANY LIMITED

Trade Mark ©



# INFORMATION

N.E. THING CO. LTD.

1419 Riverside Drive North Vancouver B.C. Canada

Date

1969

Project

TELEX PROTECTS

Number

1

MARSHALL MCLUHEN DIRECTOR AND PRESIDENT  
INSTITUTE FOR ART AND TECHNOLOGY  
ST MICHAELS COLLEGE, UNIV OF TORONTO ONT

•  
TEL TEX TOR+  
N E THING VCR

VANCOUVER BC DEC 18/69

MARSHALL MCLUHEN DIRECTOR AND PRESIDENT  
INSTITUTE FOR ART AND TECHNOLOGY  
ST MICHAELS COLLEGE, UNIV OF TORONTO ONT

TO THE PRESIDENT

PLEASE COMPLETE AND RETURN

.....  
.....  
.....  
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.....  
.....

N.E. THING COMPANY LIMITED

DONT LOOK AT THIS UNLESS YOU ARE READY FOR ANYTHING

OK SIT DOWN AND WITH A PAIR OF SISSORS CUT 4 INCHES OFF YOUR TIE  
AND PLEASE MAIL IT IMMEDIATELY TO IAIN BAXTER PRES N E THING CO  
1419 RIVERSIDE DR N VANCOUVER B C OR 336 DALY OTTAWA ONTARIO

NOW YOU ARE READY FOR ANYTHING

THE N E THING COMPANY SERVES AS THE NUMBER ONE CONSULTANT IN...  
VISUAL COMMUNICATIONS...CORPORATE IMAGE...SENSITIVITY INFORMATION  
...CULTURAL IMAGE DEVELOPMENT...ART AND DESIGN CONSULTATION...  
IMAGINATION...THE G.N.G. - GROSS NATIONAL GOOD...IDEAS...ANYTHING

IF YOU NEED ANYTHING...CONTACT...N.E.THING COMPANY LIMITED  
1419 RIVERSIDE DR N.VANCOUVER B C CAN. OR 336 DALY OTTAWA ONT  
TELEX 04-507602 FONE(604)929-3662 VANC OR (613)237-0098 OTTAWA  
CABLE: ANYTHING VANCOUVER

THANK YOU FOR YOUR TIME

REC'D JULY 10 1970  
REGD

University of Toronto  
Toronto 5, Canada

D.P.S.

CENTRE FOR CULTURE AND TECHNOLOGY

Marshall McLuhan, Director

July 10, 1970

Mr. David P. Silcox  
Senior Arts Officer  
The Canada Council  
140 Wellington St.  
Ottawa, Ont.

Dear David:

Apologies for delays over and above those of the postal strike itself. Naturally, I enjoy the photographs done by Baxter. I certainly could write about the structural and textural significance of his vision in terms that have relevance to our entire situation today. I think his playfulness is significant and valuable. His collages are meaningful and offer a means of training the perceptual life. But, the fact is, I haven't got a minute to do these things at present. I have taken on far too many assignments for the summer and have simply got to pull up short, especially since I am still a sort of convalescent.

*Yours Marshall*  
*(no other room in my desk*  
*to sign name)*

PLEASE COMPLETE AND RETURN

Description

N.E. THING COMPANY LIMITED

Trade Mark ©



# INFORMATION

N.E. THING CO. LTD.

1419 Riverside Drive North Vancouver B.C. Canada

Date

1969

Project

ARCTIC TRANSVSI

Number

1.

V  
ARCTIC TRANSVSI NBR 1  
WITH SEVERAL CANS OF ARTIFICIAL SPRAY SNOW  
WRITE THE WORD 'SNOW' ON A LARGE FIELD

ARCTIC TRANSVSI NO. 2  
TAKE 1000 SHEETS OF PAPER CRUMPLE AND SPREAD  
ON THE FLOOR IN AN AMORPHUS SHAPE, WITH EDGES TOUCHING.  
PHOTOGRAPH BOTH PROJECTS COMPLETELY  
N.E. THING CO. PROJECT DEPT ARCTIC-VSI INUVIK NWT

U+  
NS CAD ART HFX

PWA INVK  
MM



PLEASE COMPLETE AND RETURN

Description

DONE VIA TELEX <sup>COMMAND</sup> ~~COMMAND~~ FROM INUVIK TO HALIFAX.

N.E. THING COMPANY LIMITED

© 1970 NETCO LTD.





# INFORMATION

N.E. THING CO. LTD.

1419 Riverside Drive North Vancouver B.C. Canada

Date

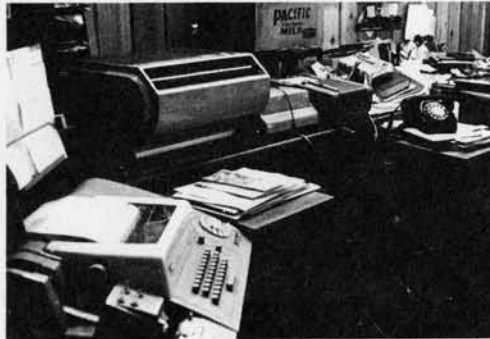
1969

Project

TELEX & TELECOPIER PROJECTS

Number

1.



TELECOPIER & TELEX INSTALLED  
AT N.E. THING CO. OFFICES.

MODERNART NYK

N E THING VCR

N E THING CO LTD  
COMMUNICATIONS DEPT  
1419 RIVERSIDE DRIVE N VANCTOVER BC CANADA

TRANS-VSI NBR 7 1969-70

THIS STATEMENT IS PRINTED OVER ITSELF HERE AND THERE 10 TIMES



IAN BAXTER USING TELECOPIER TO TRANSMIT ART WORK



TELEX FOR ART WORK AT N.E. THING CO. OFFICES.



PLEASE COMPLETE AND RETURN

N.E. THING COMPANY LIMITED  
Trade Mark ©

Description N.E. THING CO. SET UP AN NUMBER OF EXHIBITIONS USING Telex & Telecopiers AS THE MEANS OF PRODUCING WORKS OF ART. WORKS WERE CREATED USING THE WITH CONNECTEDNESS & TRANSMISSION CONCEPTS OF THESE COMMUNICATION MEDIA. A MAJOR EXHIBITION WAS DONE WITH NAVA STORM College of Art & Design. ALSO USING THESE TOOLS AS TEACHING DEVICES BY HAVING STUDENTS RESPOND BACK TO NETCO.



# INFORMATION

N.E. THING CO. LTD.

1419 Riverside Drive North Vancouver B.C. Canada

Date

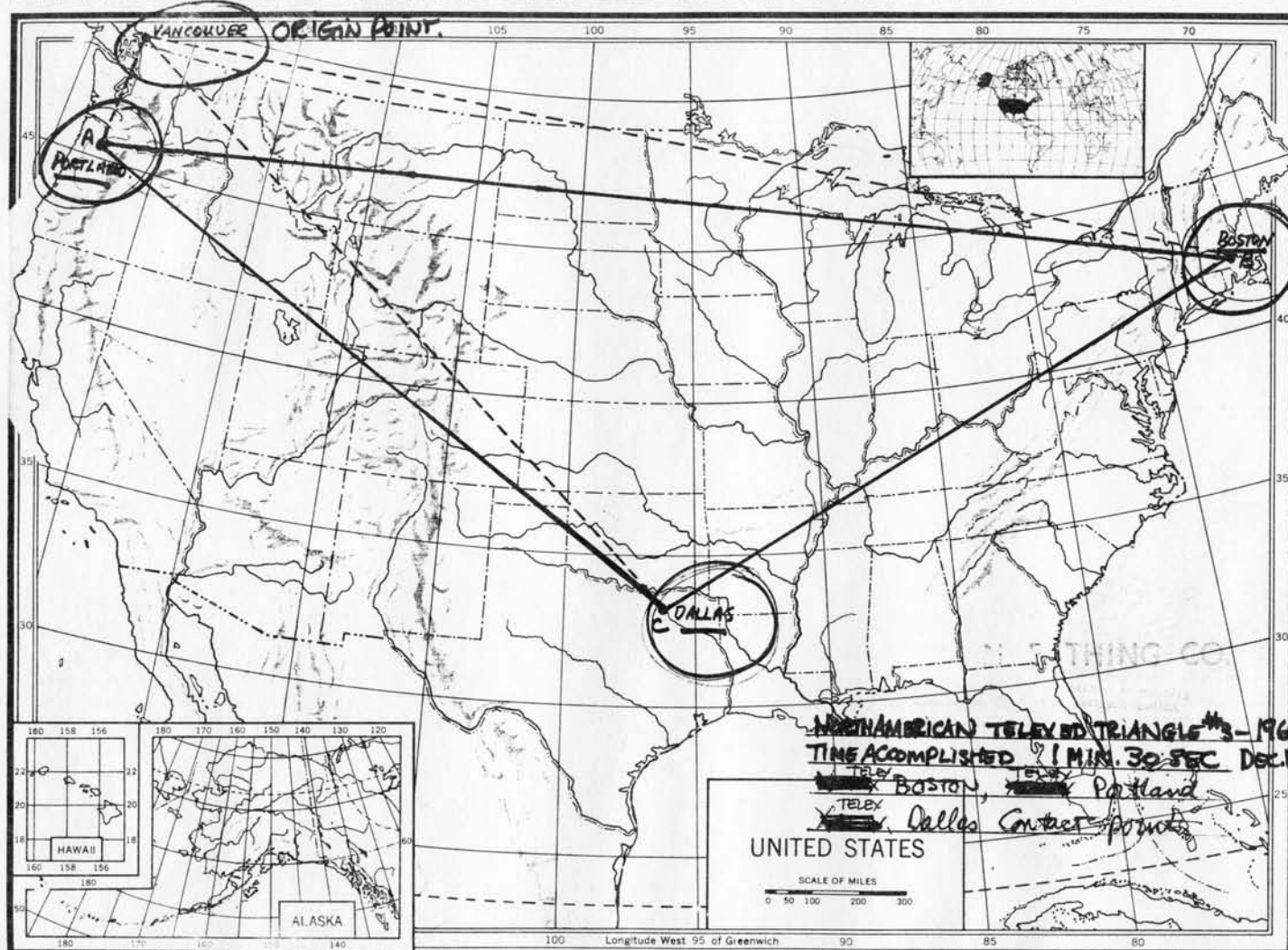
1969

Project

N. AMERICAN TELEYED TRIANGLE - 1969

Number

1.



No. DD 1

A. J. NYSTROM & Co., CHICAGO

PLEASE COMPLETE AND RETURN

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 .....  
 .....  
 .....  
 .....

N. E. THING COMPANY LIMITED

Trade Mark C

Description TELEXES FROM VANCOUVER DEC. 18/69. TO CREATE LARGE TRIANGLE ON N. AMERICA.



# INFORMATION

N.E. THING CO. LTD.

1419 Riverside Drive North Vancouver B.C. Canada

Date

1969

Project

TELEXED TRIANGLE

Number

1.

NS CAD ART HFX

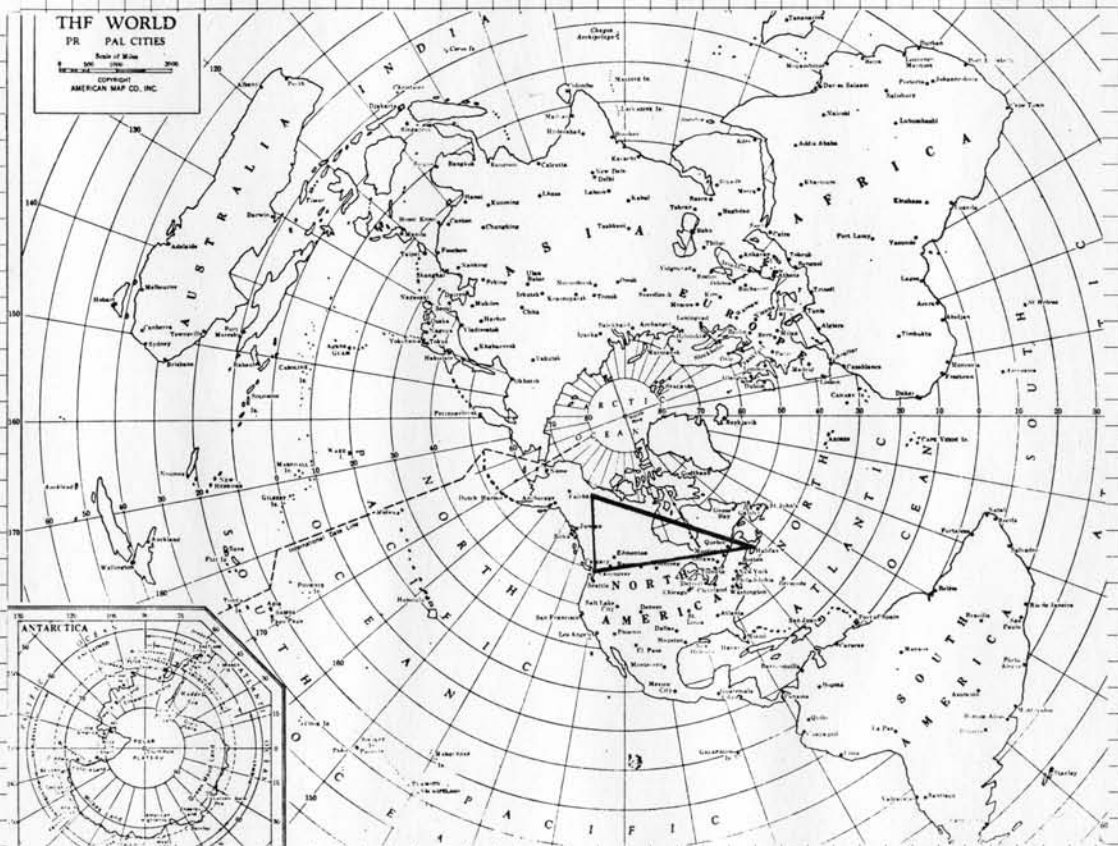
SFU LIB VGR  
SEPT 26 1969

THIS TRANSVSI WILL BE, IS BEING, HAS BEEN SENT TO  
SCRIBE A TRIANGLE WITH CORNER POINTS AT INUVIK, NWT  
TELEX NO 037 4 4545, SIMON FRASER UNIVERSITY BURNABY BC  
TELEX NO 0450267 AND NOVA SCOTIA COLLEGE OF ART AND DESIGN,  
HALIFAX, N.S. TELEX NO 014 4 22767 ON SEPT 26 1969  
ACTIVATED AND TERMINATED AT INUVIK, NWT. IMPORTANT TO  
SEND ON AND COMPLETE TRIANGLE IMMEDIATELY. N.E THING CO  
PROJECT DEPT (ARCTIC-VSI)  
INUVIK NWT

THE WORLD

PR PAL CITIES

Scale of Miles  
0 100 200  
0 100 200  
AMERICAN MAP CO. INC.



PLEASE COMPLETE AND RETURN

Description

N.E. THING COMPANY LIMITED

Trade Mark ©





# INFORMATION

N.E. THING CO. LTD.

1419 Riverside Drive North Vancouver B.C. Canada

Date

1969

Project

ARTICLE & TELECOPIER

Number

1.

## Huff, puff — it's instant wardrobe



—Citizen-UPJ staff photo

By Sheila McCook  
Citizen staff writer

Getting dressed is no longer a simple matter of struggling with the zipper. It's fighting with the air pump.

At least, that's what some courageous models at the National Art Gallery have discovered.

They were donning inflatable plastic dresses dreamed up by artist Iain Baxter.

The fashion blow-up was due to start at noon on Tuesday, but the aerodynamics of getting the garb on kept the curious crowd waiting half an hour.

When the girls finally floated in, though, everyone seemed pleased.

### Fattening

Inflatable dresses could not be described as figure-hugging; take your aver-

age plastic swimming pool, wrap it around you, and you've got the general idea.

A possible name is the tubular tutu look.

Barbara Boutin, a Gallery employee, liked her little number — a mini swishing with four horizontal streams of water.

"It's very comfortable and feels sort of organic," said she with game grin.

Mrs. Boutin thought the outfit would be suitable for evenings — great for dancing but a squelching flop as far as sitting is concerned.

In a matching dress of pink, model Ann Pollock said it was so comfortable she tended to forget she couldn't bend over.

The two went for a sunny stroll along Elgin St. Civil service lunchtime munchings were replaced

by gasps, and helmeted laborers took to following the pied pipers of plastic along the way.

Winging into the crowd came Elaine Baxter in what her husband hurriedly dubbed "the orange triangular wearable."

It's important to state that, while orange triangular wearables may be the smash of the party, they're out if the wearer plans to hold a drink. Arms are engulfed in six-foot wings of orange and transparent plastic.

Ball gowns entered next — one a pink square, the other a green tube and tent.

Is pumped-up plastic the fashion of the future?

"Could well be," said one model, remembering not to bend an inch.

*If you have just picked up this statement, view it as art, then crumple it up with the writing on the outside and throw it on the floor and leave it there till the next person does the same thing.*

### Safety first for toddlers

To prevent your toddler from having accidents when he is outdoors, the federal health department publication, Keep Them Safe suggests you take the following precautions:

- When he is still crawling, he should play in a playpen. Later, he can be kept away from the street by a sturdy fence with no easy foot-holds. The yard should be cleared of glass and jagged-edged cans.

- Be sure his playground has no deep ditches, ponds, uncovered wells or cisterns containing water.

- When taken for a walk, he is safer in a carriage or stroller, or wearing a well-adjusted harness.

- Teach the toddler that when you say "Don't" you mean it. Keep these orders for times when his actions incur real risk to his safety or the safety of others.

### The Ottawa Citizen

Wednesday, June 11, 1969 Page 49

### Swollen styles on show

National Gallery models

N E THING CO. TRANSV.S.I. INFORM  
VITE V.S.I. ACTION COMMAND # 1  
May 23, 1969  
NETCO  
Calgary, Alta. New York  
12121 NOKKALIA  
Teleco-ier by Telecopier  
NETCO  
Transmission by FACSEND

PLEASE COMPLETE AND RETURN

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N.E. THING COMPANY LIMITED

Trade Mark ©

Description

TELECOPIER WORK ASKS PARTICIPANT TO  
BECOME INVOLVED.



# INFORMATION

N.E. THING CO. LTD.

1419 Riverside Drive North Vancouver B.C. Canada

Date

1969

Project

ARTICLE

Number

1.



ARTISTS — Mr. and Mrs. Iain Baxter of North Vancouver, B.C., consultant specialists in sensitivity information, were in Halifax this week speaking to students of Nova Scotia College of Art and Design. (Wamboldt-Waterfield)

## Artist Says

# "Word Worth One-Thousandth Of A Picture"

By GRETCHEN PIERCE  
Staff Writer

Anything and everything visual affects Iain Baxter, president of the N.E. Thing Company of North Vancouver, B.C.

The 33-year-old conceptual artist and his blonde wife Elaine spoke to students at Nova Scotia College of Art and Design this week.

He is vitally concerned with communications, and how they affect transmission of information.

To prove this his first show in Halifax in September consisted of two commercial telecommunications machines that relayed messages and pictures from his office to the college gallery, 5,000 miles away.

He thinks the "gross national good" would increase if people can communicate with each other. If a telecopier was installed in every home, the need for writing letters would disappear, and so would the postal system.

The money saved here could be allocated so that every Canadian could call long distance, without charge. Everyone would be entitled

to at least \$100 per month worth of free calls.

## ONE SOLUTION

This would be one solution to breaking down geographical and also barriers between minority groups, said the tall, British-born artist.

Controversial Baxter was the subject of a one-man show this summer in the National

Gallery of Canada, Ottawa, and a major representative of the country in the Sao Paulo biennial exhibition in Brazil.

His three-year-old company, headquarters of which is in his home, consists of himself and his wife. N. E. Thing is involved with activities, called "visual sensitivity information dynamics," or VSI.

"Our goal is to help others

get the same excitement and enjoyment we get out of the environment. We want to sharpen people's perception and in a way, expand their minds," says the energetic executive.

## 11 DEPARTMENTS

The company is divided into 11 integrated departments: research, accounting, photo-

graphy, movies, printing, projects, consulting, things, ACT, ART and COP.

ACT means "aesthetically claimed thing" and ART means "aesthetically rejected thing."

Baxter's work in the Sao Paulo exhibit which closes in January, consists of 25 photographs of things labelled ART or ACT. Among the ACTs are a photo of a zebra and the Eiffel Tower. A photograph taken in Cape Breton by Roloff Beny is labelled ART. The works have been published in a calendar by the National Gallery.

The company is fond of awarding its seal of approval or rejection to objects it considers worthy.

"A word is worth one-thousandth of a picture" is one of Baxter's favorite expressions.

"COP" means "claiming other people's" (ideas).

A work by another artist may be photographed and altered slightly by the company. "It is our way of openly declaring and making fun of the fact that artists steal each other's ideas," said Mrs. Baxter.

## COMPANY SYMBOL

The company's symbol consists of the company's name, six dotted lines and the words "please complete and return."

This message immediately evokes a response in most who see it and every time they see a dotted line, they think of our company, said Mr. Baxter.

Their projects have included painting a tree's shadow on snow and pouring a quart of white paint into a hole at Simon Fraser University, Burnaby, B.C., where Baxter teaches in the visual arts centre.

They have also designed inflatable plastic dresses, which can be filled with air and water.

The couple, parents of a boy and girl aged six and eight, plan to make a movie — provided they can raise the money.

It would be an 120-hour film of a drive across Canada, from Cape Spear, Nfld. to Vancouver.

Summing up Mr. Baxter said his art extends to the total environment, and no one can buy it. "I am concerned with ways of seeing the natural and artificial environment and communicating these ways so others can see more clearly."

"I also want to remove art from its usual connotation — that it is expensive, historical or that it must hang in galleries."

Baxter who came to Canada 32 years ago, has a B.Sc. and M.Ed. from University of Idaho and an MFA from Washington State. His first one-man show was in 1961 in Japan.

Mrs. Baxter, a native of Spokane, Wash., received a degree in piano from U. of Idaho and did graduate work in physical education at Washington State.

## Operation Drug Alert Spreading Drug Alarm

An international program designed to inform the general public, parents, teachers and students at all levels about the extent, kinds and dangers of drugs, is spreading through the province, and the Maritimes.

"Operation Drug Alert," a program aimed at all-out war on drug abuse, was set down this summer as the underlying theme of Kiwanis International. In Nova Scotia the program has been geared to local levels and carried to all

clubs by Kiwanis Lt. Governors Ronald Whitman and Hedley Ivany.

In the Halifax area, which has three Kiwanis clubs with several hundred members, implementation of the drug alert program has produced a self-education program consisting of special lectures and films.

Alex Cain, drug alert chairman of Halifax Kiwanis club, said since the program was announced Halifax members have received informa-

tion on drug abuse from many levels.

"In addition to literature coming from our international organization, we have had several speakers address our weekly luncheons," said Mr. Cain.

Present status of Operation Drug Alert, he said, involved a general study of the situation by all three local clubs, Halifax, Dartmouth and Arm-dale. Members of Kiwanis in

See OPERATION Page 34

# Recreation Director Eyes Waterfrontage

By BERNIE RAINE  
Staff Writer

City Recreation Director Jesse Dillard will ask his commission to seek legislation protecting lake and ocean frontage in Halifax from building encroachment and pollution.

In an interview, Mr. Dillard said what is needed is legislation in the form of a city bylaw that will enable the city to have control over the waterfrontage in the city, both fresh and salt water.

He said since annexation, the city has drawn several good lakes within its boundaries. These, he said, have to be protected for the public good.

He added the recreation department could do many things if they had the waterfrontage available.

Small lakes, protected from pollution by controls would be available for such things as swimming, fishing, permanent fish stocks; while the larger lakes can be used for swimming and boating activities. Ocean frontage can be



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Description

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# INFORMATION

N.E. THING CO. LTD.

1419 Riverside Drive North Vancouver B.C. Canada

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1969

Project

ARTICLE

Number

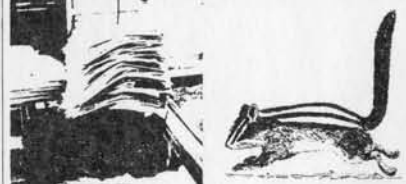
1.

BY PAUL GRESCOE

## Steady, now. Is this art?



Pictures of piles—piles of anything—is one of the projects of ex-artist Iain Baxter.



More piles—spiked bills at Wilbur's Grill. ("100% of our customers dine at Wilbur's.")



Once upon a time, Baxter drew precise pictures of animals, such as chipmunks.

This is an Eroding Fountain, and it's to be set up on the Prairies. Why? So they'll erode.



Baxter's latest creations are Inflatables, clothes filled with water or, as in this case, air.

It's hard to tell whether Iain Baxter is putting on the whole world, or simply teaching it to look for beauty in the strangest places—and in the weirdest ways.

Baxter used to be an artist of whom a Vancouver art critic once said: "He may yet become the outstanding figure of 20th-century Canadian art and a sculptor of international significance." But Iain Baxter, artist, no longer exists. Baxter is now a businessman, the president of the N.E. Thing Co., with headquarters in North Vancouver on a piece of land that slants down to the stampeding Seymour River. He lives in his head office of cedar planks with his blonde wife and vice-president, Elaine, and their two children—Tor, a boy, and Ernan, a girl.

His studio is three big tables overflowing with photographs, paper and plastics (the Company's main product). Whatever the Company produces—the inflatable fashions on these pages are one example—appears to be outrageous, creative and almost always unique.

And if businessman Baxter were preparing his first annual report, he'd probably begin it with

### A MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

The fashions illustrating the pages of this annual report are the latest offering of the N.E. Thing Co. (NETCO), a private, unincorporated, esthetic company that acts as an umbrella under which all kinds of neat things can happen.

The fashions—the Company prefers to call them wearables—are very minimal sculpture. They extend the body. They are objects that are worn. A product of the Thing Department, they may represent NETCO's first major breakthrough—if we can get somebody to mass-produce the Things.

We need a breakthrough in the retailing field because 1968 was not a



Baxter, camera at the ready, adjusts one of his Inflatables, defined as objects to be worn.

good business year for NETCO. We've had a lot of publicity, won a lot of prizes across Canada, but nobody picks up on it; they're afraid to purchase anything. We sell probably the least of anybody in Vancouver.

What we need, aside from a couple of sharp guys as business managers, is new capital investment. The Canada Council does this fantastic job, but where, we ask, are the private investors? Art doesn't seem to be an important commodity in a sod-busting society. But art is an investment. It's the greatest gamble of all.

Iain Baxter, President

### A BRIEF COMPANY HISTORY

The president, born in Middlesbrough, England, 32 years ago (arriving in Canada with his mechanical-engineer father one year later) never dreamed of being an artist or, indeed, president of NETCO. He took a bachelor of science in zoology and master of education at the University of Idaho (he was the first to trap the *Peromyscus truei* mouse in Idaho). His ability to draw led him to illustrate Wildlife Of The Northern Rocky Mountains with precise, technically perfect pictures of animals and birds.

His interest in art, coupled with his science degree, won him a Japanese government scholarship to study art for a year in Kyoto, where he had

his first exhibition of abstract works. In 1964, he had his second exhibition and won his third degree—master of fine arts—from Washington State University. He came to Vancouver that year as an assistant professor in the University of British Columbia's fine arts department. He was painting still lifes.

The next spring, after scrounging around city dumps, picking up plastic bottles, he began to vacuum-mold still life sculptures from sheets of plastic.

Canadian art galleries began inviting him to show his plastic stuff. He dropped plastic briefly to work in ice—two tons of it melting on exhibition at UBC as Beauty Through Destruction. He also designed the visual section of The Medium Is The Message, a multi-sensory public happening at the university which pop sociologist Tom Wolfe claims was the first public celebration of McLuhanism. In February of 1966, he presented Bagged Place, a four-room furnished house at UBC in which everything—every stick of furniture, even something in a toilet—was individually wrapped in polyethylene bags.

He topped that by founding the N.E. Thing Co. At one point, it was known as the N.E. Baxter Thing Co., then SICO (for Sensitivity Information Dynamics Co.), then IT—which was Iain Baxter and his friend,

John Friel, showing new work but refusing to say whose work it was: the president wanted a company that would prevent critics from pigeonholing art.

NETCO's name was registered in the spring of 1966 and the Company has since flourished, artistically if not financially. The president applied for the job of resident in visual arts at Simon Fraser University in 1966, and got it after sending a night letter that said, among other things:

SKIED ONE MILE ONE MINUTE  
CROWS NEST PASS STOP HAVE  
DRAWN STOP OWN LARGEST  
SECOND HAND PLASTIC  
ANTIQUE COLLECTION STOP ATE  
AN ORCHID STOP HAVE PLAYER  
PIANO STOP AM WORKING ON  
CONTAINING GAS STOP

President Baxter was to give 26 hours of lectures a term, which he did—all on a single day (plus two hours), during which he showed his students slides, guided them around Vancouver to see such natural beauty as billboards, took them to the movie Blow-Up and returned to class to spend all night viewing experimental films.

Since then, the Company has been exhibiting widely, giving nine one-man shows in 1966, winning the \$3,000 prize at Dorothy Cameron's Perspective '67 in Toronto and, in 1968, showing products in 23 exhibitions, including Canada 101 at the Edinburgh Summer Festival, the Third American Biennial of Engraving in Chile and Art Aujourd'hui, the National Gallery-External Affairs show touring Europe. In November, 1968, NETCO had entries in three categories of the Art Gallery of Ontario's Canadian Artists '68, three of them films, two of them created by Company vice-president Elaine Baxter.

An esthetically successful year was crowned with New York critic Lucy Lippard's review in Art News in which she called the Company's products more provocative than any in a New

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# INFORMATION

N.E. THING CO. LTD.

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Date

1969

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ARTICLE

Number

1

continued

## Steady, now. Is this art?

York gallery, "intellectually active" and "refreshingly original answers to esthetic isolation."

### THE YEAR IN REVIEW

#### Thing Department

A show of inflatable wearable Things at the Burnaby Art Gallery highlighted this department's year. Things are the traditional kinds of art—painting, sculpture—and clothing is sculpture. Among the wearables that were displayed both in a fashion show and later in the gallery as sculpture was the water dress, a White Inflated With Water Wearable, which carries its own water supply—"to use for putting out small fires," president Baxter says. "You carry another environment with you."

Another was a 12- x 12-foot Green Inflatable Wearable. "It destroys the girl's form," its creator explains, "but still you know what's under there. These things command a lot of space: at a big opening or a formal ball a girl would become the main attraction—she would instantly take over the whole place."

Other Things shown this year include a Viking 21-inch chest freezer with six water-covered mirrors on the bottom (Six Reflective Surfaces Frozen, at the UBC Fine Arts Gallery) and a 200-foot yellow polyethylene rope and two heavy-gauge turnbuckles (Yellow Rope Space, atop Mount Seymour, North Vancouver).

#### ACT Department

This is a new department this year, but one with solid growth potential. An ACT is an Aesthetically Claimed Thing. It is a visual seal of approval by the N.E. Thing Co., awarded to any object or person deemed aesthetic. While the Research Department is continuously investigating the necessary criteria for ACTs, it can be announced that certain Things have already been selected as ACTs. They include ACT 17: White Arrow On Roadway, Park Royal Shopping Cen-

tre, Vancouver, and ACT 23: Bridge Pilings, White Lake, Ont.

Photographs will be taken of all ACTs, enlarged and given a gold seal, all of which will be sent to the owner of the object ACTed. "So many Things that are being done are just so much better than art things—quote, art things," says vice-president Elaine Baxter.

#### Printing Department

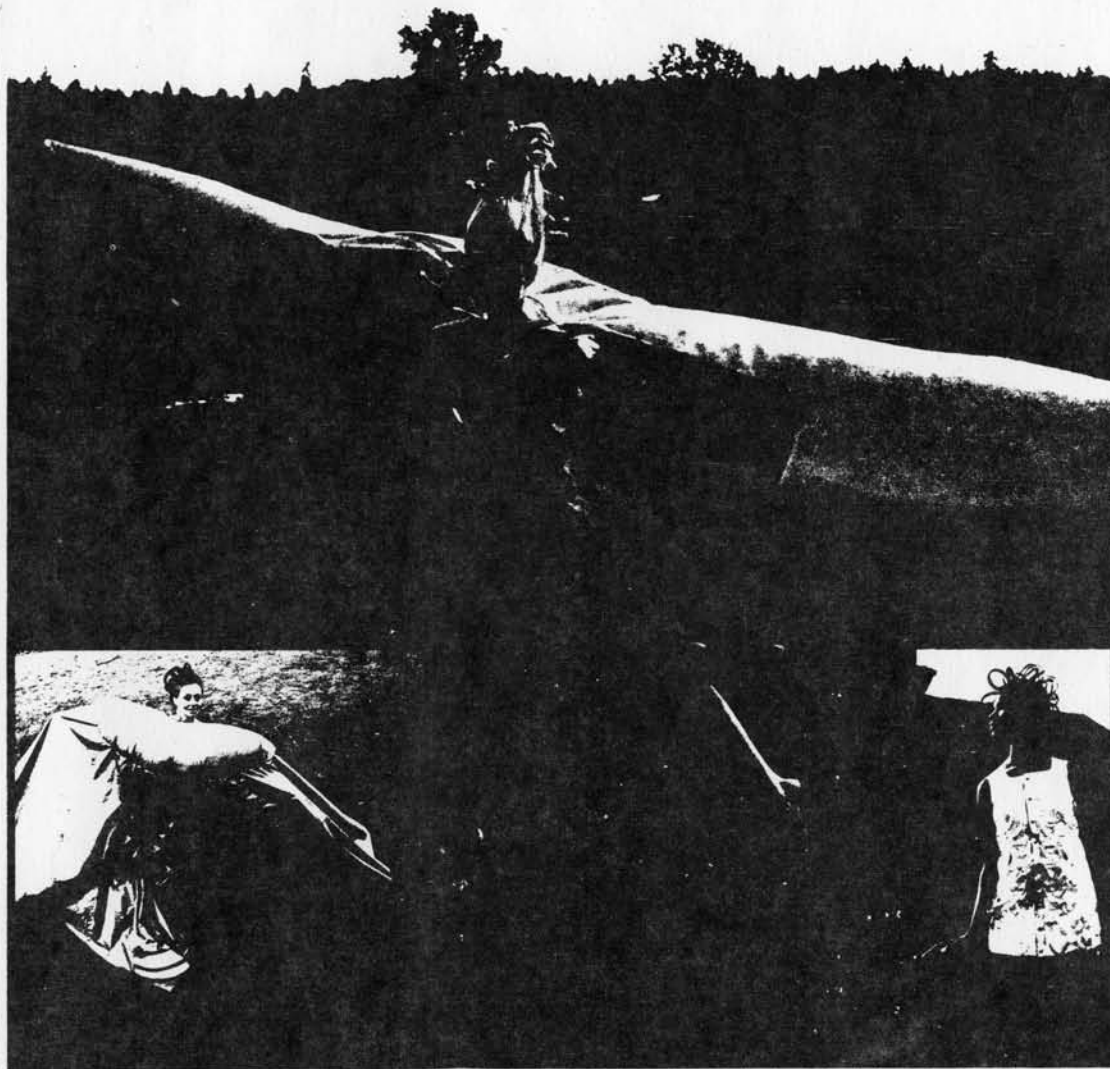
This department will be the Company representative at the Sao Paulo Biennial in 1969. It deals in any work allied with printing: monoprints, publications, print-making. Print-making itself is interpreted broadly to include such products as the third print of a movie or the imprint left when any object is placed on a lawn for a month.

In 1968, the department produced Piles, a portfolio of 59 photographs of natural piles: a pile of doughnuts at Wilbur's Grill, North Vancouver, B.C. ("100% of our Customers Dine at Wilbur's"); a pile of 25 stacked boats, Doug's Boats Ltd., North Vancouver ("Canada's Largest Boat Broker"); The Canada Council contributed \$1,500 to the production of Piles.

#### COP Department

In this department of legitimate plagiarism, the Company progressed with its copying of, or copying, the work of others. "We're working with other people's work very directly," the president says, "but at the same time working so that the things we do have their own validity." In the past, the Company has copied the work of an American artist who paints chevrons, but the Company extended his work with ribbons so that his stripes became

adorable, aren't they, especially the air-filled creation (top)? The inflatable at lower left "destroys the girl's form," its creator admits, "but still you know what's under there." The one at right carries its own water supply "to put out small fires."



15 feet long, and then exhibited this new work as the Company's own.

#### Service Department

Services have been broadened to include Company publicity as well as assistance to other artists. One request came from an American artist who was collecting earth from different countries; the Company arranged to send him some true Canadian dirt.

#### Movie Department

Some interesting developments have occurred in 1968 in the Company's progressive Movie Department. Several still-life films were completed, two- and four-minute silent movies of flags blowing in the breeze, a bonfire, a transistor radio lying among rocks (this one can have its own constantly changing soundtrack).

Three films were entered in an Art Gallery of Ontario competition late in the year, including one of A Four-mile Section Of The Total Length Of Canada. This is a pilot of a 5,000-mile movie of Canada photographed by 10 Super-8 cameras from a truck travelling 60 miles an hour from one end of the Trans-Canada to the other.

President Baxter would like to photograph this epic movie for showing at Expo 70 in Japan. "This idea, backed by the country, could put Canada on the map in movies. It would graphically depict every inch of this country. It would take every hour of about four days to see it." He estimates the production cost at only about \$30,000—a small investment, he believes, for any private company willing to finance the filming for publicity purposes.

For, as the president states in his message at the beginning of this annual report: "Art is an investment. It's the greatest gamble of all."

(A gamble for those who produce as well as those who buy. For the year ending Dec. 31, 1968, the Company's grants, prizes and sales brought it \$5,530. Its expenses came to \$9,090—not including salaries.)

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# INFORMATION

N.E. THING CO. LTD.

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1969

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NATIONAL GALLERY R.R.

Number

1.

27 May 1969

## N.E. THING CO. AT NATIONAL GALLERY

- 2 -

A "visual informer" is setting up a "visual sensitivity information centre" on the main floor of the National Gallery from June 4 to July 6. In other words Iain Baxter of Vancouver will be setting up N.E. Thing Co. Environment, a month-long series of events operating out of the National Gallery into Ottawa and its suburbs. The event, which will be formally opened by the Honourable Ben Basford, Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs, early in the evening of June 3, is intended to parallel the first festival of the National Arts Centre.

A visual informer is the way Iain Baxter prefers to refer to an artist. The visual sensitivity information centre will be many things. Every noon hour there will be demonstrations of plastic products such as inflated dresses, inflated clouds. There will be movies. And if Baxter has his way, there will be a deep-frozen environment, which will be a series of 10 to 15 freezers with frozen sculpture inside; spectators will have to open the doors to peek inside. Baxter would also like to set up a telecopier to receive and send out information to tuned-in individuals in other cities. There will also be an ever-changing photographic exhibit as Baxter roams Ottawa and district and photographs "aesthetically claimed things" (ACT), buildings, objects or views which he designates as aesthetically pleasing, meeting "the stringent requirements of sensitivity information as set forth by the N.E. Thing Co." Baxter will also be keeping records of "aesthetically rejected things" (ART) to which he will be awarding visual seals of rejection for not meeting those requirements. A plot of land will be modified according to his ideas.

Mr and Mrs Baxter are driving to Ottawa from Vancouver bringing their own visual information centre with them. As they come they will be sending information by telecopier to the Paula Cooper Gallery in New York, where Baxter is currently exhibiting along with 28 other artists. Information sent will include written texts, photographs and sketches and will refer to things seen, impressions received as the couple cross the country.

"This information is to be read or looked at, and put on shelves where others can look at it as they please," explained Baxter. "We are living in a world of instantaneous information, and we must learn to make use of it. I think that we will run the information centre at the National Gallery on Greenwich mean time, to make people aware of the varying times around the world."

Iain Baxter is resident in visual arts at the Communications Centre of Simon Fraser University, British Columbia. Born in England, he came to Canada as an infant. His degrees include a B.Sc. in zoology, University of Idaho, 1959; M.Ed. at the same university in 1962; and M.F.A. at Washington State University on a teaching fellowship, 1962-64. He studied at Kyoto and Tokyo on a Japanese Government foreign scholarship in 1961-62. Winner of several awards, his most recent is a senior Canada Council grant in visual arts.

He founded N.E. Thing Co. in Vancouver in 1966, of which he is the president and Mrs Baxter is vice-president. The company includes 11 departments: research, thing (the most comprehensive department... products developed), accounting, ACT, ART, photography, printing, COP (works by contemporary artists are transformed or extended, thus altering their concepts), movie, project (ideas initiated) and consulting. His cable address: Anything, Vancouver. The N.E. Thing Co.'s printing department, in cooperation with ACT and ART departments, will be part of the Canadian representation at the tenth Sao Paulo Biennial in Brazil in September 1969.

N.E. Thing Co. Environment has been arranged through Pierre Théberge, assistant curator of Canadian Art. Because of the spontaneous nature of the Environment, there is no catalogue. Instead, there is a glossy booklet rambling through some of Baxter's concepts; a report of the Environment itself will be published after the event.

The  
National  
Gallery  
of  
Canada



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1969

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NATIONAL GALLERY P.R.

Number

1.

le 27 mai 1969

## LA N.E. THING CO. A LA GALERIE NATIONALE

Du 4 au 6 juin, un "informateur visuel" installera un "centre d'éveil de la sensibilité visuelle" au rez-de-chaussée de la Galerie nationale. Iain Baxter de Vancouver veut y recréer l'ambiance de la N.E. Thing Co. par une série de manifestations axées sur la Galerie nationale et qui se dérouleront pendant un mois dans la capitale et sa banlieue. L'honorable Ron Basford, ministre de la Consommation et des Corporations, marquera officiellement l'ouverture de la N.E. Thing Co., le soir du 3 juin, en hommage du premier Festival du Centre national des Arts d'Ottawa.

"Un informateur visuel", voilà comment Baxter aime définir l'artiste. Son centre, qui a pour but d'éveiller la sensibilité visuelle, présentera plusieurs attractions: tous les jours, le midi, il y aura étalage de produits en plastique, tels des robes et des nuages gonflés; il y aura projection de films et, si Baxter obtient ce qu'il veut, il présentera des sculptures en milieu congelé, c'est-à-dire dans une série de dix à quinze congélateurs. Les spectateurs devront en ouvrir les portes pour jeter un coup d'oeil à l'intérieur. Baxter aimerait aussi installer un télécopieur qui recevrait des renseignements de personnes à l'écoute dans d'autres villes et qui leur en transmettrait. Il exposera aussi des photographies, sans cesse renouvelées, car Baxter parcourra les rues de la ville et les environs pour photographier "des choses esthétiques", c'est-à-dire des édifices, des objets ou des scènes qu'il jugera esthétiques (ACT) et qui répondront "aux exigences rigoureuses de l'éveil sensitif, établies par la N.E. Thing Co." Baxter consignera "les choses inesthétiques" qu'il marquera du sceau de désapprobation (ART) parce qu'elles ne répondent pas à ses normes. Il transformera aussi, à sa guise, un lopin de terre.

M. et Mme Baxter feront le voyage de Vancouver à Ottawa en voiture, transportant avec eux leur matériel pour le "centre d'éveil visuel". En cours de route, ils transmettront par télécopieur des renseignements à la Galerie Paula Cooper de New York, qui expose présentement des oeuvres de Baxter et de vingt-huit autres artistes. Les informations transmises comprendront des textes, des photographies et des esquisses se rapportant aux choses que Baxter et sa femme auront vues et des impressions qu'ils auront reçues au cours de leur voyage

à travers le pays.

"Il s'agit de matériel d'information qu'il faut lire, regarder et disposer ensuite sur des étagères pour permettre aux spectateurs de les examiner à leur guise" explique Baxter. "Nous vivons dans un monde où l'information est instantanée et il faut savoir en profiter. Au centre que nous établirons à la Galerie nationale, je crois que nous adopterons l'heure du méridien de Greenwich pour que les gens se rendent compte des différences d'heure qui existent dans le monde."

Iain Baxter est professeur invité d'arts plastiques au centre de communications de l'université Simon Fraser en Colombie-Britannique. Né en Angleterre, il est arrivé au pays lorsqu'il était encore enfant. En 1959, il reçoit un baccalauréat en sciences zoologiques de l'Université de l'Idaho et, en 1962, une maîtrise en pédagogie de la même université; de 1962 à 1964, il profite d'une bourse d'enseignement et obtient une maîtrise en Beaux-Arts à l'Université de l'Etat de Washington. En 1961-1962, il étudie à Kyoto et à Tokyo, grâce à une bourse obtenue du gouvernement japonais. On a déjà décerné plusieurs prix à Baxter, y compris une importante bourse que lui accordait tout récemment le Conseil des Arts du Canada pour lui permettre de continuer son travail dans le domaine des arts plastiques.

Il a fondé la N.E. Thing Co. à Vancouver en 1966. Il en est le président et Mme Baxter, la vice-présidente. La compagnie comprend onze services: recherches, fabrication (le plus important... où les produits sont fabriqués), comptabilité, ACT, (choses esthétiques) ART, (choses inesthétiques) photographie, impressions, COP (où les oeuvres d'artistes contemporains sont transformées ou étendues pour en modifier le concept), films, projets et consultation. Son adresse télégraphique est: Anything, Vancouver. Le service des impressions de la N.E. Thing Co., et ses services des ACT et des ART feront partie de la participation canadienne à la Xe Biennale de Sao Paulo, en septembre 1969.

La présentation dite N.E. Thing Co. Environment a été organisée par Pierre Théberge, conservateur adjoint de l'art canadien. Vu le caractère spontané de l'exposition, il n'y aura pas de catalogue, mais plutôt une brochure qui reproduira sur papier glacé quelques créations de Baxter; un rapport paraîtra une fois l'exposition terminée.

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FRENCH.

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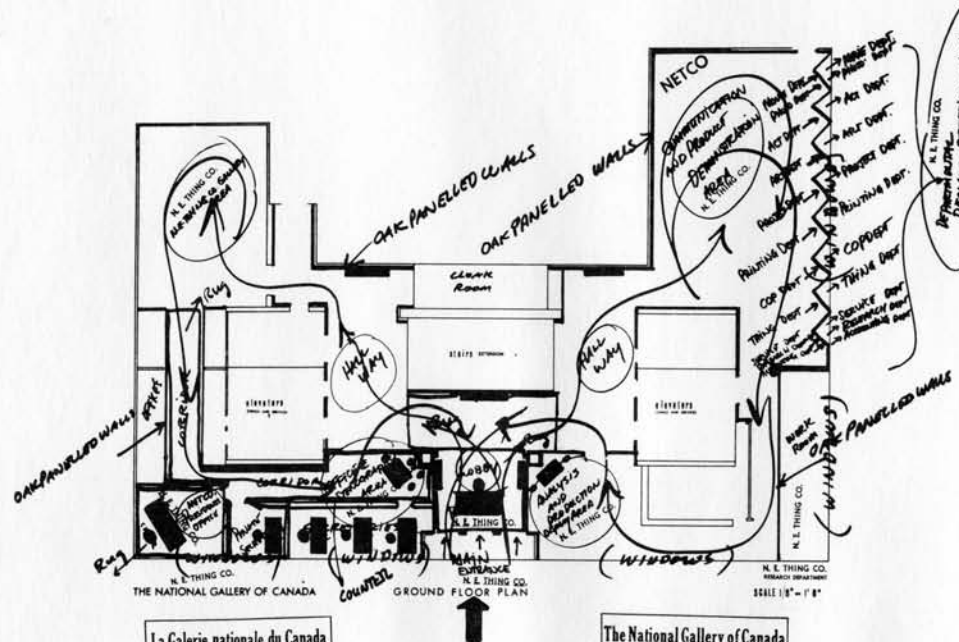
1969

Project

NATIONAL GALLERY OF CANADA EXHIBITION

Number

1.



La Galerie nationale du Canada  
OTTAWA  
4 JUIN - 6 JUILLET 1969

The National Gallery of Canada  
OTTAWA  
4 JUNE - 6 JULY 1969

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FLOOR PLAN OF LOWER FLOOR OF THE GALLERY WHICH THE N.E. THING CO. OCCUPIED AS CORPORATE OFFICES.  
SHOW WAS COORDINATED BY PIERRE THEBERGTE, CURATOR CANADIAN ART

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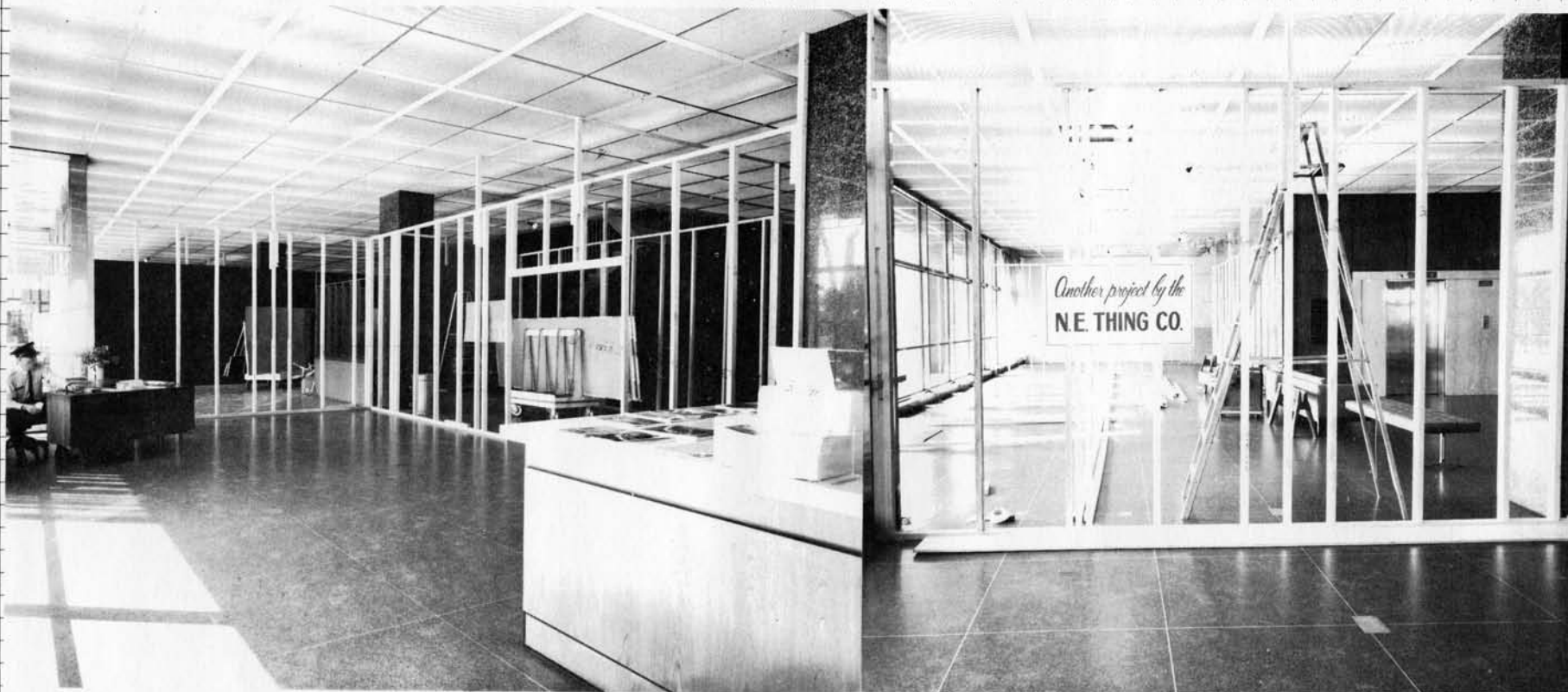
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NATIONAL GALLERY OF CANADA EXHIBITION

Number

3



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Description

PRELIMINARY LAYOUT OF WALLS FOR N.E. THING CO. CORPORATE OFFICES AND DISPLAY AREAS.

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NATIONAL GALLERY OF CANADA EXHIBITION

Number

2



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Description JUNE 9/69 N.E. THING CO. CONFERENCE ON "VISUAL SENSITIVITY INFORMATION, COMMUNICATIONS, AND RAMIFICATIONS". PARTICIPANTS: IAIN BAXTER, INGRID BAXTER, ANNE BRODSKY, EDITOR ARTS CANADA, JOHN CHANDLER, CRITIC, GREG CURENDE, ARTIST, LUCY LIPPARD, CRITIC, DENNIS REID, CURATOR, SETH SIEGELAUS, PUBLISHER, DAVID SILCOX, ARTS OFFICER, BRYDON SMITH, CURATOR, MARY TAYLOR, CURATOR DRAWINGS, DON THEALL, HEAD, ENGLISH, M'GILL, PIERRE THIBERGE, CURATOR, MARIE WHITNEY, NETCO ASSISTANT. TAPE RECORDINGS OF THE PROCEEDINGS WERE OBTAINED.





# INFORMATION

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NATIONAL GALLERY OF CANADA EXHIBITION

Number

4.



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Description *VIEWS OF DEMONSTRATION AREA.*

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NATIONAL GALLERY OF CANADA EXHIBITION

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Description

2 VIEWS OF SECRETARIAL AREA. ACT & ART WORKS ARE ON WALL

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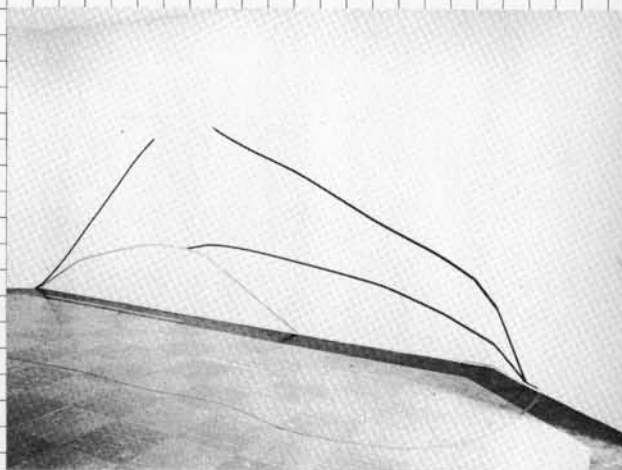
PAGE FROM NATIONAL GALLERY EXHIBITION CATALOG

Number

1.

A.

B.



C.

D.

on the first floor of the Lorne Building and at various sites  
au rez-de-chaussée de l'édifice Lorne et à divers endroits

13

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Description

A. LANDSCAPE - 1968, LANDSCAPE TAPED DIRECTLY ONTO WALL & FLOOR OF GALLERY 25' X 9'

B. WEARABLE - 1968, VINYL & AIR COLLN. 12' X 12'

C. IMAGINARY THING, 1968

D. CHAIN OVER BRANCHES, TREES, AND SHRUBS 1966-68. STEEL, 3/4" X 300 INCHES AT SIMON FRASER UNIV.

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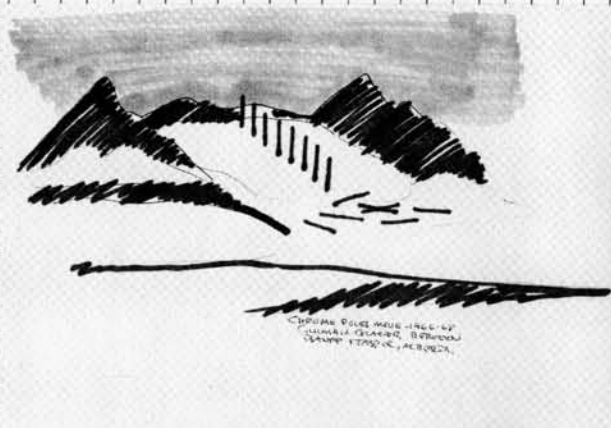
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PAGE FROM NATIONAL GALLERY EXHIBITION

Number

1.

(A)



CHROME POLES MARK LINE OF COLUMBIA GLACIER, BETWEEN CAMP TONGUE, ALBERTA.

(B)



see a display of NETCO'S latest developments in  
voyez une présentation des dernières découvertes de NETCO dans

(C)



(D)



PROJECT DEPARTMENT  
DÉPARTEMENT DU PROJET

6

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Description

A. CHROME POLES MARK 1966-68 - COLUMBIA GLACIER, JASPER, ALBERTA

B. ICE ISLAND LINE, 1969. SIMULATED AERIAL PHOTO. A LINE IS SCORED INTO TOP OF AN ICE ISLAND BY A SNOW MOBILE EQUIPPED WITH BACK HUE. THE FURROW IS THEN SPRAWLED WITH HIGH-DENSITY DYE. LOCATION: BEYING STRAIT, ORKNEY'S BAY IN LABRADOR AREA.

C. RUBBER STROUNOVER BRUSH IN DIAGONAL DIRECTION. 1966-68 20th of curved rubber threads QUARRYING LENGTHS OTHER THAN FURROW.

D. 12' X 12' SYD WALL WITH PICTURE WINDOW - 1968. SCULPTURE ERECTED AT SIMON FRASER UNIVERSITY



# INFORMATION

N.E. THING CO. LTD.

1419 Riverside Drive North Vancouver B.C. Canada

Date

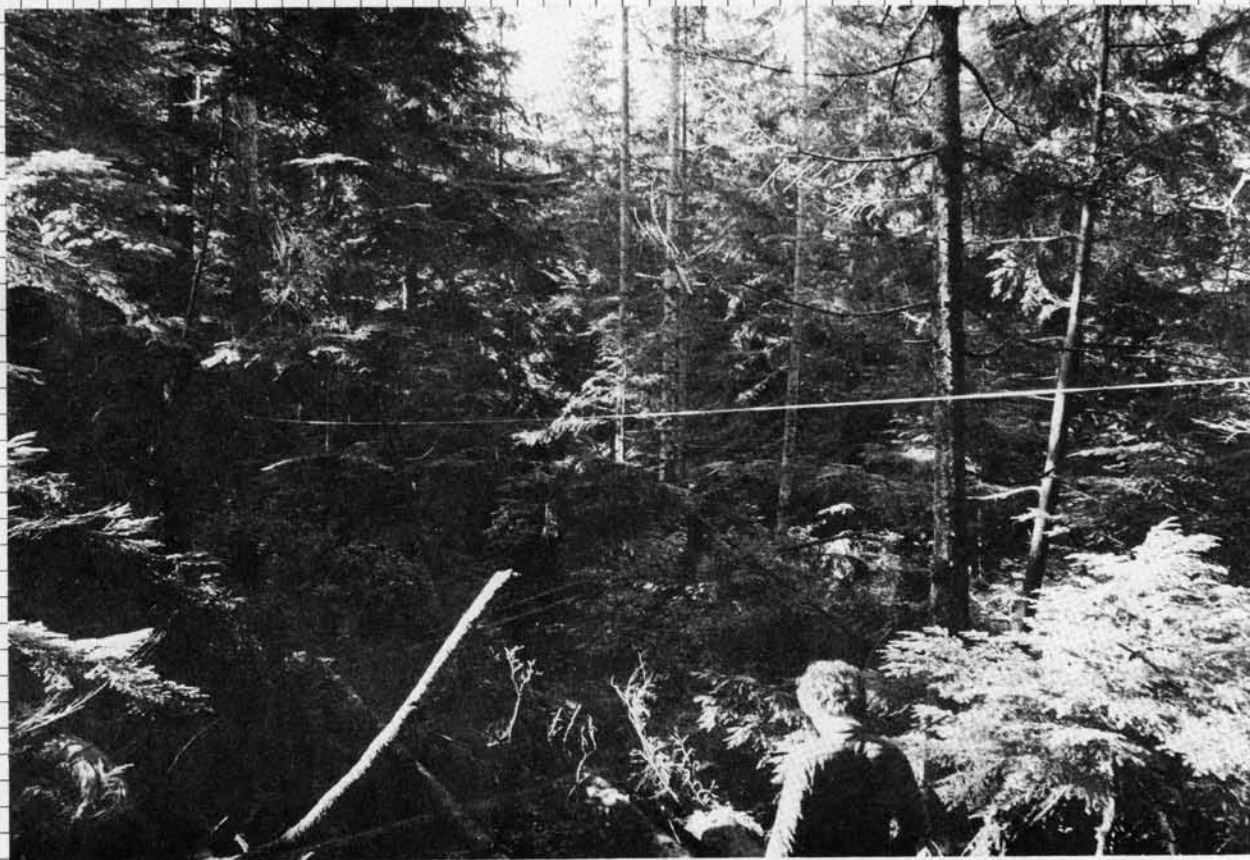
1969

Project

Page From NATIONAL GALLERY EXHIBITION  
CATALOG

Number

1.



visual sensitivity information, through projects, ideas, research and  
l'information sensitive visuelle, par des projets, des idées, de la recherche et

11

PLEASE COMPLETE AND RETURN

Description

Yellow Rope Space - 1966-68 . 700 Feet, polyethylene Rope 1/2", 2 turnbuckles, 2 eye  
Screws. at Mt. Seymour NCTD. N.VANC. B.C.

N.E. THING COMPANY LIMITED

Trade Mark ©



# INFORMATION

N.E. THING CO. LTD.

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Date

1969

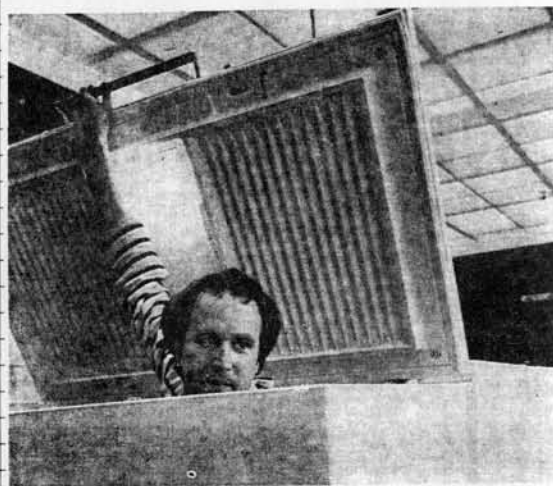
Project

NATIONAL GALLERY EXHIBITION

Number

1.

## THE OTTAWA JOURNAL



### COOLING IT

Iain Baxter, the British Columbia artist who put the new National Gallery exhibit together is "cooling it" in one of the freezers which will hold frozen sculpture.

## N. E. THING CO.

NAME

COMMENTS

Colin  
God  
When were you?  
Is the beginning  
God created the N.E. Thing Co.  
Baxter did the rest  
For this I pay my taxes?



Billard  
3 donna st.  
Ottawa Ont  
254179

Wish to buy one of your  
buttons.  
I also wish to float on your cloud.

Chas. Balik

Refreshing to discover that  
the "staid" Nat'l Gallery  
could find it in its heart  
to accommodate an enterprise  
like N.E. Thing!

Ally -

Shirley

I can not thank N.E. Thing & you

John Whitaker

I suppose that as long as  
pseudo-artists lovers with  
idiotic comments such as  
those above there will be  
pseudo artists around to  
take them in.

J. Leys

Put all this between two tightly pressed  
pages, and it still takes up too much space

PLEASE COMPLETE AND RETURN

Description

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# INFORMATION

N.E. THING CO. LTD.

1419 Riverside Drive North Vancouver B.C. Canada

Date

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ARTICLE

Number

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## Why Not?

It has to be the most hilarious thing to hit Ottawa since Charlotte Whittom slid on her backside opening a curling bonspiel.

Even the name "The N.E. Thing Co. Environment" has a kooky ring, but it fits the show — or is it the experience — which is at the National Gallery until July 4.

Because it is different from anything the Gallery has done before, the safe way to savor it is through an introductory tour.

Come in cold from the street and it could turn you off — if it doesn't outrage you — and that's no fun at all.

Our guide the other night was Pierre Theberge, a witty, articulate young assistant curator of the gallery who seemed torn between his affection for the show and a temptation to put on his audience.

We came, along with about 60 others, attracted in part by the advertised promise of a free movie after the tour.

At the risk of spoiling part of it, the movie turned out to be a postcard-size projec-

## N.E. Thing Display Asks The Ever-Burning Question

Story by Peter Jackman



Photos by Gerry Carriere, Dominion Wide

tion of a film shot from a moving vehicle without either sound or explanation.

Make of it what you would.

The idea, Theberge said, is that we look at most scenery on post cards. So why not a post card-size travelogue?

Why not?

The N.E. Thing Co. Environment was put together by Iain Baxter, an artist from Simon Fraser University and his wife, and was set up by the Gallery to complement the opening performances of the National Art Centre across Elgin Street.

In it, Baxter is saying, a number of things: saying that art doesn't have to be expensive; that it can be found anywhere in any medium and that it doesn't have to be expensive.

### Comments a Rare Treat

He has clearly captured a lively young audience whose comments and observations drawn and written into the guest book are one of the unscheduled treats.

One young couple in the mainly young touring group fingered a huge rubber stamp which forms part of the "Printing Department," one of the sections making up the environment.

"I'd love to take this and go up and down the walls of my room," the boy said.

The stamp says "STAMP" in three-inch letters. Pick your own color pad and you're in business.

Theberge hefted a huge plaid-covered, mattress-like bag with a label which reads "Cumulus Cloud Carrying Bag."

Baxter's idea is that most artists attempt to capture

clouds on their canvas to bring inside.

"So why not get a real cloud, put it in a bag and bring it home?" he asks.

Why not?

"Why not?" is really the question being constantly raised by the show.

Initially, it riles you; raises the obvious question about modern or pop art: "Is it all a big put on?"

This lasts until you begin to see your own thing in some of the exhibits or agree with Theberge's interpretation of Baxter's ideas.

Why does decorative art have to be expensive and conventional?

Baxter has some "thing" made of vinyl — like kids' swimming and sandbox toys — that can be filled with an incompressible liquid that can be filled without damage, that can be filled or set or dry without damage.

### Just Pull Out the Plug

"When you get tired of it, pull the plug and that's it. Put it into a drawer," says Theberge.

Why not?

Theberge says some of the visitors walk right through the environment, spread through three or four rooms, and ask where the exhibit is.

Two youngsters were recently chastised by a guard for lifting a phone hanging on the wall near the door.

"You should have a label on it," said their angry father. "They thought it was one of the exhibits."

Through the days Baxter, resplendent in a striped jersey and rawhide suit, sits in a big ground-floor room with "pres-

ident's office" on the door and regales visitors.

Along with the evening tours, there are daily happenings in the Environment at noon, with pretty girls modelling "inflatable vinyl dresses" — mighty mini-looking garments of infinite variety.

The tour through rooms constructed on the ground floor of the gallery ends in what appears to be a big empty room — The Venue Eye Room.

But it isn't empty.

On the end wall is a minuscule .35 m.m. print of the room itself — sort of like a reflection in a one-inch square mirror, together with the projector running the "free film."



### JUST PULL THAT LITTLE PLUG

An inflatable dress — or is it the fixture inside — has caught the attention of two visitors to the Gallery. The dress — it comes in mighty-mini lengths — can be filled with colored liquids to change the mood and look of the wearer.

PLEASE COMPLETE AND RETURN

### Description

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# INFORMATION

N.E. THING CO. LTD.

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By Roderick Nordell

Ottawa

The N. E. Thing Company of North Vancouver, B.C., uses as its cable address the word "Anything." Any questions?

O.K. The next point is that this self-described "company vitally involved with sensitivity information" will provide about a third of Canada's representation at Brazil's big, controversial São Paulo biennial art exhibition next month.

The controversy will probably not be political but artistic after the unveiling of the N. E. Thing Company's display—24 photographs, each 27 1/2 inches by 30 1/4 inches and designated either ART or ACT. This article is intended as a public service enabling readers to join the controversy without actually going to São Paulo. It is based on the N. E. Thing Company's exhibition earlier this summer at the National Gallery of Canada here in Ottawa.

## 'Actually a mural'

On a naked wall in a main exhibition room were the words: "This statement is actually a mural." Nearby, visitors were looking apprehensively into six white freezers standing like coffins on display—empty, as it turned out.

In the foyer, over the museum's sales desk for books and catalogs, was the legend: "A word is worth 1/1,000 of a picture." From behind a specially erected wooden wall, with door labeled "Workroom," came the sounds of a workroom—on tape rather than live, perhaps because it was Sunday.

Behind the glass front of the National Gallery were installed a half dozen desks, complete with phones and typewriters, plus a president's office. Teen-age girls were using the phones to call their mothers—the desks were not occupied on Sunday, one was told—and other visitors were examining the characteristic N. E. Thing Company printed form. It consists solely of the words "Please complete and return" followed by several blank lines and the name of the company.

## Society summed up

A considerable part of present-day society seemed to be summed up by that form. To this visitor, in fact, the whole show added up to some kind of comment on something, with straight-faced, scientific, businesslike trappings applied to attitudes not customarily found in the workaday world. But something was lost if one tried to push analysis too far; it seemed best simply to let it all happen.

Which may or may not bring us back to a central activity of the N. E. Thing Company—keeping a thorough and detailed global record of all the objects, persons, and events that have been awarded a seal of approval by the N. E. Thing Co. and thus been designated as ACT (Aesthetically Claimed Thing) and also of "the objects, persons, and events that have been awarded a visual seal of rejection by the N. E. Thing Co. and thus been designated as ART." ART refers to "Aesthetically Rejected Things" which, unlike ACT, "do not meet the stringent requirements of sensitivity information as set forth by the N. E. Thing Co."

What is sensitivity information? Visitors to the show here could test their visual re-



sponsiveness to it by entering a large exhibition room whose walls were absolutely empty—or seemed so until one noticed a tiny rectangle mounted at the far end. This turned out to be a photograph—apparently a 35-mm. contact print—of the part of the room behind the viewer. On the opposite wall was a similar photo taken from the opposite direction. Each was labeled "Photographic Reduction of the Entire Volume of the N. E. Thing Company's VSI Area, June 3, 1969."

Obviously, any person, place, or thing would want to keep its sensitivity-information score high. The controversy at São Paulo may come over the N. E. Thing Company's interpretation of its own stringent requirements. One man's ACT, after all, is another man's ART.

## Seal of rejection

David Smith's posthumous reputation as a sculptor is high, but the N. E. Thing Company gives his "Cubi XXVII" the seal of rejection as ART. The gold seal of ACT goes to a pattern of farm machines in action in "Hay Field Arrangement, Saskatchewan, Canada (1968)."

Picasso's "Chaise et Hibou" is dismissed as ART No. 1, while "Azimuth Projection Map" gets the accolade of ACT. Both "Athabasca Glacier" and Robert Morris's



Office

An exhibit — yes, an exhibit — in the N. E. Thing Co.'s recent National Gallery show in Ottawa.

"254 Pieces of Felt" are designated ACT. Marcel Duchamp gets an ACT citation for his "total art production" and an ART citation for his "total ready-made production."

Gold seals go to "Cement Parking Deterrents," "Excess Gas Release Fire," and "Diagram and Whole Concept of Laying the Atlantic Cable."

One may think he has grasped the idea of the organization founded in 1968 by Iain Baxter, an expatriate from Middleborough, England. But here the surface has merely been scratched, with no space for proper attention to the firm's slide shows, its water-filled inflatable dresses, its "Carrying Case for an Andy Warhol Pillow (1965)", or the old banjo music that wafted through the National Gallery as Mr. Baxter and his 11 departments did their N. E. Thing.

## PLEASE COMPLETE AND RETURN

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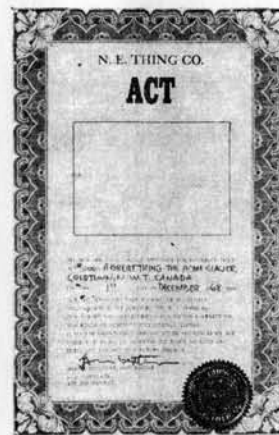
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## N. E. THING COMPANY LIMITED

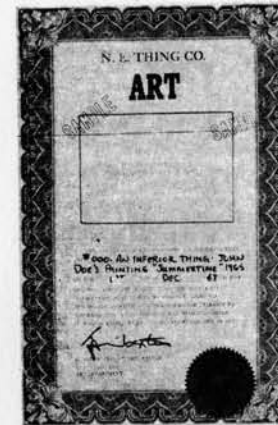
## Form

According to the review in the adjoining columns, "The whole show added up to some kind of comment on something."



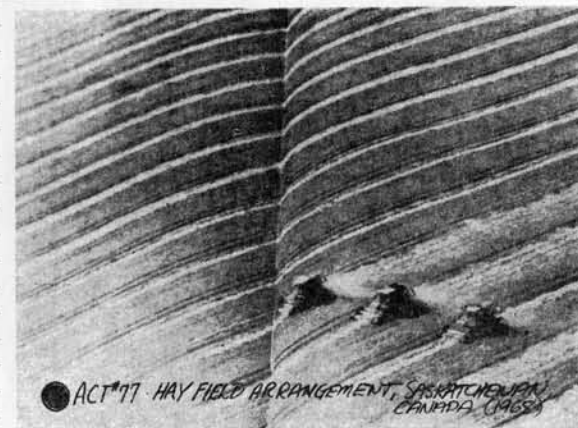
Act

Again in felt pen ink, rubber stamp ink, and collage on printed paper is this ACT citation from guess what company.



Art

ART citations from the N. E. Thing Co. have been awarded to works by Picasso, Duchamp, and David Smith. The citation's materials are felt-pen ink, rubber stamp ink, and collage on printed paper.



This one made it

Farm machines in action are the subject of ACT No. 77, which escaped the indignity of being labeled ART by the N. E. Thing Co., thus establishing itself as an Aesthetically Claimed Thing. N. E. Thing Co. lists the materials of this ACT as felt-pen ink and collage on photograph.

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## Description



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N.E. THING CO. LTD.

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Date

1969

Project

ARTICLE

Number

1

AT THE GALLERIES 24 THE GLOBE AND MAIL, SATURDAY, FEB. 22, 1969

## Magnificent clutter: order and disorder

By KAY KRITZWISER

AIN BAXTER has redone the interior of Toronto's Carmen Lamanna Gallery this week by installing a structure of two-by-fours which duplicates the inside proportions. The Vancouver artist didn't put a hand to the work.

From his North Vancouver workshop—a magnificent clutter of order and disorder—Baxter simply phoned a Toronto friend, Barry Briscoe, consulting architect, and told him what he wanted. Ideas first, performance secondary, the operation was pure Baxter.

The tall instructor from Simon Fraser University is of the new breed of anti-art man. He moves in a ferment of ideas. His vocabulary is at times so new it should come with a glossary.

In his still-uncompleted house on a slope which runs sharply down to the Seymour River, Baxter's ideas obviously are breathed in and accepted as easily as air by Elaine, his gentle-voiced wife, Tor and Eria, their children.

Tor, 7, home from swimming, examined the light boxes his father had brought from a plumbing factory. They contained colored transparencies which will be shown in the second half of Baxter's show at the Carmen Lamanna Gallery on March 1.

Father and son appreciatively assessed the smooth aluminum edges usually intended for bathroom cabinets. Eria, blond replica of her mother, left television, and like a small tadpole, curled on his work desk to draw typically Baxter designs with his black felt pens.

Tor spread out the vinyl landscape he had created from his dad's leftovers—his Bagged Landscapes which have been included in various important group shows in Toronto and abroad. Tor blew up his landscape, leaving no doubt as to how easily he will hurdle the barriers which the senior Baxter is still attempting.

Elaine is so much a link with her 32-year-old husband's ideas and work that she automatically begins her sentences with "We." She is, of course, an important partner in N. E. Thing Co., which both refer to as Netco.

While there's a lighthearted aspect to the partnership, both are deadly serious about the company which sprouted about 1967. (Netco's first projects were shown at Toronto's Albert White Gallery, anonymously, and included such intriguing parodies as Funeral Case for Harold Town's Optical and carrying cases for Andy Warhol's plastic pillows. Baxter continues his parodies with relish by extending to ludicrous lengths the stripes in Kenneth Noland's Chevron. A Time magazine photographer was recently in the Baxter home, he said, puzzling out a way to photograph the work without ending up in the river.)

Their house is on a knoll on Riverside

Drive and without half trying, has become a Baxter environment.

The rough wood wall facing the river soars up to a height broken by tall windows, which lead to a deck built around a huge tree. At its base a coil of white slats linked by steel chains unrolls to become an old ship's ladder. Two battered school desks, joined by iron feet, sit near big plastic jugs, which one day may become Baxter vacuum molded wall sculptures.

Baxter regards plastic jugs as Twentieth Century pottery. "My flexible pots," he calls them. "Once ceramics are crushed, they're permanently crushed; a plastic bottle retains its identity forever."

The new wing literally encloses the small white cottage which was their first home. The new building is made of extraordinary planks, two inches thick, 18 inches wide. "Our friends won't believe them. Trees just don't grow like that," said Elaine.

In this structure, Baxter has experimented with ideas which can be traced in the structure at Carmen Lamanna Gallery. In the gallery work, idea is foremost. While the standard construction wooden planks outline all the areas commonly used in the gallery, the idea was to document the creation and existence of a building.

With the Baxters, there's a passion to redo, reconstitute or duplicate things. That stemmed, perhaps, from a 1966 project when Alvin Balkind, director of University of British Columbia's Fine Arts Gallery, gave Baxter full steam ahead on a wild project: Baxter bagged an entire four-room apartment in plastic sheeting. Even the announcement was mailed in a plastic bag.

Bagged Place was an experiment to verify Baxter's idea that the electronics revolution had arrived, but packaged in plastic. By enclosing everything in the apartment "He even put a cup of coffee in a plastic bag on the table," Elaine recalled. Baxter hoped he shared with the viewers an unexpected look at the plastic world we live in.

Baxter bags find no place in his current work except in the logical continuation of an idea. The camera has become extremely relevant to his work, Baxter said. It's the medium for the work Baxter will soon send off to the Sao Paulo Biennale, to be shown with the three Canadian artists chosen by the National Gallery of Canada to represent the Canadian art scene.

Last summer, the Baxters travelled by car in a wide area around Vancouver, south to Oregon and north in British Columbia. Baxter photographed the kind of things most camera enthusiasts would disdain but which the Baxter family spotted with their perceptive eyes and claimed for their own. "We claimed," he became a frequent phrase in their speech.

Baxter photographed, for example, a cement culvert in a field. A giant arrow pointing along a highway. He photographed a pho-

tograph of a log structure at Tillamuck, Ore.

"The excellence of the photo is not important," Elaine said. "It's only relevant for the information it gives. Iain photographs things we like and therefore claim—or reject."

In this connection, N. E. Thing Co. has produced two forms of certificates, traditional in format, even to the affixed gold or red seal. The gold one is for Aesthetically Claimed Thing (ACT); the red one for Aesthetically Rejected Thing (ART)—which becomes, of course, a sly Baxter pun.

Of the 24 Things photographed by Netco for the Sao Paulo exhibit, more were claimed than rejected. Each certificate will be sent to the ACT or ART owner, with the information that Netco reserves "the right to redo or duplicate any ACT as a future project." Things designated ART remain, contemptuously just that.

Kenneth Noland may receive an ART certificate. But, obviously, the Carmen Lamanna Gallery structure won't, Baxter promised. He entertains the wild notion of breaking up the structure, plank by plank, and selling them to collectors, who would then receive an ACT certificate.

"They could take their planks home and rest them up against the wall as a redone John McCracken," McCracken's planks this week rest against the Art Gallery of Ontario's walls.

Elaine held up a photograph of an old burial ground, shot from a height which made apparent the strange convolutions. "We'd like to duplicate that," Baxter said.

"Maybe we'll find a sympathetic farmer some time who'll let us redo a field," Elaine said wistfully. Farmers, landowners may yet become the new patrons of the Baxters' age. Land will become important to Baxter when he arrives with his family in Ottawa next June. The National Gallery will be the setting for an environmental show to be installed by N. E. Thing Co. "That gets around the gallery's rule against one-man exhibitions," Baxter explained. The exhibition will redo Netco's offices for president, three secretaries, display areas, everything relevant to the company's projects. The Baxters will be on hand daily.

"We hope we can do some projects outside the gallery," Elaine said. Iain wants to insert a plastic bag underneath a patch of earth and blow it up. He's tried it. We'd like to imbed a mirror in a ditch near the gallery and try to mirror an environment.

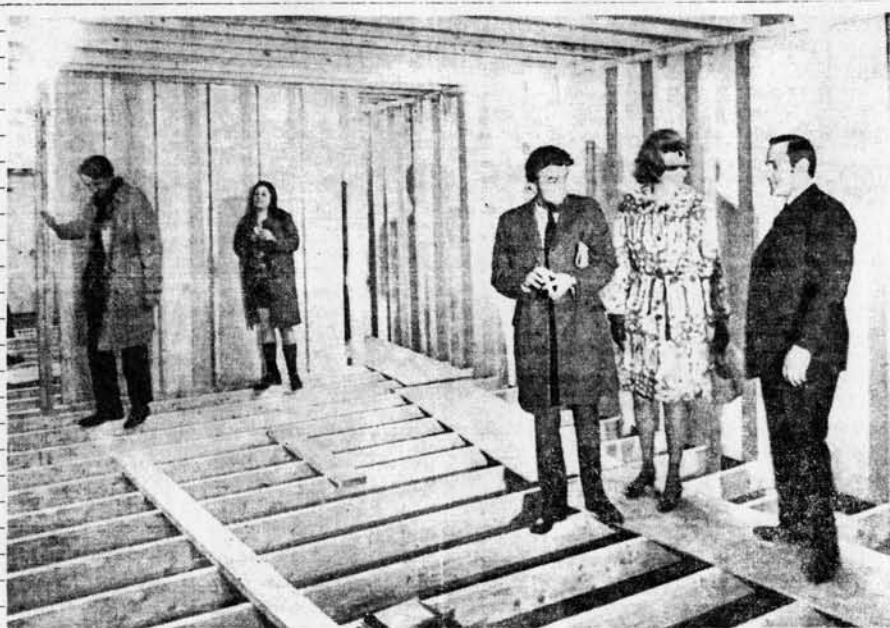
Both Baxters flourish under N. E. Thing Co. "The company gives us an umbrella under which we can claim all kinds of departments. I claim all of them," Baxter said.

"I like going to other companies to have my work done. I'd like other companies to come to me. I'd like artists to test their work with our kind of Good Housekeeping Seal of Approval. There's a fantastical extent to N. E. Thing Co."

N.E. THING CO.

BUILDING STRUCTURE

CARMEN LAMANNA GALLERY  
840 YONGE STREET • TORONTO 5 • 922-0410



Onlookers in and around Iain Baxter's display—mainly an arrangement of two-by-fours—on view at Toronto's Carmen Lamanna Gallery.

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N. E. THING COMPANY LIMITED

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Description *STRUCTURAL ENVIRONMENT* ~~CONCEPT~~ *EXECUTED BY BARRY BRISCOE.*





# INFORMATION

N.E. THING CO. LTD.

1419 Riverside Drive North Vancouver B.C. Canada

Date

1969

Project

ARTICLES

Number

1.

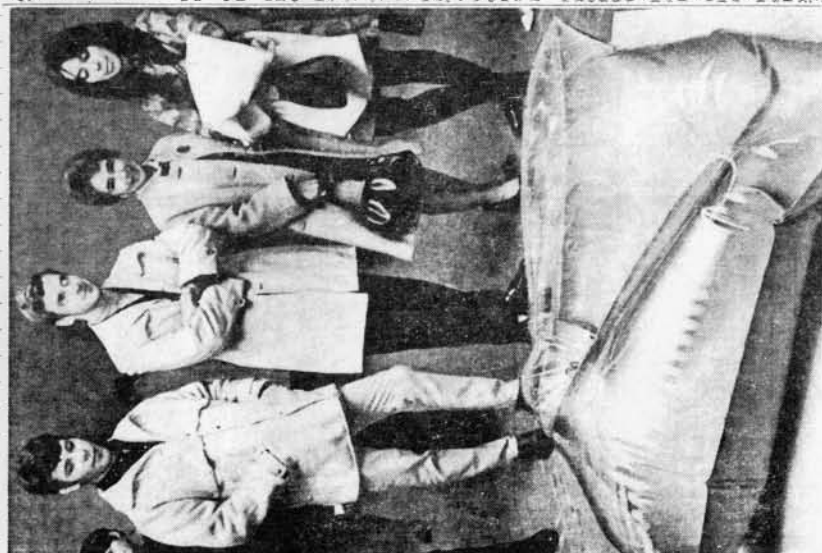
## The N.E. (Baxter) Thing Company



N. E. THING PRESIDENT IAIN BAXTER  
... museums love his plastic ART

### young living

THE ALBERTAN, Saturday, January 11, 1969 — 10



IAIN BAXTER'S GREY INFLATED . . . It won \$500.  
Don England Photo

Iain Baxter is the sort of person who automatically becomes the centre of attraction and attention in a crowded room. He did it this week in the Arts Centre Theatre. He's tall, wears a Gothic Roman hairdo and insists on taking photographs of everything he lays his eyes on.

The 32-year-old Vancouver youth is also one of the most renowned (or notorious) artists in Canada.

His talents he kept within some sort of folder in the form of photographs and snack-dab in the middle of the lecture he gave last night.

The first print was a chain, a simple everyday chain, one used on a tow truck. The chain was draped through some ashtrays, trees and other objects.

The next picture was an equally naive: a man standing on a lawn pouring stones from a wheelbarrow into a hole.

"You see this is the beginning and there is the end . . . it's really simple," explained the "vicepresident" of Baxter's N.E. Thing Company.

Iain Baxter was born in Calgary. In 1955 he left for the States where, in 1961, he received a Bachelor of Science in Zoology degree from the University of Washington.

In 1961 he went to Japan on a scholarship from the University of Idaho and studied art and original attitudes to art.

In 1962 from the University of Idaho, Washington, Iain received a Master of Fine Arts degree and in 1964 he attended the University of British Columbia working in the communications department.

Baxter's art on first impression appears to be sheer folly, but it can claim some meaning.

For example, he displayed a series of photographs on titled plates and included in this little booklet were every conceivable form of piles: Wood, brick, cans and concrete.

Anyone who chances to pass a pile of bricks outside, say, a construction area, this means nothing. But to Baxter it is interest and photogenic and therefore art.

This is visual art and Baxter is a visual artist. He likes to receive a one-man show at the National Gallery, Ottawa.

The N.E. Thing Company is divided into 11 various departments, each with its own research and production.

The main department is the THING department, which gathers together art objects, and jewelry.

PRINTING involves the production of books, print work and other printed matter.

Similar to the PRINTING department the COP department is also concerned with other people's work, though not just their prints. The COP department also involved with the copying media, like Xerox prints.

His paintings aren't selling . . . all that well, but his gallery exhibitions and displays are doing very well, and the rooms are always crowded.

"In the future the public will be more tuned in," he said. To date Baxter has exhibited his works in Rome, France and Brussels.

Baxter is not only a visual artist, he is also a sculptor. Aesthetically Rejected Things. These include inflated sculpture made of vinyl and blown up with hot air. One such example is a large, inflated shape of a huge bag, seen at the bottom and blown up.

"I'm probably the most involved artist in Canada," he said. "My work is both engaging and a challenge."

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# INFORMATION

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ARTICLE

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ART

## IAN BAXTER—genius or mastercrassman



The stock of the N.E. Thing Co. is rising rapidly on an unlimited capital of ideas. Fresh and outrageous, they are proliferating from Vancouver all over the continent and even to South America via exhibitions and the communications network. In this article critic JOAN LOWNDES takes a new look at the amazing man who has made an international name for himself out of his fantastic ideas which are behind this unique artistic concept.

Cover slides of 16 of Ian Baxter's works form the cover of the May-June issue of *Art in America*, which graphs with what it calls impossible art.

This growing phenomenon, it says, is "impossible for collectors to collect, for museums to show, for dealers to handle, for critics to appraise."

It is, of course, ephemeral and a threat to the beautiful object of tradition. It is just right, however, for the wide-ranging intellect of an Ian Baxter, since it uses as its material the world itself.

Examples of Baxter's work are photographed in one of the categories of impossible art listed by *Art in America*: "works, such as chrome poles in the Columbia Glacier which are carried down to the river below as the snow melts; and subworks—works which destroy themselves."

He could also have been included in the *thinkworks*. The entry by which he, along with only 11 other artists, will be represented in Montreal's *Survey 69* is of this order.

It is a word which he telephoned to the jurors, artist Ronald Blouin, New York critic Lucy Lippard and *Vie des Arts* editor André Paradis.

It is very simple but it is a secret. Visitors to the exhibition, which will open in a few days, will see small labels on the walls of the Montreal Museum of Fine Arts telling them to ask the guards for the work of the N.E. Thing Co. The guards will then open the door.

It may start a happening, it may provoke postmodernism, irritation or laughter—the delirious laughter of release, for in a world where so much is overburdened with information, so little new can catch us by surprise.

You go to a gallery expecting something visual; Baxter offers something else. Education to plant barley and bright yellow rain according to color.

His most recent art work was premiered at the May 9 event of the American Cultural Institute of B.C., which he had been invited to address.

His wife Elaine, who is head of the company's publicity, press agent, general coordinator, demonstrator, model, seamstress for his custom inflatable and a courier able to follow him in his wildest imaginings, got up and shouted "Shoot!"

She remarked to me, a little hurt: "But Ian, I

really serious about his ideas."

One close friend vows that he has no sense of humor—at least about himself. Perhaps to an artist it could be fatal.

The viewer, however, he leaves nicely. Take his buttons. He handed out black ones last night to invited VIPs to architects at the aforementioned meeting, then informed them that the acronym meant Visually Illusive Persons.

He is now planning a button with IQ at the bottom, for people with a low IQ, and another marked Mastercrassman, undoubtedly his masterpiece in the genre.

His playful, non-conformist will also be evident at the Sao Paulo Biennial, at which he will represent Canada in graphics—not by litho, engravings, silkscreens or intricate mixed media, but by photographs.

They are justified in the catalogue by a quotation from Webster's *New International Dictionary* which lists, in its definition of print, 12 ramifications, including: "Photography: A copy made on a sensitized surface, as from a negative or a drawing on transparent paper."

Baxter has sent 60 photographs of ACTs (Aesthetically Claimed Things) and 60 of ARTs (Aesthetically Rejected Things) to the *Visual Sensitivity Information* project.

Not that he is over the top. He has persuaded a far more serious artist, Edouard, to plant barley and bright yellow rain according to color.

And on his own property in North Vancouver he has placed mirrors in the landscape as in some fell-pen sketch.

Four days from now, however, Baxter will embark on his biggest project yet. He will set off in his pickup truck with his wife, son Tor and daughter Brian—the entire N.E. Thing Co.—for Ottawa. There at the National Gallery, he will co-operate



... on his own property in North Vancouver he has placed mirrors which reflect the landscape as in some fell-pen sketch.

York. This is for an exhibition of 25 younger artists mounted at the Pado Cooper Gallery by Lucy Lippard.

From the copy room of Wally Whitehead's Western Reproducers Ltd. some *Visual Sensitivity Information* will be transmitted by Xerox Telecopier II over the Farnet network in six minutes.

The VS will be placed on the machine, the phone lifted off the book at both ends, and the VS will be repeated half on a paper which can be instantly hung in the gallery.

Four days from now, however, Baxter will embark on his biggest project yet. He will set off in his pickup truck with his wife, son Tor and daughter Brian—the entire N.E. Thing Co.—for Ottawa. There at the National Gallery, he will co-operate

really good looking high school girls" to stage noon-hour demonstrations modelling his billowing plastic wearables or blowing up his candy-striped cotton clouds.

Sensitized store windows will display the products of all the N.E. Thing Co. departments—Things, ACTs and ARTs, photography, movies etc.

Baxter is as serious about being a businessman as about all he undertakes. He has the energy, optimism, practicality and persistence for the role.

Some people cannot stomach his salesmanship, but it should be considered, as part of his art. As fast as he conceives an idea, he visualizes all its extensions and how it should be presented to the public.

In Ottawa billboards, TV and bus advertising will

make the town aware of his presence.

He will also be putting ads in the paper announcing that he is available for consulting with architects, planners and government officials. President Baxter sees himself as "an idea man that gets paid."

He believes that just as industries engage time analysts and other experts, they should retain artists.

To keep his staff of secretaries busy, he intends to write to all the major businesses in the Ottawa area, inviting their presidents to drop in and talk to him about visual research.

He also plans to have lunch with various ministers, aggressively presenting the case for art. He wants to know where there are no art sites in parks and why the Canada Council "should be expected to

It should be recalled that he is a professor of art at the U. of Washington, liberally represented in the permanent collection of the Seattle Art Museum, and that he has taken part in group shows at the 1968 Municipal Museum and down the Pacific coast.

It is also not irrelevant, since his color is so vivid, to know that he has traveled extensively in South America.

His large one-man show consists of acrylics done in 1967—a small prelude grouping—and two acrylics and a selection of smaller paintings executed in acrylic and crayon done in 1968-69.

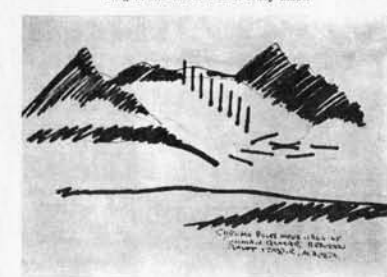
The earlier work is more specifically Pop, subjects like the Blue Sun owing an obvious debt to Oldenburg. The Royal Cigar, however, is a triumphantly individual in its blaring color and its bold decorative and its bold decorative connotations.

The cigar is raised to the status of icon.

The later work tends to be more fluid, despite the constant technique of rolling every form in black, an emphasis which is heavier in the large paintings and



ACT No. ONE... the ACTs are adorned with a big, ornate gold seal which signifies that Baxter, improving even on Duchamp, treats all art and everything in the universe as a ready made.



WATERWORKS... listed in *Art in America* as impossible art these chrome poles in the Columbia Glacier are carried down to the river below as the snow melts.

support total visuals in this country."

Outside his gallery-office, he hopes to work all over the city—on the canal, in Trudeaux's yard and at the National Capitol Commission Lands, if he can borrow earth-moving equipment. Wherever he is on location, TV will play back his activities into the environment.

From Ottawa, he will drive to Charlottetown, P.E.I., where he will create ecological works for the Confederation Gallery.

The Baxter boom, while of prime benefit to the N.E. Thing Co., cannot fail to help artists in Canada generally, possibly opening up for them new areas of influence.

Because of his personality Baxter may be able to forge a link with big business, which has lagged so far behind that of the U.S. in its support of the visual arts.

A strange mixture of Pop and Surrealism, a highly personalized fantasy art drawing upon cartoons and evoking at times the Yellow Submarine, such is the world of Seattle painter Alden Mason, now exhibiting at the Blue-Xi Gallery.

Although this is not his first appearance in the city, it should be recalled that he is a professor of art at the U. of Washington, liberally represented in the permanent collection of the Seattle Art Museum, and that he has taken part in group shows at the 1968 Municipal Museum and down the Pacific coast.

It is also not irrelevant, since his color is so vivid, to know that he has traveled extensively in South America.

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which is seemingly derived from comic strips.

The main body of smaller paintings deals with lumpy, squishy, viscous, phallic shapes, the only straight lines being for minimalist three-dimensional shading.

Often, despite the titles, one feels in an underwater world of greenness, where vegetation frays greedily with the tide or erode sea cucumbers poke through enigmatic structures.

Old concepts abound, such as Smiling Landscape—an open mouth draped like the procession arch of a theatre, its interior unreal blue and mauve.

A recurring motif resembles splashed grey bands pressing in from either side of the painting and causing the central form to bulge. Such is the effect in *Blue Volcano*, far superior in its modulated color to its bigger pure acrylic counterpart, whose solid blue and red become too hard.

The finest and also the largest work in the show is *Soft Landscape*. Here muted greys and pinks, blurred edges of objects, ambiguous constant technique of rolling every form in black, an emphasis which is heavier in the large paintings and

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—George Dlack Photo  
IAIN BAXTER'S THING . . . produced by one-man corporation in Vancouver

## Iain's All Puffed Up As His Thing Takes Art Prize

By DICK SCHULER

It's an inflatable, multi-colored vinyl bag, about 14 by 11 feet, put together by high frequency welding, titled Inflated Hillside — and incongruously classified as a painting.

As such, this creation won the N.E. Thing Co. of Vancouver a \$2,000 prize Wednesday at the Canadian Artists '68 competition in Toronto.

Thing president Iain Baxter insists the inflatable "painting" was strictly a corporate Thing production.

But when prodded, he'll admit he had a hand in its creation and, in fact, is the sole Thing Co. employee so far.

"You just pump it up like an air mattress," he said of the prize-winning thing Wednesday, "and it's about four feet in diameter."

"It actually has a hill landscape on it. You can hang it up, leave it sitting on the floor and walk around, use it as a giant pillow — or stuff it away in your closet."

Already typed the "Jolly Bagman" by Time magazine, Baxter was quite modest about garnering another cash prize for Thing in a national competition.

Last year, he said, he won \$3,000 for an entry in the Perspective '67 show, a Centennial competition.

Nevertheless, Thing Co. hasn't made enough profit yet to sustain him and his family.

So he's also a resident in visual arts at Simon Fraser University's Centre for Communications and the Arts.

But the 32-year-old artist-executive said he's quite serious about his corporation —

so far only registered in name with the city of Vancouver.

"Eventually I'll be looking for investors and get some help in the shop," he said. "It gives me much more flexibility to exhibit as a company."

"It takes away the stigma from the whole messy art situation we have right now."



IAIN BAXTER, Resident Artist at SFU, has been selected by the National Gallery to represent Canada in graphics at the 1969 Sao Paulo Biennial. Other artists chosen are Robert Murray (sculpture) and Greg Curnoe (painting). Baxter is also the only person to have works in each category of the Art Gallery of Ontario's forthcoming Canadian Artists '68 exhibition.

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## Iain Baxter: New Spaces

by Lucy R. Lippard



"It is the Visual Unknown that challenges the N.E. Thing researchers. Like researchers anywhere, they seek to add to the world's store of knowledge — by exploratory research on the frontiers of basic theory, by product research for results in specific tangible forms, by production research for processes that yield precise end products. These probings of the why and how of visual things and their combinations are efforts to discover distinct properties or effects and the means of putting them into operation." (N.E. Thing Company Operations Statement, 1978)

"Ecology as used today is: a science which investigates organisms in relation to their environment; a philosophy in which the world of life is interpreted in terms of natural processes; an art requiring skill and having a plan and a pattern within which many activities may be centered. This involves an open mind which is willing to use sensory observations as a basis for mental explanation." (Angus M. Woodbury, *Principles of General Ecology*, New York-Toronto, 1954)

"Nobody can commit photography alone. It is possible to have at least the illusion of reading and writing in isolation, but photography does not foster such attitudes. If there is any sense in deploring the growth of corporate and collective art forms such as the film and the press, it is surely in relation to the previously individualist technologies that these new forms corrode." (Marshall McLuhan, *Understanding Media*, New York, 1964.)

Baxter's photographs will represent print-making for Canada at the Sao Paulo Biennial in Brazil (September 69-January '70). Robert Murray and Greg Curnoe are the other participating artists. The N. E. Thing Co. is currently on exhibition at The National Gallery (4 June-8 July). Photos of N. E. Thing Co. projects are by the company's Photography Department.

The N. E. Thing Co. Environment occupies the first floor of The National Gallery of Canada during June.

Vancouver is several cities: a big ugly port, a visually unexceptional residential community, a university town, an up-to-date supermarket suburbia, container of and contained by magnificent natural scenery. Baxter works in and out of the various identities offered by his environment. His endless ideas admit no limitation to an artist's activities. Like artists all over the world today he is replacing the usual art-making and appreciating procedures — image identification with reality through the imitative or decorative object — with a direct and expanded attack on the idea of art. In his role as President of the N.E. Thing Company, he can be as commercial as any businessman, as free as any artist. He has learned from McLuhan that "all meaning alters with acceleration. ... Control over change would seem to consist in moving not with it but ahead of it."

Baxter's obsession with "Visual Sensitivity Information Dynamics" has led him to extend the electronic "nervous system" into broader spaces, primarily landscape, or the rural, urban and suburban outdoors. Such understated, almost non-existent pieces as the rubber line through low bushes, the chain or yellow string in the forest, are light, flexible, uncommitted with gravity. They exist not as objects or volumes to be reckoned with as separate entities, but as devices for the redefinition or refocusing of the setting in which they are placed. In the marker pieces, the nails driven into the ground, or the stream rubber sections, the explicit graphic quality is interrupted; in the ski pieces it becomes the delineation of distance and the path of action.

Dennis Oppenheim says that in his outdoor pieces, he is bombarding existing volumes with new information. Despite the differences between his and Baxter's approaches, this is a good basic definition of what generally happens in such work. The new information is patently less than is expected of art; it is not self-contained though still limited by the actual length and breadth of the project; often it is not static and does not draw attention to itself as a single entity. On the other hand, many of Baxter's most beautiful pieces do not escape the object vein at all; they are isolated forms in nature rather than in a gallery space; they geometrize nature without competing with it or dominating it in any

way. Such geometrization represents the vestiges of the pictorialism that painting and sculpture have been subjected to for eons, of the traditional imposition of artificial or man-made order on less visible natural order. It is a matter of degree, however. Much of the new work is very general, an extension of the all-over principle into very low-tension areas.

In this sense some of these works have to do with Impressionism far more than the 19th century Picturesque with which Sidney Tillym has unfavorably aligned them (*Artforum*, December, 1968). Impressionism more than any other modern style dealt with pure perceptual experience and with a complete visual field rather than significant form. It had a non-hierarchical view of nature — the comprehensive broad glance or scan instead of the single focus, sharing the vagueness of natural perception. There is a good deal more to the analogy than that, and to the relationship of Impressionism to the "broken edge" syndrome of recent art, but in Baxter's case it is worth touching upon because of his long standing involvement with nature as a phenomenon rather than as formal source.

Baxter is not and never has been a formalist. Unlike most of his American colleagues he comes into photography not from a minimal-serial background, and into the new landscape not from single structures that outgrew their formats or collapsed and disintegrated into their spaces, but from science into art, from a fundamental interest in the physical make-up of his surroundings, which led to a fusion of surroundings and information about them. In college he had courses in ecology, the study of organisms in relation to their environment. Ecology is sometimes called external physiology, and physiology, internal ecology. The eco-system approach, in which animal and vegetable organisms (human too) are considered as an interacting unit, is just being explored by artists. The Palus group at Yale (*see art/canada*, December, 1968) is involved with a subliminal or physiological reaction to the ways in which it can rhythmically focus the energy latent in the environment. Richard Serra had an exhibition in Rome in 1966 that consisted of real animals making their own environments; Charles Ross reflects the environment in prisms and calls his work ecologies. The vati-

artforum June 1969 3

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ARTSCANADA MAGAZINE ARTICLE BY LUCY LIPPARD

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MAY-JUNE 1969 \$2.50

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ACT #1 Long away,  
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VIEW FROM THIS SIDE

N. E. THING CO.



ACT #23 Nighttime view  
DATE 1/1/69  
VIEW FROM THIS SIDE

N. E. THING CO.  
PHOTO DEPARTMENT



ACT #100 R.R. Harris's  
DATE 1/1/69  
VIEW FROM THIS SIDE

N. E. THING CO.



ACT #101 R.R. Harris's  
DATE 1/1/69  
VIEW FROM THIS SIDE

N. E. THING CO.



RUBBER OVER PULVER  
DATE 1/1/69  
VIEW FROM THIS SIDE

N. E. THING CO.



ACT #6 ONE BULL FORD  
DATE 1/1/69  
VIEW FROM THIS SIDE

I. E. THING CO.



ACT #15 - GOSWORTHY TRAIL  
DATE 1/1/69  
VIEW FROM THIS SIDE

N. E. THING CO.



ACT #102 R.R. Harris's  
DATE 1/1/69  
VIEW FROM THIS SIDE

N. E. THING CO.  
PHOTO DEPARTMENT



ACT #5 Five Banks  
DATE 1/1/69  
VIEW FROM THIS SIDE

N. E. THING CO.



THING DEPT.  
DATE 1/1/69  
VIEW FROM THIS SIDE

N. E. THING CO.



ACT #103 R.R. Harris's  
DATE 1/1/69  
VIEW FROM THIS SIDE

N. E. THING CO.  
WILLIAMS COLOR



ACT #104 R.R. Harris's  
DATE 1/1/69  
VIEW FROM THIS SIDE

N. E. THING CO.  
PHOTO DEPARTMENT



ACT #3 BRIDGE SUPPORT  
DATE 1/1/69  
VIEW FROM THIS SIDE

N. E. THING CO.



ACT #105 R.R. Harris's  
DATE 1/1/69  
VIEW FROM THIS SIDE

N. E. THING CO.  
PROJECTS DEPARTMENT



ACT #106 R.R. Harris's  
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COVER: A slide series of "things" that provide the stock-in-trade of Iain Baxter, Canadian artist-entrepreneur and notable exponent of the "impossible art" featured in this issue. As the founder of ACT, an organization whose name means Aesthetically Claimed Things, Baxter has appropriated landscapes, buildings, highways, manufactured objects—and paintings and sculptures by other artists—as works of art. His total operations comprise the N. E. Thing Co., and the "N. E. Thing" (if you say it aloud) points up the "anything" character of his outlook. "Anything's a masterpiece," he says. This cover, photographed by Geoffrey Clements, carries the expressive seal of approval of the N. E. Thing Co.

## Art in America

May-June 1969

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The latest breed of artist-innovators turn out products that are uncollectable, uncollectable, unshowable—products recognized by no known bureau of standards. Hardly solemn but serious, these headstrong creations reveal the shape of a new movement that makes the earlier esthetic revolutions of this century look tame

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Cover: A slide series of "things" that provide the stock-in-trade of Iain Baxter, Canadian artist-entrepreneur and notable exponent of the "impossible art" featured in this issue. As the founder of ACT, an organization whose name means Aesthetically Claimed Things, Baxter has appropriated landscapes, buildings, highways, manufactured objects—and paintings and sculptures by other artists—as works of art. His total operations comprise the N. E. Thing Co., and the "N. E. Thing" (if you say it aloud) points up the "anything" character of his outlook. "Anything's a masterpiece," he says. This cover, photographed by Geoffrey Clements, carries the expressive seal of approval of the N. E. Thing Co.

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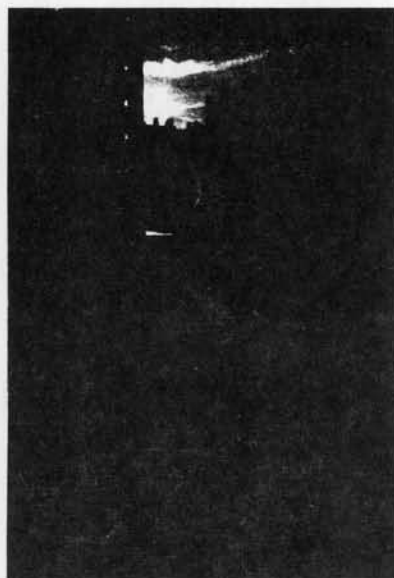
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## IMPOSSIBLE ART—WHAT IT IS

David L. Shirley



If nature has and you are in contact by using technology, you shouldn't make a habit and attend technology? (David L. Shirley in front of a wall, to show it, has created a New York Times parking lot with one of nature's staples, salt. And typically enough, the title is "Salt Flat." Photo by Robert O'Connor.

Impossible art, paradoxically, is possible. Indeed, today it is what the avant-garde sensibility is all about, what the bright new artists are thinking about. But what they're thinking is not simply the traditional disavowal of an older art style and the concomitant statement of their new aesthetic.

Impossible art insists upon reworking the whole art world as we know it—a complicated mosaic of dealers, private collectors, galleries, museums, critics and art historians—as well as the ways of looking at art. The "impossible" artists seem to be saying that we desperately need a new system for a new art. "Art is in a state of grand upheaval," says critic Harold Rosenberg, and William Rubin of the Museum of Modern Art adds that there is a "frustration among young artists. They believe that the art and the art world we know have been used up."

Much of today's art is impossible for private collections, galleries, museums and artists' studios because of its outsize dimensions. Some of it is impossible because in its "finished form" it exists only as an idea and not as an object and therefore cannot be bought and sold. It is also impossible if it exists only as a proposal on paper and cannot be realized for lack of funds or technological know-how. Certain works are impossible in the light of traditional art concepts because these works are not entities within themselves but become artistic creations only as the artist or spectator adds or subtracts from them. Impossible art flies in the face of the Renaissance canon with their devices of order, harmony and proportion which have dominated artistic thinking for centuries; it is often an art of chaos, disorder, with total disregard for harmony and the relationship of parts. A significant segment of current art is impossible because it denies and denies the age-old tenet of permanence; some pieces are conceived as artistic objects only when they are being destroyed. "Art" has become an impossible term for the "artist" who sees *creating* as a work of art, reducing the shrines of the masterpieces.

Big-scale art has been perhaps the major cause of impossible art. Ever since the abstract expressionists began, after World War II, to slash their monochromatic visions into immense canvases, art has become increasingly bigger. In its insatiable strides toward gigantism, art has pushed out of the galleries and museums and now is waging an assault on vast areas of the earth, water and sky.

Big-scale art has been perhaps the major cause of impossible art. Ever since the abstract expressionists began, after World War II, to slash their monochromatic visions into immense canvases, art has become increasingly bigger. In its insatiable strides toward gigantism, art has pushed out of the galleries and museums and now is waging an assault on vast areas of the earth, water and sky.

## Nihilworks

Nihilworks are, of course, destructive art. Like the thinkworks, they propose as their mission to reduce art to ideas, but more specifically their art achieves its creative meaning only when it is destroyed, only when irreversible change has triumphed over permanence. Nihilworks are hardly brand-new. Michelangelo shaped a snowman for the art patron Piero de' Medici, and to the joy of Michelangelo and even Piero, who was an avid possessor of objects, the man beautifully vanished before their eyes. Today many destructive artists make impermanence a policy. Iain Baxter has created a water fountain surrounded by dirt which erodes away as the water pours over it, and Mike Heiser has created a "symbolic" destruction of New York's Whitney Museum by "ferreting under the foundation." Of course, he dug only a few holes around the foundation, but those "depressions" were assertions that "the museum is now impossible in our society. It can exist only as a source of information."

Nihilworks have become so popular in advanced art circles that they were made the subject of a show last year at Finch Col-

What looks like a periscope from the underground activities of an espionage, underwater group is Iain Baxter's steel pipe that pours water out onto the dirt surrounding it and eventually erodes away the mound, which remains only a destroyed but theoretically more artistic fragment of its former physical self.



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## Waterworks

They go back to the Ruben-type of workshop tradition and each individual creativity as "possible in such a complicated world." "Personal artistic expression is obsolete," they say. They are not interested in producing art objects for galleries and museums but in creating works of art for public use.

"They" is Pula, a Yale University-based group of six men whose chosen name has no particular meaning, but who are vitally involved with works of art which "make meaningful use of current phenomena of the technological environment." Their art form is impossible except in "vast spaces accessible at times uncommonly available in nine-to-five institutions."

The reason is that their art work takes place in water and at night. Like ecdote-symptoms, they recently placed fifty-five xenon strobe lights under water in the four-acre pond of the Boston Gardens. Around the pond, above water, they rigged up fifty-two poly-planar speakers, which were programmed by elements of analogue and digital computers. Since the lighting fixtures were not visible beneath the surface of the water and the speakers were inconspicuous, the effect was perceived entirely as light flashes and sound pressures, a glittering display of water, sound and light. "Television, film, the complex interplay of urban sounds and lights, and experiences such as driving on highways at night through driving streams of automobile headlights have involved our culture in areas of new perception," states Pula. "We try to make meaningful and pleasurable these experiences which are constantly present in our daily lives."

(continued)

This is an Alberta, Canada, snowwork that becomes a waterwork. Iain Baxter, president of the N.E. Thing Co., has designed a project for which he plunges chrome poles into the Columbia Glacier. The poles work their way down to the river below as the snow melts.



Alberta, Canada



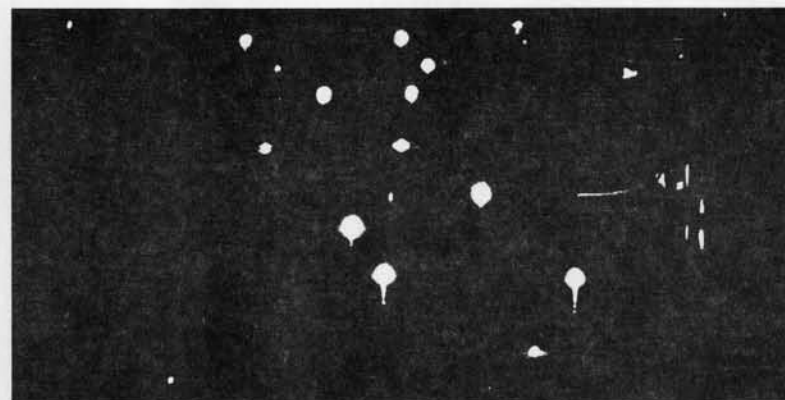
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Pula's plans for the future include working with the ocean. As oceanographers, they hope to create a light-and-water environment that will be even "more vague." "Possible art talks of dimensions and limits," they say. "Physical boundaries dissolve in our works. There are no limits, only ambiguities."

"I want to cover thousands of square miles," declares earth artist Dennis Oppenheim. To achieve that, he has also begun working with water. Last winter he ventured into upper New York State, where he created his "ice pieces." With big-toothed saws, he cut huge pieces from the ice on a lake. The liberated pieces were then allowed to float freely about the lake. He journeyed to Maine and worked snowscapes into new configurations. "This is the most grandiose art ever imagined," says Oppenheim. "It comes from a conceptual order in which ideas can be quickly extrapolated. If an artist has to spend a lot of time learning a craft like welding, he doesn't have the time to carry out all his ideas. I can do more, for it takes little time to carry out my ideas."

(Water as ice also fascinates Iain Baxter of Vancouver, British

Columbia. He has designed a series of chrome poles that are to be driven into a glacier on a mountainside five feet apart and with forty feet of each pole showing. As the glacier slowly advances, the poles topple down and come to rest on the icy lake below. Baxter's *Underwater Moving Thing* is simply an underwater moving thing balanced by floats and weights. It is to be seen by casual passers-by on ocean liners, if the "thing" is placed in the ocean. "It could also be arranged for the Great Lakes," says Baxter. Baxter has even claimed waterworks that he didn't work on. "I have, however, recognized that they are art works," says Baxter. "And I want to bring them to the attention of the public as art works." Reminiscent of Marcel Duchamp proclaiming an object to be a work of art if he said so, Baxter has set up ACT, his own organization whose name means Aesthetically Claimed Things. ACT No. 32 is the gravel-filled steel pilings in White Lake, Ontario. ACT has also claimed landscapes, buildings, highways and works by other artists as works of art. "Anything can be a work of art if we have a sensitivity to it," says Baxter, president of the N.E. Thing Co. "Anything's a masterpiece."



Above: The Pula group are symphonists who created this shimmering waterwork in Boston. Then placed 55 xenon lights under the water and were able to trap some of the fascinating effects of light deflected through water.



Left: Iain Baxter's N.E. Thing Co. has a division called ACT, an acronym for Aesthetically Claimed Things. Like Duchamp, Baxter can proclaim anything a work of art. One of the waterworks Baxter has claimed as an art work is this lake adorned with such riparian delights as the plastic tube and the two bathing beauties.

PLEASE COMPLETE AND RETURN

Description

ART IN AMERICA ARTICLE

N.E. THING COMPANY LIMITED

Trade Mark ©





# INFORMATION

N.E. THING CO. LTD.

1419 Riverside Drive North Vancouver B.C. Canada

Date

1969

Project

CONTINENTAL NORTH AMERICAN CIRCUMSCRIPTION

Number

1.

## INFORMATION

N.E. THING CO. LTD.  
1419 Riverside Drive North Vancouver B.C. Canada

Project: CONTINENTAL NORTH AMERICAN CIRCUMSCRIPTION  
Date: 1969

USING A TELEX MACHINE AT N.E. THING CO. HEADQUARTERS IN NORTH VANCOUVER, B.C. CANADA - CITIES AND TOWNS (WHEREVER A CONTACT COULD BE MADE) WERE CONTACTED. AFTER TELEX CONTACT WAS MADE PERSONS WERE TALKED DOWN AND WE THEN PROCEEDED ON TO NEXT CONTACT POINT.  
CIRCUMSCRIPTION WAS CARRIED OUT IN A CLOCKWISE DIRECTION FROM VANCOUVER P.C.  
A TAPE (AUDIO) WAS MADE OF THE ENTIRE CIRCUMSCRIPTION OF THE NORTH AMERICAN CONTINENT.



PLEASE COMPLETE AND RETURN

Description

TAPE IS PLAYED BACK SO PEOPLE CAN HEAR TELEX TERMINAL CONNECTIONS. ALSO EXHIBITED IS MAP OF NORTH AMERICA.

N.E. THING COMPANY LIMITED

Trade Mark ©



# INFORMATION

N.E. THING CO. LTD.

1419 Riverside Drive North Vancouver B.C. Canada

Date

1969

Project

N.E. THING CO. LANDSCAPE

Number

1.



PLEASE COMPLETE AND RETURN

Description Sign was placed in approved Landscape on Prince EDWARD Island. When a person comes upon this N.E. THING CO. sign the landscape included is all that one can see from this point to the horizon line.

N.E. THING COMPANY LIMITED

Trade Mark ©



# INFORMATION

N.E. THING CO. LTD.

1419 Riverside Drive North Vancouver B.C. Canada

Date

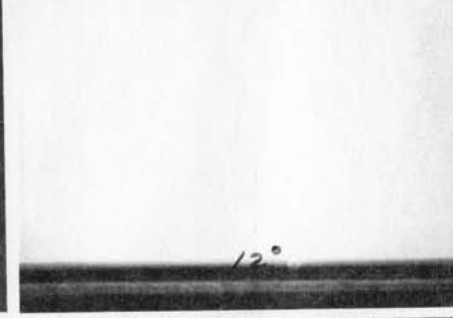
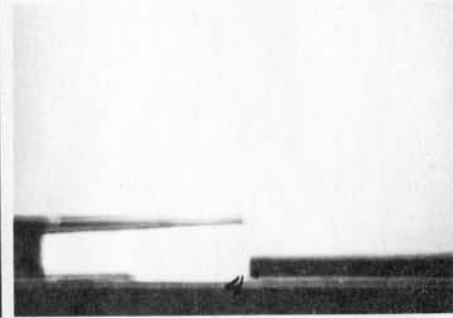
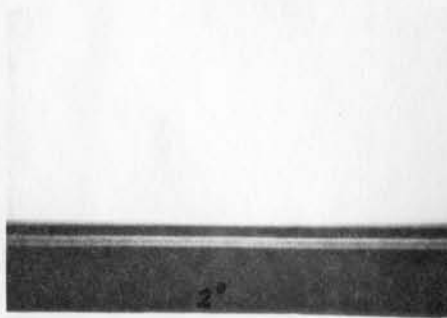
1969

Project

360 DEGREES

Number

1.



PLEASE COMPLETE AND RETURN

N.E. THING COMPANY LIMITED  
Trade Mark ©

Description

From top of Simon Fraser University camera was set up. A FISH EYE LENS was used to ~~take~~ photograph every odd degree 1, 3, 5, etc. AND THEN A 1000 MM lens was used to photograph every even degree 2, 4, 6, etc. the 2 sets of photos were then put together on microfilm to form one continuous 360° photo concept.





# INFORMATION

N.E. THING CO. LTD.

1419 Riverside Drive North Vancouver B.C. Canada

Date

1969

Project

CIRCULAR WALK INSIDE ARCTIC CIRCLE AROUND INUVIK, N.W.T.

Number

1.



PLEASE COMPLETE AND RETURN

Description

2 presidents of N.E. THING CO. LTD. WALKED IN A CIRCULAR FASHION AROUND THE OUTSIDE PERIMETER OF THE TOWN OF INUVIK N.W.T. CANADA, INSIDE THE ARCTIC CIRCLE. (140 PHOTOS WERE TAKEN OF ONE OF THE PRESIDENTS WALKING BY THE OTHER PRESIDENT. TOTAL DISTANCE OF THE CIRCULAR WALK WAS 3 1/2 MILES, MEASURED BY PEDOMETER, THE TOTAL NUMBER OF STEPS NECESSARY TO ACCOMPLISH WALK WAS (10,314))

N.E. THING COMPANY LIMITED

Trade Mark, C



# INFORMATION

N.E. THING CO. LTD.

1419 Riverside Drive North Vancouver B.C. Canada

Date

1969

Project

LUCY LIPPARD WALKING TOWARD TRUE NORTH - 1969

Number

1.



PLEASE COMPLETE AND RETURN

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N.E. THING COMPANY LIMITED

Trade Mark, ©

Description

PERFORMED AT INUVIK, N.W.T. LUCY LIPPARD WALKED  $\frac{1}{4}$  MILE THROUGH TUNDRA TOWARDS TRUE NORTH.

Seal



# INFORMATION

N.E. THING CO. LTD.

1419 Riverside Drive North Vancouver B.C. Canada

Date

1964

Project

LOOKING NORTH FOR 1 MINUTE

Number

1.



PLEASE COMPLETE AND RETURN

Description AT INUVIK, N.W. T.

Co-president, IAIN BAXTER, LOOKING NORTH FOR 1 MINUTE INSIDE THE ARCTIC CIRCLE. COMPASS WAS HELD IN HAND FOR PROPER DIRECTION.

N.E. THING COMPANY LIMITED

Trade Mark ©





# INFORMATION

N.E. THING CO. LTD.

1419 Riverside Drive North Vancouver B.C. Canada

Date

1969

Project

MELT

Number

/

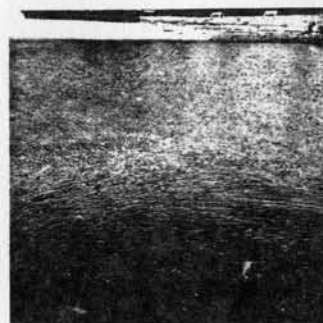
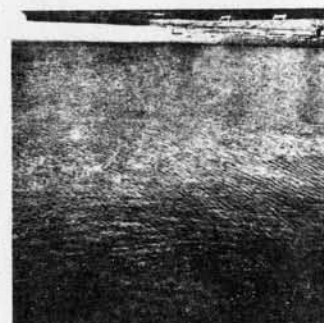


MELT

(MAKE A METAL Mould OR SOME TYPE OF Mould ONE Mould FOR EACH LETTER ABOUT 1" IN HEIGHT AND 6 TO 8" DEPTH. WHEN EACH OF THESE LETTERS IS FROZEN SOLID TAKE TO OCEAN AND PLACE IN



1. metal or wood moulds were made.
2. water was placed in moulds and allowed to freeze.
3. letters were removed & placed in the sea and left until they melted.



PLEASE COMPLETE AND RETURN

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.....

N.E. THING COMPANY LIMITED

Trade Mark ©

Description

HALIFAX, N.S.



# INFORMATION

N.E. THING CO. LTD.

1419 Riverside Drive North Vancouver B.C. Canada

Date  
1969

Project

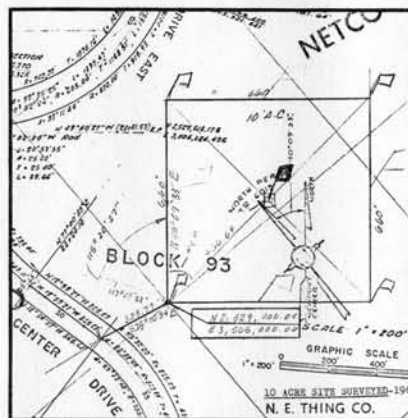
50' SAND SHIFT-1969  
10 ACRE SITE SURVEYED-1969

Number

1.



N.E. Thing Company, Ltd.  
50 Foot Sand Shift, Balboa Beach, California, 1969



N.E. Thing Company, Ltd.  
10 Acre Site Surveyed, 1969  
Square 10 acre parcel of land  
at Newport Center surveyed by  
Newport Beach city crew.

PLEASE COMPLETE AND RETURN

Description

DONE DOWN IN CALIFORNIA FOR A SHOW OF VANCOUVER ARTISTS AT NEWPORT HARBOR  
ART CENTER. ORGANIZED BY TOM GARVER.

N.E. THING COMPANY LIMITED

Trade Mark ©







## WHY THEY CAN'T BURST THE TRUDEAU BALLOON

Canadians went on a political spree last June and elected a prime minister they hardly knew. The image of Pierre Elliott Trudeau has undergone a change since then, from charismatic swinger to tough administrator. How deep a change is it? Maclean's asked three young pop artists to show you how they see the man, and assigned Walter Stewart to report on how the PM runs the show

BESIDE ME in the crowded lobby of the Lord Nelson Hotel in Halifax, the matronly lady in the flowered hat stirred with ill-concealed emotion, stirred and fidgeted and craned toward the doorway where Canada's Prime Minister was being mobbed by younger and more agile admirers. She patted her hair, shifted her feet, pursed her lips and betrayed all the signs of a thoroughly turned-on lady. Finally, she could contain herself no longer and, turning to me, a perfect stranger, she gabbled, "I don't care what you say, I think he's marvelous!"

I don't know what provoked this outburst — did I look more than usually disdainful, or was it all men, or all reporters, the flower-hatted lady was getting at? Certainly the Prime Minister didn't do anything marvelous in Halifax; he fended off some hecklers who taxed him over Canada's attitude toward Biafra, fielded a number of questions at a public meeting and delivered a clutch of political truisms to the Nova Scotia Liberal Association at a fund-raising dinner — but none of this was the lady's point. Her point was that she finds the Prime Minister marvelous even if he doesn't work marvels, and I and my scrivener tribe had better take note.

I do. That lady's blurted words, uttered in Tory Nova Scotia, underline the most remarkable fact about Canada's new Prime Minister: Trudeauism, once thought to be a passing fancy, may become a permanent feature of our political life. Since

last June's election we have been told so often the notion is becoming embedded in our folklore that Pierre Elliott Trudeau, wafted to power on the elated expectation of the nation, has since turned that expectation to gall and bitter wormwood and, in the words of political columnist Douglas Fisher of the *Toronto Telegram*, "The praise, the hope, the excitement of May and June are disappearing."

Fisher, the former NDP MP, sees the tide of adulation that swept the Liberals into office now receding, leaving nothing on the beach but a weather-worn pair of sandals. But by any objective assessment, the Prime Minister is stronger today than he was last June. Certainly he has critics, but they are mostly those who opposed him from the start.

In fact, more than any politician since Louis St. Laurent, Trudeau has lived up to his advance billing — the billing of both friends and enemies. Those who saw him as a quick, tough, rational man who could still somehow reach out to stir the nation, regard his record so far as proof of their predictions: those who dismissed him as an inflexible, autocratic reactionary, are equally certain that his every move since last April's leadership convention proves their point.

Consider for a moment a cross section of comment from some of the onlookers whom Maclean's asked to assess the Prime Minister's performance so far:

□ Mrs. Grace MacInnis, NDP MP for Vancouver Kingsway: "He's very

able, very arrogant, very rational . . . Mackenzie King with flair."

□ Gerald Regan, Nova Scotia Liberal leader: "I've just been tremendously impressed . . . I didn't support him for the leadership because I didn't know him. That was unfortunate, perhaps. I thought he was too much of a swinger for Nova Scotia . . . [but] he's businesslike, efficient, not dynamic, not radical."

□ David Lewis, NDP Parliamentary Leader and MP for York South: "The man is extraordinarily cautious in all his policies, both international and domestic. He really has no patience with the unavoidably time-consuming democratic processes . . . a smiling authoritarian."

□ William Kilbourn, history professor at York University, Toronto, and one of the first academics to

### IAN BAXTER'S TRUDEAU

"After making this 'Newmatic Trudeau', what more can I say about the man? It's larger than life, you can blow it up, or deflate it, swim, kiss, relax or party with it. In other words, you can have direct contact with Canada's source of power.

You can control inflation." Baxter made this seven-foot prototype of the Trudeau "Newmatic" for a limited edition he plans to sell for \$25 through N. E. Thing Co., 1419 Riverside Drive, North Vancouver, B.C.

Baxter was born in England in 1936. He has exhibited in galleries across Canada and Europe.



# INFORMATION

N.E. THING CO. LTD.

1419 Riverside Drive North Vancouver B.C. Canada

Date

1969

Project

N.E. THING CO. LTD. LOGO. by ALLAN FLEMING

Number

1.

PLEASE COMPLETE AND RETURN

N. E. THING COMPANY LIMITED

This symbol-cum-logotype could only be designed for the N. E. THING CO. It is, in a way, a manufactured found object — one more form amid thousands of forms. It asks you to participate in the Company's future, in any way you see fit. You can fill it in. You can tell the Company what to see, or do, or have. And since the N. E. THING CO. has only a small number of ways in which to present its symbol to you, the Company will depend upon the environment to duplicate the symbol. Every time you see the dotted leaders on a form — any form — you will think of the N. E. THING CO.

Designed by  
ALLAN FLEMING

Ce "symbole-logotype" ne pouvait être dessiné que pour la N. E. THING CO. D'une certaine façon, c'est un objet trouvé manufacturé, une forme parmi des milliers d'autres formes, qui vous demande de participer comme il vous convient à l'avenir de la Compagnie. Vous pouvez la remplir. Vous pouvez dire à la Compagnie quoi voir, quoi faire, ou quoi avoir. Comme la N. E. THING CO. ne dispose que de peu de façon de vous présenter son symbole, la Compagnie compte sur l'environnement pour reproduire le symbole. Chaque fois que vous verrez des lignes pointillées sur un formulaire, quel qu'il soit, vous penserez à la N. E. THING CO.

Conçu par  
ALLAN FLEMING

PLEASE COMPLETE AND RETURN

Description

CANADIAN, INTERNATIONALLY ~~REKNOWN~~ REKNOWN DESIGNER ALLAN FLEMING DESIGNED  
THIS UNIQUE LOGO FOR THE N.E. THING CO. LTD.

N. E. THING COMPANY LIMITED

Symbol Mark ©



# INFORMATION

N.E. THING CO. LTD.

1419 Riverside Drive North Vancouver B.C. Canada

Date

1969

Project

DIRT ACCUMULATION

Number

1.



## DIRT ACCUMULATION

Canadian - Provincial

N. E. THING CO.

A SMALL AMOUNT OF DIRT IS COLLECTED FROM EACH OF THE 10 CANADIAN PROVINCES MIXED WELL AND DISPLAYED WITH EXPLANATION. (IN PROGRESS) EASTERN PROVINCES TO BE DONE JULY-AUG/69

N. E. THING CO.

## DIRT TRANSFER

Canadian - provincial

A SMALL AMOUNT OF DIRT IS DUG FROM B.C. AND DEPOSITED IN ALBERTA - ANOTHER AMOUNT IS TAKEN FROM ALBERTA FROM THE SAME LOCATION AS DEPOSIT AND TAKEN TO SASKATCHEWAN. THE PROCESS IS REPEATED ACROSS CANADA UNTIL A BIT OF NEWFOUNDLAND IS PLACED IN B.C. THIS PROJECT HAS BEEN ACCOMPLISHED AS FAR AS MANITOBA A PRESENT MOMENT. THE OTHER PROVINCES WILL BE DONE DURING JULY - AUGUST 1969.



N.E. THING CO. TRANSV. S.I. INFORM  
 TITLE **DIRT ACCUMULATION & DIRT TRANSFER** 1969/4  
 PRODUCER **NETCO**  
 TRANSMISSION **OTAWA** RECEIVING **N. YORK**  
 PLACE **150m EST** TIME  
 BY **NETCO** BY **Paula Cooper**  
 BY **Telecopier** BY **Telecopier**  
 COMMENTS



PLEASE COMPLETE AND RETURN

Description

TOR & ERLAN BAXTER HELPED EXECUTE THIS PROJECT AS COMPANY WENT ACROSS CANADA.

N. E. THING COMPANY LIMITED

Trade Mark ©

Seal





# INFORMATION

N.E. THING CO. LTD.

1419 Riverside Drive North Vancouver B.C. Canada

Date

1969

Project

NOTHING PROJECT

Number

1.

PLEASE COMPLETE AND RETURN

N. E. THING COMPANY LIMITED

Name in Full ..... EDMONTON ART GALLERY " PLACE AND PROCESS " Date SEPT. 4 - 28, 1969

Business Address ..... #2 Sir Winston Churchill Square, Edmonton, Alberta, Canada.

Information ..... NOTHING PROJECT

Specifications: Nothing is impossible

Nothing is something

Firm or Company Name ..... N. E. THING COMPANY LIMITED ( NETCO )

Company Address ..... 1419 Riverside Drive, North Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada

Cable Address ..... " ANYTHING " Phone ( 604 ) 929-3662

List Company Departments ..... THING, RESEARCH, MOVIE, PROJECT, ACT & ART, SERVICE, COP.

PRINTING, PHOTOGRAPHY, COMMUNICATIONS, CONSULTING

Describe Company's Business ..... PRODUCERS & CONSULTANT SPECIALISTS IN: Ideas, Planning

Sensitivity Information (specialty Visual - V.S.I.), Name Development, Design, Ecology,

Communications, Architecture, Aesthetics, Things, Photo-V.S.I., Work, Anything

(Signed) *Iain Baxter*  
President, Iain Baxter

(over)

PLEASE COMPLETE AND RETURN

N. E. THING COMPANY LIMITED

More Information

(over)

*Iain Baxter* (Signed)  
Iain Baxter, President

PLEASE COMPLETE AND RETURN

Description

N. E. THING COMPANY LIMITED

Trade Mark ©



# INFORMATION

N.E. THING CO. LTD.

1419 Riverside Drive North Vancouver B.C. Canada

Date

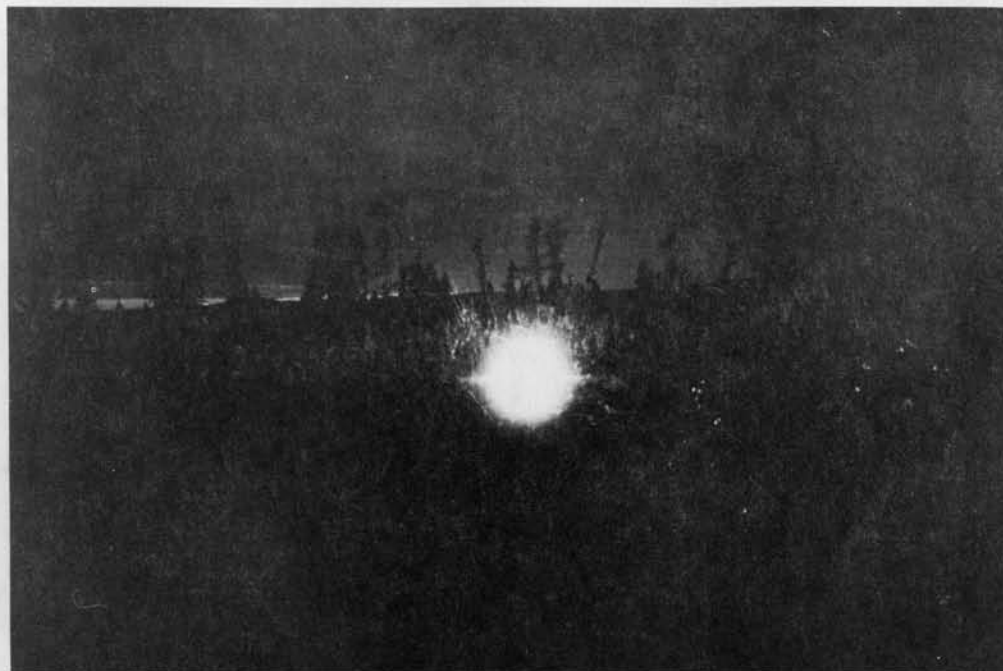
1969

Project

REFLECTED ARCTIC LANDSCAPE

Number

1.



PLEASE COMPLETE AND RETURN

Description

THE SUN AT SUNSET INSIDE THE ARCTIC CIRCLE REFLECTED TOTALLY  
IN A SQUARE MIRROR (24" X 24") PLACED AT GROUND LEVEL.

N.E. THING COMPANY LIMITED

Trade Mark ©

TO BE REPRODUCED IN McLELAND & STEWART BOOK, CHRISTMAS 1978.  
MASTERWORKS OF CANADIAN ART - BY PETER MELLEN



# INFORMATION

N.E. THING CO. LTD.

1419 Riverside Drive North Vancouver B.C. Canada

Date

1969

Project

557,087 EXHIBITION

Number

1.

## Forward

The Contemporary Art Council of the Seattle Art Museum is proud to present "557,087". The title "557,087" is roughly the population of Seattle, and it is hoped that all of Seattle will be stimulated and involved with the exhibition. Consistent with the theory that "557,087" will not deal with the conventional stylized art forms and frameworks is the fact that the show is not confined to the Pavilion at the Seattle Art Center, but extends to other locations in the Seattle Center and areas outside the city.

We are hopeful that the vitality of the Northwest "personality" as well as the vigor of the land itself will be an exciting atmosphere for "557,087".

Morrie J. Alhadeff  
President  
Contemporary Art Council  
Seattle Art Museum

The conviction that geometry is the most neutral vehicle for either physical or conceptual art ideas has been more directly transferred from minimal art into the new forms than is immediately obvious. Morris' felt is cut in rectangular sections before it assumes its own shapes; Smithson, Huebler, Baxter, Arnatt, Louw and others impose geometric overlays on space. If Morris is trying to expose the fallibility of order by refusing "to continue estheticizing form by dealing with it as a prescribed end", a "systems esthetic" continues the traditional artistic task of discovering underlying order in the world. Though the order found is far from traditionally constructed: "The special function of modern didactic art has been to show that art does not reside in material entities, but in relations between people and between people and the components of their environments" (Jack Burnham). Thus social comment (Oppenheim's extermination piece, Baldessari's ghetto boundaries) is possible, as well as a "regional art" made by foreigners through remote control (Ferrer's memorial to a Seattle engineer; McLean's Lake Washington piece.)

Photography is a product of the non-relational esthetic that pervades the 60's, and its ramifications for all the arts are innumerable. Still photography is notoriously unselective; though it can be made to falsify or over-dramatize its subject, once a viewpoint is chosen extraneous detail cannot be omitted, nor reality re-arranged. It can bring art to the level of everything else (Ruscha's books) or ricochet off reality (Baxter) or prove that the work of art exists specifically (Ruppersberg, Morris) or generally (Smithson, Huebler). Bruce Nauman extracts the punning potential of photography, as he dealt with puns in his seminal piled, random rubber sculpture (he, Hesse and Viner were the first abstract artists to work significantly with soft materials), then in his elaborately titled "representational" pieces, in photographs ("flour arrangement") and now in holograms. His films and tapes play deadpan act on timely fiction (fact taken on faith): "The True Artist Helps the World by Revealing Mystic Truths". "Do you believe that?" "I don't know. I think we should leave that open."

Why did the chicken cross the road? To get to the other side.

"The course of development: Sculpture as form, Sculpture as structure, Sculpture as place." Carl Andre

Sense of place varies: Baxter claims ready-made natural or artificial places. Andre's places are localized by his "found" or indigent materials and by his use of sculptural energy. Lever (1966) ran through a doorway; the line of hay bales at Windham (1968) began in the woods and moved into an open field. Smithson localizes place, though in a manner that incorporates (shrinks) long distance between site and non-site, landscape and its test-tube counterpart (rock samples). Huebler's place is generalized when he imposes a geometrical or serial plan on large areas, times, distances, demanding no physical proof of their characteristics, but marking duration or extension by document. Richard Long's ten-mile walking tour sculpture (1967) was both local and general; despite the distance, a very regional sense was retained by the choice of area in which to walk.

"...A scientific post-esthetic which will make possible the manufacture, distribution and consumption of a perfect art product, and will be characterized by a fusion of the art forms and materials, an abstraction and liberation of the idea, and a disintegration of art". Joseph Schillinger

An irregular, randomly controlled and impermanent art form recapitulates the "nerve" system of electronics, as opposed to the "muscle" system of electricity and the machine. Pieces like Huot's luminescent space marking, that reinforce existing interior or exterior spaces, are weightless, disintegrative, non-sequential, and can be traced back to the serialism and broken surface of Impressionism.

"We are in a desert, where nothing but sensitivity is actuality". Kasimir Malevich

"Anything can be a work of art if we have a sensitivity to it". Iain Baxter

N.E. THING CO. LTD

PROJECT DEPARTMENT

1419 RIVERSIDE DRIVE, NORTH VANCOUVER, B.C. CANADA

VSI FORMULA #5 - 1968

$$MS \times [(PE)^{1HP} + (PW)^{1HP} + (PF)^{1HP} + (PS)^{1HP}] = VSI$$

MS - MIRROR SURFACES

P - POSITIONS

E - EARTH

W - WATER

F - FOLIAGE

S - SKY

↑ ↓ } MIRROR REFLECTION DIRECTION

VSI - VISUAL SENSITIVITY INFORMATION

\* THIS FORMULA EXISTS IN PHOTO VSI FORM.

PLEASE COMPLETE AND RETURN

Description *Organized by Lucy Lippard.*

N.E. THING COMPANY LIMITED

Trade Mark ©





# INFORMATION

N.E. THING CO. LTD.

1419 Riverside Drive North Vancouver B.C. Canada

Date

1969

Project

ARTICLE

Number

1.

## ART

### '557087' - When You Get

### There, The Walls Will Be Bare

by Sally Hayman

Post-Intelligence Art Critic

Such wide variety comprises the new exhibition at Seattle Art Museum-Evaluation (running through October 5) that it would be unfair to group the artists together under a single, misleading title. So Lucy R. Lippard, the critic and author who organized the show, named it simply "'557087'" - the population of Seattle after the last census.

What does unite the artists is a disinterest in the old art system and all that is implied - beautiful objects, rich collectors, dealers, galleries, critics and museums. Nevertheless, museums on the East and West Coasts have grabbed such exhibitions enthusiastically. The critics continue to write about them.

There is even a new type of patron, rich not acquisitive, who will sponsor their projects. Seth Seigelaub, a dealer for this expanding group, came to Seattle with Lucy Lippard to organize the exhibition. Says Seigelaub, "I am not an 'idea broker,' not an object merchant."

The exhibition will be curiously bare of objects. It has viewed "557087" through its catalogue of 55 reviewed cards, arranged in random order.

On Kawara produces a series of note-books listing the number of days in each year. Douglas Huebler uses two photographers in two places to take photos suggested by six adjectives. Daniel Buren will display posters arranged by Seattleites around the city. Robert Barry's contribution consists of "All the things I know but of which I am not at the moment thinking."

Robert Morris submits a shotgun piece whose form is defined by the artist and Wilson, who will remain in New York during "557087", send a cryptic card with the words "oral communication." Carl Andre will have pieces of log arranged around the Seattle Center.

R. Bartheleme included a picture of a television set that he bought instead of making any art. John Perreault draws in space with X's of masking tape on windows around the center.

Similar threads run through this group of work. Documentation runs to lengthy essays and photographs. There are complicated and elaborate systems of the art games. Others seem so obvious that they are unnecessary. In terms of outdoor landscapes, there is a great interest in boundaries or markers.

Eighteenth century artists often talked about "holding the mirror up to nature," and some of these contemporary artists like Ian Baxter who runs an idea business called the N.E. Thing Company in Vancouver. Artists unaware of each other on opposite sides of the United States.

Though the center for much of this art is New York, there are curiously isolated phenomena like Ian Baxter who runs an idea business called the N.E. Thing Company in Vancouver. Artists unaware of each other on opposite sides of the United States.

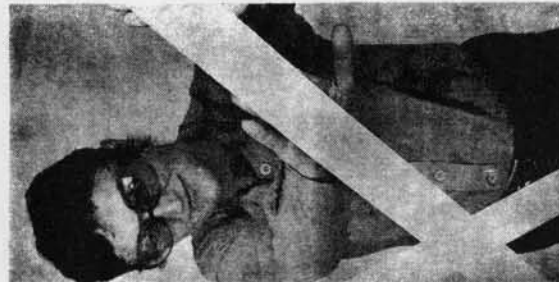
States come up with similar ideas at the same time.

Marshall McLuhan, Marcel Duchamp, Susan Sontag, the study of ecology - all have set the art in motion. More important is our environment - physical, social, historical. Says Lucy Lippard, "These ideas seem to be in the air."

The work often takes the form of a Socratic dialogue, eliminating false definitions in an attempt to arrive at the true one. Does art have to be seen to exist? Can art be a form of oral communication? What are the formal qualities of sculpture and painting? Should art be isolated from the flux of nature?

Most frequently asked by those not concerned with those questions is, "How do these artists support themselves?" Most teach and Lucy probably are prodding another artist into even more troublesome questions.

There is much talk of bringing this art out of the museum into the public environment, thus democratizing art into an experience that can be shared by everyone. But it is unlikely that this cerebral, difficult work will provide the pleasures and delights commonly associated with art experiences.



Lucy Lippard executes a work entitled "Tape," by John Perreault.

Seattle Post-Intelligence NORTHWEST TODAY Sun, Sept. 7, 1969 13

PLEASE COMPLETE AND RETURN

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N. E. THING COMPANY LIMITED

Trade Mark ©

## Description

See



# INFORMATION

N.E. THING CO. LTD.

1419 Riverside Drive North Vancouver B.C. Canada

Date

1969

Project

ARTICLE

Number

1.

## N.E. One For Art?

N.E. Thing Company  
is very much with it

By CHARLOTTE TOWNSEND

There are 31 days in March, and Seth Siegalub, New York gallery operator, gave them to 31 artists in England and North America.

With the idea of assembling an exhibition that would be an idea rather than an actuality, Siegalub chose artists who work with ideas as much as, or more than, with objects. He assigned a day of the month to each artist and gave them three options. The artist's name could be listed, along with a description of his 'work' and/or relevant information; his name alone could be listed; or nothing at all would appear on his day.

The replies and non-replies were printed in calendar form, a page a day, and hundreds of them have been distributed.

Artists taking part include Robert Morris, who sent a telegram reading 'USE THIS,' which is printed, code numbers and all, on the March 22 page; Claes Oldenburg, who wrote 'My work: Things colored red.' for the 24th, and 'Lawrence Weiner who specified 'An object tossed from one country to another' on the 30th. 'Jan Wilson, New York,' was what that artist wanted on his day.

Obviously this 'exhibition' happens wherever there is a copy of the calendar and someone thinking about it. But it can be displayed day by day in a public place, and this is being done right now in the display case outside the Theatre at SFU.

The current emphasis on concept over object in art means that the art gallery is no longer an essential middleman; concept art doesn't need a specific location to meet an audience. Ideas can be wired, telephoned or printed at no loss; and if they are executed, perhaps only for an instant, or somewhere inaccessible, there is always the camera.

The N.E. Thing Company has been operating in this way for some time; and while firmly based in North Vancouver it shows clear affinities with what the avant garde is doing in other places.

This simultaneous development of ideas, to what extent it depends on art journals and long distance 'phone calls, and to what extent on something more elusive, would be worth investigating. In the last few months Baxter's ideas have had a wider currency; consequently they are occurring to him and others in a rather different light.

The N.E. Thing Co. called its day on the ONE MONTH calendar 'March 7 Variations,' and suggested seven ways in which the word March should be 'presented on seven billboards,' 'printed in seven newspapers,' stamped, shouted spoken, flashed on T.V. and 'presented in any form in seven cities from sea level to highest city' on the seventh of March.

In this way, aside from the musical connotations, the word March is made to stand for an idea, any idea, and the piece becomes a formal dramatization of the communication process.

The dramatic element is, I think, new in the work of the



PAPER... visual onomatopoeia

N.E. Thing Company. Performance may be overtaking presentation.

Recent Company projects have tended to stress process over product, or, to reiterate, the idea of process.

I am thinking of the construction projects, one of which was to reconstruct the Carmen Lamanna Gallery floor, walls and ceiling in 24's inside the Gallery, for a recent one-man show in Toronto. Print making with skis on the snow, and burying an object, with the instruction that it is to be dug up and inflated in 100 years time, are in one sense theatrical.

They are making a gesture which is different from the straight documentation of the Piles portfolio (photos of natural piles of stuff around Vancouver) and the statements of vacuum-formed and inflated works, whether formal or landscapes.



BAXTER

The company will be represented at the Sao Paulo Biennial by ACT and ART. The intention behind the Aesthetic

Claiming or Rejecting of Things is to make public the way in which the company assesses the Visual Sensitivity Information which is the raw material for all its operations. The photographs are taken in the manner of Piles. But there is a new factor here.

The photographs are sealed and stamped, gold for ACT which claims, and red for ART which rejects, and they are accompanied by a framed certificate stating the case.

There is a more complex notion behind the visual presentation than has been usual in earlier work, and a performance is made of the presentation.

PAPER, ALUMINIUM, CAST and other words spelt out in appropriate materials, are works of visual onomatopoeia. They carry a weight of visual but also literary allusion; another new direction.

However sorting out what the N.E. Thing Co. is doing is no easy matter. I don't think it is particularly useful to consider it in terms of linear development; what will be useful is the Company's Product Review, and the accompanying catalogue, scheduled for the National Gallery in June.

A policy of anything goes leads in a lot of directions, not all equally successful; but it is worth remembering that as long ago as 1965 the Project Department was formed to deal with what has since been publicized as conceptual art, and which may be changing the whole course of art.

10A The VANCOUVER SUN: Fri., Mar. 14, 1969

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Description . AT INUVIK, N.W. T.

INSIDE the Arctic circle, one of such claims, delineating ones personal life time Territorial space. tribute to Farley Mowatt, & Never Cry wolf. Also performed at Cape Spear, most eastern point in N. America. & inside the Acropolis at Athens. ONLY performed by IAIN BAXTER AT SPECIAL PLACES IN his personal territorial travels over the globe. TO BE CARRIED ON TILL HE STOPS.





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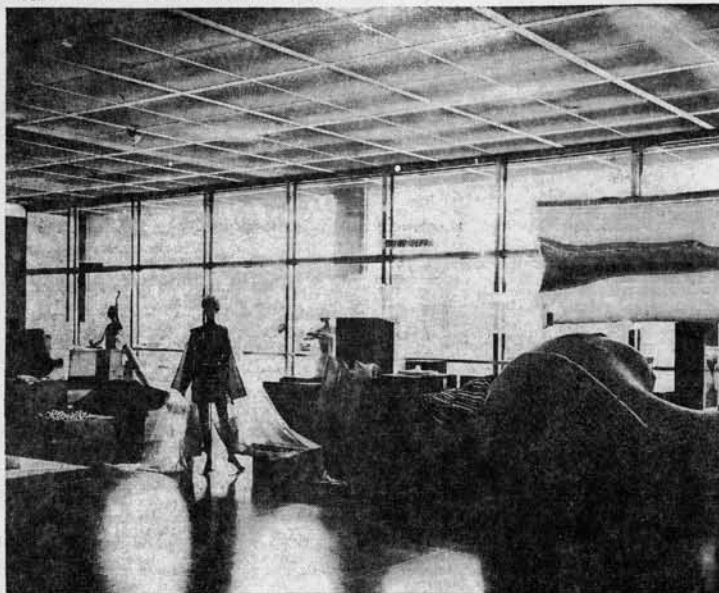
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40/LA PRESSE, MONTREAL, SAMEDI 21 JUIN 1969



Exposition des objets N. E. Thing Co. à la Galerie nationale du Canada, à Ottawa.

A la Galerie nationale:  
The N. E. Thing Co.

L'ARTISTE serait un individu chargé d'exprimer des jugements sur la réalité qui l'entoure: ainsi le veut la tradition. Jusqu'au début de ce siècle, ce jugement s'exprimait de façon simple: par des peintures et des sculptures où les objets réels se retrouvaient reproduits selon une organisation et un style qui assureraient un caractère unique à la représentation. Aujourd'hui, l'artiste peut respecter encore un tel principe, mais au lieu d'accorder la meilleure part de l'oeuvre à une simple représentation des objets, il s'intéresse d'abord aux structures qui animent ces choses; de plus, il sait maintenant qu'un tableau est une réalité dans la mesure où il est tableau. Aussi, les recherches contemporaines en peinture tendent d'abord de montrer ce qu'est un tableau, un ensemble de couleurs, et de jouer à partir de ces quelques éléments que sont la couleur et son organisation. Dans cet ordre d'idées, le geste qui le fait prendre forme n'est pas par lui-même important: il ne prend son sens que par le résultat final.

D'autres artistes se donnent encore pour mission de reproduire la réalité. Cependant, il n'est pas question pour eux de le faire à travers les limites artistiques qui justifient un tableau. Iain Baxter est l'un de ceux-là.

Son champ d'activités ne connaît pas de limites a priori. Jusqu'ici, il s'est surtout consacré à exprimer son opinion sur les divers objets artistiques produits par des artistes contemporains influents et à donner son appréciation de certains décors qui composent l'environnement où il vit. Il a aussi produit quelques objets culturels et certains nous sont connus par l'exposition itinérante de la Galerie nationale, exposition qui était au Musée des Beaux-Arts cet automne. Mais ce n'est là qu'une faible partie de son activité artistique: Iain Baxter est sans doute un "artiste", mais il est aussi le président de la N. E. Thing Co.

Le monde  
tel qu'il est

Poussant à l'extrême son désir de rendre les choses telles qu'elles sont, Baxter ne veut pas seulement les montrer telles qu'on les voit, mais aussi nous bien indiquer les cadres dans lesquels nous les avons insérées: il est un artiste "naturaliste", qui sait l'importance qu'ont les structures dans le monde contemporain. Son attitude est proche de celle d'un peintre du "minimal art" à condition que le centre d'intérêt de ce dernier soit d'abord les objets qui nous entourent, et non les lois picturales.

D'ailleurs, il s'intéresse au monde dans lequel il vit et veut y attirer notre attention. Pour ce faire, il s'implique personnellement dans cette réalité, non en y dominant un point de vue, mais en y créant des éléments autres qui les mettent en évidence: et c'est son exposition "Piles" à l'Université de la Colombie-Britannique où l'artiste invitait les gens à contempler les diverses "piles" que l'on pouvait trouver à Vancouver: dépotoirs, tas de sables, mont Vancouver et plusieurs autres. Son geste ne se veut pas moral, où la solution qu'offrirait l'artiste serait dans le rejet de certains éléments naturels, mais un geste qui ferait prendre conscience: il ne posera des jugements moraux et "artistiques" qu'envers certaines oeuvres d'art et constructions, et il ne sera pas tendre alors, voir les ART.

Et Baxter excelle à nous présenter notre monde tel qu'il est, non pas sous l'angle d'un jugement individuel, mais en dégageant un ou plusieurs éléments devant lesquels il nous sera alors possible de poser un jugement qui dépassera les limites de "l'oeuvre d'art", pour remettre en question tout notre environnement. Le meilleur exemple, et aussi le plus important, est l'exposition qui se tient actuellement à la Galerie nationale.

Tout le premier étage de la Galerie a été en effet consacré à The N. E. Thing Co. et l'éventuel visiteur ne se retrouve pas dans un musée, où il vient se réfugier, loin des horribles choses qui composent le monde contemporain, dans les merveilles du passé. Au contraire, il se trouve directement confronté avec le quotidien, par la présentation d'un de ses éléments les plus fréquents: l'intérieur d'un bureau directeur de n'importe quelle compagnie, avec tout le cérémonial presque religieux qui fixe chacun des détails.

Une compagnie  
à l'oeuvre

Cet étage a été divisé en plusieurs sections: d'un côté, nous trouvons tout l'appareil administratif de la compagnie, avec le bureau du président, le secrétariat et le V.I.P. Lounge, de l'autre, la salle de présentation des produits de la compagnie (aussi dési-

gnés dans le cas qui nous préoccupe "oeuvres d'art"). Au centre, un lobby où l'on reçoit les gens. Naturellement, pour respecter l'ordre des choses, il y a plusieurs autres petites pièces qui ne servent souvent qu'à justifier la présence d'une porte portant pancarte.

Ainsi, il sera possible au visiteur de voir la compagnie à l'oeuvre, de regarder les secrétaires et le président en plein travail, et aussi, puisqu'il le faut, de visiter la salle d'exposition où sont étalées diverses réalisations antérieures de la compagnie: robes en vinyle, paysages, divers gonflables et certaines photographies qui gardent le souvenir de constructions et réalisations humaines qui ont reçu ou non l'approbation de la compagnie, d'après les normes que celle-ci s'est données.

Quant aux réalisations de la compagnie, elles valent plus par le geste qui les a fait exister que par la beauté que pourrait avoir le produit final. Ainsi, dans cette exposition, on peut voir de larges congélateurs (des "Viking 21" d'une capacité de 21 pieds cubiques) que le visiteur est convié à ouvrir pour en voir le contenu, même si celui-ci peut parfois ne consister qu'en 21 pieds cubiques d'air congelé!

Car toujours, cette compagnie qui, en fait, se compose de quatre personnes, soit Iain Baxter, madame Baxter et leurs deux enfants, se définit comme un "informateur visuel" et ses locaux sont surtout "un centre d'éveil de la sensibilité visuelle". D'ailleurs, pour ce faire, durant toute la durée de l'exposition, Baxter convie les gens à diverses manifestations où ils pourront voir Ottawa et ses environs selon plusieurs angles d'approche, toujours pour qu'ils constatent et jugent ce qui les entoure. Le rôle de l'artiste n'est pas alors d'imposer des choix personnels aux gens mais, au contraire, de les mettre dans des situations privilégiées où ils seront à même de juger de leur environnement et à prendre les mesures qui, selon eux, s'imposeront.

"Complete  
and return"

Ainsi, lorsqu'il a été question de choisir un symbole pour cette exposition, on n'a pas utilisé une quelconque affiche "artistique", mais on a repris ces lignes en pointillé que l'on rencontre au hasard de la lecture de n'importe quel magazine, précédées de ces mots: "Please complete and return". Dans un geste réflexe, Baxter demandera aux gens de penser à The N. E. Thing Co. chaque fois qu'ils rencontreront ces quelques mots, peu importe le contexte.

Quant à toutes les recherches qui ont été entreprises ou le seront au cours de ce mois de juin, elles seront rendues publiques car, à la suite de cette exposition, un rapport sera publié. Si vous y êtes intéressés, il vous suffit d'écrire à la Galerie nationale qui vous

indiquera comment il sera possible de vous le procurer. Et le 6 juillet, The N. E. Thing Co. fermera ses locaux temporaires d'Ottawa pour retourner à son habitat naturel, au 1419 Riverside Drive, Vancouver-Nord, C-B.

Quant à la Galerie nationale elle aura prouvé qu'elle ne craint pas les audaces et celles-ci sont d'ailleurs nécessaires pour rendre compte de l'art d'aujourd'hui. Car l'artiste ne limite plus son activité à la fabrication des seuls tableaux, et une exposition de type biennale peut difficilement en rendre compte. Il est certain qu'à Ottawa la situation ne pourra qu'entraîner des commentaires qui ne seront pas toujours élogieux; mais une Galerie qui se dit nationale se doit à ses artistes. Et Baxter n'est pas l'un des moindres.

Il reste cependant à souhaiter que les visiteurs seront ses complices, car c'est en autant que les gens se laissent prendre un peu que le tout devient efficace. Mais si les diverses expériences ne sont pas pour eux l'occasion d'un éveil de sensibilité visuelle, l'exposition leur aura à tout le moins montré que l'art d'aujourd'hui est fort différent de celui du passé: la chose est connue, mais une preuve supplémentaire n'est sûrement pas inutile. Allez le constater à la Galerie nationale.

## arts plastiques

## Une enquête sur tout et rien

par Normand Thériault

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"Education editor from Vietnam two my time sitting b

An aversion to was born 28 year- gion of great sea- ing ship and Coli water venture— three shipmates when their boat the first night on U.S. (by convent set out to tour A variously as ditch er (for the Clevel. Orleans States-Its hop (in Carter, S- fended at being g- British accent. bu Colin came to v- was soon assigned two years coveri (and missed) by n- ers. He learned p- Vietnamese army ing a 1 200-foot (a 38) when his chu- His final Vietnam General Creighton 38 of this issue. — When the Battl Education Editor desk, was taking occupied admini back turned—mei —on the advanci on the back of the he reported. "Seve thing like "Lay of

ings with mosses, vines and grass. They required watering every other day and eventually died.

In form, earth art appears to be a new kind of landscape painting, one which dispenses with the canvas. But stylistically, it evolves out of "primary structures," or minimal sculpture. Once sculptors had done away with bases and pedestals by placing simple platforms and boxes on the floor, the next logical step was to cut equally simple shapes directly into the earth. Some earthworkers, who dig lines and paths in dirt, continue the severe geometrizing of "primary structures." Other earth artists, seeking less rational-looking shapes simply heap "uncomposed" piles of dirt.

Perhaps the most radical thing about earthworks is what they threaten to do to the market structure of the art world. By making impossibly large and usually perishable works of art that can't be exhibited in galleries or housed in private collections and museums, the artists are refusing to make

their work a commodity. At the same time, the terrestrial scope and scale of their work beg for large public commissions that only huge corporations or even governments could underwrite. In place of the collector, the artist now seeks an enlightened, and preferably unquestioning, patron. Last winter Canadian Artist Iain Baxter created a work in his own backyard by painting the shadows of the trees on the snow in vivid colors. "It goes as the snow melts, but it's great while it's there," he says. "What should happen is that a patron says to somebody like me: 'Here's \$500 or \$1,000, go out and create something, make something happen.' So long as I do it, it shouldn't matter that he can't hang it on his wall."

In return for their patronage, most collectors have to settle for photographic documentation—or, at best, a recent piece. Mike Herzer decided not to take any photographs—"because I wanted the work to exist only for itself. I

saw it, and three or four others saw it, so it satisfied the demands of being visible."

New York Artist Dennis Oppenheim performs his work more furtively, but once his deed is done, he scrupulously documents it in photographs and scale models. When he drives a tractor through a Nebraska field or races a snowmobile through the Maine snow, he is careful not to let on to passersby that he is creating art. Otherwise, he finds, they become "too involved," making suggestions from the sidelines. Collector Robert Scull commissioned Oppenheim to do a snow piece last winter, then refused the scale model of it he was offered in return. "Scale models are so limiting," Scull complains. "They don't give the beauty or the enormity of these boys' ideas."

If there is no work to sell, and little or no evidence that there once was a work, and only a few collectors willing to buy documentation, it's not easy for artists to subsist. Still, Richard Long has discovered that museums and galleries are willing to cover his travel expenses and he finds that ample enough reward for being able to do exactly what he wants to do. If he receives any money for a piece, he splurges it on airplane tickets and ice cream.

Earth artists believe they've barely scratched the surface of their medium. Walter De Maria has embarked on what may be the biggest earthwork of all—a three-continent project that involves digging a mile-long north-south ditch in the Sahara, a mile-long east-west ditch in India and a mile-wide square in the U.S. He intends to take aerial photographs of the three sites and superimpose them to end up with a single photograph, showing a cross within a square.

For the Sahara portion of his project, De Maria went to a remote part of Algeria last January and spent nine days in an oil-refining town, lining up equipment and looking for places to dig his ditch. His presence aroused considerable curiosity among the local citizenry. When he finally found "a terrific area" and bulldozed a mile-long swath 10 feet wide, De Maria was arrested and interrogated for eight hours by the police, who suspected him of being an oil speculator. They confiscated his film and ran him out of town before he could get an aerial photograph of his handiwork. Undaunted, De Maria still hopes to wind up the project by the end of this year, cheerfully noting that "all three sites can be photographed by satellite."

DAVID BOURDON

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COP DEPT.

## ART FOR ART'S SAKE

The members of most professions—be they baseball players, politicians or journalists—treat their calling with gravity and decorum, at least in public. Privately, they may kid their colleagues mercilessly. Artists, on the other hand, like actors, regard their fellows as prime targets for public parody. Lately, works of art poking gentle, and occasionally savage fun at other works of art seem to be multiplying like guppies. Though these works sometimes look like literal copies, they are usually sly, even malicious comments about the nature of art and its relation to reality. John Clem Clarke's stylized version of Frans Hals' "St. Adrian Militia Company," which hangs in a downtown Manhattan bar (above, with artist seated second from the left), is surrounded by a white line so that the staid, 17th century Dutchmen appear to be figures on a television screen. Clarke thus suggests that TV's prying eye has changed everybody's way of seeing reality. Vancouver's Iain Baxter burlesques famous artists by carrying their pictorial trademarks to logical extremes. By adding ribbons to his copy of Kenneth Noland's "And Again," he has created an authentic Baxter (shown with the artist, at right). In visual language, the work snorts that if stripes alone make a painting, then why don't longer stripes make a better one?



version of Frans Hals' group portrait of the officers and subalterns of the St. Adrian Militia Company, decorates a downtown Manhattan bar. It draws approving glances from young artists who drop in because, as Clarke explains, "we're all involved in process today, rather than track. By that I mean, if I were dropped on the moon tomorrow, I'd leave tracks wherever I walked—but I wouldn't be involved in them. Only the man who came after me would be. In the same way, painting today is a process of exploring. The real product isn't the painting any more. It's what the artist learns while he's making the picture."

The West Coast is an equally fertile breeding ground for art-oriented art. "All artists read magazines," notes Vancouver's Iain Baxter, 32. "Time, Life, Look—any publication that tells them anything about art. However, some won't admit to copying even when everybody knows bloody well they do. I admit what I am doing and say directly this is an extension of so-and-so."

Baxter's wagish *Extended Noland* was based on a museum catalogue picture of a Noland painting, and was meant to twist the pretentious dissertation on Noland as much as it meant to parody the work itself. To Baxter, snobishness and pretension often hinder the public from enjoying art, and he debunks both through his N.E. Thing Co., which produces buttons labeled "Artificial" and passes them out to N.E. one who will wear them. The button presumably entitles the wearer to make official statements on art—though Baxter clearly regards this distinction as somewhat artificial. The company also issues certificates for ACT (Aesthetically Claimed Things) and ART (Aesthetically Rejected Things). The Great Wall of China rates an ACT seal of approval, while some of Picasso's paintings get the ART booby prize.



TIME, FEBRUARY 28, 1969

STURTEVANT AS MAN RAY'S "DUCHAMP" In the process of celebrating process.



BAXTER'S BUTTON  
N.E. one can play.

Tijuana Velvet. Farther south, San Francisco's William Wiley is, at 31, an elder statement-maker of the West Coast's cheerfully crude funk art movement. His exhibition in Manhattan last spring (TIME, May 31) contained many paintings and sculptures dealing with the frenetic activity of the New York gallery world about which the relaxed Californian has mixed feelings. Now returned to the relative peace of Marin County, Wiley points out that even works that nominally deal with art can also have wider implications. His subtle watercolor *Sculptor's Holiday*, for example, can be read as the interior of a studio, but its bizarre, stretched-out forms and lacerated strips of leather can also be taken as symbols for an uptight state of mind.

Los Angeles' husky William Tunberg, 32, may be the only artist who has rejected to support himself as a donee to an artificial insemination clinic. (He was fired from his job as a life-class drawing teacher at Utah State for among other reasons, producing drawings that the authorities considered too erotic.) Tunberg finds that when people these days say "Look at the old masters," they are thinking of a cheap, Tijuana-velvety painting of a bullfighter or a landscape. "Such folk may find pictures by even Caravaggio or Michelangelo 'too crude and experimental.'" Tunberg's *Neoclassical Drawing Trap* was put together as a way of asking, "Do you really know what you are talking about when you praise old masters?" Says Tunberg, who is working on a construction showing a pair of hands making a pie: "Art is not just a scene or a picture any more. It is an object that exists for itself, but it also conveys something more than pure decoration—not exactly a message, but a hunch."

Age of Anxiety. Something very much like a hunch also drives Elaine Sturtevant, a fair, fey and fortyish Manhattan divorcee who went to Paris last year with her two small daughters and may not find it safe to come back. For she practices a kind of art that has made her one of the less popular artists in Manhattan. Sturtevant's thing is line-for-line copies of virtually every top pop painter and sculptor. She has "done" Segal, Weselmann, Oldenburg, Stella, Johns, Lichtenstein, Rosenquist

and Warhol with such loving cunning and accomplished accuracy that she makes them all look slightly ridiculous. If the ideal of pop is to reproduce banality literally, then Sturtevant has carried the ideal to its logical but infuriating conclusion—by reproducing the literal reproduction literally. "Oldenburg is ready to kill me," she admits. "It all makes him dive up a wall."

In the process of celebrating "process," Sturtevant has also rendered herself somewhat ridiculous (she once slashed herself with shaving foam to pose for her version of Man Ray's photograph of Marcel Duchamp). This disturbs her not one whit. "I have no place at all," she says, with a faraway look in her eye, "except in relation to the total structure. What interests me is not communicating but creating change. Some people feel that a great change in esthetics in general is happening, though few understand exactly why. Mainly, there is a great deal of anxiety."

Many of her guinea pigs might challenge Sturtevant's personal ability to create change, but few have failed to sense the anxiety of which she speaks. It is a fundamental unrest that arises because a basic artistic philosophy—originally formulated by the pop artists—now produces increasingly sterile new work. None of the mutants of the virile *genus popus*—such as op or earthworks or photographic realism—seem sufficiently robust to beget new species in their turn.

What will come after? Nobody knows. What the prevalence of "art for art's sake" creations mutely shows is that artists feel compelled to satirize the status quo. In this sense, the stage seems curiously akin to 1953. That was the year when Robert Rauschenberg set the stage for pop with his own contribution to the "art for art's sake" genre: erasing an Abstract Expressionist drawing by Willem de Kooning.



TUNBERG WORKING ON "PUDDIN' & PIE" If not a message, then a hunch.

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TIME MAGAZINE

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Description

N.E. THING COMPANY LIMITED

Trade Mark ©







# INFORMATION

N.E. THING CO. LTD.

1419 Riverside Drive North Vancouver B.C. Canada

Date

1970

Project

ARTICLE

Number

1.



IAIN BAXTER... from here to there-zip!

## Coast to Coast Art...

The VANCOUVER SUN:  
10A Fri., July 10.

Iain Baxter  
sends off  
his work  
by transmission  
to New York  
exhibit...

By JOAN LOWNDES

Arp, the noted French sculptor, once said that "art is the fruit of the brain."

No artist since the beginning of time would dispute this, but what is disorienting for many people today is to find that there is no "fruit" in the sense of a physical object, merely a brain-to-brain, system-to-system relay of information. The artist writes out his idea, which the art receiver can execute if he wishes or if it is possible; otherwise he must imagine it.

Recognizing the importance of this conceptualist trend, the Museum of Modern Art in New York opened on June 30 a three-month exhibition titled Information. Among the artists from all over the world invited to participate is Iain Baxter, resident artist at SFU and president of the versatile N.E. Thing Co.

Included in his section at MOMA are the 24 ACT's and ART's by which he represented Canada in graphics at the last Sao Paulo Biennial (photographs of Aesthetically Claimed Things or Aesthetically rejected Things anywhere on the globe.)

In addition to these extensions of found objects, Baxter is utilizing the most up-to-date methods of communication to feed instant art information into New York. Every Wednesday he is sending graphic material from the demonstration room on the ninth floor of the Westcoast Transmission Building via Xerox Telecopier II. Also daily from his home — pardon, office at his Seymour River plant in North Vancouver, he is tapping out pieces on his telex.

Companion machines must of course be installed in the Museum of Modern Art and a schedule of transmission times arranged. Our photo shows president Baxter on June 30 at 4 p.m. PDT checking by phone with New York before inserting his Transcommand No. 3 into the Telecopier for the exhibition's opening at 7 p.m. EDT.

The elegantly designed and beautifully spaced machines in the Xerox demonstration room constitute some of the finest contemporary sculpture I have seen. The grey plastic Xerox Telecopier had already caught the eye of the president of the N.E. Thing Co. who photographed it and slapped on his ACT seal when he first used the machine over a year ago. Then, with typical playfulness, he made the picture phone send a picture of itself — in this instance to the Paula Cooper Gallery in New York.

The Xerox Telecopier, through electrical impulses which activate a stylus, can transmit a document, drawing or picture 3,000 miles in six minutes. Its operation is simple but you still have to understand it. New York laughed three times, causing Baxter to remark proudly: "We were the international leaders in

(Continued on Page 9)

(Continued from Page 8)

this field. I don't think of Vancouver in a very small way; it's just a jumping off place for something else."

What kind of art work can be communicated by Xerox Telecopier? Here is a Paper Expansion and Layout piece which is in the Information show: "Take this paper and reproduce it 625 times by (Xerox etc.) Then lay all the sheets on the floor side by side in 25 rows of 25. On the back of each sheet just before putting down put down small piece of double sticky tape so it won't move. Leave message side up on all sheets and leave entire configuration up for one week at which time you will be informed of next process. Place in large room so people can walk around layout. Thanks."

The "next process" is to crumple the paper into little balls so that by means of a commonplace material Baxter has defined vast space, then made it contract by half.

On the Telex, which Baxter has had in his home since last October, and with which he is as delighted as a toy, he can send messages like the following, which call attention to the exciting immediacy of today's communication: "This statement will be, is being, has been sent by Telex."

Or he may execute a Self-Portrait from Memory, as original and amusing as Rauschenberg's fingerprint Self Portrait. In it he describes the front side, left side, right side, back side and top side of his head.

Both these Telex works were included in the exhibition Art in the Mind held at Oberlin College, Oberlin, Ohio this spring. However Baxter envisages his daily hook-up with MOMA for Information more as a long-distance diary.

Discussing the whole new development he says: "What's happening is that the art community has finally caught up with information. Which has really been going on for a long time. Like say governments and industry and newspapers have been handling information all the time, right? Well the art community was always working with paint in their traditional techniques until somebody just decided to use direct information as a way of putting down our ideas."

Baxter defends the pieces against the charge of being raw information. They are colored as much as oils or watercolors by the aesthetic outlook of the artist. "Like you come up with a concept of what you're going to do. That whole concept would be the same if you vent for a walk and said well I think I'm going to sit out here and do a drawing of that particular scene. You've made a choice and then you go after it and hone it down and work on it until it seems very perfected and tough."

"Artists are just sensitivity informers. They seem to handle information — in a poetic way."

Baxter's way is more inclined to be witty. He employs humor with a profound intent, working on the

same level as Joyce and McLuhan. He is also very interested in the reductive quality of cultural information.

"It's a minimalist attitude if you want to hang onto visuals. Because I think when a work is tripped away just to its essentials then you have to really grapple with it. It's like when there's very little there but what's there is the most important thing, then you really get the message."

Baxter acknowledges that there has been a lot of criticism of conceptualism especially by collectors. "They're caught now in the great tradition of owning big works like Stellas and Newmans and they're wondering well how do you tell if some one's ideas are better than some one else's. It's the same as the difference between a good joke and a bad joke. I mean you can tell if it's any good or not. Of course you bring your attitudes and your whole life style to the works and you decide well you kind of like that one or you don't. And it's just a matter of experiencing it and worrying about it and thinking about it and challenging it and so on."

Baxter feels that the word "collector" has to change. Perhaps we should revert to "patron." At any rate he hopes to see the emergence of enlightened persons who, instead of spending \$2,000 on a painting, would give it to a conceptual artist to get his work published. "Artists are always very appreciative of any help like that to the patron's rewards, in terms of getting his name known, will happen and he doesn't have to worry about having all those objects around. He can have objects but it's not a constant drive to do that. I think the drive should be to make things happen."

"Vancouver has a lot of people who probably haven't been involved in collecting that much. I mean this city — it's a very wealthy city in a way but I think all the wealth is spilled out on leisure time — you know boating and fishing and golfing and everything. That's one of the problems: It's so much of a paradise that everybody spends their money on that attitude."

"That's why there's not that much support in terms of the cultural parameters and it's very sad. If you don't want to know anything about your country or any area you've ever lived in just don't give anything towards the arts. And so sad behold no one will know anything that ever happened because boats and golf courses don't show the true expression of the anxieties and feelings of the population. Which of course come out in the guys that we call cultural informers or artists."

And a last plea from Baxter, who is trying to bridge many gaps between artists and big business and artists and the machine: "Artists are not guys you can't talk to. You just simply call them up and start talking to them." Phone 929-3662, Telex 04-505802. Cable Anytime Vancouver.

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Description

N.E. THING COMPANY LIMITED

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# INFORMATION

N.E. THING CO. LTD.

1419 Riverside Drive North Vancouver B.C. Canada

Date

1970

Project

DPMA - 1970 BUSINESS EXPOSITION

Number

2

GUIDE TO

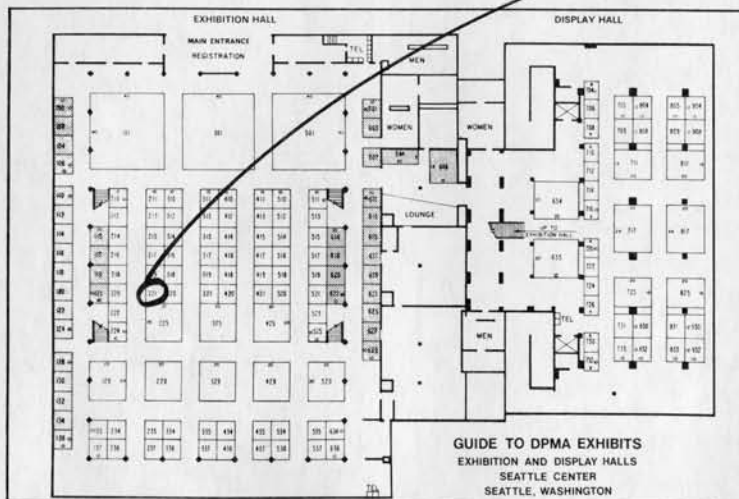
## DPMA 1970 BUSINESS EXPOSITION

JUNE 23-26 SEATTLE CENTER

SEATTLE, WASHINGTON

### EXHIBIT HOURS

Tuesday, June 23 - 1:00 p.m. - 7:00 p.m.  
Wednesday, June 24 - 8:30 a.m. - 6:00 p.m.  
Thursday, June 25 - 8:30 a.m. - 6:00 p.m.  
Friday, June 26 - 8:30 a.m. - 12:00 noon



EXHIBITOR	BOOTH LOCATION	EXHIBITOR	BOOTH LOCATION
Addressograph Multigraph Corporation, Cleveland, Ohio	110, 112, 114, 116, 118, 120, 122	Business Press International, Inc.	704, 706
Allen-Babcock Computing, Inc.	534	Business Supplies Corporation of America	218
Allen Hollander/Kimball Systems	805, 809	Caelus Memories, Inc.	235, 237, 334, 336 Island
American Key Punch Company	621	Cheshire, A Xerox Company	211, 213, 215, 310, 312, 314
American Telephone and Telegraph Company	419, 421, 425, 518, 520	Computer-Link Corporation	320
Ampex Corporation	435, 437	Computer Machinery Corporation	529 Island
Applied Digital Data Systems, Inc.	705, 709	Computer Solutions Inc.	732
Audio Devices, Inc.	808	Computerworld	130, 132
Bankers Box/Record Storage Systems	722	Conference Book Service, Inc.	720
The Boeing Computer Services Division	415	Continental Computing Corporation, a subsidiary of Industrial Dynamics, Inc.	644
Boorum & Pease Co.	216	Courier Terminal Systems, Inc.	217, 219
Burroughs Corporation	329 Island	Cummins-Chicago Corp.	119, 121
		Data Instruments Company	129 Island

EXHIBITOR	BOOTH LOCATION	EXHIBITOR	BOOTH LOCATION
DATA MANAGEMENT	311, 313, 315, 410, 412, 414	Moore Business Forms	725, 731, 733, 830, 832 Island
Datamation®	536	Nashua Corporation—Computer Supplies Division	708
Data Processing Magazine	619	National Blank Book Co., Inc.	325, 337
Data Processing Management Association (DPMA)	311, 313, 315, 410, 412, 414	<b>* N.E. Thing Co. Ltd.</b>	<b>221</b>
Data Product News	726	The Office	607
Data Products Corporation	102, 104	Pak-Well Corporation	601, 603
Dennison Manufacturing Company	712	PHI Computer Services, Inc.	710
A. B. Dick Company	411, 413	RCA Computer Systems	135, 137, 234, 236 Island
DYLAFO Business Machines Corporation	220, 222, 224	Royco Instruments	417
Dynamation Systems Corp. Limited	317	St. Regis Paper Company, Laminated & Coated Products Division	436
Eastman Kodak Company—Business Systems Markets Division	817 Island	Sanders Data Systems, Inc.	825
Electronic Computer Programming Institute	434	Seatronics, Inc.	521
Engineered Data Products, Inc.	517	Staff Builders International	510
Friden Division, The Singer Company	611, 613, 615	Stantard Industries	724
Frye Manufacturing Company	128	Supreme Equipment & Systems Corp.	811
General Electric Company—Information Systems Equipment Division	501 Island	Systems Manufacturing Corporation	115, 117
Robert P. Gillette & Co., Inc.	730	Tab Products Co.	225
Global Tabulating Equipment Corp.	716	Tally Corporation	210, 212, 214
Globe Ticket Company	515	Teletype Corporation	523, 525
Honeywell Data Products Division	229 Island	Terminal Equipment Corporation	512
International Business Machines Corporation	101 Island	TransCom, Inc.	636
International Management Systems, Inc.	617	United States Tabulating Binder Corporation	316, 318
Instrument Specialists, Inc.	614, 618	UNIVAC, Division of Sperry Rand Corp.	301 Island
KYBE Corporation	514, 516	Universal Time Punch, Inc.	416
Lewis Business Forms, Inc.	519	Vanguard Data Systems, Inc.	100
Magnetics Inc.	124	Virginia Panel Corporation	106
MAI Equipment Corporation	831, 833	Wells TP Sciences, Inc.	804
Memorex Corporation	319, 321, 325, 418, 420	Wilson Jones Company	511, 513
3M Company—Magnetic Products Division	717 Island	Wright Line	429 Island
Modern Data	714	Xerox Corporation	211, 213, 215, 310, 312, 314
Monarch Metal Products, Inc.	711	Xerox Corporation—Communication Products Division	620, 622



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N. E. THING COMPANY LIMITED

Trade Mark ©

Description

NETCO. TOOK A BOOTH AND GAVE OUT PUBLICITY AND A GNG "GROSS NATIONAL GOOD" BUTTON. IAIN BAXTER ALSO GAVE A LECTURE TO BUSINESS MEN ABOUT SENSITIVITY INFORMATION.





# INFORMATION

N.E. THING CO. LTD.

1419 Riverside Drive North Vancouver B.C. Canada

Date

1970

Project

DPMA - 1970 BUSINESS EXPOSITION

Number

2.

NO. 1

CONSULTANT

N. E. THING CO. LTD.

1419 Riverside Drive, N. Vancouver, B.C., Canada  
phone (604) 929-3662, Telex 04-507802, Cable ANYTHING vancouver

SUBJECT: TO CARRY YOUR THOUGHTS AND ANYTHING

## N.E. THING CONSULTS WITH 1% OF YOU ...

the enlightened few who are ready to do something about -

- gross national good — the GNG
- your corporation's contemporary philosophy and how to communicate it
- QUALITY vs QUANTITY
- CORPORATION vs CORPSEPERATION
- understanding the sensitiveness of information
- the 5 E's — ecology, education, environment, energy, emagination
- fusing GNP & GNG to raise the "QUALITY OF LIFE" factor
- affluent slavery
- new honesty in business. . . if you can't make it, don't fake it
- innovations
- the dirth of support to culture . . . which is history's true balance sheet after all
- seminars in culture, understanding contemporary arts
- the deleterious byproducts of the "AMERICAN DREAM"
- corporation's honest image, cultural image, total image
- ideas
- the marriage of business to committment, culture, honesty & humility
- the generation — gap
- keeping up with what is happening in instant change
- SUPEREFFICIENCY equalling SUPERDEFICIENCY
- non-organizational man, the stay at home commuter
- information as natural resource
- imagineering
- cultural attitudes being the dimension by which business can gain insights into how to affect change sensitively
- eradication of "THE ECONOMIC END JUSTIFIES THE MEANS"
- new humanist youth attitudes
- communication in our audio-visual society
- your 1970's N.E. THING company "DIAGNOSTIC SERVICE CHECK", test how far out your company is
- harmonizing the dynamics of change
- using enlightened business as a power-base to do good
- considering this statement a MIRROR . . . reflect on your company's image

30 of many reasons why you'll get in touch with us about anything . . .  
we'll be talking to more of you soon about n.e. thing

THE N.E. THING COMPANY IS THE NUMBER ONE ICOM CONSULTANT IN . . . VISUAL COMMUNICATIONS . . . CORPORATE IMAGE DEVELOPMENT . . . SENSITIVITY INFORMATION . . . CULTURAL IMAGE DEVELOPMENT . . . ART AND DESIGN CONSULTATION . . . GLOBAL PROMOTION . . . IMAGINEERING . . . GNG — GROSS NATIONAL GOOD . . . ICOM — INTERNATIONAL CONSULTANTS OVER MEDIA . . . IDEAS . . . RENT-A-THINK . . . ANYTHING

IAIN BAXTER, President

PAUL WOODROW, Director, Special Projects

N.E. THING CO. LTD.

1419 RIVERSIDE DR., N. VANCOUVER, B.C., CANADA

PHONE: (604) 929-3662, TELEX 04-507802, CABLE: ANYTHING Vancouver, B.C.

ANYTIME YOU SEE

ANYTIME YOU THINK

THINK N.E. THING

SEE N.E. THING

PLEASE COMPLETE AND RETURN

Description

BROCHURE HANDED OUT AT D.P.M.A. EXPOSITION. IT STATES MANY OF THE N.E. THING CO. POSITIONS ON BUSINESS. THIS FOLDER WAS USED BY PARTICIPANTS TO CARRY OTHER MATERIAL IN.

N.E. THING COMPANY LIMITED

Trade Mark ©



# INFORMATION

N.E. THING CO. LTD.

1419 Riverside Drive North Vancouver B.C. Canada

Date

1970

Project

D.P.M.A. SHOW, BAYSHORE INN, VANCOUVER

Number

1.

Art and Artists Thursday, June 4, 1970 \*\*\*41

## N.E. Thing Company sells art to businessmen

By JOAN LOWNDES

Is your company involved in GNG—(gross national good)? If not, you should be. This is only one of a series of challenges put by the president of the N.E. Thing Co. to the delegates attending the computer conference at the Hotel Vancouver and the Bayshore Inn.

The conference, which ended Wednesday at noon, is under the joint sponsorship of the Information Processing Society of Canada and the Canadian Operational Research Society.

Catch your eye among the exhibitors' booths at the Bayshore is a red traffic-like sign which says GO.

Beside it, in a conservative suit, handing out GNG buttons, questionnaires and business cards is Vancouver's unique Iain Baxter.

He is selling his main product: ideas. Instead of reaching into offices via his Telex, he has come into the market place to meet Big Business face to face.

His credentials line his booth: catalogues from the Sao Paulo Biennial at which he represented Canada in graphics.

On his counter is a TV set through which is being fed a videotape of one of the Whitney's computer movies, featuring psychedelic mandalas vibrating to ragga music.

He is flanked by his Director of Special Projects Paul Woodrow, who has just graduated from the Vancouver School of Art.

No wonder people stop in their tracks: it's so different. Baxter says: "A lot of people come up and kind of question us and in a sense they're questioning themselves."



"Dialogue has been happening. They can't deny we've been having success."

"Like the IBM thing is fairly sterile. They're probably wondering why people are not more interested in the machinery. Maybe it's too slick or too overpowering. We have humor and people recognize it."

"Humor is one of the greatest things. There's no phoniness about it—you're all on the same level."

"No one's playing any games, they're honest. The greatest thing a corporation has to do today is to be honest."

Does it sound simple-minded? Not to Roger Emsley of the Canadian Systems Support and Development Corporation, (seen in our photo talking to Baxter).

He told me: "We're interested in ideas. We're operating in some respects as a think-tank with information processing as our specialty."

Baxter, who is aware of the disaffection of the young, quoted from an article in the April issue of Fortune: The View Through Youthful Eyes by Louis Banks.

Banks explains that students, young managers, intellectuals and artists in the '60s cannot enthuse about a trillion-dollar economy because they see "the gross national hypochondria—of mindless urbanization, environmental pollution, and the whole wasteland of public dereliction."

To counteract this situation Baxter offers himself as a consultant in imagination, sensitivity information, visual communications . . . ANYTHING.

He shoots these questions at management: Does your company have an art collection?

Do your employees need a group project to pull them and management together?

Would you like exciting global promotion thinking?

Would your top executive like to know about Fine Arts and Culture?

Rent-a-brain?

Baxter sums up: "There's no sense waiting until computers are smashed at Sir

## 'Machinery can be fun'

N.E. Thing Co. invades the computer world

36\*\*\* The VANCOUVER SUN: Wed., June 3, 1970

By MOIRA FARROW

The stop sign said GO in the ballroom of the Bayshore Inn.

And the man behind the counter wore a button announcing: My Computer Understands Me.

It was all very unexpected in the midst of a very serious, very scientific conference.

Surrounded by clacking machines, electronic equipment and technocrats in white shirts, the N.E. Thing Co. was doing its thing again.

Company president and Vancouver artist Iain Baxter has an exhibit booth at Session 70, the first annual joint conference of the Canadian Information Processing Society and the Canadian Operational Research Society.

"I want to show that machinery can be fun," explained Baxter, whose inflated plastic bags ("bagged landscapes") have caused controversy in the art world.

"People talk about the coldness and insensitivity of machinery so we want to show that it is just like any other tool—you can learn to relax with it."

Baxter's proved his point. The Telex machine was drawing pictures and 'komputer films'—computer-generated images—were making pretty colored patterns on the television set.

The only noise was recorded Indian sitar music and anyone who paused for a moment to listen was rewarded with a button stating: GNG—Gross National Good.

"I'm very much concerned with Gross National Good because that is what we have to make happen," said Baxter.

The GNP, Gross National Product, has produced things like pollution and urban sprawl. These have been the by-products of the Great American Dream.

"Today I'm convinced that young people will use the great corporations as a power base to change things. I think a GNG approach can solve many problems—even the labor-management disputes."

So Baxter took his message right to the heart of the big business world.

His co-exhibitors at the Bayshore Inn include Xerox of Canada Ltd., IBM Canada Ltd., Canadian General Electric Co. Ltd. and the National Cash Register Co. Ltd.

As the sitar plunked in the background, Baxter handed out leaflets asking questions like: "Does your company have an art collection?"

And: "Is your advertising vibrating with the tenor of the times? Rent-a-



IAIN BAXTER . . . "I don't want to frighten people off"

brain?"

Baxter, in a somewhat baggy corduroy jacket and tartan tie, looked very different from the other grey-suited exhibitors but he insisted that his booth is not as way out as it might have been.

"I don't want to frighten people off," he said. "I'm convinced there should be more humor in business—you can sell things with humor. But we're not doing any hard sell."

"We've caused quite a lot of hard thinking around here. People have come up to question us and ended up questioning themselves and their own attitudes."

PLEASE COMPLETE AND RETURN

Description

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N.E. THING COMPANY LIMITED

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He shoots these questions at management:

Does your company have an art collection?

Do your employees need a group project to pull them and management together?

Would you like exciting global promotion thinking?

Would your top executive like to know about Fine Arts and Culture?

Rent-a-brain?

Baxter sums up: "There's no sense waiting until computers are smashed at Sir

George Williams and guys get killed at Kent campus.

"I think I've come a long way trying to be here and do something but business has to take a step too."



# INFORMATION

N.E. THING CO. LTD.

1419 Riverside Drive North Vancouver B.C. Canada

Date

1970

Project

ARTICLE

Number

1.

## Doing N.E. Thing For Gross National Good

BY SUSAN PAYNTER

Iain Baxter is a young idea factory whose mind works so much faster than his tongue that his words tumble over each other on their way to your ear.

And once they get there, you're still a little confused.

The young Canadian married a pretty blonde named Elaine and together they produced two children and the N. E. Thing Company Ltd.

"The company is an umbrella under which all sorts of neat things can happen," its president explained. And they do.

The company is based in Vancouver in a little building near a river. Inside the Baxters live and create things like the world's longest movie, inflatable clothing and a concept to raise the world's quality of life.

At 32, Baxter has been through more changes than a fashion model.

"In school I took degrees in things like zoology and education," he said. "Science took me into illustrating, illustrating into painting, and painting still lifes into creating Things."

Things are anything the N. E. Thing Company produces in its Thing Department. Examples are plastic environments or bagged landscapes enclosing water, soil and land-form shapes. They hang in several Canadian museums and private collections.

And a series of stainless steel poles sticking up at various angles out of a Canadian glacier. "It's a slow kinetic sculpture," Baxter explained.

"Iain was doing still lifes," Elaine Baxter explained. "And we thought we ought to update."

"We don't like to refer to art," Baxter said. "Because people's concept of what is art carries with it a lot of hangups. Like art has to be something in a frame you hang on the wall."

"The common pottery of today is a plastic bottle so I started doing plastics. We'll be buying old plastic bottles someday as antiques."

"By referring to 'visual sensitivity information' instead of art, you can include so many more things. We're even showing areas of a field grazed in a certain pattern by cows. That's pretty hard to hang on a wall."

"And instead of collectors, our patrons are 'people who make things happen.'"

Aside from the Thing Department, the Movie Department, the Printing Department, and the COP Department (of legitimate plagiarism) N.E. Thing's act Department is very active.

The Act Department has set up a stringent set of requirements by which anything from a pyramid to zebra can be judged either an Act (Aesthetically Claimed Thing) or an Art (Aesthetically Rejected Thing).

The department then issues an official stamped and sealed document announcing that from this day on all men shall recognize the object as an official Act or Art.

About a year ago the company took on

(Page 5, Col. 1)



—F-1 Photo by Jack Brown

N.E. THING CO. LOOSENS UPTIGHT BUSINESS WORLD

Paul Woodrow, Elaine Baxter and President Iain Baxter

## N.E. Thing for the G.N.G.

(From Page 1)

its director of special products, a red-haired fellow named Paul Woodrow. N. E. Thing by then was a fully-registered firm and was operating somewhere between the world of art and the world of business.

There it flourishes, if not financially, then productively communicating ideas and visual data with all the computerized and electronic equipment the '70s can offer.

Concepts and pictures are transmitted from Canada to the United States and other countries via telex systems. The idea is instant communication of ideas.

The prime recipient of all this creative action is the "uptight world of business." With slogans like "My Computer Understands Me" Iain Baxter hopes to help business find happiness.

"We're mainly concerned with gross national good," Baxter explained. "All these years, industry has been creating a gross national product. But, along with it, has come a gross national by-product, like pollution."

"We want to help business combine GNP with GNG. They'll continue to make a profit but they'll also make friends," Baxter said.

He's not just philosophizing. Iain Baxter is taking his message directly to business on his own terms. During a recent computer and business-machine exhibit in Vancouver he rented a booth and in the midst of the clicking and ticking machines, challenged business executives to see the humor in their industry.

They were a little suspicious at first," he admitted. A lot of them wouldn't even look at our questionnaires. But a lot of them started questioning us and ended up questioning themselves.



"It was really kind of sad. A guy in a booth just stood there like a machine, next to his machine, telling how it worked. I mean, he didn't even say what a nice day it was!"

The free-wheeling approach loosened a few straight laces in companies like Xerox and IBM and Baxter thinks he made some headway.

So he's going to do it again, here. Starting Tuesday at Exhibition Hall, his booth sporting a 10-foot inflatable IBM card, will sit in the middle of a massive computer show.

Surrounded by huge red stop signs that say Go, he'll try to bring art and humor to big business.

Baxter admitted the business man is slow to accept his advice. "Maybe I'm naive, but I want to help him before it's too late," he said. "Before things happen like the recent burning of computers in Canada and the Kent State shootings."

"People aren't used to thinking of companies as organizations that do good as well as make products. But industry is realizing it has to be concerned with

the quality of life around it and it's coming around."

"The thing is, business can't just turn to a management analyst and expect him to change things. So why not come to guys like us?"

"Even raising employee morale can be done by devising a project they can all work on, from the president to the janitor. Companies can do more together than just go bowling."

Amidst all this idealism and art, a family could starve to death. So Baxter teaches at Simon Fraser University.

But even there the bridge over troubled waters is crumbling.

"I don't know how much longer I'll have my job," he said. "It's a combination of the conflict of the company and my classes and their idea of what an art school and an art teacher should be."

If that happens the Baxters' "quality of life" may suffer a little but Baxter and his co-company president Elaine won't give up.

They'll continue to try to bridge the worlds of art and business and, hopefully, make a living at the same time.

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N. E. THING COMPANY LIMITED

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Description SEATTLE POST-INTELLIGENCER June 21/70





# INFORMATION

N.E. THING CO. LTD.

1419 Riverside Drive North Vancouver B.C. Canada

Date

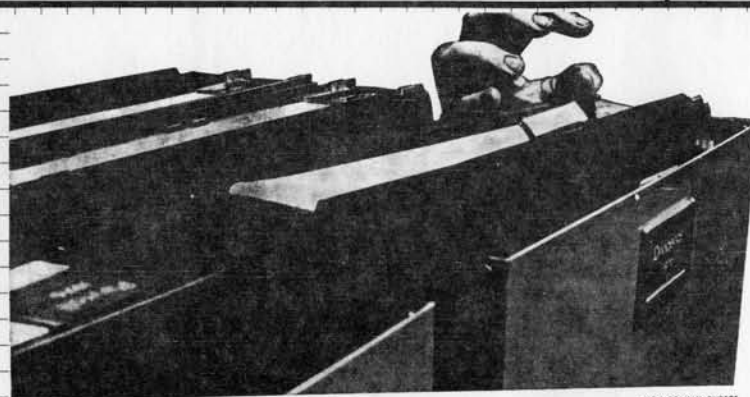
1970

Project

ARTICLE

Number

1.



GARY TOLMAN PHOTOS

## N.E. Thing Can Happen When You Meet Iain Baxter

by Susan Paynter

ONCE upon a time there was a company man named Ernest Right who'd been programmed, punched, spindled and mutilated by his own computer.

Just as he was about to be fed, whole and healthy, into a hungry data processing machine he was saved from his plight by a young man with a crooked smile but straight

teeth who was named Iain Baxter.

Meeting Iain Baxter is exciting. Talking to Iain Baxter is exhausting. Seattleites by the drove discovered Baxter when they visited the 1970 International Data Processing Conference at Seattle Center's Exhibition Hall.

There, in the middle of a super-straight and serious exhibition of all the latest data processing machines and the men who feed and care for them, stood the N.E. Thing Co. Ltd. booth doing anything it could to communicate.

N.E. Thing was started in 1966 by Baxter and his pretty blonde wife, Elaine. It began as an umbrella "under which all sorts of neat things could happen," says Baxter.

The company makes things like the world's longest movie and inflatable dressers with water inside "for putting out small fires."

But that wasn't enough. N.E. Thing wanted to help the uptight business world loosen up. So it brought its message to the heart of American business — the computer.

First in Vancouver, then in Seattle, the company rented a booth at the IFPMA conference and blew a few machinery-oriented minds with slogans like "My Computer Understands Me," towering red stop signs that said Go and a 10-foot inflatable plastic IBM Card.

Where other exhibitors had wall-to-wall carpeting, Iain Baxter spelled out I-U-G in carpet samples on the floor.

The booth drew crowds. Some onlookers were angry, some felt threatened, some were curious and some enthusiastic. All went away with a new concept of "business as usual."

Iain Baxter does have something to offer besides a business put-on. He's serious

about having a sense of humor and wants to help.

He has ideas — so many his tongue gets tangled trying to tell you. "Okay, now let me explain. See, I have this idea. Now this is it," he'll say and before the sentence is out he'll have another one.

One of these brainstorms took shape in a bus mounted with movie cameras. Iain and company made a movie of the entire length of Canada by filming it (without stopping except for gas) from east to west. Running continuously, the film would take four days, 24 hours a day, to show.

"People could come in and watch, sleep, eat, leave and come back, see," Iain said. "A company could buy it as a promotion. And it could be the first company to feature the world's longest movie."

So far, the movie's unsold. Skeptics say they're waiting for the book.

But Baxter's undaunted. He still has his ideas and so does his wife. They conduct board meetings at breakfast to "iron out their ideas."

One of their breakfast table brain sessions yielded a worldwide network of communications systems so that people on opposite sides of the globe could draw pictures to send to each other across the language barrier.

"Machines have always been used for practical things," Baxter complained. "We're trying to show they can be fun. Machines like telexes and telegraphs can give you visual, voice and written communication at the same time."

"Instead of a bunch of executives getting together in Miami Beach for a convention, they could all sit at their telexes and have a meeting without moving," he said.

Baxter tackled the mod machinery after trying everything else at least once — science, business, mathematics, painting, candlestick making and even going straight.

He holds degrees in just about every thing except animal husbandry and says they all help him run N.E. Thing's several departments.

There's the Thing Dept. It makes things. And there's the Printing Dept. that prints things. Like his recent book called *Piles*—pictures of piles of everything from boats to donuts.

And the Cop Dept. which "works very directly with other people's work." And the Movie Dept. And the Service Dept.

Then there are the Art and Art Departments. They research and assess the esthetic value of things like tractors. Or piles of felt.

If the object is esthetic enough it is awarded an officially-sealed document proclaiming it for all time and all men, an ACT (Aesthetically Claimed Thing). If it falls short of N.E. Thing's rigid standards it gets an ART (Aesthetically Rejected Thing) certificate.

And finally, there's the consulting department — the one that's currently giving business the business.

All departments are manned by Iain Baxter, his wife, and their creative director, Paul Woodrow. The multifaceted company headquarters is in Baxter's house, together with children, toys, pets, and a kitchen sink with faulty plumbing.

Baxter realizes he's a bit ahead of his time — a visionary of the '70s and figures that's why the company flourishes — more creatively than financially.

Publicity and award-wise, the company's a gold mine. It's been featured in every national magazine from *Time* to *Harper's Bazaar*. But still, last year's expenses outweighed fees and prize money by some \$4,300.

The lack of currency flow doesn't seem to damp up the flow of ideas, however.

"Gas stations should be pop art gym-

bols," Iain explained. "They already are, but they should be more so. You should go to a gas station with the idea of spending some time there."

"When you're on a trip you want to get out of the car and stretch at the station, right? Well, they should have food and museums and art galleries there. Gas stations are boring."

"And super markets need redoing," he said. "I'd put in lots of mirrors and make giant soap cans out of the telephone booths. The check-out stands could be very exciting. There could be a gigantic electrical sign board at the front and when the checker rings up your total it would register in huge lighted numbers on the board. And bells would go off, so everybody could see how much you spent."

Art to Iain shouldn't be something you have to hang on a wall. Art can be a pasture patterned by grazing cows. Or a telephone rack filled with water and earth. He calls it "Bagged Landscapes."

He thinks plastic is the common pottery of today and that people someday will buy plastic antiques.

He's devised a "slowly moving kinetic sculpture" on a glacier in Canada. It's a series of steel poles, placed upright at varying angles which, if watched over a period of five years, would slowly topple over.

Currently he's working with Seattle's Henry Gallery on a continental communications connection of museums and art schools. Students will do things like 50 word poems with each word coming from a different contact point in a different city or state.

He advocates free telephones or phones taxed like roads so anyone could make calls up to a certain set limit each month.

"That way we'd really have communication," he said. "Right now you always think of how much it's going to cost before you call someone, right? Well this way you could call up somebody you met last summer while you were camping in Yellowstone. Just call him up in another state to say hello."

"That would keep the politicians honest, see. Because there would be instant communications between people of every state and each one would tell the other what's happening where he lives. It might even solve the bilingual problem in Canada. English-speaking Canadians would call up French-speaking Canadians and pretty soon they'd begin to understand each other."

"It could eliminate the need for a postal system. Except maybe once a week, when they send out the bills. Everybody would call instead of writing. So you'd take all the postal employees and put them in the telephone system so they wouldn't lose their jobs."

Better and shorter movies are on his mind. He thinks the TV set will become the art gallery of tomorrow and there will be short filmed subjects instead of plotted scripts.

"I'd film a three-minute blue abstract or two minutes on how to make candles," he said. "Or three minutes of one of my inflatables floating down a river. TV stations could hire a staff of 20 artists to show their work in different time slots."

Business, Baxter has decided, can reap the benefits of all this creativity. But first it's going to have to make up its mind to change its mind about taking itself too seriously.

"Companies could advertise by sponsoring an artist instead of a TV show," he said. "Business has always lacked humanism. People are supposed to be like machines, working toward that great and gross national profit. Business hasn't grasped major issues, or done anything about them. A company could make itself very popular by helping resolve national disasters instead of creating more."

"Today's business executive has to become concerned about people, and beauty and surroundings. When a billboard ad runs out, a painting should be put up. It should make a whole city a gallery. Another thing. Top management shouldn't have to go to the office every day. These people should get paid for the time they spend thinking about their job while they're out mowing the lawn."

"I know it's hard for people to change their attitudes when they're based on the Puritan ethic of the value of work. But they shouldn't be afraid to try new things and wonder about a different way of doing business."

"My company's slogan has always been, 'I wonder what would happen if . . .'"



Seattle Post-Intelligencer NORTHWEST TODAY Sun., July 19, 1970 7

PLEASE COMPLETE AND RETURN

Description

N.E. THING COMPANY LIMITED

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# INFORMATION

N.E. THING CO. LTD.

1419 Riverside Drive North Vancouver B.C. Canada

Date

1970

Project

ARTICLE

Number

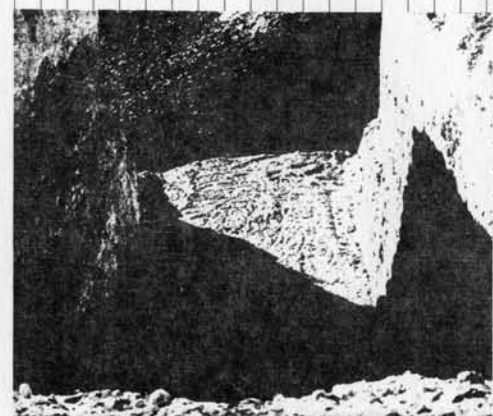
1.

## The New York Times Magazine

FEBRUARY 1, 1970 SECTION 6

### It's Called Earth Art —And Boulderdash

By ROY BONGARTZ



Courtesy Dawn Gallery, New York

tan and place a large number of mirrors in the ground, described the artistic effect this way: "One couldn't help feeling that this was a ride on a knife covered with solar blood." That this sort of solipsistic art is hard to parody was proved in a recent take-off by Art News, in which the total oeuvre of a fictitious enfant terrible was said to be five sketchbooks: the first had its drawings erased, the second was blank, the third had its pages torn out, the fourth was burned up and—the masterpiece—"the fifth sketchbook simply was never purchased." The trouble with such kidding is that the notebooks would clearly be considered substantial enough nowadays for somebody to commission as a project.

Yet most of the artists are dead serious, not only about their work as personal experience, but also as a way to break free of the stultifying gallery scene and marketplace commercialism, in a *mise en valeur* of the vast, amazing, unlooked-at countryside all around. Says another founder of the genre, Californian Den-

nis Oppenheim, 31: "Things like the Grand Canyon have always frightened artists. They've always seemed like forms impossible to duplicate or rival. Now artists have to be willing to meet these objects in their own ball park." Like Iain Baxter, Oppenheim started out by marking certain sites that pleased him with aluminum plaques—a basic tenet in the new art is that craftsmanship is altogether beside the point and that the artist's role may be simply to point out the esthetic order in nature. Oppenheim next stretched out snow fence in patterns in wheat field in Hamburg, N.Y., until the farmer who owned the land called the police to stop him. The artist finally convinced the farmer that the field had artistic possibilities. He got permission to direct the harvesting in certain patterns, but only the fact that he intended to photograph the results seemed to make the project acceptable to the farmer. "My feeling," says Oppenheim, "was that the experience of directing the harvest was the main work, not the pictures." In another

"*Mile Long Walk*" by California sculptor Walter de Maria, shown here lying at one end of the work—two parallel chalk lines, 12 feet apart, one mile long—in the Mojave Desert. Unlike other earth artists, this veteran seeks "a minimum of communication with the public."

Courtesy Dawn Gallery

work, he managed to place several hundred pairs of boards, nailed together at right angles, along a thousand-foot expanse of Long Island Expressway embankment; he photographed his creation, titled it "Land-slide" and got away before the police noticed what he was doing.

Last spring a hip farmer of Finsterwolde, the Netherlands, let Oppenheim direct the seeding of his wheat field in wide

curves (title: "Directed Seeding—Wheat"). The trouble was that at the crucial moment of harvesting, Oppenheim was back in New York City. He got on the phone to the farmer and carefully instructed him to harvest only two swatches in the field, in the form of an X, and to save the wheat, not have it refined for bread (title: "Canceled Crop"). The grain was sent to a gallery in Düsseldorf in 500 sacks, where it was displayed,

MODERN art has escaped into the wilderness, and a search party may have to be sent out to find it. The new Earth Art is hoping to skip out on the insiders who have made the avant-garde into a kind of currency, an admission ticket to a rarified international social scene, a badge of in-ness, far-outness, somewhere-else-ness and too-muchness. Succeeding waves of action painting, abstract expressionism, pop and op and minimal arts have been captured and sequestered by hip art patrons vying to sponsor the most scandalous artists in town. In this procedure, certain of the artists turned into prima donnas who could autograph a shoe and sell it for a fortune, while the patrons became famed far and wide for cranking up the momentum of art history to a breakneck speed.

But now what has happened is that the new art has slipped its rails altogether. Many artists, in what is probably a futile revolt against the socialite, show-biz art scene, have simply taken their work from the

theatricality of gallery, museum, and penthouse wall, and have made off into the mountains, rivers, desert and oceans with it. Hardly anybody sees it out there in the wilds, but that is O.K., because the viewer—the former museumgoer or gallery customer—does not matter any more. Get with it, please: the new Earth Art can be as invisible as a buried length of pipe, as ephemeral as a sled track on the snow, as slightly existent as dots on a road map, as unfindable as pieces of chalk on the ocean floor. Earth Art—the term is used along with others, such as Earth Works, Ecologic Art, Impossible Art, Conceptual Art or Microenvironmentism—can be a hole dug and then filled up, footprints made into plaster casts, a room carpeted with dirt, a wheat field scored by a harrow. It can be a salt crystal growing in a glass tube, a cliff wrapped in plastic sheets, a mountain peak shrouded in felt.

Earth Art can, in fact, be anything the artist says it is. Iain Baxter, a Vancouver practitioner who used to paint on the shadows of trees on snow, now merely ennobles certain objects that strike his eye, such as a bridge, a gas storage tank, or a billboard, by snapping pictures of them so that they thus become what he

calls Aesthetically Claimed Things. Each of his A.C.T.'s is carefully numbered.

"Boulderdash" cried one critic; in fact, a large part of the traditional art world, and most of the public, are convinced that the whole act can be nothing but a weird, elaborate put-on, a faddish stunt like flagpole-sitting or hula-hooping. But artists have always outraged right-thinking citizenry by claiming new fields for art. What is new here is this stopper: ordinarily you cannot see this art. Nobody is going to trek out into the boondocks or swim around under water in the hope of catching a glimpse of a masterpiece before it gets blown over with sand or washed away—with the rare exception of such patrons as New Yorker Robert Scull, who chartered a plane to fly over a series of holes linking dry lakes in Smoke Creek Desert, Nev. Scull had commissioned Michael Heizer, 25 years old, to dig the holes out there as a 520-mile-long stretch of what the artist calls "negative objects." Says Heizer, "In the desert I can find that kind of unrapped, peaceful, religious space that artists have always tried to put in their work." Scull, who has commissioned a dozen such works, says

he does not need to actually see them. "It's enough for me that Heizer is out there," he says.

This very private, almost religious meditation of the artist before his work does give the new art a mystical quality that is part of the general effort to escape the commercial gallery-museum world. In this, artists probably can never succeed, since some sort of patronage is obviously needed to pay, for example, \$1,000 a day for the hire of earth-moving equipment in the desert. (A new concern of art patrons thus becomes the bills from contractors and real estate taxes on the land the piece is built on or dug out of.) And there is no question that as far as the patrons are concerned, there is as much prestige involved in paying for a desert excavation as there used to be in sponsoring a happening or buying a signed soup can. But the current resurgence of interest in world ecology does find a serious echo here, where artists try their best to return directly to the primordial earth—to see it, feel it, sense it in some pure and straightforward way, untrammelled by society's cliques and dollars.

Oddly, Earth Art has a number of

Continued on Page 22

This is not a cigarette.

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Description

N. E. THING COMPANY LIMITED

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# INFORMATION

N.E. THING CO. LTD.

1419 Riverside Drive North Vancouver B.C. Canada

Date

1970

Project

LITHOGRAPH

Number

1.



N.E. Thing Co. Ltd.  
Iain Baxter, President

Printing Dept. (Lithography)

P + L + P + L + P = VSI  
VSI FORMULA NO. 10

This lithograph is a production of the N.E. Thing Co's Printing and Projects Departments, in consort with the Lithography Workshop, Nova Scotia College of Art and Design. The point of departure for the work was the Art in America cover, May-June 1969 issue featuring the Projects Department of the N.E. Thing Co. The

cover began as a series of slides (P = Photograph) and became an offset lithograph cover for Art in America (L = Lithograph) which in turn was photographed (P = Photograph) by the Lithography Workshop for printing on metal plate lithographically (L = Lithograph). After the edition was printed, in a gesture of complete consciousness of the medium, it was crumpled and placed in a pile on the floor. This pile of crumpled lithographs became a work of the N.E. Thing Co's Projects Department and was accordingly photographed (P = Photograph). This series of transformations (P + L + P + L + P) equals the total Visual Sensitivity Information (VSI) available.

N.E. Thing Co. Ltd. Writing Department  
GF Worker

Original four color lithograph, hand-printed from aluminum plates at the Lithography Workshop, Nova Scotia College of Art and Design between March 3, 1970 and April 30, 1970.

The lithograph is an edition of 50, with 5 artists' proofs. The project also includes one 8½ x 11 title card and one 35mm. color slide with each lithograph.

The print bears the chop of Robert Rogers. Complete documentation and slides available upon request.

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# INFORMATION

N.E. THING CO. LTD.

1419 Riverside Drive North Vancouver B.C. Canada

Date

1970

Project

STUDIO/INTERNATIONAL SPECIM PROJECT

Number

1.

N.E. THING CO.

The Citizen, Friday, March 13, 1970

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Recht:

Jeder soll erkennen und für die Zukunft notieren, dass: 'ACT' No. 120, Der Prozess von 'ACT' und 'ART', sowie die Diploma von 'ACT' und 'ART' (März 1970) an diesem heutigen Tag des März 1970 den strengen Forderungen für Sensibilitätsinformation nachgekommen sind, wie sie von der N.E. THING CO. statuiert sind. Sie sind hinfort und für die Ewigkeit in eine Sphäre für 'ÄSTHETISCH BEANSPRUCHTE DINGE' ('ACT') erhoben. Ab heute sollten sie von jedem als 'ACT' anerkannt werden. Die N.E. THING CO. behält sich das Recht vor, jeden 'ACT' zu wiederholen oder zu duplizieren als zukünftiges Projekt. Gez. Präsident Iain Baxter N.E. THING CO. 'ACT' Department

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# INFORMATION

N.E. THING CO. LTD.

1419 Riverside Drive North Vancouver B.C. Canada

Date

1970

Project

ARTICLE

Number

2.

N. E. Thing Co. (Iain Baxter), Reflected Landscape, Seymour River, B.C., mixed media, 1969.

Bodo Pfeifer, Untitled, acrylic on canvas, 1969; Douglas Gallery, Vancouver.



## DRAMATIS PERSONAE

(In order of their appearance)

INTERLOCUTOR, Alvin Balkind  
WALLACE, Ian Wallace, artist  
and instructor at University of B.C.

EMERY, Anthony Emery, director, Vancouver Art Gallery

BREEZE, Claude Breeze, artist  
MORRIS, Michael Morris, artist  
FISHER, Brian Fisher, artist

LOWMES, Joan Lowmes, art critic for morning newspaper  
WONG, Bao-Xi (or Paul) Wong, artist and dealer, director of Bao-Xi Gallery

ROSENBERG, Ann Rosenberg, writer, lecturer, former art critic for evening newspaper

MR. PIES, Iain Baxter, president, N. E. Thing Co.

SHADSBOLT, David Shadbolt, senior curator, Vancouver Art Gallery

SIMMONS, Richard Simmons, art critic for Canadian Broadcasting Corporation, former

director, Vancouver Art Gallery

CHRISTMAS, Douglas Christmas, dealer, director of Douglas Gallery, Vancouver, and Ace Lewis, Glen Lewis, artist

AGLEN, Werner Aglen, executive director, Intermedia

TOPPINGS, Glenn Toppings, artist

SILCON, David Silcon, arts officer, Canada Council

## SCENE I

INTERLOCUTOR. Is there an art scene in Vancouver?

WALLACE. What is a scene? The art world, the magazines, are constantly looking for scenes.

What I sense is the myth of the Vancouver scene.

EMERY. Something has emerged here in terms of the number of artists of talent, of organizations like the Vancouver Art Gallery, the Fine Arts Gallery at the University of B.C., Simon

Fraser University, the Douglas Gallery, the Bao-Xi Gallery—all of which tends to make a scene. Then we have the recent advent of Intermedia. The excitement of New York is on a grand galactic scale. Ours is a much more local kind of thing; yet we do exist on the fringes of the global village—suburbanites—whereas once we were a distant outpost of a vanished empire.

BREEZE. Painters painting, fine—there are enough of them. But to describe it as a scene, I don't like it. Let's forget the word "scene"; it's overdone.

MORRIS. If you mean are there serious people working here, then I suppose there is a scene. If you think these people think of themselves as a scene, that is all wrong. It's just the place where we work. It isn't a question of scenes, but of personal friends—here and in other cities—who have concerns similar in a degree to one's own.

FISHER. There isn't a scene in the sense of any group loyalty, or any sort of consistent similarity in intentions or ways of working amongst a group of people here.

LOWMES. Definitely a scene, and a very lively one for a city of under a million, but small of course in the eyes of the world. Relativity is the key here.

WONG. Yes. It's coming. It's there; but not real grown yet.

ROSENBERG. There is a scene; but like home brew, it has been forced through the fermentation stage and encouraged to settle too quickly.

MR. PIES. Yes, there are a lot of interesting scenes around here. Vancouver is known for its beauty; and a lot of people come here to see the scenes. We have a large fishing industry, and an awful lot of salmon derbies have been developing lately.

(continued)

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Claude Breeze, Faces, No. 2, charcoal and acrylic on canvas, 1967; collection of the artist.

## SCENE II

INTERLOCUTOR. Has the scene been under- or over-rated?

EMERY. It depends on who's doing the rating. I feel that we get "specially treated by visiting bigwigs" from the outside, and because they want to be patronizing so much as they definitely unreasonably don't want to be patronizing.

MR. PIES. It's something the tourist will have to decide for himself when he arrives.

## SCENE III

INTERLOCUTOR. Who are the significant artists in Vancouver?

ROSENBERG. Significant by "international standards"? Only a few, like Baxter, Morris, Lee-Nova, Fisher and Breeze. Artists who state something valid about what it is like to live in or near Vancouver; Jack Wise and Tom Onley. If you mean the measure in which an artist's personality reflects the combustible mixture of extraordinary perceptual and intellectual

acuteness and the ability to translate his conceptions into concrete visual images and performances, then only one artist, Iain Baxter, rubsches this combination to a remarkable degree.

MORRIS. I think the most important artist is Iain Baxter. He is one of those artists who are idea men, and he's able to work in a conceptual way that generates a lot of interest, excitement.

He's also an amazing, talented, brilliant man.

WALLACE. Baxter is the artist who is able to successfully integrate a regional and an international sensibility. He takes his aesthetic and broadens it. He draws from other artists; he's in constant communication. It is this exchange of information that is the international arena now. One steals what one may and makes it his own; and Baxter's able to do this best. A feedback, that's just what it is.

SHADSBOLT. Iain Baxter, certainly. Michael Morris, Bodo Pfeifer, Gary Lee-Nova, Claude

Breeze, Brian Fisher. These are certainly the first ones who come to mind.

BREEZE. Gary Lee-Nova and Brian Fisher are the two top artists. I would say underneath them and coming up, are Joan Balzar and Audrey Doray. We all know Baxter, Pfeifer, Morris, and all that; but personally I don't like them as much as the painters I've mentioned.

LOWMES. I would like to add to the list Richard Turner, Glenn Lewis, Gathie Falk, Gordon Smith, Jack Shadbolt and Paul Wong.

SIMMONS. And I would add Sherry Grauer.

CHRISTMAS. Michael Morris and Iain Baxter are the main spark plugs.

MR. PIES. Significant artists? One who comes to mind is the man who paints the backdrops at the White Spot Drive-In. He paints a lot of scenery around here, and does a very good job of it. I'm not sure of his name, but I've always

noticed it every time I go there to eat. There are a lot of modern artists around, too.

## SCENE IV

INTERLOCUTOR. To whom or to what do these artists owe a debt?

BREEZE. Spontaneous generation. We came in at the right time to make use of all these new materials: acrylics, fiberglass. Art images come quicker—bam, bam, bam, it's there!

LEWIS. It's just a matter of star crosses, a coming-together of influences and people.

SHADSBOLT. The scene did not happen miraculously, out of a total artistic hiatus; yet there is a relative absence of tradition, of establishment and institutionalism, which makes for creative openness. After Emily Carr, and following her example of the grand romantic wanderer triumphing over an impossible situation, a generation of artists developed who peaked in the thirties. These were artists

Description

ART IN AMERICA ARTICLE.

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# INFORMATION

N.E. THING CO. LTD.

1419 Riverside Drive North Vancouver B.C. Canada

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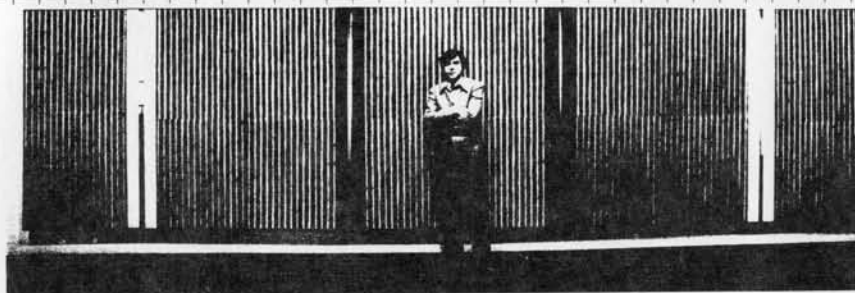
1970

Project

ARTICLE

Number

3.



Michael Morris, New York Letter, mirror, plexiglas and photographic reproduction, 1969; Douglas Gallery, Vancouver.

who were both rooted in the region and who yet transcended the limitations of regionalism. They were mostly connected with the Vancouver School of Art: Jack Shadbolt, Bert Blanning, Gordon Smith, Don Jarvis, Roy Kiyooka—painter, poet and guru—arrived in 1959, and was powerful stimulus, related as he was to current international awareness rather than to local conditions. If we speak of other debts, I would have to mention the Fine Arts Gallery at U.B.C., which manages, on virtually no budget, to present shows that reflect the developing edge of sensibility; and the Vancouver Art Gallery, which organizes contemporary exhibitions of international caliber, and maintains a steady program of relevant events.

FISHER. Anyone who came in contact with Roy Kiyooka had to be affected in a positive way. And then Doris Shadbolt and others, who have been trying to raise the attention, interest and sympathy of the larger public. ROSENBERG. Better ask "who," than "what" generated local activity. They are: Doris Shadbolt, Alvin Balkind, Roy Kiyooka, Jack Shadbolt, Ron-Xi Wong, Douglas Christie.

MORRIS. It was a number of people working with contemporary ideas who were determined to do their work here in Vancouver, and two or three sympathetic people at the Vancouver Art Gallery and the universities.

LOWENDES. Richard Simmins' role in reorienting the Vancouver Art Gallery is very relevant, as was his organization in 1961 of a show called "New Talent, B.C."

SIMMINS. I would point to three top shows: "London—The New Scene," in 1965; "Los Angeles 67," in 1968; and "New York 13," in 1969, all of which have been part of the regeneration in the past six or eight years of the Vancouver Art Gallery. Then, some of the most creative exhibitions organized in Canada have been at the U.B.C. Gallery. Mr. PREE. Actually, it goes back to the original Constitution of Canada, and how we fought to gain this land, the 49th Parallel and so on. And the building of the railroad, too. Also, there's been a lot of civil activity happening lately in the Interior, where Kiefer Aluminium is doing some large strip-mining.

## SCENE V

INTERLOCUTOR. What is the effect of Internodia on the local scene?

AELLEN. Internodia is unique, if not in the world, then certainly in Canada.

WALLACE. I don't think it has taken root yet, but as an idea, it stands to be one of the strongest and most important aspects of what's happening here. There is a building with people, equipment, ideas where younger artists can work as close to any art history behind them. It will art-

tract naive artists, who will be the strength of art in the future—artists who have no concept of esthetics, but who will experiment with materials and come out with a totally new esthetic. LOWENDES. It has fostered the development of people who could never present a portfolio of work for admission to an art school, or who are not academically suited for fine-arts courses at universities, but are endowed with some sort of electronic extraordinary perception. SIMMINS. Perhaps this is the kind of art school we're going to have in the future.

ROSENBERG. Internodia is not as groovy as people make out. Although some multimedia performances have been taking place, no single presentations of cooperative effort have been technically or artistically impressive. SHADBOLT. It is a unique, open-ended organization devoted to bridging the gap between the arts and technology, and anybody can make use of it.

EKKET. Most of all, it has put these young artists in touch with one another in a way, say, that the café society did in Paris in the early part of the century.

Mr. PREE. Internodia? Yes, she has had quite an effect on the scene. There's been a lot of activity coming from this person, in terms of multitudes, and in a kind of a new way of looking at electronics.

BOWEN. I think it's still a little bit Mickey Mouse.

## SCENE VI

INTERLOCUTOR. What influence has Canada Council had on the local scene?

SHADBOLT. Absolutely crucial. Their support of individuals and institutions, and their general encouragement of movement in the art field of people, ideas, works, have really made the scene possible.

AELLEN. Without Canada Council, Internodia would not exist. They have funneled about 95 percent of our activities.

WALLACE. Extremely important! There are no big collectors here; there is no art audience, no art market. No artist can completely rely on sales to earn a living or buy materials.

MORRIS. Canada Council helped us to travel, if we wanted to, and later, also if we wanted to, to remain and work here.

EVERY. Without Canada Council the scene wouldn't have happened. Every one of the local artists who is significant has been, in some sense, a prisoner of the Canada Council. And we might as well come right down to it and say that David Silcox has taken the young artists of Canada under his wing. He has tied together the art scene right across Canada in a way that doesn't exist at any other level in Canadian life. Insofar as there is now the beginning of an interesting culture in Canada, it is almost entirely the work of Canada Council.

ROSENBERG. It has helped to make Canada a ground fertile for the growth of culture, and Vancouver has received more than its share. It has been a process of artificial insemination, with money as semen, becoming father to works of art. SIMMINS. It pours about a million dollars a year into the arts in this area.

Mr. PREE. Yes, they've been putting in some monetary potential to help develop the resources in this area.

TOFFINO. But when you are subsidized—sometimes for three years—what happens afterward in a society that's not really prepared to support you?

## SCENE VII

INTERLOCUTOR. What effect have visiting art celebrities had on the Vancouver scene? A partial list of recent visitors would include: Lucy Lippard, John Chamberlain, Henry Dickzähler, Robert Rauschenberg, John Coplans, Chas Oldenburg, William Seltz, David Thompson, Peter Selz, Philip Leder, Jasja Rephardt, Yvonne Rainer, Debbie Hay, Richard Hamilton.

BREXER. Yeah. People got a little naiver to each other. The game playing started to take over. I don't like that. I don't meet them at airports, or any-

thing like that. In general, I think it's made the local artists a little tense at times—like, "Who did you see?" or "How come he didn't see me?" I think we could do without that.

SIMMINS. We are still intellectually starved. When these people come into town, they are fed to death, they are talked to till they nearly drop dead.

We're sort of parched, if you will, thirsty for new ideas from the same sources.

FISHER. It had never happened before; now it's happening so often it's getting to be a drag.

Mr. PREE. There have been a lot of tourists coming out this way, and they all come scanting to see the scene here. They've all been interested in getting hotel rooms with windows to view the mountains.

LOWENDES. The visitors have wiped out that forlorn end-of-the-line feeling.

## SCENE VIII

INTERLOCUTOR. Is there a distinctive B.C. or Canadian art? LOWENDES. No, the time for such nationalism is past.

ROSENBERG. I would like to believe that nationalism and provincialism in the arts are dead.

SHADBOLT. I don't think it's pos-

Gary Lee-Nova, Menthon Filter Kings, acrylic on canvas, 1967; Vancouver Art Gallery.

Glenn Lewis, Take It or Leave It, porcelain, 1967; Douglas Gallery, Vancouver.



sible at this time in history. Nonetheless, somehow one's deepest experience does still relate to the part of the world to which one has a commitment. It is, perhaps, in a realm of mysticism, of psychology.

SIMMINS. There is a distinctive quality in B.C. art, and there isn't at the same time. If you were to put together a major Vancouver exhibition, by describing what it was not, you might find something positive.

BREXER. Distinctive Canadian art doesn't exist any more. The media have drastically changed our approach. We just can't be provincial any longer.

WALLACE. Vancouver painting as a whole doesn't interest me. I'm only interested in the very best being done on top of it all.

CHRISTMAS. Distinctive B.C. art: West Coast Indian. Distinctive Canadian art: Indian.

Mr. PREE. I think there is a distinctive B.C. art, and it goes right back to B.C. That's a fact.

FISHER. I don't know whether you could call it Canadian or B.C.; but it certainly has a lot to do with regions—relating what you do to the area where you live.

MORRIS. The word "scenes" implies competitions—between cities, between different countries,

between different artists; and I think anyone concerned with art is not concerned with competition. One is only concerned with one's own head. I'm not interested in a B.C. art, or a Canadian art, or an American art, or an international art. I'm only concerned with art.

## EPILOGUE

SILCOX. There is a critical population mass which has a lot to do with a cultural scene. When a city gets to a certain size, things begin to happen which otherwise wouldn't happen. For the sake of general argument, one million is one of the turning points for development. It was true of Toronto, and I think it is true for Vancouver. The loss of innocence is also very important. I have observed this over the last three or four years in Vancouver. There is a certain magic or trance that you are involved in when you are learning things; it is a time when artists are supporting each other. The moment things get bigger, and the spotlights come on, divisions take place. This is good in the long run—in any case, it is part of an inexorable movement. Vancouver has lost its innocence, and may now produce better art.

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Description

ART IN AMERICA ARTICLE







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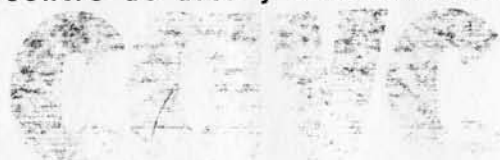
CENTRO de ARTE Y COMUNICACIÓN ARTICLE

Number

1.

dibujos y proyectos de 16 escultores británicos / museo pro-  
pial de artes visuales rosa galisteo de rodriguez / inauguración  
19 de setiembre / 18.30 / santa fe / república argentina / 1970

centro de arte y comunicación



presas que fabrican productos masivos. Si visualizamos al mundo como un gigantesco sistema de información, la industria puede ser considerada como un enorme centro de comunicaciones, por eso puede ser tan útil el artista, que es un profesional en el área de las comunicaciones. La habilidad manual, en el tratamiento de los materiales, ha llegado a ser menos importante en este momento que el dominio técnico de la información. El antiguo estudio del pintor se ha convertido en una torre de marfil; fue útil cuando las noticias eran transportadas sobre los cuadros y el mundo interesado iba a las galerías a verlos. Hoy al artista le interesa el contexto total, la situación viva, y lo más importante es la síntesis de su visión, y no la visión individual como forma de expresión. El artista no quiere imponer un orden determinado, sino que busca atraer la atención para lo que podría suceder, con la adopción de una premisa diferente. Su función sigue siendo la misma que en el arte tradicional, intenta realinear sistemas de prioridad en una situación presente. Pero más que el objeto en sí, lo que es ahora importante para el artista es el proceso; las obras tienen su foco de atención directamente sobre las circunstancias de cómo se hacen y del contexto en que se dan. Son concebidas con la idea de una estruc-

tura en el intercambio de información; ya no son planteadas en términos privados y secretos, están incorporadas al espectador, al público, y se deben a él. Así como Eass Levine trabaja en Nueva York con su organización N. I. L. (Logística de Inteligencia Negociable), una corporación de inteligencias puestas a nivel consultivo; así como Iain Baxter funda en Vancouver la N. E. Thing Co. y extiende el 'sistema nervioso electrónico' (extensión de la mente humana) al paisaje, a los objetos industriales, a los exteriores urbanos, a las obras de arte, a los libros o los supermercados, y su departamento A. C. T. (Objetos estéticamente elegidos) registra todos aquellos hechos o elementos que han recibido la aprobación de la N. E. Thing Co., el grupo joven inglés que expone en este Museo se ha reunido al rededor del A. P. G. (Artist Placement Group). Los pintores y escultores ingleses de hoy desean entrar en una nueva relación con el mundo de la industria. En lugar de pensar en función de un patronazgo industrial, es decir un cuadro para la oficina del director, una escultura para la entrada de la fábrica, desean hallar su camino en colaboración. No pueden ignorar la tecnología y además no lo hacen, pues suponen que las obras deben ser realmente terminadas por procesos tecnológicos "...la única diferen-

Lamentablemente esta expansión no se ha convertido más que en una promesa de un mundo más humano, aún se mantienen en las zonas semipúblicas de los Museos y de las exposiciones como documentos de in-

formaciones; seguramente todavía quedarán en largo tiempo como proyectos, pero no se puede dudar que en el futuro convivirán con el hombre de todos los días.

Jorge Glusberg

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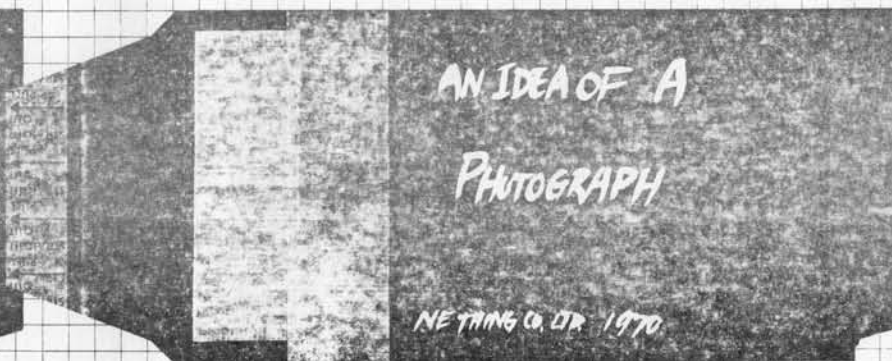
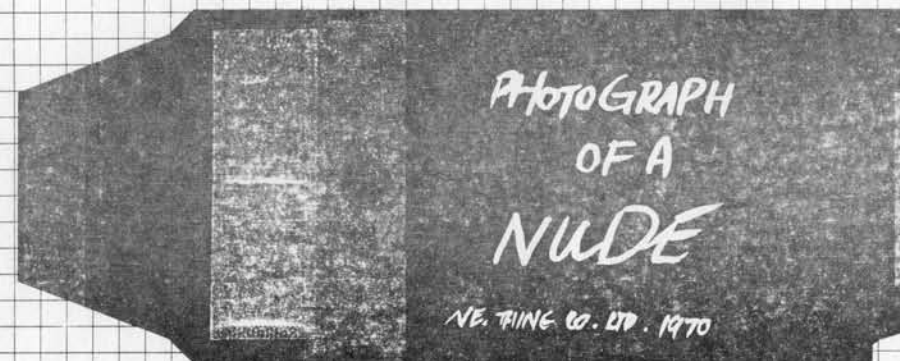
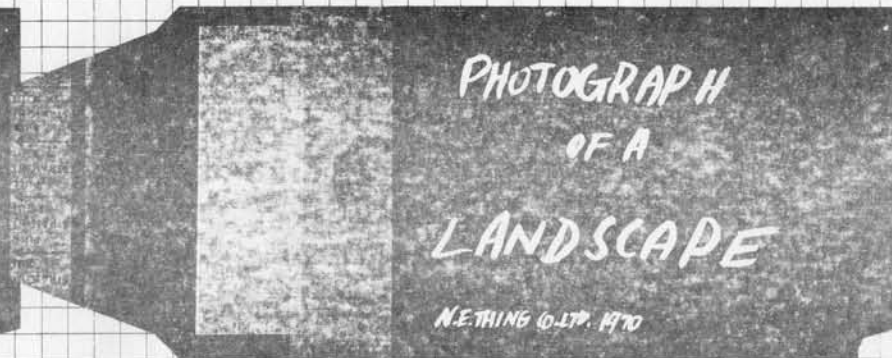
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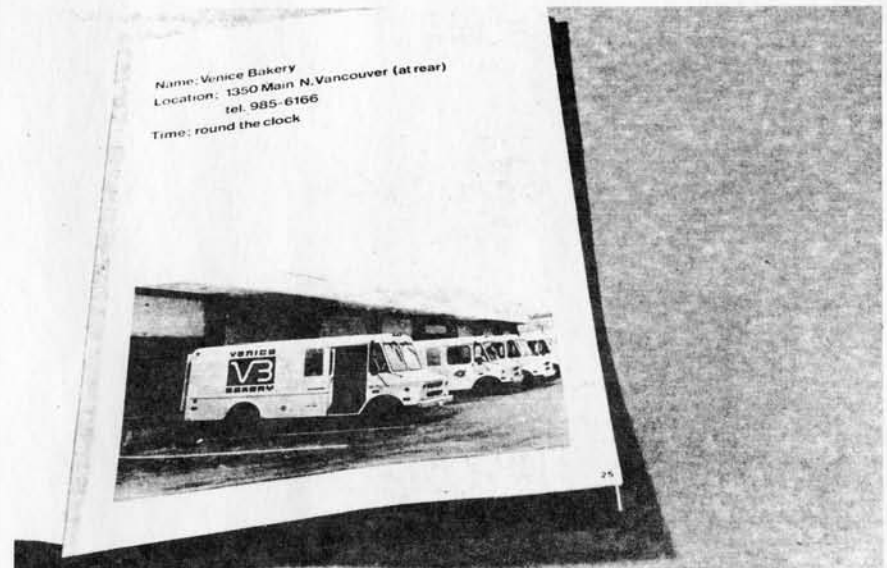
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SENSE GUIDE PROTECT-NOSE GUIDE

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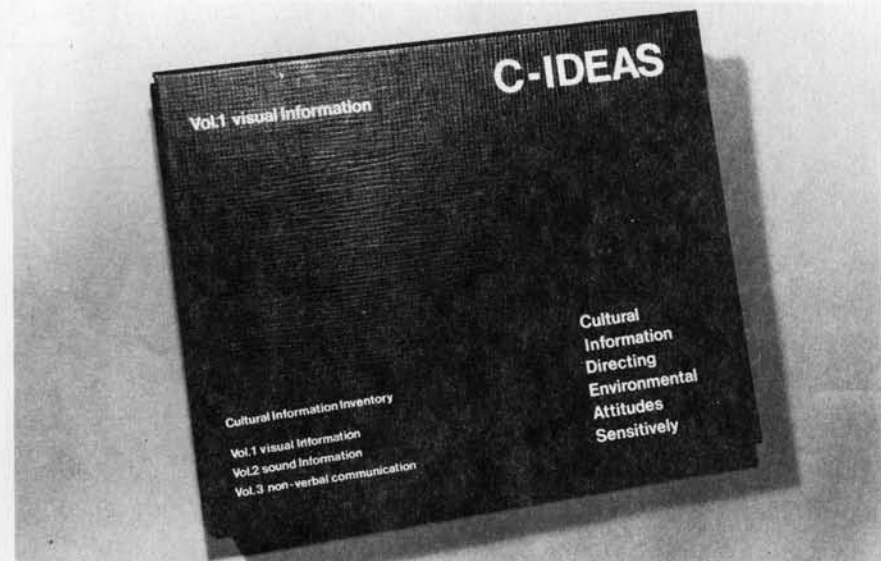
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Description *THIS BOOK IS IN PROGRESS AND IS A VISUAL RECORD OF A CITY. IT IS HOPED IN THE NEAR FUTURE TO BE ABLE TO PUBLISH A COMPREHENSIVE VOLUME WHICH WILL ACT AS AN VISUAL INVENTORY FOR A CITY. A BOOK SUCH AS THIS WOULD BE VALUABLE TO PLANNERS, HISTORIANS, SOCIOLOGISTS, AND ARCHITECTS. PLUS THE ORDINARY CITIZEN WOULD LEARN A GREAT DEAL OF THE SENSE OF PLACE IF IT WERE AVAILABLE FOR HIM TO BUY.*



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TRANS-V.S.I. - SNOW, 1970, VANCOUVER, B.C.

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Description For a special Christmas program the N.E. THING CO. requested that Channel 8 T.V., Vancouver, create and transmit for 30 sec. T.V. SNOW to the viewers of Vancouver.

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Seal





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PRESS RELEASE

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Description IAN BAXTER performed an N.E. THING CO. project with international Critics at Simon Fraser University. Critics were asked to press their hands together in front of their bodies - they were asked to hold this pose for 10 seconds then they were asked to Release their hands. They were then thanked for helping the N.E. THING Co. complete a new work called PRESS RELEASE.

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ARTICLE & PORTRAIT

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## Exhibition Reviews

**N. E. Thing Co., Session '70  
Computer Conference  
Bayshore Inn, Vancouver  
June 1970**

by Joan Lowndes

In the April issue of *Fortune*, Louis Banks explained why not only students but young managers, intellectuals and artists cannot shout hosannas to the Gross National Product. It is because they see "the gross national byproduct - of mindless urbanization, environmental pollution, and the whole wasteland of public dereliction."

But what if instead of the GNP another goal was proposed: the GNG, gross national good? This is the new approach which Iain Baxter is trying to promote. At the Vancouver computer conference Session '70 he came to meet the masters of communication on their own ground: not in an art gallery but in a hotel convention space.

Around him were the booths of such companies as IBM, Xerox of

Canada, Univac, Digital Equipment Canada, National Cash Register. His own booth was like no other: an exhibition within an exhibition. At the front was a big red traffic sign: GO. On the walls were his credentials: catalogue-calendars from Sao Paulo where he represented Canada in graphics and blowups of his ACT's and ART's. On the counter was a TV monitor through which was being played a videotape of one of the Whitney's computer films: mandalas pulsating to ragga rhythms in a bizarre counterpoint to the whispered fold-out from the Optical Page Reader opposite.

Baxter, in a conservative suit, was flanked by his wife Elaine (recently promoted to co-president of the N. E. Thing Co.) and his Director of Special Projects Paul Woodrow, just graduated from art school.

He handed out GNG buttons, exchanged business cards, gave his sales pitch. Is he role playing? No he is serious. He genuinely admires certain aspects of business: the drive, optimism, and quick decision taking. But he realizes how much all this needs the humanizing touch of the artist. He offers himself as a consultant in ideas, imagination, visual sensi-

tivity information . . . ANYTHING that is going to help in what is a global crisis.

He shoots these questions at business: Does your company have an art collection? Do your employees need a group project to pull them and management together? Would your top executive like to know about Fine Arts and Culture? Rent-a-brain?

That brain can be plugged into via the Telex which Baxter has had in his home since last October. For months from his rustic headquarters in North Vancouver he has been lobbying into key offices of American industry the message that, like Barkis, he is willing. No response. That is why he took the further step of making contact at the computer conference.

And it worked. In the photo you see Baxter talking to Roger Emsley of the Canadian Systems Support and Development Corporation, who had no hesitation in stating: "We're interested in ideas."

Baxter was also invited to the subsequent Data Processing Conference and Business Exposition in Seattle, an international affair with an estimated attendance of 20,000.



Iain Baxter, president of N.E. Thing Co., talking to Roger Emsley, of the Canadian Systems Support and Development Corporation, at the Conference. Photo: Dave Looy.

He feels he is making some inroads at last. Commenting on the Vancouver experience he said, "A lot of people came up and kind of questioned us and in a sense they were questioning themselves."

"The greatest thing a corporation has to do today is to be honest - that's the real challenge of the twentieth century."



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Description

200 PHOTOS: SELF PORTRAITS OF IAIN BAXTER.  
ONE WITH CAMERA  
ONE WITH RAKE.

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3 bdrm. post & beam on quiet street. Close to Upper Grand Blvd. buses & schools, apt. to view. 985 6798

**SAT. & SUN.**

From 2 p.m. to 5 p.m. we are holding open house. Buy away from city & save dollars. Inspect this 1300 sq. ft. home, just follow the signs to 6999 Haddon Ave. in historic Fort Langley. It is only 35 mins. via 610 from Vancouver. This home has 3 bedrooms & a full bath. It is located on a large lot on a quiet street with good homes. It is vacant & ready for occupancy. Come & have a look at it \$3,500 down should handle with F.P. \$23,700. Try your offer, Call:

**The Man From Glengarry**

G. McConnell 361-6644

C. Corns 514-6684

Glengarry Estates Ltd. 581-5431

**Open 2 to 4 Sunday**

7912 Curragh St., situated between Rumble and Marine, with a beautiful view from 20 ft. corner lot. Unusual & attractive, 3 bdrm. & den, 1,500 sq. feet (no basement). Only \$29,500 on terms. Mrs. Stollberg 683-7581 (24 hours), Wilton & Koford Ltd. 683-7581.

**OPEN 2-4 P.M.**

12965 - 64th Ave., Surrey \$17,500 terms

CO-OPERATIVE TRUST CO. OF CAN.

"THE CREDIT UNION CO." 872-7944

**OPEN WKEND 2 4:30**

Call at 3210 East 26th Ave. and see this 3200 sq. ft. 3 bdrm., 2 1/2 bath, 2 car garage, excellent view. Transportation and schools within 3 blocks. Asking \$23,500. Try an offer. Mr. Monger CY 6-7928 Mr. Walsh 731-6774 or Britannia Agencies Ltd. 325-8262.

**NEW - 3 BEDROOMS**

Asking \$22,500. Finished rec. room, 3 sets of plumbing. Good view. Call Mr. Esau 321-3275 or Britannia Agencies Ltd. 325-8262.

**NEAR UNIVERSITY**

Revenue home, 8 rooms, 3 bdrm., \$450 monthly income. Comp. furn. with washer, dryer, auto gas heater, garage. Dble. corner lot \$46,000. \$18,000 down. 145 Springer Ave., N. Bly. View or

**1775 W. 60th Ave., Sat. 2:30 - 5 p.m. 3 or 4 bdrms. F.P. \$46,000. Rainbow Props. 736-1664. H. Summers 738-8943.**

**a groovy air. A must see in the thirties. Pat Bennett 929-2023**

**Central & very private well-built 3 bdrm. home. All amenities. \$27,500. Also adjoining building lot if required. Owner, 988-5904.**

**A.E. Hoover**

**Real Estate**

**1381 Marine**

**922-6196**

**NEW BY OWNER**

Price reduced \$2,000 to \$31,900. Close to schools, bus & winter club. Huge sundeck, 2 bathroom, 2 bedrooms, double carport. 1119 Shavington, N.V. 988-6952.

**OPEN DAILY**

5405 Ringer Ave. 2 new 1 bdrm. with dishwasher, w/c, central air, \$41,900 and \$43,900. Ph. builder 985-5784.

**Lower Delbrook HOMES! SECLUSION!**

This lovely one owner "Post 'n Beam" on one of Delbrook's best streets just gives you that "home" feeling of true family living. All good size rooms, 4 bedrooms, large family-rc. rm., sundeck, secluded 70' lot with trees and barbecue. Close to schools & bus. An outstanding lot at \$42,500. See it tonight. Jack Gillmore, 988-4078, B.C. Investors Ltd. 874-9101

**NORTH VAN. HOME OWNER TRANSFERRED**

Priced Reduced to \$20,900. All Offers Considered. 4 bedrooms, close to 4 rec. room & dark rm., two full bathrooms, choice selected lot close to everything in the Capilano Highlands. Rex Padden evens 988-1983

**FRANK HOWE & CO. LTD.**

600 Clyde Ave. 926-4374

**Open Tomorrow 2:30-5**

1026 Prosper

Spacious fam. home, 3 bdrms (space for 4th), 3 baths, den, playrm. in an area of fine homes. Well priced at \$29,900. Lge. 9 1/2 mige. Mrs. Walker 985-5574

**Geo. Walker Rity. Ltd.**

**\$6,000 DOWN**

Capilano Highlands

This beautiful maintained full basement home features 2 bedrooms on main floor with 3rd or rec. room down. Wall to wall carpet. Lot 60x100 ft. immaculate garden. Only \$23,900 full price - first time offered. One of the best buys on the North Shore today. Call M. Howard at National Trust, 922-9191 or 987-4107 evenings.

**WON'T YOU?**

Come with me and see INSIDE this spacious 3 bedroom rancher! Just a little "touching up" on the OUTSIDE would make it most attractive (the inside is lovely) and you could have \$50 much fun in the 16 x 34 ft. FILTERED pool. Excellent financing available, offers to \$22,900. Call me - you'll be glad you did. Mrs. Betty Henne 922-4669. National Trust 922-9191 (24 hrs.).

**Ann Hathaway Cottage!**

Old English character 2 bedroom stone fireplace, solid pine walls, appliances included. One only - \$24,900. See it today. 988-6952.

**6662 SUNSET BLVD. BEST BUY**

We sincerely believe that this spotless 3 bdrm. home is today's best buy in this popular area. It is priced at \$32,900 and the owners are anxious to sell as they have purchased a new home. There is a full bath, with a finished rec. rm., a cozy office or sewing rm., & ample space for a large 4th bed. There are two 3 piece vanity bathrooms. Price includes stove, frig. & L.R. drapes.

**THE BIG BONUS is the LOT**

which is situated on a ravine with a safe creek. Call MARGOT or DOUG KIRK 988-7707.

**3856 Wellington Cres.**

**OPEN 24 WKND.**

(Not Sat.)

2 - bedroom bungalow

Quality built home

Extra-large dining room

near shopping & church

Very quiet street

LAWRIE BELLIVEAU 987-0948

BRUCE ALLEN 988-4222

**EASY FINANCE OPEN 24 WKND. 4517 CAPILANO RD.**

3 bdrms., conv. sep. dining, hardwood floors, large kitchen with eating area. The cozy well-planned sep. entrance in-law suite in ground level built, is fully self-contained. Try your trade or D.P. to First Mgt. of \$18,000 at \$138 F.I. at 7%.

**R. MORGAN 987-4646**

**HIGHLAND RLTY. (1966) LTD.**

985-4151 (24 hrs.)

**PEMBERTON HTS. 3 B.R. - \$18,500**

Just listed and ready to go! All on one floor, no steps, suitable for retired couple or starters. Nice lot. To view phone Jack Pope 988-9908 or 988-4181.

**UPPER LYNN VALLEY!**

Just building, attractive 3 bdrm. home off Coleman Rd. with possession in 90 days. If you have a house to trade, we would be interested in taking it in on this home. Price is \$25,900 with \$22,140 mortgage at 9%. So if you had cash or equity of \$3,000 you would be into a new house by 1st of May. Phone me for further details - Jack Pope 988-9908 or 988-4181.

**BOULTBEE SWEET REALTY**

1265 Marine Dr., N. Van.

**DREAM HOME**

1663 Appin Road, off Mountain Highway at 15th. Be sure to see it. Beautifully decorated 1 1/2 baths, w/c & fireplace. Large landscaped lot. For appointment

call Betty Henne 988-6952.

**PERHAPS**

You would like your own style of home in this Canyon Heights area. Several trees lot left - Daniel Jarvis Res. 987-0986.

**JUST LISTED**

View home in Forest Hills, 3 bedrooms and full basement. New carpeting throughout. Finished rec. room. Large lot. A steal at \$33,500. See the city lights - Call O. Overgaard 985-6695

**BRAND NEW IN CAPILANO**

Large 3 bedroom impressive home with beautiful wall to wall carpeting throughout. It has separate parking off the lane with a spacious sundeck off the kitchen and nook area. Price \$29,900. Call O. Overgaard Res. 363 6685.

**LYNN VALLEY - \$27,500**

Spacious 2 bedroom full basement home with large bedroom and bathroom down. Nestled among the trees with sunny deck off spacious kitchen. This home has a big living room - with \$10,000 down, balance may be carried by 9 1/2% Agreement of Sale. Call Role Easdown any time Res. 988-3800.

**BLUEBERRY - \$24,500**

Just off Berkley Dr. this 3 bedroom full basement home (built 2 years) has beautiful finished recreation room in basement. The owner is transferred and can give immediate possession - lots of space for trailer parking. Call Role Easdown anytime for appointment to see 988-3800.

**CITY VIEW**

New and ready for possession, this 3 bedroom home includes 1240 sq. ft. on main floor, good size living room and family size kitchen with large sundeck off. Excellent basement for future development. Asking only \$21,900. To view any time call Fred Nielsen Res. 929-3050. Off. 985-1321.

**WEST OF LONSDALE**



# INFORMATION

N.E. THING CO. LTD.

1419 Riverside Drive North Vancouver B.C. Canada

Date

1971

Project

THE YEAR 1971

Number

1.



PLEASE COMPLETE AND RETURN

Description

N.E. THING COMPANY LIMITED

Trade Mark ©



# INFORMATION

N.E. THING CO. LTD.

1419 Riverside Drive North Vancouver B.C. Canada

Date

1971

Project

POSITION STATEMENTS

Number

1.

N.E. THING CO. LTD.

## POSITION STATEMENT:

The role of an "ARTIST" in society today is constricted by a series of negative structures i.e. financial, political and especially the connotations of the word "ARTIST" itself, which propels his position to the fringes of the sources of power and its servants the media.

An artist in this market place environment relies ultimately on the charity of those who for whatever psychic, socio reasons wish to "support" the arts. It is essential to free the artist from these constraints, and allow the cultural knowledge he possesses to fuse with that of business, politics, and education.

Rejecting impotence and violence it seems essential to develop a financial base, therefore the N.E. THING CO. LTD. is transitioning itself into a business organization operating within the current framework - to generate funds by legitimate, highly imaginative and profitable business activity, in areas like food, clothing, shelter, leisure, and consultation, so as to support and accomplish the projects and concepts it wishes to <sup>achieve</sup> ~~conceive~~.

The object is not personal profit, but to develop a structure and method whereby products, functions and power can change directly the value systems of society.

September 1971

PLEASE COMPLETE AND RETURN

N. E. THING COMPANY LIMITED

Name in Full JEFF BRADY, Educ. Chr. Puget Sound Chapter, DPMA Date April 9, 1971

Business Address Computer Time Services, 2737 W. Commodore Way, Seattle, Wash. 98199

Information Dear Jeff Brady: Enclosed please find the information relating to our presentation "YOUR EMPLOYEE AND MOTIVATION" on Friday, April 16, 1971, as part of your 3 day workshop series, "MANAGING DATA PROCESSING" presented by the Puget Sound Chapter of DPMA, April 14, 15, 16, 1971, at the Renton Sheraton Inn, Renton, Washington.

In terms of publishing our presentation in the participants notebook please publish these sheets as is (including this one). We would like to present it this way as it will be an illustration of our philosophy regarding information. thank you.

"YOUR EMPLOYEE AND MOTIVATION"

BITS OF INFORMATION - Cont.

Firm or Company Name N. E. THING COMPANY LIMITED (NETCO)

Company Address 1419 Riverside Drive, North Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada

Cable Address "ANYTHING" Phone (604) 929-3662

List Company Departments THING, RESEARCH, MOVIE, PROJECT, ACT & ART, SERVICE, COP,

PRINTING, PHOTOGRAPHY, COMMUNICATIONS, CONSULTING

Describe Company's Business PRODUCERS & CONSULTANT SPECIALISTS IN: Ideas, Planning

Sensitivity Information (specialty Visual - V.S.I.), Name Development, Design, Ecology,

Communications, Architecture, Aesthetics, Things, Photo-V.S.I., Work, Anything

(O.E.R.)

(Signed) *[Signature]*  
President, Iain Baxter

PLEASE COMPLETE AND RETURN

Description

N.E. THING COMPANY LIMITED

Trade Mark ©



# INFORMATION

N.E. THING CO. LTD.

1419 Riverside Drive North Vancouver B.C. Canada

Date

1977

Project

POSITION STATEMENT

Number

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PLEASE COMPLETE AND RETURN

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page 2

- GNG , Gross National Good, motivation vs manipulation, Idea synergism, INFORMATION, videofeedback, Hit the nail on the head, instant history, IDTA - Information Directly Effecting Attitudes, Pulling over ones self, Communications Community, I-N-T-E-R-C-O-M-M-U-N-I-C-A-T-I-O-N-S-S, At the drop of a hat, TRANS-VSI, C-IDEAS- Cultural Information Directing Environmental Attitudes Sensitively, A society's culture should be part of everyday life instead of apart from it, Putting all your eggs in one basket, transmitted sensitivity information, TIME - Total Information Modulating Energy, Motivation is the ability to be able to be able, PLAY - Putting learning at youthfulness, COMMUNICATIONS vs COMMUNICATION, WORK - Wandering On Rejecting Knowledge, VSI - Visual Sensitivity Information, SSI- Sound Sensitivity Information, MSI - Moving Sensitivity Information, PSI - Experiential Sensitivity Information, SI - Sensitivity Information, SID - Sensitivity Information Dynamics, a NETCO term to denote the cultural activity and climate of the times, IB (Information Basic) + IP (Information Practical)+ IS (Information Sensitive) = IQ (Information Quality), open-handed, ART - Aesthetically Rejected Things, ACT - Aesthetically Claimed Things, thight-fisted, CONCEPT - Coming On New Causes Effecting Perceptual Thinking, Letting the cat out of the Bag, Cash in hand, Cash on hand, Superofficial, Back-up-light, WORLD - We Outward Reaching Lively Development, Quality vs Quantity, Eradication of "The Economic End Justifies the Means", ARTIFICIAL, the Generation - gap, the Information-gap-and-lap, SUPEREFFICIENCY equalling SUPERDEFICIENCY, imagineering,

(over)

..... (Signed)

Iain Baxter, President

PLEASE COMPLETE AND RETURN

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CORPORATION vs CORRUPTION, stay at home computer, rent-a-think, More information cultural attitudes being the dimension by which business can gain insights into how to affect change sensitively and synergistically, business as power-base for gross national good, Putting your money where your mouth is, going belly up, ART IS ALL OVER, Forty winks, Information Competence, Non-Verbal Communications, written, architecture - give it the shirts off our backs, Work is obsolete absolutely, Taking it with a pinch of salt, Activispace, The demand for Change, After all is Culture, SYNERGISM + SYNERGISM = GROSS NATIONAL GOOD, Bending over Backwards, K - NOW, NOW, Alive and kicking, BUNCHIVERSITY, talking through ones hat, INFORMATION IS ALL OVER, changin one's tune, Having time on one's hands, FACTS - Vitally Sensitive Ideas - VSI, commitment HONEST, Throwing one's weight around, the marriage of business to commitment, culture, honesty & humility, THE WORLD IS ALL OVER, Information as natural resource, deleterious byproducts of of the " AMERICAN DREAM " done, Passing the buck, Putting one's foot in one's mouth, Power of Mediocraty, true organization = communication, Synergism = individualism reflected from groupism, STATES OF INFORMATION CONSCIOUSNESS, Basic, Practical, Sensitive, VIP -Visually Illiterate Person, Taking the words out of one's mouth, made in THE WORLD, Having money to burn, Penny pinching, Ironing out the wrinkles, Sensitivity Information, - history's true balance sheet, DO - Diversity Onwards, By leaps and bounds, SYNERGY - Sensitive You Now Effecting Real Group You's, A drop in the Bucket...

(over)

..... (Signed)

Iain Baxter, President

PLEASE COMPLETE AND RETURN

Description

N.E. THING COMPANY LIMITED

Trade Mark ©





# INFORMATION

N.E. THING CO. LTD.

1419 Riverside Drive North Vancouver B.C. Canada

Date

1971

Project

JOINING VANCOUVER BOARD OF TRADE

Number

1.

## VANCOUVER BOARD OF TRADE

500 - 1177 W. Hastings St., Vancouver 1, B.C.  
Telephone 681-2111, Area Code 604

February 3, 1971

Mr. Iain Baxter,  
President,  
N.E. Thing Co. Ltd.,  
1419 Riverside Drive,  
North Vancouver, B. C.

Dear Mr. Baxter:

Your application for membership was accepted today by the Council of the Board.

In supporting Board actions and policies on behalf of business organizations and the professional life of the community, you will greatly aid in extending the Board's influence and strength.

In addition, you personally have the opportunity to participate in policy making through Committee activity into which you will be cordially welcomed.

Membership includes the Vancouver Board of Trade Club reserved for the exclusive use of members and their guests. You will enjoy the relaxing and refreshing setting of this fifth floor dining area with its sweeping view of Burrard Inlet.

Through "The Sounding Board" you will learn of many activities and events in which you may have personal interest and some in which you will want your employees, family or friends, to share.

We hope you will enjoy your membership, particularly by the use of the publications and services available. The office will welcome your enquiries on any of the many subjects in which we are interested, related to our community and business development and betterment.

Sincerely,

G.M. Morris  
GENERAL MANAGER



1871  
VANCOUVER BOARD OF TRADE

This certifies that IAIN BAXTER  
Member's Signature  
is a member of this organization in good standing and subject to its by-laws, is entitled to all its privileges and benefits, including those of V.B.T. Club, until December 31st, 1971.

No 1700

Void after Jan. 31st, 1972

Gen. Manager

SERVING THE GREATER VANCOUVER AREA

PLEASE COMPLETE AND RETURN

Description

N. E. THING COMPANY LIMITED

Trade Mark ©



# INFORMATION

N.E. THING CO. LTD.

1419 Riverside Drive North Vancouver B.C. Canada

Date

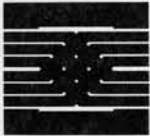
1971

Project

D.P.M.A. DATA PROCESSING MANAGERS ASSOC.

Number

1



March 8, 1971

Mr. Iain Baxter  
N. E. Thing Co.  
1419 Riverside Drive  
North Vancouver, B.C.

Mr. Iain Baxter:

Our sincere appreciation for your acceptance to participate in the workshop series 'Managing Data Processing' presented by the Puget Sound Chapter of DPMA.

The scheduled date for your presentation of 'Your Employee and Motivation' is Friday, April 16, 1971 at the Renton Sheraton Inn. Your first workshop presentation is to begin at 8:30AM on the above date.

The Renton Sheraton Inn has rooms available which may be reserved for you or your associates by contacting them directly, if room accommodations are required.

I would be appreciative if you could send me immediately a brief resume of yourself and your company for further publication as well as any equipment requirements that we must provide for your presentation which you will not be able to bring with you. We would also like to have, no later than April 1, 1971, written material covering the content of your presentation for publication in a participants notebook to be given to every attendee of the workshop. I would also like to confirm that the agreed fee for your part in the workshop is to be \$300.00 for the one day of April 16, 1971.

Again many thanks for your participation in the workshop, and on behalf of the Puget Sound Chapter, may I extend an invitation to you and your associates presenting the workshop to attend the Chapter meeting of the Puget Sound Chapter, at the Windjammer Restaurant on the evening of April 16, 1971, beginning at 6:30PM.

Sincerely,

Jeff Brady, CDP  
Education Chairman  
Puget Sound Chapter, DPMA

Computer Time Services division of Time Oil Company 2737 W Commodore Way Seattle 98199 (206) 282-0422

DATA PROCESSING MANAGEMENT ASSOCIATION

PUGET SOUND CHAPTER  
P. O. BOX 249  
SEATTLE, WASHINGTON 98111

April 26, 1971

Mr. Iain Baxter  
N.E. Thing Co.  
1419 Riverside Dr.  
North Vancouver, B.C.

Dear Iain,

I want to express my thanks for your participation in the DPMA Management Workshop. Your contribution was well received by all who commented on the workshop. I believe that your comments and outlook on people and attitudes contributed greatly to the thinking of those in attendance.

I am sending additional copies of the workshop notebook under a separate cover.

Please express my thanks to your wife and Brian Dyson for their efforts.

Thank you,

Jefferson L. Brady, CDP  
Education Chairman  
Puget Sound Chapter DPMA

THE ASSOCIATION REPRESENTING the INFORMATION PROCESSING and COMPUTER COMMUNITY

PLEASE COMPLETE AND RETURN

Description

N.E. THING COMPANY LIMITED  
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# INFORMATION

N.E. THING CO. LTD.

1419 Riverside Drive North Vancouver B.C. Canada

Date

1971

Project

N.E. THING CO. SUBSIDIARY  
INTERNATIONAL CONSULTANTS ON MEDIA

Number

1.

## ICOME

### BITS OF INFORMATION - CONT

WE DRESS OURSELVES TO ARCHITECTURE  
HE SHE ARE REALLY BUILT  
THE FOREST WAS MAN'S 1<sup>ST</sup> ARCHITECTURAL ENVIRONMENT  
HE WORE THE TREES LIKE A MAINTENANCE  
HE WORE THE TREES AND THE ANIMALS  
THE FIRST ARCHITECTURE - THE SKIN OFF HIS BACK  
ARCHITECTURE IS CLOTHING  
ARCHITECTURE IS A WEARNESS  
WE ARE NOW WITNESSING THE FINISH OF  
TOUCHES OF ARCHITECTURE  
SPACEMEN ARE BUILDING BUILDINGS AND  
SYSTEMS - SOFT INFORMATION - SOFTWARE  
WE ARE NOW IN THE INFORMATION REVOLUTION  
MAN'S FUNCTION IS TO COMMUNICATE WHO  
WE ARE TO EACH OTHER  
TODAY'S CONTEMPORARY CITY STRUCTURE - OBSOLETE  
LOTS GO TO THE CITY MUSEUM - PUT IN THE  
TURN STYLE - WORKS CHANGING - WORK IS  
OBSOLETE MAN CAN BE ANYWHERE AND  
EVERYWHERE ALL AT ONCE - ANYTIME  
FUTURE OF ARCHITECTURE DEPENDS ON WEARABLES  
WE WILL CONTROL THE WEATHER OR CONTROL  
CLIMATE GENETICS  
THE HOME (SPACE) OF THE FUTURE MIGHT BE  
UNDERWEAR (FOUNDATION GARMENTS) AND  
OUTER WEAR (EXTERIOR OR ATMOSPHERIC GARMENTS)  
MAN WILL CARRY A PACK CONTAINING  
"ACTIVSPACE ROOMS - SPACE ENVELOPS" THESE  
WILL ALLOW HIM TO CAPTURE SMALL WORKS  
ARCHITECTURE IS NOW MOVING BACK TO ITS  
PLACE OF ORIGIN - CLOTHES - WEARABLES  
TERRITORY OWNERSHIP WILL BE DONE BY  
USING CAMERA TO RECORD SPACE, TRAVEL A  
LOT HAVE A LOT OF PHOTOS  
THE CITY TODAY HAS TO GO AWAY  
WITH POPULATION EXPLOSION WE WILL RETURN TO  
OUR CLOTHES. INSTEAD OF A HOME AWAY  
FROM HOME LIKE ASTRONAUTS IT WILL BE  
OUR HOME AT HOME. STUDY THE MEDIUM OF  
GARB. INSTITUTES MUST BE SET UP TO RESEARCH  
THIS - THE U.N. MUST TAKE THE LEAD  
CLIMATE IS EASY TO WEATHER OFF TRAVEL LIGHT AND  
BE PREPARED. PULL ON A ROBE - DRESS UP - DRESS DOWN  
STRIPE - ZIPPER UP - UP TO DRY - CLOTHES ARE LAND BOATS  
THE SHIP OF EARTH SKIN PACKAGED INDUSTRY.  
IDEAS ABOUT WEARABLES OR  
HOUSEWEAR - THE THREAD  
THAT RUNS THROUGH  
ARCHITECTURE.  
WE SHOULD GIVE IT "THE SHIRTS OFF OUR BACKS"

Architecture Canada

\* NOTE: Ideas on architecture were done while  
doing research & consultation for ICOM.  
Upon retrospection the notes applied directly  
to the future of Architecture and the changes  
that must occur. Iain Baxter, Pres. N.E. THING CO. LTD.

#### EXHIBITOR

#### BOOTH

MEMOREX CORPORATION 319, 321, 325, 418, 420  
The Memorex exhibit will present four new products: Astron™  
computer tape; Quantum CX; modular computer tape storage  
racks; disk pack cover set holder.

On display will be the 1600 series computer output microfilm  
system which features a unique on-line printer as well as a de-  
veloper previewer, viewer/printer, and COM supplies. Astron™  
a new back-coated computer tape, will also be featured along  
with other computer tapes, disk packs and magnetic tape  
cartridges.

3M COMPANY— 717 ISLAND  
MAGNETIC PRODUCTS DIVISION  
Data processing supplies

MODERN DATA 714  
Modern Data Magazine

MONARCH METAL PRODUCTS, INC. 711  
Monarch Metal Products, Inc., manufacturers of data processing  
accessory equipment, offers a complete line of equipment cov-  
ering the entire range of the data processing industry.

On display will be various units for the storage and handling  
of 80 and 96 Column Cards, Tape, Disk Packs, Microfilm and  
M/T/ST cartridges and Data Display Desks.

MOORE BUSINESS FORMS 725, 731, 733, 830, 832 ISLAND  
Moore will exhibit new ideas in form construction and sys-  
tems. In addition, new equipment, including a forms cart and  
a storage cabinet will be shown, along with new devices to aid  
in OCR encoding, high-speed forms handling equipment and  
imprinting-detaching.

NASHUA CORPORATION— 708  
COMPUTER SUPPLIES DIVISION  
Disc packs and computer supplies

NATIONAL BLANK BOOK CO., INC. 335, 337  
EDP binders, housing equipment, and accessories. The Data  
Reference Control System.

N. E. THING CO. LTD. 221  
Services available from this recognized ICOM-Consultant in  
visual communications, corporate image development and sen-  
sitivity information will be displayed. Interests include cultural  
image development, art and design consultation, vi-  
sual global promotion, imagination ideas, gross national  
good, rent-a-think.

THE OFFICE 607  
The Office—A monthly publication for administrative, systems,  
and data processing executives. Broad editorial and product  
coverage of business systems and equipment, data processing  
equipment and supplies. Free subscriptions to qualified DPMA  
members upon letter head request. International Business  
Equipment—A monthly, trilingual publication in English-  
German-French for administrative, systems, and data pro-  
cessing executives in Western Europe.

PAK-WELL CORPORATION 601, 603  
Computer-Pak continuous envelopes and pre-inserted forms in  
the continuous envelopes which do not require mechanical  
inserting after printing on the computer. Demonstrations will be  
given on the Computer-Pak Feed and Trimming Unit equipment  
to facilitate minimum handling, resulting in time control of  
mailings.

48

#### EXHIBITOR

#### BOOTH

PHI COMPUTER SERVICES, INC. 710  
Phi markets the finest Proprietary Software Packages currently  
available. These include the PHI Generalized Payroll System;  
MONEY MINDER, a simplified financial recordkeeping system;  
Facilities Management System, a project control system; and  
one yet-to-be-announced product. All systems are fully docu-  
mented and supported by PHI.

RCA COMPUTER SYSTEMS 135, 137, 234, 236 ISLAND  
RCA will exhibit two software products: Manufacturing Data  
Base/70, a generalized data base system, and WISDOM  
(Wholesale Industry System for Distribution and Order Man-  
agement), an inventory system for wholesale distributors. Both of  
these packages will be offered to customers free of charge.

ROYCO INSTRUMENTS, INC. 417  
Automatic Aerosol Particle Monitors that predict wear in a  
mechanical memory system. The prediction and prevention of  
head crashes or catastrophic wear failure is accomplished by  
monitoring the increase in particle manufactured by the mem-  
ory system itself.

ST. REGIS PAPER COMPANY. 436  
LAMINATED & COATED PRODUCTS DIVISION  
Mimic Carbonless Paper; Tro-Mark Dry-Gummed Paper.

SANDERS DATA SYSTEMS, INC. 825  
System 6000 Display Data Recorder, for retrieval and updating  
of computer-stored data and the Sanders 620 Stand Alone  
Display System.

SEATRONICS, INC. 521  
Fire detection, alarm, and extinguishing systems using Halon  
1301, "the people-compatible extinguishing agent." Protection  
systems designed to minimize loss from fire and prevent agent  
damage in data processing facilities.

STAFF BUILDERS INTERNATIONAL 510  
Staff Builders, through its balanced staffing system, provides  
a complete temporary staffing service for all planned or emer-  
gency staffing needs. Staff Builders Data Processing Division  
provides: Key punch operators, lab operators, console opera-  
tors, programmers, systems analysts, conversion crews.  
Whether a firm requires one operator or a complete conversion  
team, Staff Builders balanced staffing system is available to  
service industry through its network of offices from coast to  
coast.

STANART INDUSTRIES 724  
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49

### Description

PLEASE COMPLETE AND RETURN

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# INFORMATION

N.E. THING CO. LTD.

1419 Riverside Drive North Vancouver B.C. Canada

Date Project

1971

GERMANO CELANT ARTICLE

Number

1.

The spiral has snapped and gone off on its own. Radicalization of the relationship between art and life has halted and is in process of abolishing the negative pole. Art is just when the structures of utility (markets, banks, big stores, economic trusts), posturing as progressive activists, are trying desperately to keep the artist on the leash and turn the inutilizable carhairs of art-life into yet another consumer product. Straining to substitute one product for another, they have replaced the theme of the mass-media, the consumer society, the existential gesture, gestalt, language and visually with that of life, nature, the spontaneous, the nomadic event, improvisation the body, death, concept and imagination.

If, in fact, we analyze the present state of *arte povera* and Conceptual Art, and also of theatre-on-the-streets, the guerrilla-warfare theatre, cinema reportage, uncritical criticism, imaginary architecture, spontaneous politics and all the counter-cultural attitudes that aim at turning work into art or action, we observe that one episode (artistic, political, architectural, theatrical, cinematographic, philosophical, critical, etc.) has taken over from another, but the utilization has remained the same. The attempt to destroy, annul or dissolve the myth of culture as art, theatre, architecture, cinema, philosophy, science, law or history into everyday utility, has failed.

The structures of privilege have thus kept going, nomadism and politics have been turned into forms and images, art and the entire cultural or counter-cultural scene continue to serve contemplation and are exhausted in work dedicated exclusively to abstract knowledge that can never be translated into either action or stasis, intervention or immobility: revolution or Nirvana, never become a physical method.

This attitude, typical of the climate of the years between 1966 and 1970, although it may appear to derive its activities from concepts and ideas, turns them into images and symbols, which are always individual and particular. Despite the attempt to express mental and physical facts objectively, ambiguous and equivocal terminology reduces them to metaphor, thus aiding and abetting the culture-consumption structures without modifying their utility. This sort of consumption, by exploiting the visual and objectual qualities of its products, encourages the myth of art and the heroic view of culture, thus perpetuating myth and heroism as the continuing appropriation of art and intellectual activity on the part of the Establishment and small-or large-scale consumer and market concerns. This leads to parallel expansion of the economic and political power of both art and culture, of the Establishment and of the structures that control and exploit them.

Yet reality and life, which have primary goods of their own, need not myths or heroes but either the instruments of activity or an absolute stasis. In order to become functional and established as procedures or rites. Either activism or total immobility might thus achieve an objective transformation based not on secondary goods such as culture (art, cinema, theatre, philosophy, architecture, politics, etc.) but on the primary goods which are utility, consumption, exchange, mediation and services.

Instead of this, art, theatre, cinema, philosophy, criticism, architecture and politics continue to create myths and heroes for imitation, thus ensuring that the materials and outcome of culture and counter-culture do not become changes, contractions, utilizations and definitions of primary goods, but simply remain merchandise and power. The myth goes on creating superthings, though reality and life require not super-things, but obvious, banal, untitled things.

For this reason, radicalization of the attitude to art and cultural activity of all kinds has become absolute and gone off on its own. This seems to be demonstrated by the work of white classes of intellectuals (1) who are busy shifting action from a metaphorical-contemplative state to a condi-

tion of utility or the annulment of utility in which every kind of work becomes a utensil (2) or else is dissolved in the everyday reality of primary goods, exploding, modifying or defining, annulling or dissolving.

Thus the Weathermen Underground, the OHO Group, the N.E. Thing Co., Siegelau, Godard, Long and Flanagan, Schechner, Information Documentation Archives, the underground press, Archizoom, the Descriptive Improvisation Group, Living Theatre and other intellectuals are changing direction in their work in order to get off the seasaw of inversions and substitutions of theme. They have gone over from a productive status which can be identified only with the finished product or object, to a status through which work is understood as definition, revolution, introduction or alteration of utility and utility itself. They act on the customs that permeate daily life and constitute primary goods, without adding super-things and no longer admitting any distinction between the artistic and cultural sphere and the extra-cultural and extra-artistic. Their work becomes actual, no longer having an aesthetic-formal dimension, but a practical-concrete one, fused with the reality of utilization, functionality and the services. They thus disappear into the shadows to work no longer on themes, which become systematically transformed into aesthetic forms or entities, symbols of power and exchange groups, functions or services (such as banks, markets, universities, big stores, museums, parties, institutes, theatres and producers), but, instead, to stir up and revolutionize the systems and standards of utility and of culture and counter-culture.

This means blowing up the joints and structures of service and power, utilizing the same instruments of service and utility, countering the utility groups and bodies by altering their methods and procedures. They thus shift from work that is haphazard, vague and confused to needful and continuous work that is in a position to confront the procedures, regulations, rites, utilities and primary systems that surround and mould them. It is these utility groups, bodies and structures that constitute the real obstacle to creating tangible utility attitudes. Thus work as utilization tends to derange, upset, deteriorate, transgress, counteract, aggrandize and bankrupt obvious and banal uses through up of them that is obvious and banal, but adulterated or differently styled. That is the reason why all these intellectuals have gone beyond bounds in working on art, theatre, cinema, politics, information, criticism, architecture, to try to turn work into utility or the revolution of utility so that it may be committed totally (in space, time and utility) to the existing utility structures (TV, information services, banks, stores, airports, services, laws, newspapers, society, etc.).

In this sense work has not been translated afresh into objects and products, symbols of redemption and liberation from the «ills» of the world and society, but turned into negative opposition to present-day utilization of work which, as produce or objects in the hands of the utilization structures has remained mythical and metaphorical, existing according to the rules of representation. Work is thus translated into visual ideas or facts that are the benefit of bourgeois aesthetics, can be assessed as to quantity and location and, on the contrary, as utilization or non-utilization, annuls and destroys the realm of art and culture with all its dependencies.

If, in fact, we go into the merits of the work done by all these intellectuals we observe that it does not acquire or no longer preserves any typical or specifically linguistic characteristics. It is no longer just art, theatre, cinema, information, architecture or politics, but action and practical method, indefinable and untitled, relative to the world and no longer just to culture. This is proved by the disappearance of the individual as hero to be replaced by a set of initials, a public or private body or a structure that can

easily be integrated at an explosive and modifying level with the other sets of initials (IBM, DATAMATION, A.B. DICK COMPANY, KYBE, RCA, TAB, TV, PHI, BNL, etc.) which are the bricks and mortar of primary goods, and therefore culture. Like the N.E. Thing Co., founded in Vancouver by Iain Baxter in 1966 with its business address in Canada and consisting of eleven research departments: research, things, accounts, ACT, ART, photography, COP, etc., ideas and consultations. These departments carry out different functions within the company environment, which sees itself not so much as a producer of art works as alternative instrument for the utilization of cultural knowledge. The N.E. Thing Co. does not produce objects or products for a specific circulation, but was founded as a consultant company for visual communications, sensory information, imagination, ideas and all kinds of qualitative and quantitative innovation. Aesthetic work has become utilization, function and services. It has gone so far into the shadows that it has become confused with all the other information and consultation services.

Iain Baxter, President, General Manager, Employee, etc. now goes to all the big business exhibitions and trade fairs, with the American Telephone and Telegraph Company, Boeing Computer Services Division, UNIVAC, Xerox Corporation, Data Processing and Tube Company. N.E. Thing Co. competes with the rest, Baxter has annulled himself as an artist, but acts as an intellectual on the utilization and information systems, using instruments such as telex, computers, TV, xerox, not technically or artistically but for operations designed to change their use or revolutionize their functions. On that line the OHO Group, four Yugoslav intellectuals, are presently working to set up in a big consumer and recreation complex new practical methods of utilization, behaviour and selection of primary goods. The continuous work that is in a position to confront the procedures, regulations, rites, utilities and primary systems that surround and mould them, is clearly not that of an artist, or group of artists, collaborating on the aesthetic structure of the building or group of buildings. The group works from inside, studying the utilization and overall direction of the complex. It works directly on the behaviour patterns of those responsible for practical functioning, on the selection of foods and consumer products, on viability, on internal procedures and regulations and all the primary utilization structures of the complex. Similarly the Weathermen Underground have adopted the same procedures for their destructive and revolutionary activities at airports, in skyscrapers, big stores, banks and markets in America. Weathermen Underground contract with and make use of the same utility services in America, the primary goods of Western society, to destroy or damage them. They place a time-bomb in a skyscraper and then inform the police that the bomb is due to explode in twenty minutes — just the time needed to empty a skyscraper, as tested by the police and the fire insurance companies. The destruction of the building is attained by making use, or counter-use, of the typical utilization systems themselves. Or else they use dynamite in the big stores, airports, banks and stations, making use of all the typical functioning and security systems tested and approved by the companies themselves, but conversely to blow them up and cause revolutions. In this way the very utilities and regulation systems, exalted and overpraised by the utilization structures, revolt against themselves in order to achieve a change of direction.

In the same way the underground press (Mani-festo, Re Nudo, Realist, etc.) has ceased merely to mock the utilization structures and set out to provide an alternative information service and to use information differently. It is no longer underground, but makes a direct confrontation, like the N.E. Thing Co. This is tangible and physical information, outside cultural taboos and objective forms, independent and not susceptible to incorporation by the utilization structures, which are clearly not going to tolerate competition aimed at rendering them inactive. It is information that deals with the facts and not their interpretation, going as far as to reveal the techniques of interpretation and the regulations for the utilization of information.

Work on the regulations and mechanism of interpretation is done by the «Gruppo di Improvvisazione» — associate administrator Emilio Prini, which provides a continuous stream of data on the standards of registration, purchase and consumption. The group works systematically to provide concepts, actions and data on the theory of goods, the theory of values, the theory of communications, of information, of tautology, of utilization, on the theory of chance, the theory of things, of information, of language, of the dynamics of society, the theory of cause, of primary automatism (psychic-linguistic) and secondary (mechanical), on the theory of theory of utilization (as opposed to consumption). For the standards of consumption, the «gruppo di improvvisazione descrittiva» has presented the consumption, or utilization duration of a camera, a tape-recorder, a spotlight, a flat, a Fiat 500 car, things that carry out their normal function until they stop, without any aesthetic intervention. Registration of the (utilization) standards is a datum in itself, maintaining the original value and irremovable from its own context, therefore not material for insertion into the history of the aesthetic object, because the standard is an independent entity, anonymous and unrecognizable with respect to the other standards. Thus registration of sets of values, letters, heads, insignia and centres, and of all the utilization standards, which possess a meaning from the meaning of the initials or insignia themselves, becomes tangible in confirmations or participations, variants of diction, exposition and position.

In the environment of the laws of utilization, Seth Siegelau, having founded and organized International General, a production and distribution company, issued as an intellectual books and publications that carried on his previous occupation as a gallery owner, but with more emphasis on the capitalization of products and the accumulation of information as work. Recently he has been promoting and studying a series of norms or laws that can regulate and block the use of intellectual products, of whatever kind they may be. His action is directed at eliminating irregular and arbitrary utilization on the part of the economic powers that be of all work stored or storable by the consumer structures such as publishers, galleries, museums, industry banks, etc. This drawing up of rules for utilization tends towards the elimination of arbitrary possession or deceptive exploitation of information and of intellectual work, unbinding the tacit and Mafia-like rules of the market in intellectual and artistic goods, upsets the exploitation of artists and the manipulation of their ideas, and creates a law or norm, in a system that uses the norm only for economic repression, but refuses to accept the norm as a counter-attack aimed at anti-economic and anti-exploitation utilization. This attack on market laws and procedures is also being pressed by other artists and jurists such as Beuys, Heeren and Steack, who are opposed not only to the art market and its utilization, but to the continued operation of the monopoly laws or deceptive and oppressive utilizations. In England, Long and Flanagan are presently campaigning for the introduction of a law that would place an intellectual in every factory or industry, not of course as a producer, but with the task of breaking up existing behaviour and procedural patterns. This change of indication of rules, norms and utilizations becomes, for I.D.A. (Information Documentation Archives) the annulment of the power or selection of information or documents, in the part of art critics. This is done by setting itself

up as a service for the diffusion and distribution of information for every kind of intellectual entity. A service, with a utilization structure that emits continuously on all possible channels, both theoretical and practical, information and documentation, thus reversing the role of the critic, turning him into an instrument controlled by the intellectual. I.D.A. in fact makes use of all the information channels (newspapers, magazines, TV, posters, books, photographs and publications) and offers them to the workers, becoming a medium of information and denies its own power of selection or judgement or of acting repressively on things. It is structured to be able to work at three levels: a theoretical level tending towards the elaboration of operational and behavioural methods, studying and initiating research with the maximum economy of concepts and ideas, an information level that uses all the existing instruments for the propagation and diffusion of ideas, theories and utilization and behavioural methods worked out by intellectuals; and an operative-organizational level, tending to put into concrete use the operative methods and modifications in utilization proposed by the workers, taking over total responsibility for making use of all existing organizations and materials with relation to single and collective ideology.

It was the same sort of setting itself up as a service, distant yet active and in contact with everyday reality, that led the Living Theatre to emerge from the trap of the theatre in order to break down the barrier of art as a prison in the power of the Establishment and investigate the function and utilization of all kinds of action and inaction. Aware that in a spectacular society every product is a spectacle, and thus that the theatrical object only increased the merchandizing cycle, the Living Theatre went out of production and into analysis of violent and non-violent utilizations and procedures that may lead to the destruction of the Bureaucratic-Military-Authoritarian-Police Combine. It worked, of course, in the shadows, in an unknown and non-linguistic environment, but a physical and practical one, in which utilization and functioning of action have a tautological meaning, not a symbolic or moral one. It takes up a position instead of describing, presents but does not represent, destroying and annulling the seen-but-not-expressed which serves the interests of the Upper Classes, exalting action and speech on utilization and consumption, the field of those who always tell us what we should do and how we ought to do it.

This work on the utilization of action and of the instruments of work are transformed by Schechner into information-divulging activity when he uses the communication media (newspapers, books and magazines), changing their sign and function to make them spectacular at the moment of publishing a series of events that everyone can use against the Establishment. These are events deprived of the protection of copyright, instituted as possible utilizations of the roads, spaces and services of the revolutionary structure, on the limits and procedures of urban guerrilla-warfare.

Of course, contraction, revolution, deciphering, interpretation, annulment and the reversal of utilization values cannot be achieved solely through the work of a small number of groups and bodies. That is why these, and many others, are uniting and forming bigger groups, recognizing each other and collaborating, to form a social power as a counter-society that can construct and invent, project or achieve or annul utilization instruments that have community aims, unitary aspirations and the will to work constructively, destructively or towards Nirvana.

Only the coming together and rendering concrete the forces operating on utilization and counter-utilization can, indeed, create and command a real, and not ephemeral, dimension in which to oppose actively through concrete action the existing utilization and consumption structures of

the Establishment. These have, in fact, enabled us to become aware, tragically, of the vanity and uselessness of all isolated and imaginative gestures, which are ephemeral and incidental, bound to the culture rather than to the procedure, justified by Freud but denied by Pavlov, in a society dedicated to utilization and recurrent and continuous exchange that is obvious and general. Thus only the setting up of a counter-society, or, rather, the recognition that we belong to one, can show the way to delirium, imagination, fantasy and escaping from physical traps and from the mind (3) («dementia», from «de mente») becoming norms and procedures based not only on the present but on continuity (space, time and utility). This is an escape and a change of indication as to the utilization procedures that can be based on utilization structures and materials, on individual and collective work centres, on general and particular activities, on concrete realizations or non-realizations, on the discovery of areas of work and utilization, on the liberalization of working space, utilizing materials, of course, and existing or new organizations, the latter though on the user's total responsibility and for his own use.

This is therefore a step from work which so far, directed by the instruments of the Establishment, has aimed at the creation of totems and fashions for the upper or aestheticising classes, to work on utilizations and the modification of the use of means and instruments, with total integration of work into utility and the final abolition of art, theatre, cinema, architecture, criticism, politics, philosophy and all the institutions. Germano Celant

(1) The term «intellectual» is used with intent to abolish the specific and mythical nature of work and thus pass on from particular action to general. It is, admittedly, a generic and indicative term, but an insignificant one.  
(2) The concept of culture as utility is altogether removed from that of applied culture (art, theatre, cinema, architecture, philosophy, criticism) which is nothing more than another form of alienation from the product and merchandise.  
(3) These positions include the work of «Fiat Sai Assicurazioni», «Shelli» and «Domus». The first consists in placing in the city of Turin a single publicity board for Fiat and Sai Insurance Co., just as it is, presented visually to consumers and clients. This hoarding does nothing to the aesthetic dimension and disappears into the dimension of application, revealing its real utility. While the meaning of «Fiat Sai Assicurazioni» is «Sai Sai Assicurazioni». The second is in the placing in Genoa of a new wall meaning, the «Shelli» which, although advertising meaning different from the original shell, but levels to Shell as an image-sign-symbol of language. The sign Shell, drawn attention to itself as a linguistic symbol. The Descriptive Improvisation Group has invented the title «Domus» as an example of confirmation through participation in the title of the title, the title of the title, on the cover, in the synopsis, monograms, etc. The title «Domus» is another utilization standard, a linguistic and advertising symbol like IBM, CGL, LIL, or RCA.

Only conceptual Art, imaginary architecture and all the activities that have apparently switched attention from the physical, the mental have, on the contrary, reduced the mental to an image, failing to realize the physical and visual. Therefore «dementia» (action, under the guise of a concrete new idea, unbindable and not to be rendered physical, may become a modification of the utilization of the mind and extremely logical.

PLEASE COMPLETE AND RETURN

Description

MARKH  
DOMUS 1971

N.E. THING COMPANY LIMITED

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untitled



Date Project

1971

Project

ARTICLE

Number

1.

La spirale cambia di segno. La radicalizzazione del rapporto arte e vita sta abolendo il polo negativo, l'arte, proprio mentre le strutture d'uso (mercati, banche, magazzini, musei, trust economici), con un gesto di falsa azione progressiva, stanno disperatamente tentando di continuare a tenere a guinzaglio l'artista e di ridurre la disubbidiente catarsi dell'artista a un ulteriore consumo, teso a sostituire prodotto a prodotto, che al tema del mass-media, della società dei consumi, del gesto esistenziale, della gestualità, del linguaggio, della visibilità contrapponga il tema della vita, della natura, dello spontaneismo, dell'evento nomade, dell'improvvisazione, del corpo, della morte, del concetto, dell'immaginazione.

Analizzando infatti la situazione attuale dell'arte povera e della conceptual art, ma anche del teatro per strada o di guerriglia, del cinema reportage, della critica acritica, dell'architettura immaginaria, dello spontaneismo politico, e di tutti quegli atteggiamenti contro-culturali che si pongono l'intento di risolvere il lavoro in vita o azione, è dato notare che un episodio (artistico, politico, architettonico, teatrale, cinematografico, filosofico, critico, eccetera) e successo ad un altro, mentre l'uso è rimasto lo stesso ed il tentativo di distruzione o di annullamento o di dissolvimento del mito della cultura, come arte, teatro, architettura, cinema, politica, filosofia, scienza, legge, storia, nell'uso quotidiano, è fallito.

Così le entità privilegiate sono rimaste in vita, il nomadismo e la politica si sono risolti in forme ed immagini, l'arte e tutta la cultura o contro-cultura continuano a servire la contemplazione e si esauriscono in un lavoro dedicato esclusivamente alla conoscenza astratta, che non si traduce mai in azione o passi, intervento o immobilismo, rivoluzione o nirvana, non diventa mai metodo fisico. Così l'atteggiamento che è stato caratteristico di questo clima degli anni 1966-1970 anche quando è sembrato mettere a capo del suo lavoro concetti o attività generali (la ha tradotti in immagini e simboli, che sono sempre particolari e individuali, e se ha tentato di esprimere oggettivamente fatti mentali o fisici, li ha ridotti in metafore, mediante termini ambigui ed equivoci, che agevolano le strutture di consumo della cultura e non modificano gli usi. Consumo, che mediante la visibilità e l'oggettualità dei prodotti, favorisce il mito dell'arte e dell'eroismo della cultura e con l'eroismo e il mito della cultura, la continuazione dell'appropriazione dell'arte e del lavoro intellettuale da parte dell'Establishment e di piccole e grandi strutture di consumo e di mercato, con parallela espansione di potere economico-politico sia dell'Establishment, sia dell'arte e della cultura, sia delle strutture che la dirigono e la esaltano. Eppure la realtà e la vita, con i loro beni primari, non hanno bisogno di miti ed eroi, ma di strumenti attivi o di stasi assolute, che diventino funzionanti e si instaurino come procedura o rito, per compiere mediante l'ativismo o l'immobilismo totali, una trasformazione obbligatoria, che non sia basata sui beni secondari, quali la cultura (arte, cinema, teatro, filosofia, architettura, politica, ...), ma sui beni primari quali gli usi, i consumi, gli scambi, le mediazioni, i servizi.

Invece l'arte, il teatro, il cinema, la filosofia, la critica, l'architettura, la politica, continuano a creare eroi e miti da imitare, servono a far sì che i dati e i portali della cultura o contro-cultura non si realizzino, come modificazioni o operazioni o contrazioni o definizioni dei beni primari, ma solo come merce o potere. Il mito continua a creare superuomini, mentre la realtà e la vita non necessitano di superuomini, ma di cose, ovvie, banali e senza titolo.

Per questo motivo la radicalizzazione dell'atteggiamento in arte e in tutte le attività culturali si è assottigliata e ha cambiato di segno, come sembra mostrare il lavoro di tutta una totalità di intellettuali (i) che stanno portando il fare da una condizione metaforico-contemplativa ad una condizione d'uso o di annullamento d'uso, in cui ogni tipo di lavoro diventa utensile (i) o si dissolva nella realtà quotidiana dei beni primari per farsi esplodere o modificarsi o definirsi o annullarsi o subire.

Così gli Weathermen Underground, il gruppo OHO, la N.E. Thing Co., Siegel, Godard e Straub, Long e Flanagan, Schechner, l'Information Documentation Archives, i Controgiornali, gli Archizoom, il Living Theatre, il Gruppo Improvvisazione descrittiva, e altri intellettuali stanno cambiando il segno al loro lavoro per non continuare l'altalena delle invenzioni e sostituzioni letterarie. Sono passati da uno status produttivo, identificabile solo con l'oggetto o il prodotto finito, ad uno status in cui il loro lavoro si istituisce come definizione o sabotaggio o introduzione o alterazione d'uso o uso stesso. Agiscono su gli usi che permeano la vita quotidiana e costituiscono i beni primari, non agiscono per superuomini e non permettono più una divisa tra sfera culturale ed artistica e sfera extraculturale ed extrartistica. Il loro lavoro diventa fatto, non possiede più una dimensione estetico-formale, ma pratico-concreta, fusa con la realtà degli usi, delle funzioni e dei servizi. Il loro è un segno di ribellione, per non lavorare più sui testi, che si trasformano sistematicamente in forme o entità estetiche, simboli dei gruppi di potere e di scambio, funzione o servizio (come banche, mercati, università, magazzini, musei, partiti, istituti, teatri, produttori) ma per agire e rivoluzionare i sistemi e gli standard d'uso della cultura e della contro-cultura. Il loro è un lavoro che agisce sulle giunture e le strutture di servizio e di potere, utilizzando gli stessi strumenti di servizio e d'uso, contrarre i gruppi o le entità d'uso alterando i metodi e le procedure, in modo da passare da un lavoro accidentale, approssimativo e confuso, ad un lavoro necessario e continuo, capace di affrontare le procedure, le norme, i riti, gli usi e i sistemi primari.

Sono infatti i gruppi o le entità o le strutture d'uso che costituiscono il vero ostacolo all'attuazione e alla concretizzazione degli atteggiamenti d'uso, per cui il loro lavoro sull'uso tende a far impazzire o segretare, alterare, trasgredire, contrare, misurare, far fallire gli usi ovvi e banali, tramite

usi ovvi e banali, ma alterati o con segni diversi.

E per questo motivo che questa totalità di intellettuali, ha forzato i limiti del lavoro in arte o in teatro o in cinema o in politica o in informazione o in critica o in architettura, per renderlo uso e rivoluzione d'uso, che possa essere impegnato nella totalità (spazio tempo) delle strutture d'uso esistenti (tv, informazione, banche, magazzini, aeroporti, servizi, leggi, giornali, società, eccetera).

In questo senso il lavoro non si è tradotto, nuovamente, in oggetti o prodotti, simboli di salvezza e di liberazione dei « mali » del mondo e della società, ma in opposizione negativa nei confronti dell'uso attuale del lavoro, che, come prodotto od oggetto, in mano alle strutture d'uso, è ancora mitico e metaforico, vive secondo canoni di rappresentazione e si traduce in idee o fatti visuali, quantificabili e collocabili, per borghesi estetizzanti, e al contrario come uso o disuso, distrugge e annulla il mondo dell'arte e della cultura, con tutte le sue appendici.

Entrando in merito al lavoro svolto da questa totalità di intellettuali, notiamo che il lavoro non acquista o non ha più una caratteristica ed una specificità particolare linguistica, non è più soltanto teatro, arte, cinema, informazione, architettura, politica, ma azione e metodo pratico, indefinibili e senza titolo, relativi al mondo e non più solo alla cultura, prova ne sia che l'individuo sparisce, come eroe, e viene sostituito da una sigla, da un'ente, da una struttura, che può agevolmente inserirsi, a livello di rompendo e modificando, tra le altre sigle (IBM, DATAMATION, A. B. DICK COMPANY, KYBE, RCA, TAB, TV, PHI, BNL, eccetera) che costituiscono i beni primari, e sono quindi cultura. Come la N. E. Thing Co. fondata a Vancouver da Ian Baxter nel 1966 con sede sociale in Canada, che comprende undici dipartimenti di ricerca: ricerca, contabilità, ACT, ART, fotografia, COP, film, progetti, consultazioni, impressioni. Dipartimenti che assolvono funzioni diverse nell'ambito della compagnia, la quale vuol porre non come produttiva di lavoro artistico, ma come strumento alternativo d'uso delle conoscenze culturali. La N. E. Thing Co. non produce oggetti o prodotti di circolazione specifica, ma si è formata come società per consultazioni in merito alle comunicazioni visuali, all'informazione sensoriale, all'immaginazione, all'ICOM, alle idee, e a ogni tipo di innovazione, qualitativa e quantitativa. Il lavoro estetico è diventato uso, funzione e servizio, è entrato nell'orbita tanto da confondersi con tutti gli altri servizi di informazione e di consultazione. Ian Baxter, che ne è il presidente, gerente, lavoratore, eccetera, è presente ora con N. E. Thing Co. nelle grandi esposizioni d'affari e fiere di mercato e di uso, insieme con l'American Telephone Punch Company, la Boeing Computer Services Division, la UNIVAC, la Xerox Corporation, la Data, la Type Company, concorre con esse, si è annullato come artista, ma agisce come intellettuale sui sistemi d'uso e di informazione, usa strumenti contrari come la telex, il computer, la tv, la xerox, non per lavori estetici o artistici, ma per lavori che ne possano alterare l'uso, rivoluzionare il sistema. Per questo motivo, il gruppo di intellettuali jugoslavi, attualmente sta lavorando all'installazione, in un grande complesso di consumo e di svago, di nuovi metodi pratici d'uso, comportamento, scelta dei beni primari. Le sue funzioni all'interno del complesso, in costruzione, non è evidentemente quella di un artista, gruppo di artisti che interviene nella formalizzazione estetica dell'edificio o del complesso edificato, ma avviene all'interno dello stesso degli usi e dei comportamenti globali del complesso. Si svolge direttamente sull'impostazione del comportamento delle persone adibite al funzionamento pratico, sulla scelta dei cibi e dei consumi, sulla visibilità, sulle procedure e sulle norme da tenersi all'interno, su tutte le strutture d'uso primario del complesso. Un'attenzione all'uso stesso delle procedure, che gli Weathermen Underground hanno adottato per le loro azioni distruttive e dinamitanti negli aeroporti, nei grattacieli, nei grandi magazzini, nelle banche, nei mercati americani. Gli Weathermen Underground infatti contraggono e usano le stesse norme d'uso dei servizi americani, beni primari della società occidentale, per distruggerli o danneggiarli. Pongono una bomba a tempo in un grattacielo, e avvisano telefonicamente la polizia, che la bomba scoppierà in venti minuti, tempo fisico di suamento del grattacielo, collaudato dalla stessa polizia e dalla società incendi, la distruzione dell'edificio avviene avendo o controuso delle stesse caratteristiche d'uso dello stesso, oppure agiscono con la dinamite nei grandi magazzini, negli aeroporti, nelle banche, nelle stazioni, utilizzando, tutte le caratteristiche funzionali di sicurezza, collaudate e testate da questi enti, con un segno inverso, rivoluzionario e dinamitante. In questa maniera gli stessi usi e le stesse norme, esaltate e magnificate dalle strutture d'uso, si rovinano contro le stesse, in modo da acquistare una direzionalità diversa. Una direzionalità con forse il loro che gli Archizoom hanno applicato alla condizione urbana, come sistema autogestificante, con le sue strutture rigide d'uso e di attenzione, quali i Supermarket e le Fabbriche. Il loro intervento, quantitativo e non qualitativo, tenta il sabotaggio di tutte le logiche obbligate e condizionanti che presidono l'organizzazione, la forma e la configurazione, della città, per fare della struttura un sistema universale in continuo divenire, modificabile e alterabile, secondo le modificazioni d'uso, dettate dalle condizioni stesse, implicite nella rete urbana, definita non dagli elementi statali (casa, complessi, forme) ma dalle funzioni (traffici e scambi). Un lavoro che, come complesso, morafica l'ideologia dell'architettura o urbanistica e contrappone un metodo d'uso non più critico del sistema urbano precedente, ma attivo nell'attuale. Alla stessa maniera i controgiornali (Manifesto, Re Nudo, Controcanto, Time out, Ubu) non si pongono più come informazione delegante delle strutture d'uso, ma si formano come informazione alternativa, che

vuole istituire una funzione ed un uso diverso dell'informazione, non più sotterranea, ma frontale, come la N. E. Thing Co. che informa e informa e fa luce, fuori dei tabù culturali e dei miti obblivi, autonoma e non lacerabile dalle altre strutture d'uso, che chiaramente non sopportano la concorrenza tesa a renderle inattive, un'informazione ancora che tratta i fatti e non le interpretazioni, anzi semmai rivela le tecniche di interpretazione e le norme d'uso dell'informazione.

Un lavoro sulle norme e sul meccanismo di interpretazione che, nel gruppo improvvisazione descrittiva/descrizione descrittiva, curatore associato Emilio Prioli, si concretizza in un flusso continuo di dati su standard di registrazione, acquisto e consumo. Il gruppo elabora sistematicamente concetti, azioni, dati sulla teoria dei beni, sulla teoria dei valori, sulla teoria della comunicazione, sulla teoria dell'informazione, sulla teoria della tautologia, sulla teoria dell'uso, sulla teoria del caso, sulla teoria della cosa, sulla teoria del linguaggio arte, sulla teoria della dinamica sociale, sulla teoria della causa, sulla teoria dell'automatismo primario (psichico-linguistico) e secondario (meccanico), sulla teoria del consumo (contrapposto ad uso). Per gli standard di consumo, il gruppo improvvisazione descrittiva ha presentato il consumo o durata d'uso di una macchina fotografica, di un registratore, di uno spot di un appartamento, di una macchina 500, che eseguono il loro lavoro normale sino a fermarsi, senza nessun intervento estetico. La registrazione dello standard (uso) è un dato di fatto, che mantiene il valore originario e non è decontestualizzabile e quindi non inseribile nella storia dell'oggetto estetico, essendo lo standard un'entità anonima e irrisolvibile rispetto agli altri standard.

Così la registrazione delle sigle e delle testate, delle insegne e delle entrate e di tutti gli standard d'uso, che posseggono un significato dal significato stesso della sigla o dell'insegna, si concretizza in conformazioni e partecipazioni, varianti in dizioni, esposizioni, edizioni e posizioni (i). Nell'ambito delle leggi d'uso Seth Siegel dopo aver fondato ed organizzato la International General, una società di distribuzione e produzione di libri o pubblicazioni emesse da intellettuali, che contraeva la sua precedente attività di gallerista, tesa all'accumulazione di informazione come la sua recente attività di gallerista, ha presentato una serie di codici o leggi che possano regolare e bloccare l'uso del prodotto intellettuale, di qualsiasi tipicità esso sia. La sua azione è indirizzata a stroncare l'uso irregolare e arbitrario, da parte del potere economico, di ogni lavoro immaginato o immaginabile dalle strutture di consumo. Ivali editori, gallerie, musei, industrie, banche e così via. Questa struttura di regole d'uso tende a togliere ogni possesso arbitrario e ogni utilizzazione mistificante dell'informazione e del lavoro intellettuale, scardina le regole, facili e mafiose, del mercato di beni intellettuali ed artistici, sconvolge lo sfruttamento degli artisti e la manipolazione delle loro idee, crea una legge o una norma, in un sistema che usa la norma solo per repressione economica, ma non accetta la norma come attacco o uso contrario, antieconomico e antistrutturale. Un attacco alle leggi ed alle procedure del mercato, viene condotto anche da altri artisti e giuristi, come Beus, Heinrich, Staack, che oltre al mercato d'arte e alle sue leggi, si oppongono all'uso e alla permanenza dei monopoli e di leggi, o usi, mistificanti e repressivi, oppure come Long e Flanagan che attualmente stanno chiedendo il riconoscimento di una legge che permetta l'inserimento in Inghilterra di un intellettuale ogni fabbrica o industria, naturalmente non con funzioni produttive, ma di rottura comportamentistica e procedurale. Un cambiamento di segno delle regole, delle norme, degli usi, che con l'I.D.A. (Information Documentation Archives) diventa annullamento del potere o della scelta dell'informazione o del documento, da parte del critico d'arte, che si istituisce come servizio di diffusione e distribuzione di informazione per ogni tipo di entità intellettuale. Un servizio, con una sua struttura d'uso, che emette in continuazione, con tutti i canali possibili, lavoro teorico, informazione, documentazione, e capovolge la funzione critica, diventando uno strumento in mano all'intellettuale. L'I.D.A. infatti usa tutti gli strumenti di informazione (giornali, riviste, tv, manifesti, libri, fotografie, pubblicazioni) e li offre agli operatori, diventa un tramite d'informazione e nega il suo potere di scelta o di giudizio, di potere repressivo sulle cose. La sua strutturazione le permette di operare a tre livelli, un livello teorico, che tende all'elaborazione di teorie e metodi operativi e comportamentistici, studia e imposta ricerche nella massima economia di concetti e di idee, un livello informativo, che provvede tramite tutti gli strumenti esistenti alla propaganda e alla diffusione delle idee, delle teorie, dei metodi d'uso e di comportamento elaborati dagli intellettuali, un livello operativo, che cerca di mettere in atto concretamente i metodi operativi e le modificazioni d'uso proposte dagli operatori, utilizzando, in totale responsabilità, tutte le organizzazioni e i materiali presenti, in rapporto alla ideologia singola o collettiva.

Un istituto come servizio assente, ma attivo e onisciente con la realtà quotidiana che ha condotto il Living Theatre ad una situazione di teatro, per abbattere la barriera dell'arte, che risulta una prigione del potere dell'Establishment, e per indagare sulla funzione ed uso di ogni azione o inazione. Il Living, conscio che in una società dello spettacolo ogni prodotto è spettacolo, per cui l'oggetto teatrale non è un oggetto di spettacolo, ma è usato dalla produzione ed è entrato nell'analisi degli usi e delle procedure violente e non violente, che possono portare alla caduta del Complesso-Burocratico-Militare-Autoritario-Poliziesco. Chiaramente il loro lavoro è svolto nell'ombra, in un ambiente sconosciuto e alinguistico, ma fisico e fisico, in cui l'uso della funzione dell'azione hanno un significato tautologico, non simbolico e morale, ed è posizionato e non descritto, presentato, ma non rappresentato, distrugge ed annulla il visto e il non detto, che servono gli interessi delle Classi Superiori, ed esalta l'azione e

il dire sugli usi e sui consumi, che sono quelli che dicono sempre come si deve fare e come lo si deve fare.

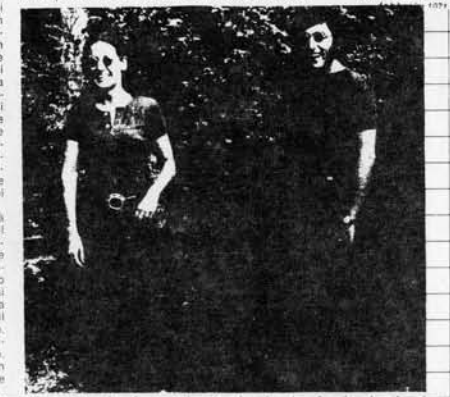
Un lavoro sull'uso dell'azione e su gli usi degli strumenti di lavoro che in Schechner si trasforma in lavoro informale quando usa i mezzi di comunicazione (giornali, riviste, libri) modificati di segno e di funzione, li fa diventare spettacoli, non mostrano, ma mostrano una serie di eventi, che tutti possono usare contro l'Establishment. Eventi privi di protezione e di copyright, che si istituiscono come possibili usi della strada, degli spazi, dei servizi, della struttura rivoluzionaria, sui limiti e le procedure di una guerriglia urbana.

Una guerriglia, come uso del cinema, che Godard ha reso norma e procedura del suo lavoro, quando è uscito dal circuito e dalla struttura di distribuzione e di produzione, di sfruttamento e di prevaricazione del cinema ed è entrato nell'uso del cinema come azione non privilegiata, ma ovvia e banale, per Al Fatah e per la comunità agricola Algerina. Godard ha cambiato di segno all'uso, è scomparso nella guerriglia fisica, non per registrarla, ma per agirla e viverla. Un uso del cinema contro il cinema, che Straub conduce verso lo stesso prodotto, nel momento in cui realizza lavori come « Otton » che, nel totale rispetto degli usi strumentali del lavoro, come insieme complesso di dati autonomi e liberi, sono avversi qualsiasi utilizzazione del lavoro, che non sia quella originale fraccante il mito e l'attuale uso del cinema.

Naturalmente la contrazione, la rivoluzione, la decifrazione, l'interpretazione, l'annullamento, il ribaltamento dei valori d'uso non può avvenire solo ad opera di una piccola totalità di gruppi o enti, per questo motivo questi stanno riunendosi e costituendosi, riconoscendosi e collegandosi insieme a molti altri, come forza sociale, come contro-società che costruisca o inventi o progetti o realizzi o annulli strumenti d'uso che posseggano le qualità comuni, aspirazioni unitarie e volontà operative, di ordine costruttivo, distruttivo o nirvanico.

Solo la riunione e la concretizzazione delle forze operanti su gli usi e sui consumi può infatti assumere e possedere una dimensione reale, non effimera, tale da contrapporsi attivamente, con un'azione concreta, agli attuali usi e consumi proposti dall'Establishment. Questi anni hanno infatti permesso di acquisire la coscienza, tragica, della vanità e dell' inutilità di ogni gesto isolato e fantastico, effimero e contingente, legato al gesto, più che alla procedura, giustificato da Freud, ma negato da Pavlov (?) in una società dedita all'uso e allo scambio ripetuto e continuo, ovvio e generale, per cui soltanto la costituzione o meglio il riconoscimento reciproco di far parte di una contro-società, può far sì che il delirio, l'immaginazione, la fantasia, la fuga dalle trappole fisiche, la fuga della mente (la demenza da « de mente »), possano diventare norme e procedure basate non soltanto sul presente, ma sulla continuità (spazio tempo) uso.

Una fuga e un cambio di segno delle procedure d'uso che può fondarsi su strutture e materiali d'uso, su centri, individuali e collettivi di lavoro, su operazioni generali e particolari, su attuazioni o istituzioni concrete, sul ripetersi di aree di lavoro e d'uso, sulla liberalizzazione degli spazi operativi, naturalmente utilizzando materiale ed organizzazioni nuove o presenti, quest'ultimo però in totale responsabilità ed uso dell'utente. Passaggio quindi da un lavoro che, direzionato da strumenti dell'establishment, è approdato sinora alla creazione di totem o mode per le classi superiori ed estetizzanti, ad un lavoro sugli usi e sulle modificazioni d'uso dei mezzi e degli strumenti, con totale inserimento del lavoro nell'uso e l'abolizione definitiva dell'arte, del teatro, del cinema, dell'architettura, della critica, della politica, della filosofia e di tutte le istituzioni. Germano Celant



PLEASE COMPLETE AND RETURN

Description **MAJOR PHILOSOPHICAL ARTICLE WRITTEN BY REDDOWN ITALIAN, CRITIC, WRITER, GERMANO CELANT, PICTURE WASTAKE WHEN GERMANO VISITED N. E. THING CO. IN 1970.**

N. E. THING COMPANY LIMITED

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# INFORMATION

N.E. THING CO. LTD.

1419 Riverside Drive North Vancouver B.C. Canada

Date

1971

Project

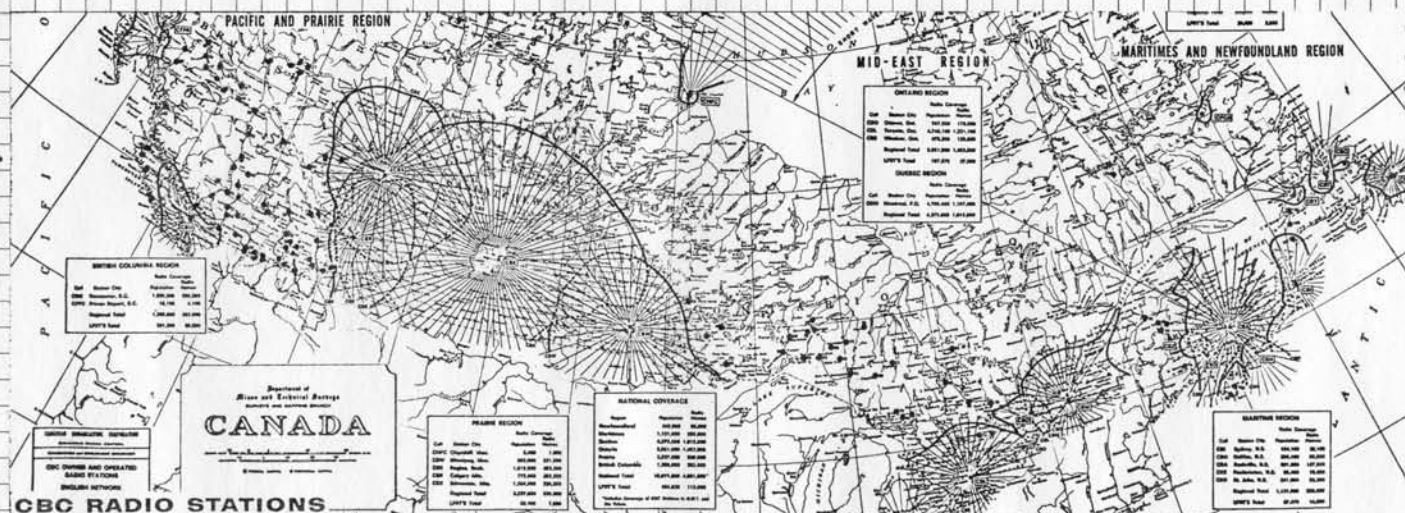
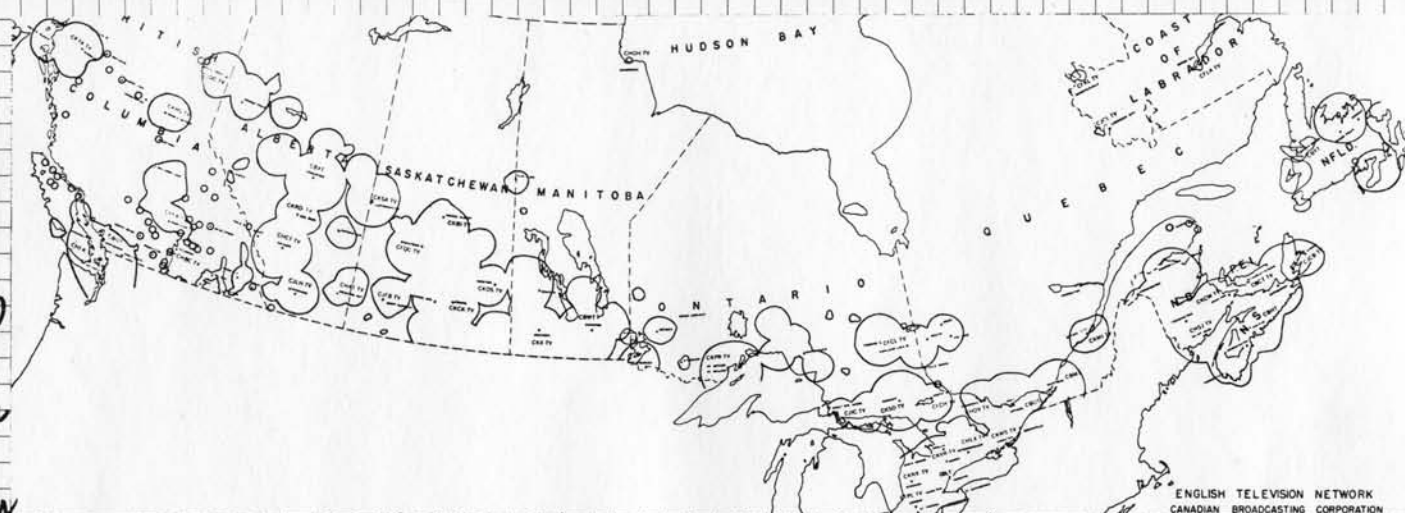
COMMUNICATIONS DEPT.  
PHOTOGRAPHY DEPT.  
Broadcasts, Transmissions, Display,  
Television, Projections, PHOTO-VSI  
VIDEO-VSI.

UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA  
Art Gallery & Museum  
RING HOUSE NUMBER ONE, Campus  
Edmonton, Alberta, Canada  
JAN.15 - FEB.10, 1971

Number

1

ADS WERE  
BROADCASTED  
LOCALLY IN  
EDMONTON AND  
SOME WERE  
BROADCASTED OVER  
ALL CANADA ON  
THE C.B.C. NATIONAL  
RADIO AND T.V.



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## Description

RING HOUSE NUMBER ONE is  
situated immediately south of the  
FACULTY CLUB, near Saskatchewan  
Drive.  
Telephone 432-5818

## GALLERY TIMES:

MON & FRI.....12:30-4:30pm

TUES & THURS.....12:30-5:15pm

WED.....11am - 7 pm

N.E. THING CO. LTD. Broadcasts  
RADIO -(1969-71) see times posted  
T.V. -(1969-71) see times posted  
PHOTO-VSI-(1970) North American  
time zone PHOTO-VSI Simultaneity  
VIDEO-VSI-(1970) Displayed  
PROJECTIONS-(1966-71) Displayed

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A2. Well, Joseph Beuys does, definitely.

Q. So the whole field of "Fine Art" has become just another cliché for you.

A2. Well for me personally "High Art" is pure Camp. I mean the whole thing is just another "scene". Like they have their own manufactured superstars and jet-setters and gurus and it's a whole political-financial-manipulation trip, and there are very few artists, as I mentioned before, who can rise above this.

A3. Actually I have no conception at all of what "Art" or "Fine Art" is and I'm not really interested in working out a definition of what "art" is at the moment.

Q. Then what exactly are you doing?

A2. Well I don't really have a definition for what I'm doing. (pause) ... exploring I suppose. (pause) ... or probing would be a better word. Exploring environments has always appealed to me. I've done quite a bit of mountaineering and caving and just travelling generally in the past. It's just that now I'm exploring different environments, environments that come to me in a sense, like radio and TV. etcetera.

A3. Yeah, and these environments aren't just coming to "me", they are everywhere all at once ...

Q. Well how do ...

A3. ... And these media are environments which alter our whole perception of things and create completely new psychic postures which we adopt in our relationship to the world around us.

A1. I want to stress here that we're not talking about being able to explore India by T.V. instead of actually going there, although this in itself is of great significance, but also that ... (short pause) ... Well let's drop India at this point and try and find a better way of describing what I'm talking about ...

A2. Well let's stay on home ground and talk about Canada. You see, our conception of Canada is completely different from that of Canadians at the turn of the century, in terms of individuals in relationship to a nation. I mean the speed of these new media; the changes they force on us in relationship to each other; the way they alter our ideas of things like privacy and personal freedom and private property and so on. Manners might maketh Man,

but its the environment which maketh the manners.

A1. It's quite staggering really. I mean this nation of some twenty million people is strung out like beads on a five thousand mile string. I mean in England there are twice as many people crammed into an area about the size of Vancouver Island.

A3. And the whole backbone of this country is communications ... (pause) ... I mean it's one of our greatest resources, a fine electronic nerve which runs right across the country, and the thing is, this whole network is invisible.

A1. And so what we are doing is probing these new media such as Telex, T.V. and radio, sort of playing with them, treating them like very sophisticated and powerful toys: sort of describing them and finding ways of using them which elucidate their processes and their functions because they're part of our lives and our culture and ...

A2. (Interrupting) ... You see these media are forcing us to reconsider the whole structure and function of the arts in general. At the moment the whole "Fine Art" thing seems largely irrelevant and hypocritical ...

Q. Well what other studies have you been making within this broad cultural framework you've been talking about?

A2. Well we're just getting started on a major environmental study called C-IDEAS, which stands for Cultural Information Directing Environmental Attitudes Sensitively, and what this is a three volume cultural information inventory. The three volumes are: one, visual information; two, sound information; and three, non-verbal communication. The sound volume will be a set of long-playing records. Volume one is well under way. It's like a visual dictionary with subject matter listed alphabetically, for example, billboards are listed under 'b', and then there are things like fences and supermarkets and gas-stations, etcetera.

A1. You see we're just handling this information sensitively, which is exactly what a painter or graphic designer or writer or film-maker or politician or whoever is doing, if he's any good, and I don't think we should be too concerned about whether this is "Art" or not. I mean this is just a dead issue as far as I'm concerned and I think that

goes for the rest of the N.E. THING Company staff.

Q. That C-IDEAS project you were just talking about sounds like a very ambitious thing for anyone to get involved in. How long do you expect to take to collect and collate all this information?

A2. Oh, about five years I guess before the final volume is published. The whole operation depends on the funding that we can make available to that project. But the most pressing project for us at the moment is the five thousand mile movie, which we hope to be able to make as a B.C. (British Columbia) Centennial project in 1971.

Q. Yes I remember reading something about that in Weekend magazine some time ago. How do you intend to finance it?

A2. Well we had the whole thing costed out by professionals in Toronto and it will cost about \$250,000.00 to make so obviously we can't finance it ourselves.

A3. What we've actually done is to put together a very comprehensive proposal laying out the how, why, when and where of the movie, which we'll be presenting to several members of the financial community on the assumption that one or more will be enlightened enough to be able to grasp the significance and the timeliness of the whole thing.

Q. Well just what form will this "epic" take?

A3. Well, it will be the longest movie in the world and will cover the journey from the most easterly coast of Canada to the most westerly coast. We expect that it will take about one hundred and twenty five hours to show in its entirety. Basically it will be a very honest travelogue, showing Canada for what it is, with nothing left out. But it will also be much more than that. Historically it will be the most socially significant single event ever attempted, showing the culture and life-style of the Canadian people, and it is a very timely thing to do with the B.C. Centennial celebrations coming up in 1971. The movie will also have a sound track which will consist of ambient sound and a continuous series of interviews with a complete cross-section of the Canadian people; Indians, professional people, skilled workers, housewives, children, politicians, laborers, educators,

etcetera, who will be given the opportunity to air their views on a whole range of subjects relevant to this period of change that our society is going through.

A1. And whoever backs the movie will get publicity for themselves, their business interests, their province and their country which will far outweigh the cost of the project. But we don't expect anyone to give us backing for philanthropic reasons. We believe that the film is a very good financial investment which will realize many times its original cost in a relatively short period of time.

Q. Have you tried getting any kind of sponsorship from the Provincial Government?

A2. Yes, we called the government official in Victoria who's dealing with proposals for centennial projects and told him what a great thing the movie would be for B.C. to do in its centennial year, and that we proposed that Mr. Bennett should present a copy of the film to Mr. Trudeau as a gift from B.C. to the Canadian people. Anyway, this guy said that the centennial year was B.C.'s birthday and that people should be giving gifts to B.C. on its birthday and not the other way round. So we didn't feel like getting involved any further with that kind of attitude and decided to try and get support from the business community, which we are trying to do at this moment.

Q. Well, all these ambitious programmes that you're working on, not only the movie and C-IDEAS but your plans for shops and restaurants and also the sense guides, if they ever get off the ground, could have tremendous social significance. In fact your whole objective seems to be to change the consciousness of our society by developing a cultural awareness among people that is non-existent at the moment.

A2. Well ... (laughs) ... I don't know about that ... (pause) ... it seems a bit unrealistic at the moment to say the least. Although you did hit the nail right on the head. A cultural awareness in society is what's missing. I mean for us this is the issue, and it obviously influences everything we do. A society's culture should be part of everyday life instead of apart from it.

Q. And does anyone else share these views with you?

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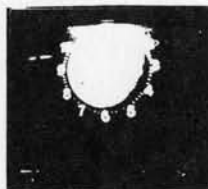
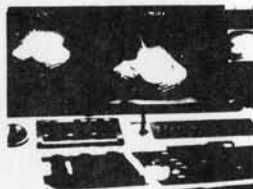
N.E. THING CO. COMMUNICATIONS & BROADCASTS

Number

3.

The N.E. THING Company New Year's Eve Trans-VSI broadcast. Channel 8 TV, Vancouver, 1970.

Time	Visual	Audio
11:59:30	Clock with second sweep. Photo of Earth superimposed on centre of dial.	Piano intro to John Lennon song 'Love'.
11:59:13		Voice over: "I am now going to count from 1 to 20".
11:59:10		Cut audio.
12:00:10		Continuation of piano intro. Voice over: "It's the thought that counts".
12:00:15	Dissolve from clock face to hand pressed against screen	Voice over: "Touch someone and place your hand on mine".
12:00:20		Start vocal: "Love is touch" and run out to end of track.



The N.E. THING Company Communications Department presents Video-sensitivity information: Cliche as probe.

Biting the hand that feeds you.  
Hitting the nail on the head.  
That's the way the cookie crumbles.  
Toeing the line.  
Having money to burn.  
Burning the candle at both ends.  
Letting the cat out of the bag.  
Penny pinching.  
Counting the odds.  
Putting all your eggs in one basket.  
Don't put all your eggs in one basket.  
Giving the nod.  
Taking it with a pinch of salt.  
Mouthing off.  
Wiping that silly grin off one's face.  
A fly in the ointment.  
Ironing out the wrinkles.  
Throwing one's weight around.  
By leaps and bounds.  
Wringing one's hands.  
Clock-watching.  
Taking the words out of one's mouth.  
Talking through one's hat.  
Forty winks.  
Tight-lipped.  
Open-handed.  
Facing the music.  
Touch wood.  
On the tip of one's tongue.  
Kicking the bucket.  
Burning a hole in one's pocket.  
Taking candy from a baby.  
A shot in the dark.  
A drop in the bucket.  
Watching one's step.  
Head over heels.  
Going belly up.  
Kicking one's self.  
Spilling the beans.  
Blowing one's top.  
Bending over backwards.  
Chewing the rag.  
Alive and kicking.  
Burning one's fingers.  
Cash in hand.  
Cash on hand.  
Putting one's money where one's mouth is.  
At the drop of a hat.  
Passing the buck.  
Having time on one's hands.  
Up against the wall.  
Going around with a chip on one's shoulder.  
Carrying the can.  
Making a clean sweep.  
Putting one's foot in one's mouth.  
Falling over one's self.  
Changing one's tune.  
Backing out.  
Watching one's step.  
Tongue twister.

PLEASE COMPLETE AND RETURN

N. E. THING COMPANY LIMITED

The projects described in this publication were presented at the University of Alberta, between Jan. 15 and Feb. 10, 1971 through the generous assistance of Alister Dunlop, Director of the University of Alberta Art Gallery, Ring House No. 1, University of Alberta, Edmonton, Alberta, Canada.

PLEASE COMPLETE AND RETURN

N. E. THING COMPANY LIMITED

Trade Mark ©

Description

CLICHES EXIST AS 1/2 HOUR VIDEO TAPE





# INFORMATION

N.E. THING CO. LTD.

1419 Riverside Drive North Vancouver B.C. Canada

Date

1971

Project

49<sup>TH</sup> PARALLELS EXHIBITION

Number

1.

While the effect of much of Levine's work is to make us more conscious of ourselves as players or spectators in the art game, the activities of Iain Baxter take our attention away from art and towards the world. Thus, Baxter operates from behind the façade of the N. E. Thing Company Limited, an organization staffed principally by himself and his wife Elaine, which permits him to transcend the category 'artist' altogether; and where Levine lives in New York and gets under the skin of the toughest art community ever known, Baxter, with the world as his oyster, remains content to live in suburban Vancouver. This difference partly accounts for the sardonic note in Levine, which in the activities of the N. E. Thing Company is missing. Indeed, there is the same fundamental warmth in the activities of the Company that one finds in Wieland — and Baxter's earlier essays in inflatable art shared something of the aesthetic of Wieland's quilts. On the other hand, where Wieland continues to make 'fine art' objects, Baxter, like Levine, has renounced objects in favor of a more total, though more diversified, use of the environment, and, in the same way as Levine, is 'software' orientated. The N. E. Thing Company, that is to say, exists to process 'visual sensitivity information' or 'V.S.I.', a position at which the Company has arrived since its formation in 1966 through a series of departmental expansions, as the president has conceived a new style of activity or expanded his sphere of operations to another area of life.

Baxter's unseriousness is determinedly serious; he has devised extensions to other people's work (an extra 'annular' area around an Albers; water for an Oldenburg toilet; and even an extension to the concept art of Lawrence Weiner — who, when he proposed 'an object tossed from one country to another', found that Baxter had added, 'and back again'); he has defended his inflatable sculpture on the grounds that it was deflatable and, in the tradition of Duchamp's 'reciprocal ready-mades', claims to have returned canvas to its appropriate function by using it for tents and awnings. Among its activities, his Company issues certificates, as appropriate, to the owners of 'things'. Of these there are two types: 'ACT Certificates' are issued to the owners of 'aesthetically claimed things', and 'ART Certificates' are issued to owners of 'aesthetically rejected things'. Compared with Levine's acerbic demolitions this may seem no more than a good-humored poke in the ribs, though when related to the Company's many photographic, elemental and landscape projects, it has its place as a lesson in the disjunctive nature of the concept of art today. But perhaps the Company's greatest success was achieved last year when it rented a booth at the International Data Processing Conference in Seattle, where its mysterious, serio-comic presence commandeered almost the entire media interest in the event. During the conference Baxter gave an address,



N.E. Thing Company, Booth at International Data Processing Conference, Seattle, 1970

Baxter: no. 40

issued buttons extolling 'Gross National Good' and finally sold the computer card blow-up that identified his exhibit for a sum that covered his expenses. It is significant that 'straight' members of the conference took him much more seriously than they might have if he had appeared in the local art gallery. In such activities however (and there have been others) he extends the category 'visual art' to merge with that of 'living theater' or social psychology — possibilities foreseen and avoided by Duchamp but which may well stand, on the evidence, to 'reconcile art and the people' where the aristocratic Duchamp, of whom this prophecy was made, did not.

The Company's submission to the present exhibition (from its 'Photo and Communications Department') takes a place in that contemporary genre which draws our attention to improbable or unusual viewpoints, or the synchronicity of events in time and space. In this case, six photographers were programmed to take photographs, in the six North American time zones, of the same traditional 'art' subject at the same moment in time. The resulting photographs, accompanied by synchronised clocks, have the effect of replacing our linear concept of space/time with the apprehension of what might be called a simultaneous space/time mosaic.

Two painters who pursue different but equally lonely courses in Canadian art today are John Meredith and Peter Kolisnyk. One might call Meredith a 'visionary' painter. In the early sixties he emerged from the sunset of Toronto's Abstract Expressionism with canvases that showed bold, uncomplicated designs brushed freely through a single field of color. *Presence II* (in the exhibition) is typical of these. Slowly, however, they gained a greater and greater complexity of detail, and one began to notice the appearance of wispy, ciliated edges to each brushstroke which gave the painted surface a mysterious, iridescent gleam. Meredith's work has obvious affinities to the early 'non-objective' paintings of Kandinsky (the sunrise of Abstract Expressionism), although it is not improvised but worked from preliminary drawings. At the same time Meredith resists in these drawings the psychedelic identity of such an artist as Michaux, even though their tucked and stitched qualities connote an attachment to the tapestry and apparel of Oriental culture. In the present exhibition, *Seeker* and *Ulysses*, show him at the height of his powers, replete with elusive meanings and brilliantly handled suggestions, where micro and macrocosm, organic and inorganic, the ominous and imminent are locked into designs of great mobility and control.

Kolisnyk's work follows an opposite direction from Meredith's richly woven mindscapes; it is concerned with reticence and holding back — the aesthetics of austerity; and as with 'reductionist' art elsewhere it has become modular and monochromatic.

morrow's radicalism in art in other words is less likely to come from plastic than political intuitions (Baxter's social commitment is particularly interesting in this respect); the plastic alternative seems to be a more modest, eclectic consolidation of what has gone before. There is every indication that for many this will be the answer. Without it, one may even ask will plastic art survive.

PLEASE COMPLETE AND RETURN

Description

SHOW ORGANIZED BY DENNIS YOUNG - FROM ONTARIO ART GALLERY.  
DENNIS YOUNG'S WRITING FOR CATALOG.

N. E. THING COMPANY LIMITED

Trade Mark ©



# INFORMATION

N.E. THING CO. LTD.

1419 Riverside Drive North Vancouver B.C. Canada

Date

1971

Project

NORTH AMERICAN TIME ZONE PHOTO V.S.I. SIMULTANEITY.

Number

1.

possible to fulfill the claim made by the modified statement which could be taken to mean "I will do no special work for this exhibition"?

Does the claim "I will do nothing" necessarily imply that I have done nothing in the context of this exhibition? Any claim to have done nothing for this exhibition has already been shown to be false.

One might object to the claim "I will do nothing" on the grounds that it calls for a decision that has to be effective throughout the duration of the exhibition and is, as a decision, a special case of doing something for the exhibition. The difference here is that there is and can be no concrete evidence that would make any kind of sense in relation to the claim. The statement "I will do nothing," at any given time, always refers to the future.

To sum up: The claim "I have done nothing," made at any time throughout the duration of the exhibition would be false for the reasons already given. The claim "I will do nothing," made at any time throughout the duration of the exhibition, implies intention only and as such would further imply temporal and spatial considerations.

If, as a contributor to this exhibition, my intention is to do no special work for the exhibition (as my contribution), I must, during the period of the exhibition, be doing something else.

If I'm doing something else I must be doing it somewhere.

Somewhere might be anywhere.

Anywhere might include the location of this exhibition.

The location of this exhibition might include this gallery.

If I do something in this gallery (meaning in the future course of this exhibition), it does not necessarily follow that whatever I do is to be taken as having done some "special work" for this exhibition.

Arnatt comes to "idea art" via process or behavioral land art (a consistent interest in hermeticism and holes) and a something-to-nothing development. In Camden, for instance, a little machine on the wall clicked away the number of seconds in the entire exhibition: 2188800-0000000, as an "exhibition of the duration of the exhibition," a pretty simple idea that has a mesmerizing physical effect, a terrifying associational effect, and a dramatic ending. When the row of zeros is about to strike, one has the feeling of teetering on the brink of time itself; what happens when there are no more seconds?

The Nothing piece is an exercise in mental gymnastics. The idea of doing nothing has a long art-historical pedigree by now, running from Picabia and Duchamp to Yves Klein, Buren, Barry, and the N.E. Thing Co. and Christine Kozlov, a specialist in the reduction of complex intentions to rejection. Arnatt answers his unanswerable question with a (double) negative by doing something and covering himself in the last sentence, an instance of the provocative tension in which he works between the countdown and a reverse generosity of both ends and means. [A related work appeared in the catalogue of the Lisson Wall Show, January, 1971, entitled "Did I intend to do This Work?"; see also p. 225 for a third omission piece by Arnatt].

Joseph Kosuth, "Special Investigation":

1. A LOGICIAN, WHO EATS PORK-CHOPS FOR SUPPER, WILL PROBABLY LOSE MONEY;
2. A GAMBLER, WHOSE APPETITE IS NOT RAVENOUS, WILL PROBABLY LOSE MONEY;

174

219. Dig that crazy rhythm, piece.
220. The artist as a baker (work).
221. The artist as a bricklayer (work).
222. The artist as an artist (piece).

McLean, Bruce. "Not Even Crimble-Crumble." *Studio International*, October, 1970.

NETCo. *North American Time Zone Photo-V.S.I. Simultaneity*, October 18, 1970. West Vancouver, B.C., West Coast Publishing Ltd. Folio of 18 prints of 14 subjects (Time, Nude, Still Life, Cityscape, Earth, Air, Fire, Water, North, South, East, West, Shadow, Self-Portrait) photographed simultaneously in Vancouver, Edmonton, Winnipeg, London (Ont.), Halifax, Mt. Carmel (Newfoundland), each of which is in a separate time zone (PDT, MDT, EDT, ADT, NDT). Message from the presidents—Ingrid and Iain Baxter. (Rep.)



8:00 AM PDT



8:00 AM MDT

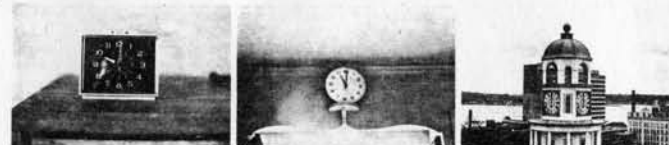


10:00 AM CDT



11:00 AM EDT

12:00 Noon ADT



PLEASE COMPLETE AND RETURN

## Description

North American Time Zone Photo - V.S.I. Simultaneity was carried out by six photographers shooting the same subject matter in every time zone of North America at precisely the same moment in time on October 18, 1970.

Procedures: The N.E. THING CO. sent each photographer in the respective time zones of North America a shooting schedule with the times for his zone noted opposite the subject matter to be shot. On October 17 the photographers were contacted by phone to reconfirm procedures and to ask them to set watches by the C.B.C. (Canadian Broadcasting Corporation) time signals so as to ensure shooting synchronization. After the project was completed

on October 18, the film from each of the photographers was mailed back to the N.E. THING CO., where it was processed. Work was then begun on the production of this folio.

In this project all negatives were given the same development and were printed full frame on the same grade of photographic paper. All cameras used were 35mm and in four cases the black and white film used was Ilford FP4, ASA 200, and in one case, Ilford HP4, ASA 400, and in the other case Kodak TRI-X, ASA 400. The Kodak film was developed in D-76 developer and the Ilford film was developed in Ilford Microphen. The prints were all printed on Ilford IB 1-3P.

N.E. THING COMPANY LIMITED

Trade Mark ©



# INFORMATION

N.E. THING CO. LTD.

1419 Riverside Drive North Vancouver B.C. Canada

Date

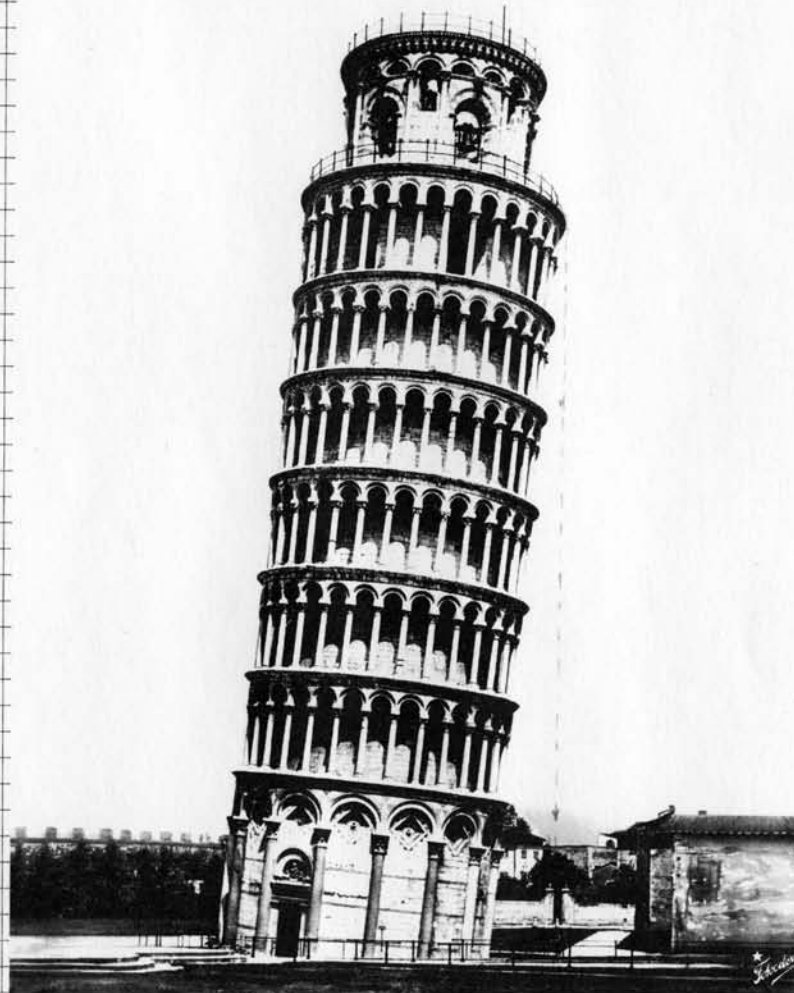
1971

Project

GALILEO'S EXPERIMENT SEEN

Number

1.



PISA - Torre Pendente

PLEASE COMPLETE AND RETURN

Description

N.E. THING CO. WENT TO PISA, ITALY, IN 1971 TO ACCOMPLISH THIS WORK.  
A MOVIE CAMERA (GOING) WAS DROPPED FROM THE EDGE TO THE GROUND BELOW.  
THE WORK CONSISTS OF THE OBJECT DROPPED (CAMERA) CONCEPT LOOP SUPER 8  
MOVIE WHICH IS SHOWN ON SMALL SCREEN AND A PHOTO OF PISA TOWER.  
OWNED BY: ART BANK - CANADA COUNCIL.

N.E. THING COMPANY LIMITED

Trade Mark ©





# INFORMATION

N.E. THING CO. LTD.

1419 Riverside Drive North Vancouver B.C. Canada

Date

1971

Project

N.E. THING CO.  
MADE: BY MAN & WOMAN - PLAY

Number

1.

THE  
FACTORY THEATRE  
LAB

374 Dupont St. Toronto 9215989

June 5, 1971

Iain Baxter  
Fine Arts Department  
Communication Department  
Simon Fraser University  
Burnaby, British Columbia

Dear Iain,

The play you described over the phone four months ago sounded very interesting.

Please do send me a copy! We're in the Market!

*Best regards  
Ken Ross*

VOL 7:#2 Dec 12/72.

THEATRE

VISIONS

MS. AMERICA by Leon Rooks  
MADE BY MAN AND WOMAN by N.E. Thing Co. Ltd.  
MORTIER by Marc F. Geunas  
MONSTER by Lawrence Russell  
A DAY WITH PEGGY by Sister Mary Agnes  
COWBOY ISLAND by Brian Shein

PLEASE COMPLETE AND RETURN

Description

N.E. THING COMPANY LIMITED

Trade Mark ©

Project Department

MADE: by MAN and WOMAN

N.E. THING CO. Production  
Project Dept.

MADE: BY

## INTRODUCTION

The male and female play equal parts determining the hereditary characteristics of the sperm and the female the single ovum forms a fertilized fetus, and eventually a newborn.

CAST: One Man  
One Woman

COSTUME: None - Nude, unless public protests, then costume should be a black turtleneck shirt. Can be done clothed if absolutely necessary.

SETTING: Stage or Gallery - Each actor is in a separate room, box, or other plain enclosure. Both may speak at once if it will be possible for the audience to hear. The script should be spoken twice. If each actor is presented separately the script needs to be presented only once.

LIGHTING: Stark

AUDIENCE: May be mixed or segregated as to men or women.

OTHER RELEVANT INFORMATION: In regards to the two parts,

The man is to read his part about twice as fast as the woman.

The woman is to read her slowly at about half the speed of the man.

both parts are to be read in straight forward manner, no theatrics.

The introduction is to be read to the audience immediately prior to the commencement of the Man and Woman reading their parts. The introduction is to be read by master of ceremonies, dressed in a suit.

forth in a snake-like

forward. Normal sperm move to 4 mm. per minute. This movement is simultaneous with the movement of the ovum, which itself is simultaneous with the movement of the sperm.



# INFORMATION

N.E. THING CO. LTD.

1419 Riverside Drive North Vancouver B.C. Canada

Date

1971

Project

N.E. THING CO. BUTTON

Number

1.

18. N.E. THING CO. - Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada

(Advertisement)

**ART  
is  
all over**

N.E. THING CO. LTD.

**ART  
is  
all over**

N.E. THING CO. LTD.

1419 Riverside Drive North Vancouver B.C. Canada tel (604) 929-3662 Telex 04-507802 Cable Anything Vancouver B.C.

PLEASE COMPLETE AND RETURN

Description

BUTTON CREATED TO SAY SOMETHING ABOUT ART AND THE SITUATION.

N.E. THING COMPANY LIMITED

Trade Mark ©



# INFORMATION

N.E. THING CO. LTD.

1419 Riverside Drive North Vancouver B.C. Canada

Date

1972

Project

THE YEAR 1972

Number

1.



PLEASE COMPLETE AND RETURN

Description

N.E. THING COMPANY LIMITED

Trade Mark ©

Seal





# INFORMATION

N.E. THING CO. LTD.

1419 Riverside Drive North Vancouver B.C. Canada

Date

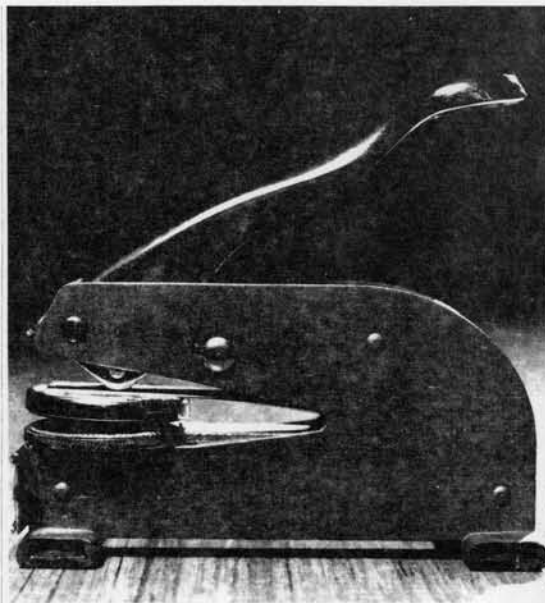
1972

Project

REALISM, EMULSION, & COMMISSION EXHIBITION, KINGSTON, ONT.

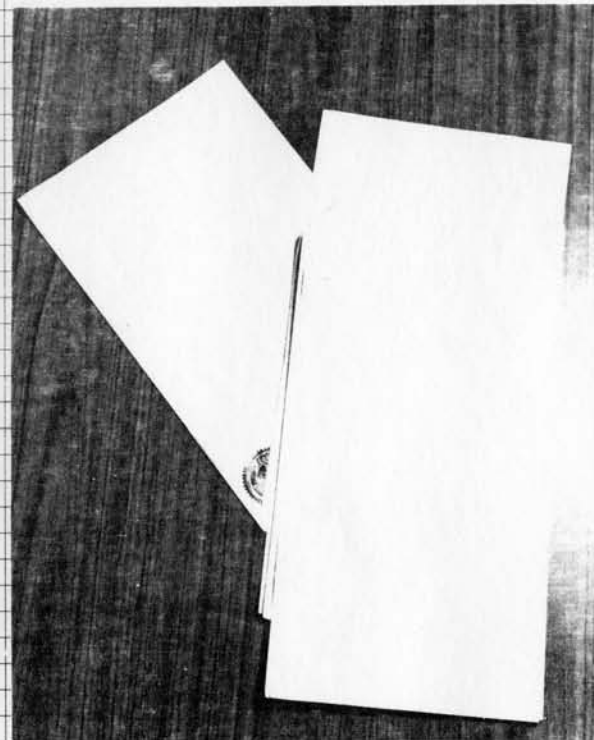
Number

N. E. THING CO. LTD.



1 INFORMATION AND SEAL Documents Coll. of the artist

CORPORATE STAMP AND SEAL



INCORPORATION PAPERS FOR N.E. THING CO.

## Art Companies and Communication Art

As of old Canada has strong regional centres, but new, and maybe concurrent with the new strong feelings of nationalism and a Canadian identity, is the development of several idea/art companies that link artists

across Canada, share information and communicate with each other on an artistic level, using mostly photographs as visual material. N.E. Thing Co. Ltd. was the first (1968) Canadian legal art-company, the number one ICOM consultant in visual communications, corporate image development, art and design consultation, global promotion engineering. Being an officially registered company, with Iain Baxter president and his wife Ingrid co-president, it can work outside the usual art channels and hire, for instance, a booth at the International Data Processing Conference in Seattle, 1970 (ref. Dennis Young). The General Idea Company in Toronto, affiliated with the Image Bank, Vancouver, has recently issued an artists paper *File*, which is sent, free of charge thanks to a Canada Council grant, to all artists across Canada.

Another manifestation of a feeling of unity within Canada is the fact that artists travel from coast to coast to record facts of the Canadian landscape with the camera. Gar Smith took, at each of thirty successive points, at equal intervals from St. John's Newfoundland to Totino, British Columbia, on thirty successive days, at two minute intervals, twenty successive photographs beginning at sunset, facing west, and twenty successive photographs ending at sunrise, facing east. William Vazan has several operations, projects, word-searches involving also other artists, photographers and even university departments, map libraries, etc. as in his worldline event held in March 1971 (ref. *Art and Artists*, May 1972).

PLEASE COMPLETE AND RETURN

.....

.....

N. E. THING COMPANY LIMITED

Trade Mark ©

Description

N.E. THING CO. EXHIBITED THE FACTS OF ITS EXISTENCE — STAMP, SEAL, & LEGAL INCORPORATION PAPERS.



# INFORMATION

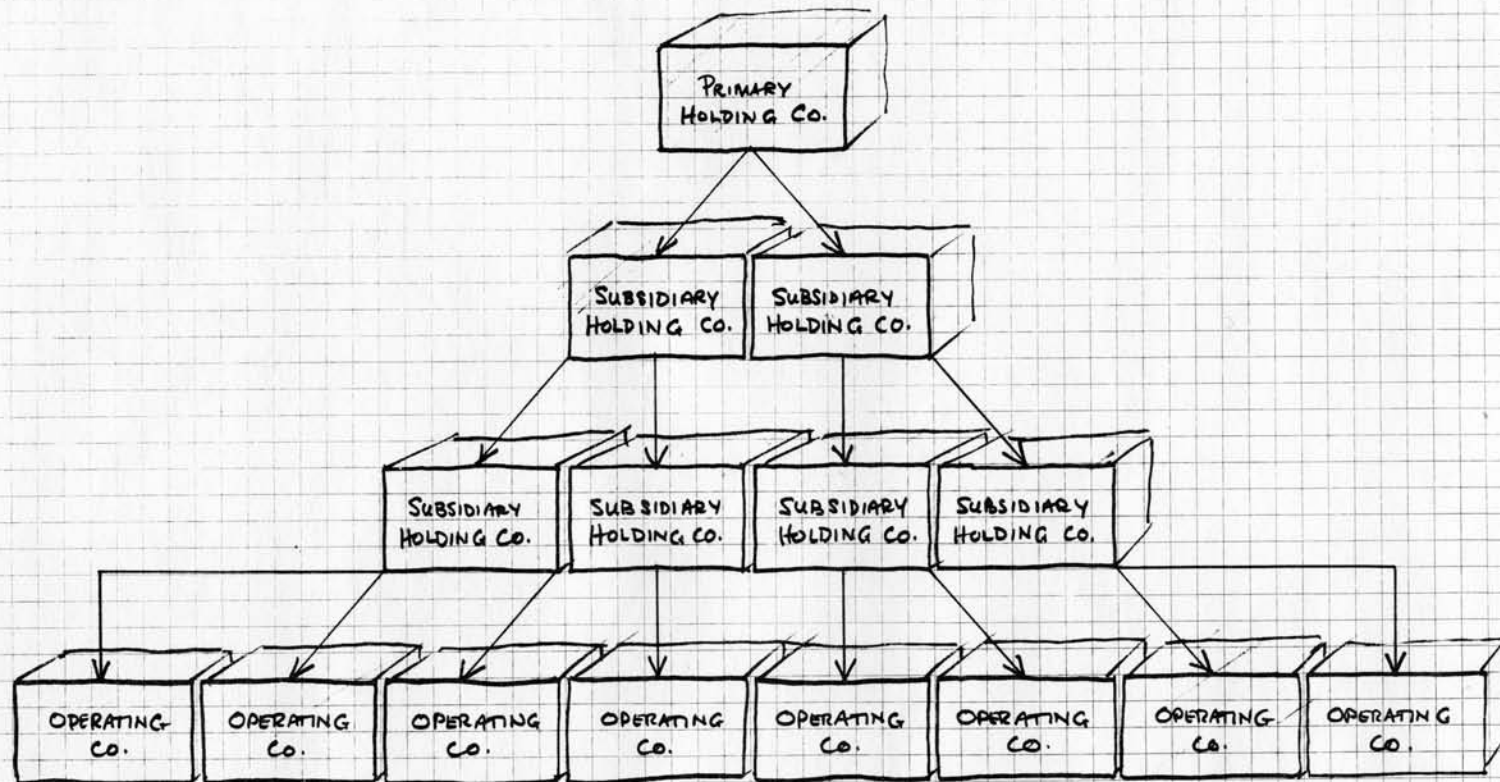
N.E. THING CO. LTD.

1419 Riverside Drive North Vancouver B.C. Canada

Date  
1972

Project *BUSINESS FUNDAMENTS:  
"PYRAMIDING"*

Number  
1.



PLEASE COMPLETE AND RETURN

Description

N.E. THING COMPANY LIMITED

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# INFORMATION

N.E. THING CO. LTD.

1419 Riverside Drive North Vancouver B.C. Canada

Date

1972

Project

WHAT IS ART?

Number

1



## WHAT IS ART?

Would you believe my janitor?

BY PAUL GRESOE

Art, says Marshall McLuhan, is anything you can get away with.

Vancouver artists Iain and Ingrid Baxter, co-presidents of the N. E. Thing Co., Ltd., get away with quite a lot in the name of art: once, as an exhibition at the National Gallery of Canada, they set up a complete corporate office headquarters; they've played Monopoly with real money in a guarded bank; they even sponsor an N. E. Thing Co. hockey team. New York critic Lucy Lippard calls them "the most intellectually alive" artists in the city of Vancouver.

Their latest project is distributing thousands of postcards around the continent to solicit answers to the overwhelming question: what is art? A sampling of responses:

Art is perhaps the only true weapon we have against death. BOB ALLEN, transit operator, Seattle.

Art is what we do with the visualization of our experiences. JACK CHAMBERS, painter, London, Ont.

Art is, obviously, rat tar. MARCIA TUCKER, curator, Whitney Museum of American Art, New York.

Art is me! MARNI JAY, five, Burnaby.

Gertrude Stein on her first trip to China. ELSIE HASTIE, philosophy student, Seattle.

One of the states in which any entity (whether physical or nonphysical or both) exists after any person has determined that the entity constitutes a work of art created by his or her own self. (This definition is of "art," not of "good art," which would be unlikely to comprise the same immense group of works.) RICHARD MORPHEUS, museum curator, London.

That area of an artist's aspiration in which he fails. HAROLD TOWN, artist, Toronto, Ont.

A bag of oranges or a plastic cloud. P. D. McTAGGART-COWAN, executive director, Science Council of Canada, Ottawa.

Art is what people who are interested in art refer to as art. ABRAHAM ROGAT-NICK, director, Vancouver Art Gallery.

For me, I find art best exemplified when involved in trimming trees because it's what I can do to effect a difference in a natural order of nature. I like to change these things a lot. Somehow it makes a mark when I go away. For me, it's the permanence. M. WHITNEY, tree servicer, California.

It's something that you don't know what it is. ERIAN

BAXTER, nine, Vancouver.

Art is my janitor. CHRIS YOUNGS, gallery director, Sackville, N.B.

This card is art by the N. E. Thing Co. GREG CURNOW, artist, London, Ont.

Art is museums. Art is curators. Art is committees. Art is product. Art is wheeling and dealing. Art is manipulation. Art is status. Art is hierarchy. Art is social climbing. Art is not done by artists. Art is not thought. Art is not personal expression. Art has nothing to do with a person in silent communion with his/her soul, psyche, need, wish, dream, desire, hope, and all good things. ALVIN BALKIND, curator of contemporary art, University of British Columbia.

Art is asking the right question. KATHY DRUMMEY, student, Seattle.

## POST CARD

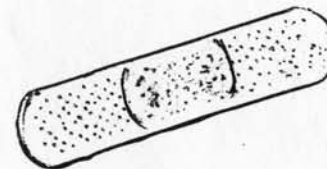
STAMP

Please answer as briefly as possible the "What is Art" question on the opposite side of this card and mail to NE Thing Co. in N. Vancouver.

We are compiling a number of these statements for publication and would appreciate your contribution. Thank you in advance.

to: N.E. Thing Co. Ltd.,  
1419 Riverside Drive,  
North Vancouver,  
B.C.,  
Canada

## WHAT IS ART?



the way it heals

name: Brent Alley  
occupation: student

residence: #5, 1972 York  
age (if you wish): 25

PLEASE COMPLETE AND RETURN

## Description

A PROJECT STARTED THIS YEAR AND TO CONTINUE FOR MANY YEARS  
THE RESULTS ARE TO BE COLLECTED AND PUT INTO A PUBLICATION IN THE NEAR  
FUTURE.

CARDS ARE LEFT AT EXHIBITIONS FOR PEOPLE TO ANSWER AND MAIL TO NETCO.  
ONE EXAMPLE OF WHAT IS ART?

N. E. THING COMPANY LIMITED

Trade Mark ©





# INFORMATION

N.E. THING CO. LTD.

1419 Riverside Drive North Vancouver B.C. Canada

Date

1972

Project

WHAT IS ART?

Number

6

POST CARD

STAMP

Please answer as briefly  
as possible the "What is Art"  
question on the opposite  
side of this card and mail to  
N.E. Thing Co. in N. Vancouver.

We are compiling a number  
of these statements for  
publication and would  
appreciate your contribution.  
Thank you in advance.

to: N.E. Thing Co. Ltd.,  
1419 Riverside Drive,  
North Vancouver,  
B.C.,  
Canada

WHAT IS ART?

name:..... residence:.....  
occupation:..... age:.....

PLEASE COMPLETE AND RETURN

.....  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....

N.E. THING COMPANY LIMITED

Trade Mark ©

Description

PLEASE TEAR OUT THIS PAGE IF YOU LIKE AND MAIL IT TO THE  
N.E. THING CO. WE HOPE TO PUBLISH A BOOK ON THESE SHORTLY.

Seal



# INFORMATION

N.E. THING CO. LTD.

1419 Riverside Drive North Vancouver B.C. Canada

Date

1972

Project

WHAT IS ART?

Number

3

WHAT IS ART?

ART IS BORING

name: ANDREW GRANT residence: 1177 WIS VANCE  
occupation: ARCHITECTURE age (if you wish): BC

WHAT IS ART?

ART

- 1.) Carl Andre did once (a paper of "A", antwerpen) a large statement. The opposite of this statement could be the two texts especially the first one of Joseph Kosuth, published in "Studio International" in 1969 ("Art after philosophy"). From my own point of view I prefer the statement of Carl. because there are no limits, what means that he tried to consider in a realistic (sociological, historical) way all points of views. But both are so important for me.
- 2.) In my personal contact with art and artists there is certainly the "vision of world". Through the works, the intensity of this vision, which is important for me.

March, 10. February 1974

name: KAN-CHRISTOPHE ANMANN residence: CH-6005 LUCERNE  
occupation: DIRECTOR OF THE MUSEUM OF FINE ARTS age (if you wish): 35

WHAT IS ART?

FROM THIRTY FEET AWAY SHE  
LOOKED LIKE A LOT OF CLASS-  
FROM TEN FEET AWAY SHE  
LOOKED LIKE SOMEONE WHO  
HAD MADE HERSELF LOOK  
LIKE A LOT OF CLASS FROM  
THIRTY FEET AWAY

name: RAYMOND CHANDLER residence: WHEREVER DEAD  
occupation: WRITER age: PEOPLE C.C.

WHAT IS ART? UNE PRODUCTION DE L'HOMME, QUI NE  
VIEN PAS SEULEMENT DE L'ESPRIT (LA PITTURE E  
COJA MENTALE, DIT LE LEONARDO DA VINCI) MAIS AINSI  
DES SENS, PAR LAQUELLE L'HOMME CHERCHE UNE  
JOUISSANCE. CETTE JOUISSANCE EST FAITE AVANT  
DE DOULEUR QUE DE PLAISIR. PUISQUE L'ART EST UN EFFORT  
VERS UN DEPASSEMENT DE SOI, VERS UNE CONNAISSANCE (OU  
CO-NAISSANCE) ET QUE TOUT EFFORT EST DANS SON PRINCIPE  
DOULEUR, ET PARAIT DANS SON RESULTAT. PLAISIR.

name: Charles Achille CHABOW residence: 47 Avenue du MAINE 75014 PARIS  
occupation: FILM MAKER age (if you wish): 47 FRANCE

PLEASE COMPLETE AND RETURN

Description

EXAMPLES OF REPLIES TO WHAT IS ART?

N.E. THING COMPANY LIMITED

Trade Mark ©



# INFORMATION

N.E. THING CO. LTD.

1419 Riverside Drive North Vancouver B.C. Canada

Date

1972

Project

WHAT IS ART?

Number

4

WHAT IS ART?

ART IS: WHATEVER THE MAKER/DOER/THINKER PRESENTS AS ART  
WHATEVER THE VIEWER/RECIPIENT ACCEPTS AS ART

THESE QUESTIONS ARE ANSWERED WITH CONSISTENCY IN REGARD TO  
THE ABOVE QUESTION

name: VIRGINIA GUNTER residence: SELF VIRGINIA GUNTER (USUALLY FOUND IN BOSTON)  
occupation: VIRGINIA GUNTER (WHOLE) age (if you wish): VARIABLE BUT CURRENTLY BASED AT 45

WHAT IS ART?

ART IS WRITTING POST  
CARDS WITH YOUR RUBB  
ER STAMP SET.



MURRAY  
LEADBEATER TORONTO  
name: occupation: STUDENT age: 25

WHAT IS ART?

INFINITY ON TRIAL.

name: DAVID FREDERICK WILSON residence: 1 GOSFORD BLVD. #16 DOWNSVIEW,  
occupation: STUDENT age: 19 ONTARIO

WHAT IS ART?

① Art is a Zen koan.  
It does not belong to things seen: nor to things  
unseen. It does not belong to things known: nor to  
things unknown. Do not seek it, study it, or name  
it. To find yourself on it, open yourself wide as  
the sky

② If you spell it backwards.....  
..... it's TRA — MENDOUS !!!

name: Barbara McCullough residence: 191 Indian Grove  
occupation: student age: 23

PLEASE COMPLETE AND RETURN

Description EXAMPLES OF REPLIES TO WHAT IS ART?

N.E. THING COMPANY LIMITED

Trade Mark ©





# INFORMATION

N.E. THING CO. LTD.

1419 Riverside Drive North Vancouver B.C. Canada

Date

1972

Project

WHAT IS ART?

Number

2

WHAT IS ART?

"The enrichment of the  
fragments of life"

name: K. Lockhead  
occupation: Painter - teacher

residence: 138 Fulton Ave  
age: 48 Toronto, Ont. M4K 1Y1

WHAT IS ART?

The past transmitted to the present.

name: Ronald L. Bloore  
occupation: image maker

Office: 206 Varsity College, York University  
residence: 4700 Keele St. Downsview Ont.  
age (if you wish): 48 M3J 1P3

WHAT IS ART?

IN LATIN AMERICA WE CANNOT SPEAK PURELY OF ART  
THERE'S AN ART OF DOMINATION, CHARACTERISTIC OF UNDERDEVELOPED COUNTRIES IN  
OPPOSITION TO THE ART OF LIBERATION.  
THIS NEW ART ATTEMPTS TO BREAK AWAY WITH IDEOLOGICAL DOMINATION OF THE COUN-  
TRIES THAT HAVE POWER AND WEALTH, SOMETIMES USING THEIR SAME METHODOLOGY AND  
LANGUAGE, SOME OTHER TIMES THE CHARACTERISTICS ARE DIFFERENT AND UNIQUE. BUT  
WE CANNOT DENY THAT THERE IS A COMMON ATTITUDE, A COMMON STRATEGY FOR LIBERA-  
TION EXTRACTED FROM THE POLITICAL AND SOCIAL AREAS AND APPLIED TO ART.  
ART ~~NOT~~ ANTICIPATES OR INTENSIFIES THESE ATTITUDES.

name: JORGE GLUSBERG residence: BUENOS AIRES  
occupation: DIRECTOR OF CAYC age (if you wish): 41

WHAT IS ART?

Art is that which brings  
happiness to the creator  
and the beholder. HUMAN DEFINITION:  
Cosmetic dentistry which enhances  
nature's product. OCCUPATIONAL DEFINITION.

name: John Nasoldkin residence: 4687 W.4.  
occupation: Dentist age (if you wish): 37

PLEASE COMPLETE AND RETURN

Description

EXAMPLES OF REPLIES TO WHAT IS ART?

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# INFORMATION

N.E. THING CO. LTD.

1419 Riverside Drive North Vancouver B.C. Canada

Date

1972

Project

N.E. THING CO. HOCKEY TEAM

Number

1



*The N. E. Thing Co. Ltd.*  
is pleased to announce the sponsorship  
of a  
*Hockey Team*  
in the  
Edgeley Community Athletics Program  
of Toronto (Downsview) Ontario  
for the 1972-73 Season  
Games: Every Tues. evening & Sat. mornings  
at John Booth Memorial Arena  
Downsview, Ont.  
PHONE: 625-9408

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Description

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# INFORMATION

N.E. THING CO. LTD.

1419 Riverside Drive North Vancouver B.C. Canada

Date

1972

Project

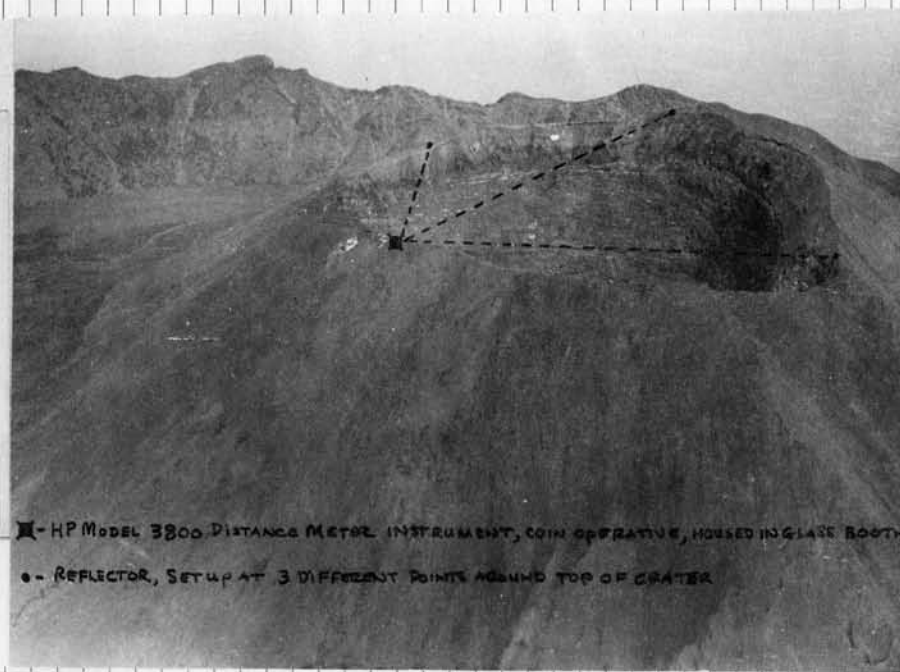
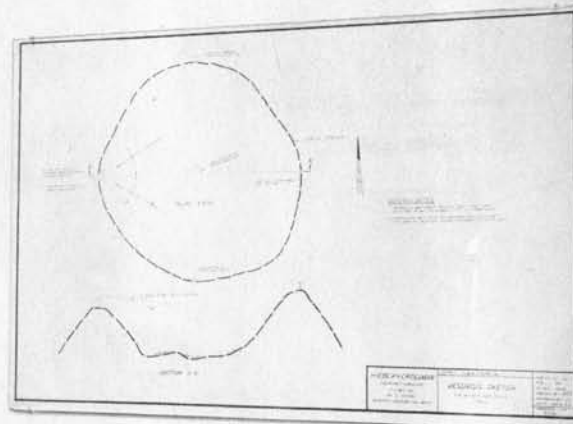
VESUVIUS PROJECT

Number

1.



REFLECTOR



HP Model 3800 DISTANCE METER INSTRUMENT, COIN OPERATIVE, HOUSED IN GLASS BOOTH

REFLECTOR, SET UP AT 3 DIFFERENT POINTS AROUND TOP OF CRATER

PLEASE COMPLETE AND RETURN

Description Project organized by Jan Van der MARCK For Henry Gullay, Seattle, Wash.  
People guess distance across crater & then using surveying instrument  
from Hewlett Packard to give the exact distance.  
(Coin operated)

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# INFORMATION

N.E. THING CO. LTD.

1419 Riverside Drive North Vancouver B.C. Canada

Date

1972

Project

SACKVILLE, NEW BRUNSWICK, - BANFF, ALBERTA

Number

1



PLEASE COMPLETE AND RETURN

Description

EXAMPLE SEQUENCE, FROM MATERIAL FOR A BOOK:  
SACKVILLE, N.B. - BANFF, ALTA.

THIS BOOK WOULD DOCUMENT EXACTLY  
THESE TWO SMALL CITIES AND SHOWS  
THE DIFFERENCES IN ARCHITECTURE,  
FOLIAGE, CLIMATE, ETC. IT IS AN  
ATTEMPT TO RECORD ALL STRUCTURES  
IN THE CITY WHICH HOLDS ALL THE  
POPULATION

N.E. THING COMPANY LIMITED

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# INFORMATION

N.E. THING CO. LTD.

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Date  
1972

Project *BUSINESS FUNDAMENTALS*  
*"AFTER HOURS ACTION"*

Number  
1.



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Description

*Drawing 30"x40": 1972*

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# INFORMATION

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Date

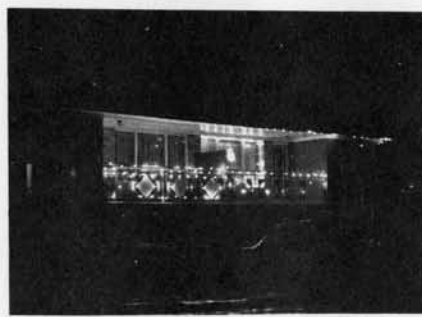
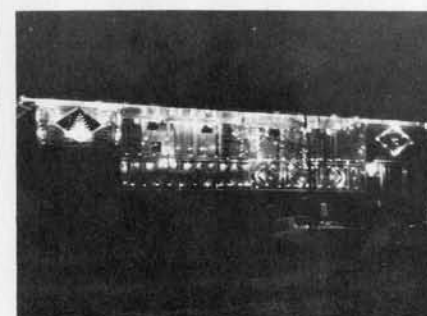
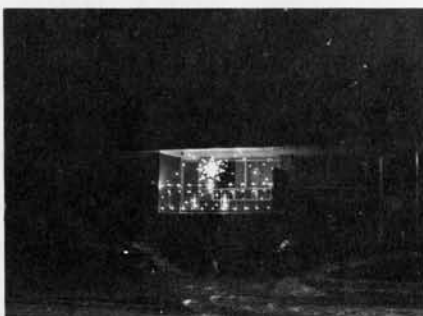
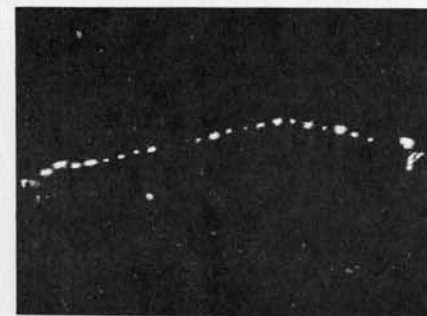
1972

Project

FOLK SCULPTURE- CHRISTMAS HOUSE LIGHTS

Number

1



PLEASE COMPLETE AND RETURN

Description

EACH PERSON DECORATES HIS OR HER OWN HOUSE IN THEIR OWN WAY REGARDLESS OF MASS TASTE - THIS CREATING INDIVIDUAL SCULPTURES IN LIGHT.

NETCO. HAS MANY COLOR SLIDES OF THIS PHENOMENON AND WOULD LIKE TO PUBLISH THESE IN BOOK FORM.

N.E. THING COMPANY LIMITED

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N.E. THING CO. LTD.

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Date

1973

Project

THE YEAR 1973

Number

1.



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Description

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# INFORMATION

N.E. THING CO. LTD.

1419 Riverside Drive North Vancouver B.C. Canada

Date

1973

Project

MONOPOLY WITH REAL MONEY ARTICLES

Number

1.

## entertainment

### 'Real' monopoly is still 'pretend'

By Helen Bullock  
Staff Writer

The acting president of York University went to jail, the wife of one of his associate deans couldn't pay her rent, a businessman went bust and the banker swept up \$15,000.

It would have been an enjoyable game of monopoly if it hadn't been so determined to make its artistic point.

N.E. Thing Co., the umbrella under which Iain and Ingrid Baxter shelter their artistic pretensions, "presented" the game at York University Wednesday with \$15,200 of legal tender loaned by the Toronto-Dominion bank.

More than 200 students crowded up against the locked glass doors to see acting president John Yolton, businessman Murray Frum, associate dean of fine arts David Silcox, Sandy Thompson, assistant manager of the York University branch of the T-D bank, and Ingrid Baxter buy and sell property, build houses, pay taxes and collect \$200 for going past GO.

The three-hour game was videotaped by Baxter for posterity.

The 36-year-old visual-arts professor said using real money "heightened perceptual awareness of the game."

"Monopoly is a game about money. Therefore real money should be used," he said.

Baxter's perception may be in need of heightening. The legal tender the players used had no more value than

the funny money supplied by Parker Brothers, as they couldn't keep it, save it or spend it.

The whole idea of games is to pretend: the money is pretend, the properties are pretend, and in this case, the art was pretend.

Baxter insists that "fine art is isolated. We are in the vanguard of artists trying to bridge the gap between art and business communities."

Wife Ingrid agreed it was "more exciting" to play for money, but not all the players felt that way.

Banker Sandy Thompson who (naturally) won, said he "didn't get the art concept at all. I was just playing monopoly." He said he enjoyed the game and playing with real notes was "something different," but "I knew it wasn't my money so I couldn't get excited."

John Yolton said, "I didn't find it any different. In the context of the game it wasn't real money. It was an interesting occasion but no one was sure what was going on." How did he feel about losing? "Oh, every time I play at home, I always lose so it didn't feel any different," he said.

But perhaps one player took Baxter seriously.

At the start of the game, David Silcox' money rearranged itself so that a dollar bill ended up on the floor under his foot.

Anyone for a game of Clue?

### Monetary monopoly

MONEY, money everywhere and not a cent to keep. Players in N.E. Thing Co's monopoly game bought and sold with real cash at York University Wednesday. But all the lovely loot had to be returned to the bank when the game ended. Contemplating the next move are, from left to right, N.E. Thing's Ingrid Baxter, businessman Murray Frum, acting York president John Yolton and assistant bank manager Sandy Thompson.

Photo: Dave Blizzard



PLEASE COMPLETE AND RETURN

Description *RICHMOND HILL NEWS.*

N. E. THING COMPANY LIMITED

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# INFORMATION

N.E. THING CO. LTD.

1419 Riverside Drive North Vancouver B.C. Canada

Date

1973

Project

PLAYING MONOPOLY WITH REAL MONEY

Number

1

## TORONTO DOMINION BANK NOTES

May/June 1973/Vol. 33 No. 3  
Editor: Cassandra Sanders  
Public Relations Department  
P.O. Box 1  
Toronto-Dominion Centre  
Toronto, Ontario  
M5K 1A2

## NEWS FILE

# \$15,200 real-cash monopoly game

David Silcox, associate dean of fine arts at York University, picked up the dice, shook doubles and landed on Vermont Avenue. He calmly paid \$100 cash — Canadian legal tender — for the property deed and rolled again.

He was playing Monopoly with real money — \$15,200 lent by the campus branch of Toronto Dominion — and the game ended up with a banker winning.

The banker in this case was assistant manager Sandy Thompson, who was deemed co-winner along with Murray Frum, dentist turned real estate broker, who dazzled his opponents with a whirlwind series of reciprocal benefits, free landing rights, lease-backs and consortiums.

The real-cash contest was scheduled to be played in York's art gallery as part of a visual arts presentation by Iain Baxter, an associate dean of fine arts at the university. But security problems arose, and the game was staged in the lobby of the bank branch instead.

Since the winner was not allowed to keep the money, Baxter was asked what he expected to discover as a result of the experiment.

"I'm curious to see how people react to handling something like a \$1,000 bill," he replied.

As it turned out, the players agreed the novelty of playing with \$15,200 of somebody else's money wore off quickly: it



A game of Monopoly was played with \$15,200 in real money in TD's York University campus branch. The contest was staged to see what would happen if people played with genuine money. Playing the

game, instead, the outcome of the game that kept it interesting.

The big loser was John Yolton, philosophy professor and acting president of York.

Bankrupt in an hour, the 52-year-old scholar admitted he's "always been a patsy in the world of finance."

Next to go broke were a pair of artists — Baxter's wife, Ingrid, and David Silcox.

Mrs. Baxter's problem was that she over-extended herself in a series of deals that ultimately gobbled up her choicest properties, while Silcox — who had enjoyed a run of luck that kept him in jail and out of danger much of the time — finally landed on the Park Place - Boardwalk block once too often.

Baxter, who prefers to be called a visual consultant rather than an artist, and his

wife Ingrid, operate N. E. Thing Co. While busy filming the event with videotape cameras he continued to explain that "we're trying to bridge the gap between the art community and the business community."

The company has produced a number of post-Picasso art objects in recent years. One on display for a limited time, featured the Baxter's children, Tor and Erian, standing on wooden pedestals. It was called "And They Had Issue."

Another involved dropping a movie camera, still operating, off the Leaning Tower of Pisa. Baxter named the result — a smashed camera and a roll of film — "Galileo's Experiment Seen".

About 200 students gathered outside the glass doors of the bank where the Monopoly game was being played.

## N.E. Thing strikes again

# Real-cash monopoly, an art form

By MARTIN DURRELL

David Silcox, associate dean of fine arts at York University, picked up the dice, shook doubles and landed on Vermont Avenue. He calmly paid \$100 cash — Canadian legal tender — for the property deed and rolled again.

He was playing Monopoly yesterday afternoon at the university. His opponents were Murray Frum, Toronto businessman; John Yolton, York's acting president; Sandy Thompson, assistant manager of the university branch of the Toronto-Dominion Bank, and Ingrid Baxter, of N. E. Thing Co. Ltd.

About 200 students gathered outside the glass doors of the bank where the game was being played. They all probably had played Monopoly, but they had never seen real money used before — \$15,200 of it, to be exact.

The man who planned the game was Iain Baxter, recently appointed an associate dean of fine arts at the university. The money was lent by the bank.

Since the winner was not allowed to keep the money, Mr. Baxter was asked what he expected to discover as a result of the experiment.

"I don't know, I've never done it before," he replied. "I'm curious to see how people react to handling something like \$1,000-bill."

Mr. Baxter was busy filming the event with videotape cameras but he did have time to mention, in his rapid-fire McLuhanesque way, that "we're trying to bridge the gap between the art community and the business community."

"Most people's concept of art," he said, "ends at Picasso. Art has gone 100 years beyond that so we're trying to bring art to the people."

He said he had never met Marshall McLuhan "but I'm doing the things he's talking about."

Mr. Baxter, who prefers to be called a visual consultant rather than an artist, and his wife Ingrid, operate N.E. Thing Co.

The company has produced a number of post-Picasso art objects in recent years. One on display recently for a limited time, featured the Baxter's children, Tor and Erian, standing on wooden pedestals. It was called "And They Had Issue."

Another involved dropping a movie camera, still operating, off the Leaning Tower of Pisa. Mr. Baxter named the result — a smashed camera and a roll of film — "Galileo's Experiment Seen."

But, getting back to the Monopoly game, the players were approaching the real money and the crowds with equanimity.

Several veteran Monopolists watching commented that the rules were not being strictly enforced — houses and hotels popped up on single deeds of land and partnerships were freely formed.

Not surprisingly, academics and Mrs. Baxter lost to the business community.



Predictably, the artist and academics lost to the business community in the popular real-estate game. Here TD'er and co-winner Sandy Thompson plays one of his winning moves.

PLEASE COMPLETE AND RETURN

Description

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# INFORMATION

N.E. THING CO. LTD.

1419 Riverside Drive North Vancouver B.C. Canada

Date

1973

Project

N.E. THING CO. VIDEO ARTICLE

Number

1.

OTHER N.E. THING CO.  
VIDEO TAPES ARE

CLICHES VISUALIZED - 1970

BUYER-SUPPLIER NITE - 1970

## Video Activity of N.E. THING Co. Ltd.

The business of art is to reveal the relation  
between man and his circumambient universe  
at this living moment. D. H. LAWRENCE



Half Meal 1 year 1/2, April 1973

JOYCE ZEMANS

The N.E. Thing Co. Ltd. is a company formed by artists to bridge the gap between art and life. Its founders and co-presidents, Iain and Ingrid Baxter believe that the application of business organization and techniques can serve the purpose of art. That purpose is one they espouse with missionary zeal: to heighten the perception of the public, to allow people to make the connection between art and their own lives, to "see" in a new way. Concerned with what McLuhan calls the "information of visual conception," the Company's chosen nomenclature is even more specific: visual sensitivity information, motion sensitivity information, sound sensitivity information, and experiential sensitivity information. To impart that information, to capture and channel it to its audience, the N.E. Thing Co. Ltd. will use any and every medium. In their most recent exhibition, held at the Art Gallery of York University last spring, a variety of both media and activities were explored.

Photography has fascinated Iain Baxter since he was a teenager, and currently absorbs his whole family. But if photographs are a means of isolating elements in our landscape and re-examining their significance, they are nevertheless limited in their effectiveness by virtue of the frozen quality which removes them from real time and from the dynamic vision of contemporary life. Even the sequential or compendium approach to organization of material, the attempt to generalize and overcome the specific nature of the photographic medium, does not solve this problem. Only a medium which incorporates real time can significantly bridge the gap.

In recent years the N.E. Thing Co. Ltd. has been experimenting with video and using it as an inexpensive, easily available and effective tool for documenting their work. For them the

But in their recent exhibition several factors suggest that the N.E. Thing Co. is re-evaluating the significance of video - attempting to explore the possibilities inherent in the medium itself. The conflict between art and life, between video record and event was brought to the fore by the nature of the events which comprised this exhibition: some were simply the events themselves, unframed, unrecorded, but presented in a new light because of their identification with the gallery context, the "fine art" framework. Others contained within them the seeds of the future of video as an art form.

The first of these events was the presentation of the children of co-presidents Iain and Ingrid Baxter as the ultimate work of art. (What the N.E. Thing Co. Ltd. called celebrating the ordinary and what a local critic called "celebrating the mediocre.") The two children spent a day standing on labelled pedestals in the art gallery with the exhibition title *And they had issue* inscribed on the walls. For an exercise in boundary crossing there was a contrived and artificial aspect to this event. Those artists who present their lives as art through photographic documentation and the presentation of childhood mementos seem less pretentious and theatrical. In fact it was the atmosphere of staging and performance which brought this event closer to mediocre theater than art. It relied almost totally on the Western world's dependence upon the gallery syntax to lend credibility to art.

A Monopoly game played with real money in the setting of the Toronto Dominion Bank at York University explored a similar problem, but outside of the gallery environment. It was a sociological probe rather than a theatrical presentation like the child exhibition where most reactions were preconceived and consequently followed a pattern strongly resembling a script: in the Monopoly game there was less predictability, even though the investor won and the artists lost. The excitement of the game was intensified by playing with real money but the anxiety and avarice which the Baxters felt would be engendered in the players by the handling of real money did not materialize. The players were simply more aware of their roles - given the audience, cameras and ensuing excitement. This event was photographed and videotaped but the video record is just that - a record.

In only one event did the use of video seem both appropriate for documentary purposes and important in its own right. *Half Meal One Year Half Meal* began at noon on March 22, 1973 when Iain and Ingrid Baxter sat down to a steak lunch in the presence of a waiter and a video cameraman in the Art Gallery at York University. At 12:30 they stopped eating and the remainder of the meal was wrapped and frozen to be eaten exactly one year later at the same place. The event was videotaped; spectators observed on monitors outside the gallery. There was a comical, unplanned aspect to the event: the setting included a date-clock and precisely at noon, as the taping commenced, it changed the date to the 23rd of March - a fact unperceived by the participants. Pop art has long since established food items as acceptable art objects: but the organizers of this event saw the significance of the act in terms of time rather than the

version between the Baxters; later they might contemplate the ramifications of the changed date on the clock. In this recorded event the core of video's potential is touched upon - its capacity to record real time and the lapse of time. Yet even here the element of drama and performance persists. Film has often been plagued with an inability to separate the art of theater and that of film; and video has inherited its own associated problems, for this element of performance perverts the artists' stated intention of using video for pure documentation and creates as a final product an event which lies somewhere between theater, the artist's subjective perception of an event and an objective record.

On the first of April, 1973 on the CBC national television network, the N.E. Thing Co. Ltd. used video to explore another aspect of perception. Concentrating on the significance of individual words and phrases (as they had done in three-dimensional sculptures within the gallery context), they carried the analytical approach to extremes by dramatizing clichés: literally enacting for a nationwide audience such expressions as "at the drop of a hat" and "chewing the rag." Trite at first and even at second glance, these exercises are nonetheless successful in imparting "experiential sensitivity information," in forcing the viewer to examine the significance of the words he regularly uses and especially their visual connotations. The key aspect of this particular event, its public broadcast, holds manifest repercussions for the contemporary artist involved with video. One of the most important aspects of the medium lies in its ability to reach a large number of people and as long as artists are content to use the medium within a gallery setting or a fine art context, its value is limited chiefly to the initiated. How to go beyond the security of the traditional gallery setting and explore avenues for reaching a broader audience are questions few video artists have explored. Even those who also work in commercial television see such endeavours as isolated from their real intentions. But artists who are concerned with breaking down barriers must be careful not to erect new ones by the elitist use of this medium.

In another recent experiment, the N.E. Thing Co. Ltd. has escaped from the realm of performance into a more purist investigation of the recording of time through the ideal medium of video. A clock was taped to the take-up reel of the tape deck so that the camera was focused on the reel with the clock attached and turning. The whole tape shows the clock turning, the reel filling up - unedited, the actual time being recorded. The distinction between "real" time and real time becomes blurred. As employed by artists, the video equipment itself is respected as an integral element of the total act. Editing is an anathema.

In the future the N.E. Thing Co. Ltd. will continue its exploration of video in greater depth. Iain Baxter talks of the Castellis of the future being cable television company owners: with TV as the gallery, and video cassettes the format for transmitting information. Teilhard de Chardin observed that: "The history of the living world can be summarized as the elaboration of ever more perfect eyes within a cosmos in which there is always something more to be seen."

That more perfect eye today may use video as its medium, but it will operate with full sensitivity only with the conceptualizing of artists like the N.E. Thing Co. Ltd. to guide it.

value of video has resided mainly in its suitability for recording events and as a tool for "social probing." It has been the recorded event itself which has fulfilled the aesthetic criteria of art.

meal itself, which was chosen for its commonplace quality. Perceived time and real time, and the problems of continuing the same meal after a full year, formed the basis of luncheon con-

## Description

PLEASE COMPLETE AND RETURN

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.....

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# INFORMATION

N.E. THING CO. LTD.

1419 Riverside Drive North Vancouver B.C. Canada

Date

1973

Project

ART WORKS.

Number

1.



(A.)



(B.)



(C.)



(D.)



(E.)

PLEASE COMPLETE AND RETURN

Description (A) THIS LITTLE pig... - 1973. Canada Council collection 80"X20" - CIRACHROME PHOTOS.

(B) I NEVER HAD... 1973

(C) CROTCH .... 1973

(D) CHEST ... 1973

(E) NECK ... 1973

} each  
60"X16"

- CANADA COUNCIL COLLECTION

} Color photographs and some  
hand tinted ones

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# INFORMATION

N.E. THING CO. LTD.

1419 Riverside Drive North Vancouver B.C. Canada

Date

1973

Project

SEX-LANGUAGE RESEARCH

Number

1.



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Description

SEXUAL CLICHES WERE VISUALIZED. THESE ARE LANGUAGE PHRASES USED EVERYDAY BY ALL PEOPLE. THE N.E. THING CO. IS PRESENTLY WORKING ON SEX-LANGUAGE CLICHES AND THEIR VARIATIONS IN DIFFERENT LANGUAGES. WE ARE PRESENTLY PREPARING FOR PUBLICATION A BOOK THAT SHOWS & USES DIFFERENT SEX SLANG FROM DIFFERENT FOREIGN LANGUAGES.

Seal



# INFORMATION

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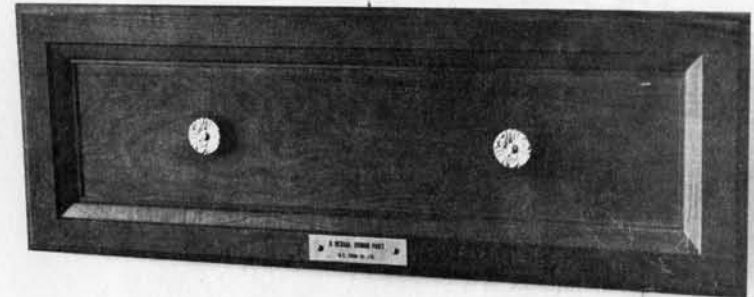
Date  
1973

Project

Sex Language Research

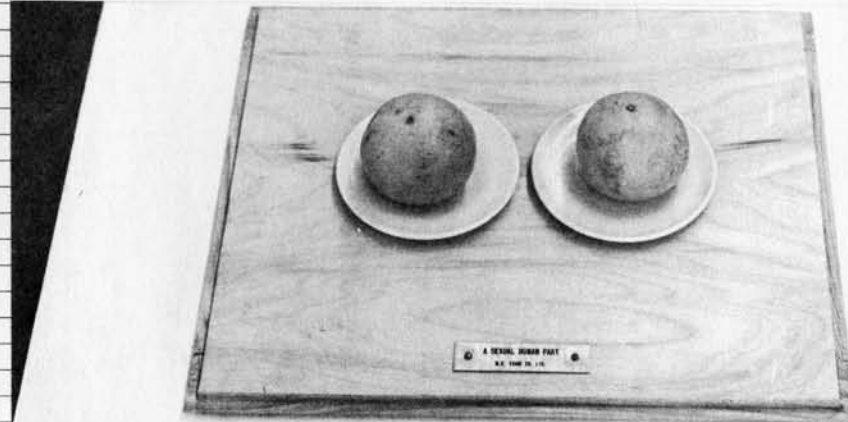
Number

1.



(A)

(C)



(B)

(D)

PLEASE COMPLETE AND RETURN

Description

- (A) Asexual Human Part - tool - 1973 (SLANG FOR PENIS)  
 (B) A sexual Human Part - Grapefruit - 1973 (SLANG FOR BREASTS)  
 (C) Asexual Human Part. KNOBS. - 1973 (SLANG FOR NIPPLES & BREASTS)  
 (D) A SEXUAL HUMAN ACTION - Screw - 1973 (SLANG FOR COUPULATION)

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Date

1973

Project

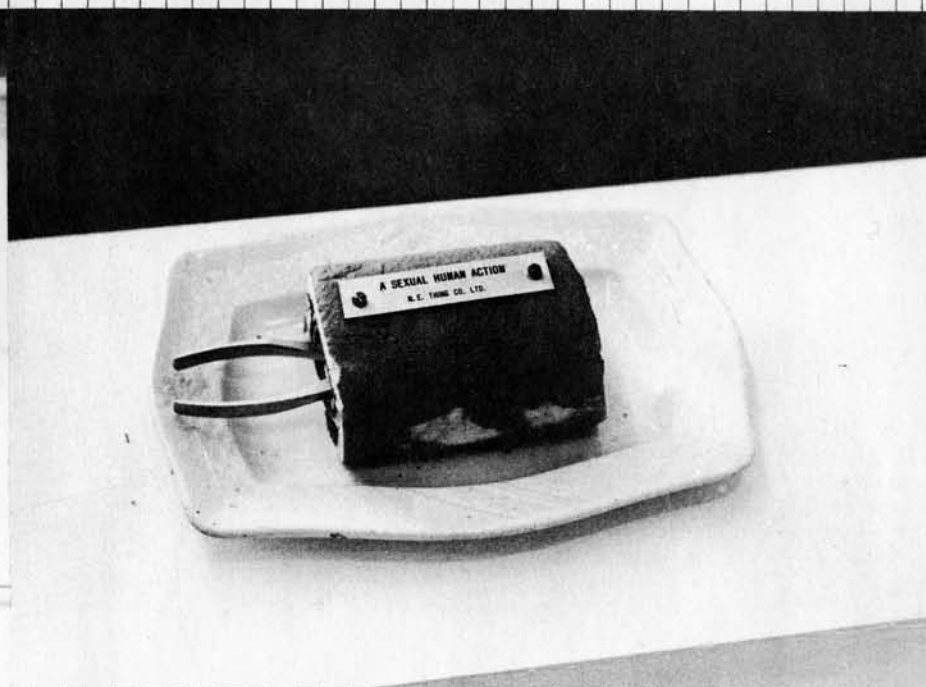
SEX LANGUAGE RESEARCH

Number

1.



(A)



(B)

PLEASE COMPLETE AND RETURN

Description (A.) SCULPTURE - A SEXUAL HUMAN ACTION - ("DIP THE STICK" or "VARNISH THE STICK") 1973  
(B.) SCULPTURE - A SEXUAL HUMAN ACTION - ("TOOL IN JELLY ROLL") 1973

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Date

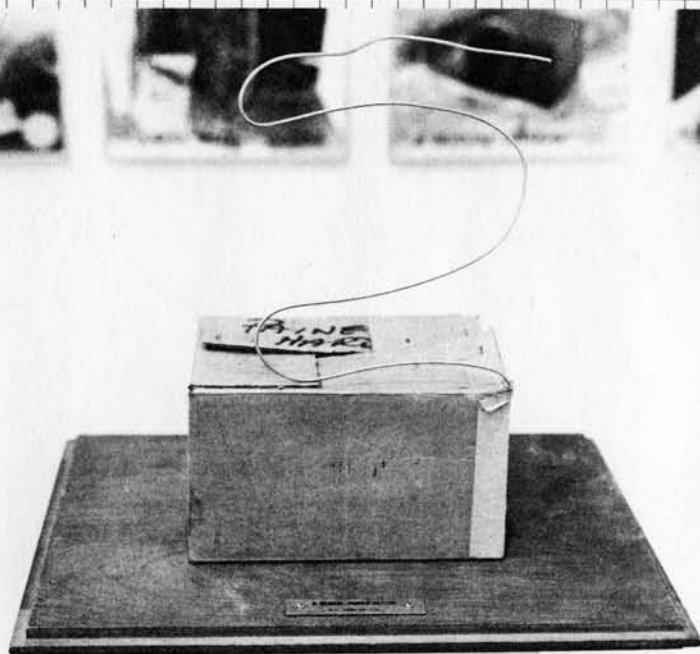
1973

Project

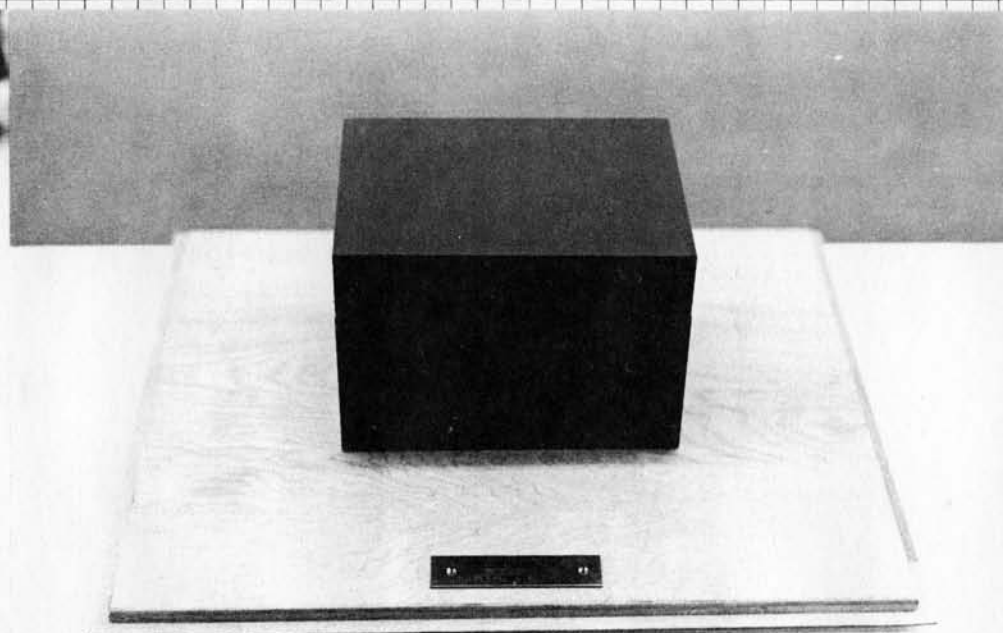
SEX-*Language Research.*

Number

1.



(A.)



(B.)

PLEASE COMPLETE AND RETURN

Description (A.) *SCULPTURE - A SEXUAL HUMAN ACTION - (WIRE IN A BOX) 1973*

(B.) *SCULPTURE - A SEXUAL HUMAN PART - (Q BOX) 1973*

N.E. THING COMPANY LIMITED

Trade Mark ©



# INFORMATION

N.E. THING CO. LTD.

1419 Riverside Drive North Vancouver B.C. Canada

Date

1973

Project

SEX LANGUAGE STUDIES

Number

1.



PLEASE COMPLETE AND RETURN

Description

USING EVERYDAY SLANG TO DEPICT A BODY PART HAS BECOME SOCIETY'S WAY OF SKirting THE ISSUE. IT IS INTERESTING THAT THE SAME PART CAN HAVE SO MANY VARIOUS RESPONSES. N.E. THING CO. PLANS A BOOK, COMING PHOTOS FROM FOREIGN LANGUAGES TO DEPICT SEXUAL PARTS & ACTIONS.

N.E. THING COMPANY LIMITED

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# INFORMATION

N.E. THING CO. LTD.

1419 Riverside Drive North Vancouver B.C. Canada

Date

1973

Project

YORK UNIVERSITY SHOW.

Number

1.

N.E. THING CO. LTD.

March 21 - April 13, 1973

Project Department: (VSI, MSI, SSI, ESI) = SI

Celebration of the ordinary, Retro-Aesthetics, Lithograph-photographed, Aesthetics of deception, Singing, Video tapes, Language & Colour, Hockey team, Pisa, Loch Ness, Half meal one year half meal, Reversal of Columbus' voyage, Re-historical events, Alphabet-26 sculptures, and they had issue.

- MARCH 21 AND THEY HAD ISSUE - 1968  
Ingrid and Iain Begat Tor, 1961-, and Erian, 1963-.
- MARCH 22 HALF MEAL ONE YEAR HALF MEAL - 1969  
12:00 noon E.S.T.
- MARCH 23 VIDEOTAPES, SLIDES, INFORMATION.
- MARCH 25-30 LITHOGRAPH-PHOTOGRAPHED - 1971.
- MARCH 26 SINGING - 1969.  
Performed by Agnes Boucher, McLaughlin Hall, York Campus.
- APRIL 1-6 \*HOCKEY TEAM, RE-HISTORICAL ACTIVITIES, REVERSAL OF COLUMBUS' VOYAGE, LOCH NESS MONSTER SIGHTING, RETRO-AESTHETICS, ALPHABET-26 SCULPTURES, GALILEO'S EXPERIMENT SEEN.
- APRIL 8-13 COLOUR LANGUAGE - 1971.
- \*Enclosure: Deskphoto - Hockey team sponsored by N.E. THING CO. for The Edgeley Community Athletic Association, Booth Memorial Ice Arena, 1972-73.  
Hockey team will play on Saturday morning between 10:00 - 12:00 p.m., March 24, 1973.

N.E. THING CO. LTD. - Nomenclature

- VSI - Visual Sensitivity Information (Visual Arts)
- MSI - Moving Sensitivity Information (Dance, Sports, etc.)
- SSI - Sound Sensitivity Information (Music, Poetry)
- ESI - Experiential Sensitivity Information (Theatre, Film)
- SI - Sensitivity Information (Culture)

ART GALLERY OF YORK UNIVERSITY  
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## AGYU

ART GALLERY OF YORK UNIVERSITY

Ross N145 Mon-Fri 10:430 Sun 25

## N.E. THING CO.

A varied program of events:  
visual, actual, documentary  
and otherwise in different  
media

To April 13, 1973

## N. E. THING CO. LTD.

Project Department: (VSI, MSI, SSI, ESI) = SI



AND THEY HAD ISSUE - 1968  
Ingrid and Iain Begat Tor, 1961-, and Erian, 1963-.

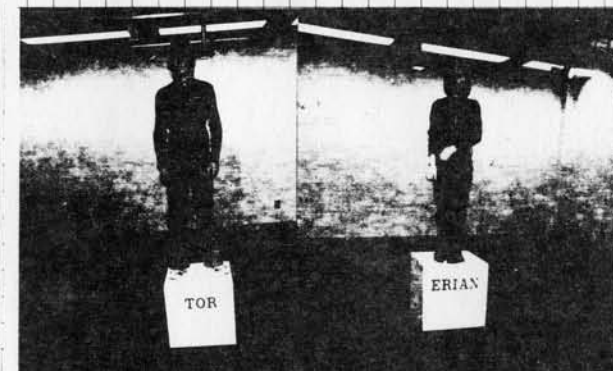
March 21 - April 13, 1973

Celebration of the ordinary, Retro-Aesthetics, Lithograph-photographed, Aesthetics of deception, Singing, Video tapes, Language & Colour, Hockey team, Pisa, Loch Ness, Half meal one year half meal, Reversal of Columbus' voyage, Re-historical events, Alphabet-26 sculptures, and they had issue.

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Sunday, 2:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m.



OUR OFFERING WERE EXHIBITED  
AS THE ULTIMATE WORK OF ART.  
PEOPLE ARE THE POSSIBLY THE  
ONLY REAL WORKS OF ART. THIS  
PERFORMANCE POINTS THIS OUT.

PLEASE COMPLETE AND RETURN

Description

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# INFORMATION

N.E. THING CO. LTD.

1419 Riverside Drive North Vancouver B.C. Canada

Date

1973

Project

SIX YEARS BOOK - LUCY LIPPARD

Number

2.

Irregular intervals during the interview and ten phrases were chosen from the interview; the combination constitutes the piece.

John and Barbara Latham, eds., NOIT NOW (with APG news, no. 1), London, May, 1969:

"In 1965 the art gallery appeared to be folding, or to be no longer relevant in London except insofar as it could further the series one called art—which went along by pressure of anti-art. The APG (Artists Placement Group) probe... was never a scheme for helping artists, or for raising money, for that matter... Art was to scrub off—all kinds of stuff, systems, things, science, painting, ideas, love, boredom, politics, whatever it was, art was to defy it—maggots. Art was your actual opposition. [APG proposed, among other things] that industrial concerns, whose materials and equipment are of special interest to the artists we put forward, should incorporate within their salaried staff a practicing free artist, or graduate from an Art College, or even a small group of two or three."

In 1970, APG proposed to "set up under the auspices of the Ministry of Technology a body whose function would be to examine and cultivate methods of raising levels of attention throughout the community and of reducing problems brought about by redundant information." The idea is to insert an artist into the conventional mechanism, or habits, of industry as interruptive (not destructive) factor that would stimulate or generate new attitudes. "Motivation and Structure have become one and the same." (John Latham.)

Goldin, Amy. "Sweet Mystery of Life." *Art News*, May, 1969. On Kaltenbach, Oppenheim, Morris, etc.

Esthetic experiences are easier and purer than art because they're less consequential. Unlike art, the embodiment of an esthetic idea is informal. It sets no constraints on the idea and offers no clue to its human significance... To deny this work the status of art is to claim that art is defined by a special kind of structure which this art lacks. You can refuse that premise and take the alternative one, defining art as a special sort of intention and response. Then this work is simply a new kind of art. I believe that art is a kind of structure and, consequently, that artistic value is beside the point here. The esthetic situation is pre-artistic, which is not to deny that some of this work is interesting, intriguing and delightful. At its most inventive, it has the mystery and charm of life itself. It is the toughness of art that is lacking.

Shirey, David. "Impossible Art." *Art in America*, May-June, 1969.

Arte Povera 1967-69. Galleria La Bertesca, Genoa, June 25-30, 1969. Anselmo, Boetti, Icaro, Merz, Pistoletto, Prini, Zorio. Text by Germano Celant.

Look at the N. E. Thing Company/ Voyez La Compagnie N. E. Thing. National Gallery of Canada, Ottawa, June 4-July 6, 1969. Primarily reproductions and documentation of pieces done elsewhere before the show.

N. E. Thing Co. Report on the Activities of the N. E. Thing Co. of North Vancouver, British Columbia, at the National Gallery of Canada, Ottawa, and other locations, June 4-July 6, 1969. In French and English; bibliography, list of projects, ACTS, ARTS, photos of exhibition environment and conference held in June at the museum. Among the participants in the conference were Iain and Elaine Baxter (presidents of NETCo.), Anne Brodsky, David Silcox, Greg Curnoe, John Chandler, Lucy Lippard, Seth Siegel, Brydon Smith, Mark Whitney, etc..

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## TOTAL POSITIVITY

• SAMUEL KARLIN

Volume I

Bernar Venet. *Total Positivity*. Presentation of the book with enlargement of title page and contents. 1969.

Baxter. The thing that really interests me is that there are all kinds of information around—liquid information. IBM is interested in multiplying and collating information. Xerox is interested in copying information and there are also guys around who handle information purely for its own sake, and that's what I call visual informers. We call what we do Visual Sensitivity Information because it's a different way of looking at what the word "art" is. It gets at a broader area. Like you can start talking to a guy in the street or a businessman and if I say art he says, oh, Rembrandt...

Siegel: It doesn't present you with speculations but with fact, and that's a critical difference. A painting is identical to its presentation, but now there's a body of work where the original of the art, the fact of the art, is not the presentation of the art. How you become aware of something is not what the thing is about. They are two different things. In other words, Iain can put something on the wall but it's not about something on the wall, it's about something that might be on the north coast of Southeast Asia... Iain can be drawing attention to a very specific pile of rubbish and he's not even touching it; he's doing as little as possible to tell you it exists.

Summer: NETCo. executes a series of "landscapes" by erecting signs along roads in the countryside, appropriately spaced, and reading: "You will soon be passing by a 1/2 mile N. E. Thing Co. Landscape"; "Start Viewing"; "You are now in the middle of the N. E. Thing Co. Landscape"; "Stop Viewing."

Lippard, Lucy R. "Iain Baxter: New Spaces." *Artscanada*, June 1969. Special issue on "The Elements" also includes John Chandler, "Hans Haacke: The Continuity of Change."

Gassiot-Talbot. "La Proposition de Buren." *Opus International*, no. 12, June, 1969.

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PLEASE COMPLETE AND RETURN

Description

N. E. THING COMPANY LIMITED

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# INFORMATION

N.E. THING CO. LTD.

1419 Riverside Drive North Vancouver B.C. Canada

Date

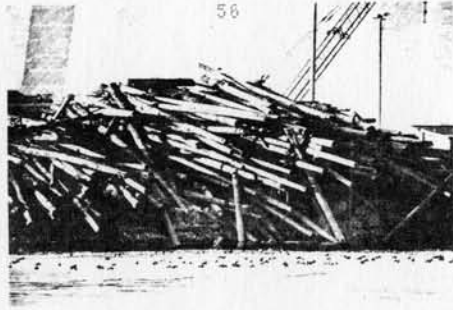
1973

Project

SIX YEARS BOOK - Lucy Lippard

Number

1.



N. E. Thing Co. Plate from *A Portfolio of Piles*, 1968.

Burnham, Jack. *Beyond Modern Sculpture*. New York, George Braziller, 1968.

Calvesi, Maurizio, ed. *Teatro delle Mostre*. Rome, Lerici, 1968. Book after exhibition in Rome (May 6-31) in which one artist per day performed a piece.

Marchetti, Walter. *Arpocrate seduto sul lotto*. Madrid, Zai, 1968.

N. E. Thing Co. *A Portfolio of Piles*. (Rep.) Fine Arts Gallery, University of British Columbia, Vancouver, February, 1968. Fifty-nine photographs of found "piles" ranging from dirt to chains to breasts to doughnuts to barrels, etc., plus a list of locations and a map of Vancouver. Introduction by Kurt von Meier, note from the president of NETCO. Reviewed by Alvin Balkind, *Artforum*, May 1968 and in *Artscanada*, August, 1968.

It is the visual Unknown that challenges the N. E. Thing researchers. Like researchers anywhere, they seek to add to the world's store of knowledge—by exploratory research on the frontiers of basic theory, by product research for results in specific tangible forms, by production research for processes that yield precise end products. These probings of the why and how of visual things and their combinations are efforts to discover distinct properties or effects and the means of putting them into operation. (1968 Company statement.)

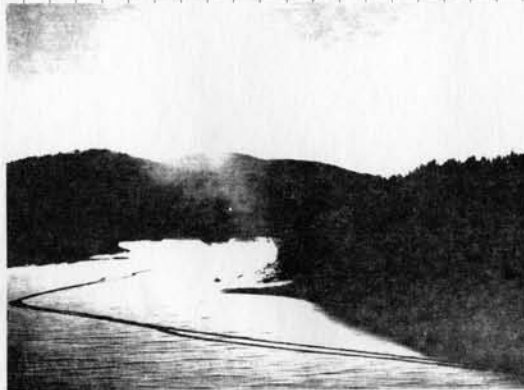
Ramsden, Mel. *Abstract Relations*. New York, 1968.

Ruscha, Edward. *Nine Swimming Pools and a Broken Glass*. Los Angeles, 1968 (in color).

Ruscha, Edward, and Bengston, Billy Al. *Business Cards*. Los Angeles, 1968.

Walther, Franz Erhard. *Objekte, benutzen*. Cologne, Gebr. König, New York, 1968: "These objects are instruments, they have little perceptual significance. The objects are important only through the possibilities originating from their use." Walther has made instrument-objects since 1963. (Rep.)

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Dennis Oppenheim. *Time Line* (detail). 3 miles long. U.S.A./Canadian boundary, along frozen St. John River near Fort Kent, Maine, 1968.

Alloway, Lawrence. "The Expanding and Disappearing Work of Art." Lecture given December 7, 1968, at Parke-Bernet Galleries, New York, and repeated on Channel 13 TV; published in *Auction*, October, 1969.

Tillim, Sidney. "Earthworks and the New Picturesque." *Artforum*, December, 1968.

During 1968, Stephen Kaltenbach makes three Time Capsules (see pp. 84-85) and four bronze sidewalk plaques (Bone, Blood, Flesh, Skin).

During 1968, Dennis Oppenheim makes numerous outdoor pieces, including several snow projects in northern Maine (Rep. and see p. 184), and Iain Baxter (the N.E. Thing Company) makes snow pieces on the west coast of Canada (side steps, skiing, snow over frame) (Rep.).

November, 1968, Vancouver: N. E. Thing Co., ACT and ART. Photographs accompanied by stamped certificates of approval (claim) or rejection assert.

All men are to recognize and note for posterity that: ACT #000 (example: a great thing, the Acme Glacier, Coldtown, M.W.T. Canada) on the —day of —, 19—, has met the stringent requirements of sensitivity information as set forth by the N. E. Thing Co. It is hereby and henceforth elevated for eternity to the realm of Aesthetically Claimed Things. It is to be known from this day on by all men as an ACT. The N. E. Thing Co. reserves the right to redo or duplicate any ACT as a future project.

All men are to recognize and note for posterity that: ART #0000 (example: An inferior Thing, John Doe's painting, "Summertime," 1955) on this —day of —, 19—, has not met the stringent requirements of sensitivity information as set forth

66

by the N. E. Thing Co. It is hereby and henceforth banished for eternity to the rank and file of Aesthetically Rejected Things. It is to be known from this day on by all men as ART.

It has occurred to us that Duchamp all his life tried to find an unaesthetic object but really could not do this because any object becomes good with time, social and cultural conditions, etc. Thus all his readymades are N. E. Thing Co. ACTS. . . . While on the other hand our Research Department in cooperation with the Art Department has come up with the following important discovery—that an aesthetic object, one which does not meet the stringent visual sensitivity information requirements of the N. E. Thing Co., is called ART because it is within what gets called ART that the 5th rate unaesthetic object fails. (NETCO. letter to L.R.L., November, 1968.)

When I visited Vancouver in February, 1968, and met Iain and Elaine Baxter (now Ingrid) for the first time, I was struck again by the phenomenon of "ideas in the air." NETCO's ideas for nonart object exhibitions, nonobject art exhibitions, imaginary visual experiences, and photographic projects (capitalizing upon the artist's isolation from New York and "provincial" dependence on reproduction rather than on first-hand experience) often coincided point by point with those unpublished projects in the planning stages in New York and Europe at the time, with which the Baxters could not have been familiar. The points of departure were, of course, the same (Morris, Nauman, Ruscha, etc.) but the spontaneous appearance of similar work totally unknown to the artists can be explained only as energy generated by these sources and by the wholly unrelated art against which all the potentially "conceptual artists" were commonly reacting. (Adapted from Lucy R. Lippard, "Letter from Vancouver," *Art News*, September, 1968.)

*Soft and Apparently Soft Sculpture*. Circulating exhibition for the American Federation of Arts, 1968-69; organized by Lucy R. Lippard, spring, 1968. Baxter, Bourgeois, Hesse, Kaltenbach, Kusama, Linder, Nauman, Oldenburg, Paul, Serra, Simon, Sonnier, Viner, Winsor.

*Extensions*, edited by Suzanne Zavrian and Joachim Neugroschel, New York, No. 1, 1968, includes work by Acconci, Graham, Perreault, H. Weiner; no. 2, 1969, work by Acconci, Graham.

Ian Burn and Mel Ramsden. "Excerpts from 'Six-Negatives' Book." New York, winter, 1968-69: "Six Negatives" was conceived in the following way. The tabular synopsis of categories was appropriated per se from Roget's Thesaurus. There are six classifications stated for dealing with ideas (I. ABSTRACT RELATIONS. II. SPACE. III. MATTER. IV. INTELLECT. V. VOLITION. VI. AFFECTIONS), of which two (class IV and V) each have two divisions. Each class or division of class formed a separate page in the work. Within each class is listed a number of sections and within each of these is listed a number of categories or heads, being arranged in two columns, the left listing the positive words denoting categories and the right listing the negative or contrasting. Having accepted the synopsis of categories as a basis for working, a process of negation was imposed: this was formed by four distinct attitudes: (i) the imposing of the process negating the possible role which the synopsis of categories could assume in the work; (ii) the physical striking-out or negating of each word in the column of positive words; (iii) as a result, a vocabulary of negative or contrasting words remains; (iv) finally, the entire work made into a photographic negative of its completed state.

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PLEASE COMPLETE AND RETURN

Description

N. E. THING COMPANY LIMITED

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# INFORMATION

N.E. THING CO. LTD.

1419 Riverside Drive North Vancouver B.C. Canada

Date

1974

Project

THE YEAR 1974

Number

1.



PLEASE COMPLETE AND RETURN

Description

N.E. THING COMPANY LIMITED

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# INFORMATION

N.E. THING CO. LTD.

1419 Riverside Drive North Vancouver B.C. Canada

Date

1974

Project

LANGUAGE-COLOR RESEARCH-FOOD

Number

1

## INFORMATION

N.E. THING CO. LTD.

Project

1974

LANGUAGE-COLOR RESEARCH-FOOD

1. FOODS HAVE COLOR NAMES
2. FOODS HAVE THEIR OWN COLOR
3. COLORS HAVE FOOD NAMES
4. FOODS ARE COMMONLY MIXED
5. COLORS ARE COMMONLY MIXED

## INFORMATION

N.E. THING CO. LTD.

Project

1974

LANGUAGE-COLOR RESEARCH-FOOD

FOOD WITH BLACK OR WHITE IN ITS NAME WAS  
PURCHASED IN SACKVILLE, N.B. CANADA

### BLACK

Black Beans  
Black Rice  
Black Tea  
Blackberry  
Blackberry  
Blackberry  
Blackberry  
Blackberry

### WHITE

White Rice  
White Tea  
White Sugar  
White Sugar  
White Sugar  
White Sugar  
White Sugar  
White Sugar

FOODS WITH BLACK AND WHITE COLOR NAMES WERE MIXED TO FORM GREY

## INFORMATION

N.E. THING CO. LTD.

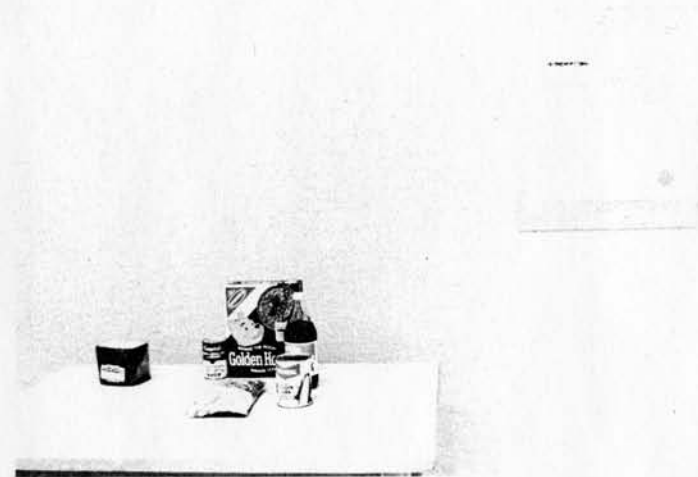
Project

1974

LANGUAGE-COLOR RESEARCH-FOOD

IN OUR RESEARCH WE DISCOVERED A FEW FOODS THAT WERE  
DEFINED BY NAMES OF METALS SUCH AS

SILVER: Silver Beans  
GOLD: Gold Beans  
COPPER: Copper Beans  
IRON: Iron Beans  
ZINC: Zinc Beans  
MANGANESE: Manganese Beans  
SODIUM: Sodium Beans  
POTASSIUM: Potassium Beans  
CALCIUM: Calcium Beans  
MAGNESIUM: Magnesium Beans  
PHOSPHORUS: Phosphorus Beans  
NITROGEN: Nitrogen Beans  
OXYGEN: Oxygen Beans  
HYDROGEN: Hydrogen Beans  
HELIUM: Helium Beans  
LITHIUM: Lithium Beans  
BERYLLIUM: Beryllium Beans  
BORON: Boron Beans  
CARBON: Carbon Beans  
NITROGEN: Nitrogen Beans  
OXYGEN: Oxygen Beans  
FLUORINE: Fluorine Beans  
NEON: Neon Beans  
SODIUM: Sodium Beans  
MAGNESIUM: Magnesium Beans  
ALUMINUM: Aluminum Beans  
SILICON: Silicon Beans  
PHOSPHORUS: Phosphorus Beans  
SULFUR: Sulfur Beans  
CHLORINE: Chlorine Beans  
ARGON: Argon Beans  
POTASSIUM: Potassium Beans  
CALCIUM: Calcium Beans  
SCANDIUM: Scandium Beans  
TITANIUM: Titanium Beans  
VANADIUM: Vanadium Beans  
CHROMIUM: Chromium Beans  
MANGANESE: Manganese Beans  
IRON: Iron Beans  
COBALT: Cobalt Beans  
NICKEL: Nickel Beans  
COPPER: Copper Beans  
ZINC: Zinc Beans  
BRASS: Brass Beans  
STEEL: Steel Beans  
ALUMINUM: Aluminum Beans  
SILICON: Silicon Beans  
PHOSPHORUS: Phosphorus Beans  
SULFUR: Sulfur Beans  
CHLORINE: Chlorine Beans  
ARGON: Argon Beans  
POTASSIUM: Potassium Beans  
CALCIUM: Calcium Beans  
SCANDIUM: Scandium Beans  
TITANIUM: Titanium Beans  
VANADIUM: Vanadium Beans  
CHROMIUM: Chromium Beans  
MANGANESE: Manganese Beans  
IRON: Iron Beans  
COBALT: Cobalt Beans  
NICKEL: Nickel Beans  
COPPER: Copper Beans  
ZINC: Zinc Beans  
BRASS: Brass Beans  
STEEL: Steel Beans



PLEASE COMPLETE AND RETURN

Description

N.E. THING COMPANY LIMITED

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# INFORMATION

N.E. THING CO. LTD.

1419 Riverside Drive North Vancouver B.C. Canada

Date

1974

Project

LANGUAGE-COLOR RESEARCH-FOOD

Number

1.

## INFORMATION

N.E. THING CO. LTD.

Project

1974

LANGUAGE-COLOR RESEARCH-FOOD

FOOD WITH RED YELLOW & BLUE IN ITS NAME WAS PURCHASED IN SACKVILLE, NEW BRUNSWICK CANADA

### RED

Good's Red Ketchup Brand  
White's Red Ketchup Brand  
Pineapple Red Ketchup Brand  
Pineapple Red Ketchup Brand

### YELLOW

Yellow's Yellow Ketchup Brand  
Pineapple Yellow Ketchup Brand  
Pineapple Yellow Ketchup Brand

### BLUE

Blue's Blue Ketchup Brand  
Pineapple Blue Ketchup Brand  
Pineapple Blue Ketchup Brand

FOODS WITH PRIMARY COLOR NAMES WERE MIXED IN THE WAY THAT PRESENT COLORS

WERE SUCCESSFULLY MIXED

PRIMARYS WERE MIXED TO GET THE SECONDARIES

RED WITH YELLOW - ORANGE

RED WITH BLUE - PURPLE

BLUE WITH YELLOW - GREEN



RED



ORANGE



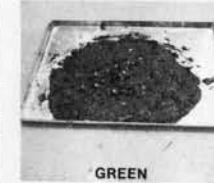
PURPLE



YELLOW



BLUE

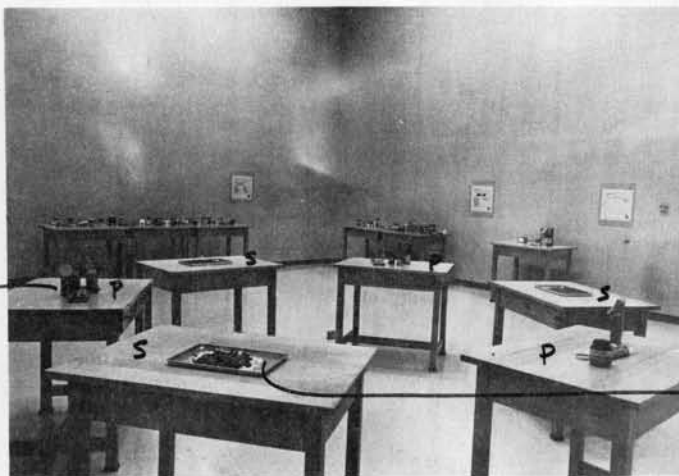


GREEN

P. PRIMARY  
S. SECONDARY

(USING TABLES)  
COLOR WHEN WAS SET-UP WITH PRIMARIES OPENED  
AND MIXED TO MAKE TO SECONDARIES.

PRIMARY  
COLOR  
SET-UP  
FOOD OPENED  
LEFT IN  
CONTAINER



SECONDARY OBTAINED BY MIXING 2 PRIMARY  
COLORS (BUT WITH ACTUAL FOOD)

PLEASE COMPLETE AND RETURN

Description

Project DONE ORIGINALLY IN TOWN OF SACKVILLE, NEW BRUNSWICK

N.E. THING COMPANY LIMITED

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# INFORMATION

N.E. THING CO. LTD.

1419 Riverside Drive North Vancouver B.C. Canada

Date

1974

Project

CIBACHROME LAB.  
N.E. PROFESSIONAL PHOTO DISPLAY LABS LTD.

Number

/



N.E. PROFESSIONAL  
PHOTOGRAPHIC  
DISPLAY LABS LTD.  
one step... new  
**CIBACHROME**  
Color Prints  
Murals - Displays  
Black to white - no chemistry  
"We make the big image"  
734-1511

PLEASE COMPLETE AND RETURN

Description

LOCATION OF CIBACHROME PHOTO LAB. PARTNER IN COMPANY WAS DAVID HONEY.  
LARGEST CIBACHROME COLOR LAB WEST OF TORONTO.

N.E. THING COMPANY LIMITED

Trade Mark ©





## Canadian Team: Avant-Garde Fun

By ALLEGRA BERRIAR

The slide presentation by Canadian conceptual artists Ingrid and Ian Baxter last Thursday evening at Spokane Falls Community College provoked a variety of responses from the mixed audience. For many the material was new and mystifying, for some shocking, to many funny and stimulating and to one person it was relaxing enough to bring on sleep. Whatever the responses, however, the openness and genuine delight the two artists take in their work communicated itself to the audience and added a great deal to the experience.

The artists, both graduates of the University of Idaho with master's degrees from Washington State University, are Canadian citizens. They have a home in Vancouver, B.C., where they founded the N.E. Thing Company, the signature for their many art "acts." They are living now in Toronto while Baxter teaches at York University. The Canadian government has awarded them a Senior Canada Council Grant, lending its support to their work.

The slide lecture progressed from earlier more traditional works done by Baxter as a graduate student through a series of take-offs, or comments on work done by famous contemporary American artists. An "extended Nolan" for example showed a typical stripe painting with ribbons trailing off the canvas.

They conceived a "frame for an Albers," an irregular red-orange square which could be fitted around any of Josef Albers' color studies. Claes Oldenburg and Franz Kline also were used as material, altered and otherwise commented on.

One of the precepts of conceptual art seems to be that anything (and I do mean N.E. Thing) can be art. These artists push this broadened definition of art in myriad directions, opening new possibilities for the use of words, colors, sensory information, food, video tape, mails, names, mirrors, nature and so on as viable media for the artist. Many of their ideas are not new to the avant-garde scene, but they are intriguing and fun.

The artists developed a seal for labeling things along the



Conceptual Artists

Baxters hold UI, WSU degrees.

lines of the Good Housekeeping Seal of Approval. An "Aesthetically Claimed Thing" such as a bridge or other man-made object becomes an ACT, while an "Aesthetically Rejected Thing" has the ironic acronym ART. They were quite pleased with this verbal twist, since they found that much of the work generally referred to as "art" by the establishment fell short of their standards. By "claiming" things not normally called art they extend the static concept of art into action. It's all done with mirrors, folks. In this case the tricky mirror of language.

Another bit of linguistic wizardry came out on a recent project where several artists were photographed doing different things. Someone attempted to document himself doing nothing but found that, no matter how hard he tried, he was always doing something, even if it was sitting in his room watching TV. From this experience he concluded that "nothing is impossible," a message of hope or despair, depending on the point of view.

Some of their word-play was just plain corny, such as the word "true" written in blue or "see" (red). Things like the word "pumpkin" written in pumpkins on a farmer's field had a rather flat cuteness about them, along with their

raw material for art. It's no longer limited to paint, canvas, or other traditional media.

What I at first felt to be a major weakness in some of the work, the banality of some of the ideas, may be another point in their favor, as I think more about it. Followers of conceptual art are maybe too accustomed to looking for heavy esthetic meanings and large-scale visual shocks in this kind of work. What the Baxters seem to have going for them is a contagious enjoyment of simple information available to us all.

This lecture appearance was made possible through funds from the SFCC Student Association and was arranged by Georg Heindal, art faculty member.

centered around the euphemisms commonly used for sex, which probably number in the thousands. Those, needless to say, did not appear on even enlightened Canadian TV, ending up instead as a series of enigmatic photos, unceremonious without the narrative phrases.

Some of the nuttiest work dealt with food, selected from a grocery store according to color-names. Red beans, yellow corn, blueberries, were arranged as on an artist's palette and mixed as colors with the unappetizing results you might expect.

Perhaps as an outgrowth of this idea, the Baxters decided to do an act while here in Spokane, using color names taken from the Spokane phone book. They contacted as many people as they could with color or food names (Brown, White, Green, Rice, etc.) and invited them to a banquet at the college Friday evening. The responses to this novel invitation varied from hostile refusal to delighted acceptance. The dozen or so people who showed up at the dinner are now immortalized in a series of food and color "still lives" and visual pun photographs. A good time was had by all.

One criticism of the presentation could be that it relied too heavily on slide photography much like a traditional art history lecture. However

video tapes giving literal visual translations to often-used clichés like "letting the cat out of the bag," "toeing the line," and so on. These latter appeared in a series called "Cliche" on CBC-TV across Canada, with a surprisingly phoned response from viewers. Corny, maybe, but a vast improvement over Josephine the Plumber or ring-around-the-roses!

Another series of clichés Ingrid Baxter's relaxed and articulate narration effectively communicated all the ideas and enjoyment of the work. By the end of the talk, many people in the audience were thinking conceptually along with the artists, almost waiting for an extension of the ideas in the lecture to take place on stage. The basic idea of conceptual art was experienced by the audience: That life itself can now provide the

## Genitals entree

## Art or porno fest?

by Connie Dietz

Students of this campus were exposed, in my opinion, to hard core pornography, without warning on October 9, when Ian and Ingrid Baxter presented a slide show on Conceptual Art.

The Baxters, both accomplished artists, are the presidents of their company, the N.E. Thing Company. "Anything" is truly the word to describe it.

The part of the show that I found to be objectionable started with a snow scene marred by a line in the center of the picture, executed by a stream of human urine. It was titled, "Pee Line Straight." The next slide was one of a male human in the act of voiding against a wall. Everyone knows that voiding urine is a fact of life, but really, is it art?

### Art or Porno

If the slides which followed were art, I shudder to think of the talent going to waste on the walls of public wash rooms. Some of the things I saw at the Performing Arts Bldg. were deserving of being flushed down the conveniences in those public wash rooms rather than being put on a large screen under the guise of art.

One can only believe that the artists ran out of ideas and fell back on the ancient "bestseller": sex. Sex and the sexual act, no matter in which manner performed, are not truly revolting. To each his own. But when gutter words are used to label both the act and the reproductive or sexually related organs of the body, then to me it becomes pornography.

There are certainly many places for this sort of thing in our society today, and our Performing Arts Bldg. may very well be one of them, but not without notice being set up in the foyer as to the content of the show.

### Interesting Ideas

In all fairness to the artists,

they reported that they had some slides that were fairly "strong" and requested that they be reviewed and approved or disapproved as the case might be. They were reviewed and obviously those doing the reviewing did not find them distasteful.

All this does not mean that I found the entire show to be in poor taste. There were some fabulous ideas beautifully executed.

There were pictorial definitions of clichés that were particularly interesting as well as amusing. A series of slides made outdoors, using mirrors for special effects were sensitive, lovely and fascinating.

Some of the artist's most amusing works were done with plastic bags filled with water. One of the best in this group was an enormous plaid bag, with a handle attached. The bag was dome-shaped at the top with a broad horizontal base. It was titled, "Cumulus Cloud with Tartan Carrying Case."

The Baxters have done well in putting their ideas to work. I applaud most of that which I have seen.

In no way do I wish to malign the artists or their works. This article has been written only with the hope that they forewarn those who do not consider gutter and washroom wall language as being art.

PLEASE COMPLETE AND RETURN

### Description

N.E. THING COMPANY LIMITED

Trade Mark ©

Spokane Newspapers





# INFORMATION

N.E. THING CO. LTD.

1419 Riverside Drive North Vancouver B.C. Canada

Date

1974

Project

ARTICLES

Number

1.

Joan Lowndes says...

## I didn't really know all the words

By JOAN LOWNDES

The print is called Sex Language Studies. It consists of a series of six small images of male and female genitals and sexual acts, listed below each, the various terms by which we allude to them in English.

My husband and I knew about half of them. My daughter, 22, and her boy-friend knew about half (those we didn't). My oldest friend, who is a social worker, knew all but three which, she declared, must be new. "I have to know these words," she explained, "because of my profession."

And now I, through my profession, have learned them.

This little anecdote would have delighted the N.E. Thing Co. which made the print, for it illustrates that their current work is all about the confusion of language, sociology and the visual arts.

The N.E. Thing Co., whose co-presidents are Iain and Ingrid Baxter, has just returned to Toronto, where Iain is teaching at York University. It spent the past year quietly back at its head office on Riverside Drive in North Vancouver — apart from a show last spring at the Blue Sky Gallery from which, at usual, it sold nothing.

True to its name the N.E. Thing Co. has always been prepared to move in any direction. It is also fascinated by word play. As part of its exploration of the cross-over between the verbal and visual it created a sculpture in which A Field of Pampas was spelled out with real pampas in a real field. More recently in Toronto it asked a woman opera singer to perform a recital singing the word "singing." She put it in a German folk tune and sang scales in it, so that word and action coincided.

The N.E. Thing Co. is also aware of all the latest images that proliferate in our daily conversation, especially clichés. President Iain Baxter becomes really excited about all that visual information that no one has ever seen.

As far back as 1959 he and Ingrid were making video tapes of actions such as Tearing the Line. Now, using hand-drawn photos as their medium, they have made Tearing the Candle at both ends a hand holding such a candle or Putting Your Mouth Where Your Mouth is — Iain, his mouth stuffed with dollar bills.

These images are unexpected, funny or surreal. As far as language is concerned the whole matter of clichés is a curious one. Through increase in their original impact they become dulled.

But when, as a student of a foreign language, you come across them you are drawn by their aptness and introduce them proudly into your conversation — similar in French like "made as a woman" or "full as an egg" or the German proverb, "After the grass has grown everybody has seen it growing."

The N.E. Thing Co. believes even so the redoubled demand from clubs and private through generations of purely oral usage can be reduced by pictorial representation.

President Iain Baxter: "We've been planning to do a lot of these clichés in various other language structures like German, French and Chinese but it requires a lot of time and professional consultation. We hope to put together a visual dictionary which points up all these very beautiful visual things that always exist only in our heads."

It was through their interest in language that the company came to focus on sex.

President Ingrid Baxter: "It was because a word had so many different terms or an act had so many different names that it was just such a fruitful area to dig around in and get more and more into it."

By using simple words we've been able to see and

WARHOL-LIKE mosaic by N.E. Thing Co. has co-president Ingrid Baxter in President of a Company Face Screwing.

the sex actions. Maybe our coming it up to part of the time, where it is much more accepted and we can talk about oxidation or whatever."

President Iain Baxter: "We've been doing a lot of research because some of the different phrases go back to the 20s and 30s and to the Deep South."

President Ingrid Baxter: "It's interesting how people will respond to some of the phrases but not to others. It's part of their background, times and vocabulary."

Asked about the reaction of the junior executives of the company — son Tor, 13 and daughter Eirian, 10, they replied:

President Iain Baxter: "It's just part of the kids' language. It becomes very normal because they hear all this kind of talk in their peer groups."

President Ingrid Baxter: "I think we learned some of it from them."

The richness or poverty of a language in certain domains does have, we agreed, psychological implications. Ingrid said that in Japanese, for instance, there are no swear words. Perhaps the old euphemism would help to relieve the frustration of this euphemism-bound people and save them from committing suicide so often. In English the abundance of words with double meanings related to sex is probably a reflection of our puritanical aversion of directness.

The N.E. Thing Co. staged a play — couple of years ago at the Factory Lab Theatre in Toronto called Made by Man and Woman.

President Iain Baxter: "It's a play where these two actors describe their bodies and the whole act of copulation from the biological standpoint. They stand there nude and talk very straightforward and mention how the act can be done in scientific ways and then they perform it. That's maybe why all these other phrases developed, cause no one knew all those medical terms. You've got to go to medical school almost. The dialogue was taken out of a medical book."

President Ingrid Baxter: "The play received mixed reactions. One reviewer thought it was absolutely fantastic and others said it was ridiculous because it was non-theatrical. That was seen in a theatre as a play. We also see it as a sculpture in a gallery."

As part of their Language Studies exhibition in the spring, the N.E. Thing Co. showed such hand-colored photos as a lot of tail of their big black and white dog sitting on a mature curled rug, beyond the instant effect of its gun it works at another level as a humorous still-life.

Another work, a large Warhol-like mosaic of 16 photos of Ingrid, is titled President of a Company Face Screwing. The funny work is very similar to a videotape made by the American feminist Hannah Wilke. This is not to say that the N.E. Thing Co. is derivative. Rather, as a specialist in Visual Sensitivity Information — its attempt to art what is a topic, beyond the instant effect of its gun it works at another level as a humorous still-life.

In addition to registering grooves (traces) about sex the N.E. Thing Co. has taken notes on the "art of copulation." However, since it is not an art — it is a copulation, it has defined this reflex activity.

President Iain Baxter: "I went back to a place near Calgary where I was when I was 13 and sent for a big kiss. I went back 25 years later over the same ground, then wrote about the differences in the trees, took a drink out of the same stream, noticed things that weren't there and so forth."

President Ingrid Baxter: "If you had to label it, it would be a sculpture because it's a space of time between then and now and the difference in your thoughts."

For her essay in retro-ethics Ingrid, who was a member of a synchronized swimming team at the University of Idaho in 1960, chose this sport.

President Ingrid Baxter: "I purposefully performed one of the stunts that was very difficult that I did very well years ago to experience if it could do the same thing. Of course, that then calls into mind all my tape in physical education and I'd forgotten some of the exact movements. Yet I performed it. I really surprised myself. I performed it quite well."

President Iain Baxter: "Phyllis and her description of how it felt when she did this stunt were included in the show organized by Lucy Lippard (the New York critic) called CROW Women's Art Show. Only she was not included as Ingrid Baxter but as the N.E. Thing Co."

President Ingrid Baxter: "That's the way we like it." This brought up the subject of women's lib. Iain Baxter, when he incorporated the N.E. Thing Co. under the B.C. Societies Act in 1966, made Ingrid vice-president. In 1970, being a liberated husband, he made her co-president. I asked what she thought of the emphasis on women in the arts in last month's special events program at the Vancouver Art Gallery.

President Ingrid Baxter: "It's unfortunate but necessary. I view it as just a phase in time. It's true many of the gallery structures and power words within the art world have been controlled by men. But if you look at Canada that's not completely true because the head of the National Gallery is a woman, a woman's editor is a woman and, at the Vancouver Art Gallery, a very dynamic force has been that of a woman."

"But I've often seen in classes that I would lecture in, that three-quarters of the class may be female. You compare in the gallery world and the exhibiting world and where are these three quarters? It's more like in night is female. Where do they go and why? So I do think there's more need of focusing on women's involvement in the arts and encouraging women to accept themselves as persons."

President Iain Baxter: "The really interesting point of view is when men and women all feel realize that they're people."

President Ingrid Baxter: "This is the level at which we function and just assume that everyone else does the same. We weren't concerned at who authors any of our things. It's not 'I did this' and 'you did that' but a total working together. I always feel that perhaps many wives of artists have been standing behind their husbands in doing their work but then it develops into something more than that. With us it has been a real partnership. And in that I think we have truly liberated."

## Playing the art game



Iain Baxter

PLEASE COMPLETE AND RETURN

N.E. THING COMPANY LTD.  
N.E. Thing is a game... and it is not a game.  
It is art and it is not art.  
It is a game it is art  
It is an education.

By Michael White

BUT educators have been playing games with us since we were six years old. And artists have been playing games with men and women since we were a million years old.

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Sometimes the game the teachers and the artists play comes close to the real game we play in real life.

N.E. Thing is today's art; it is a way of saying anything is art if you make it so and the game in art is believing. If you believe in art and an art thing then the game is art.

Iain Baxter, who made the N.E. Thing Company, is first of all a contemporary man, a naturalized Canadian, B.Sc., M.P.A., M. Ed. married, two children; second he is a man who believes in the art game and art things; and third, Iain Baxter is an impresario, because that is how he and a group of men and women, mostly from the West Coast of Canada feel the game of art and life have to be played today.

Baxter says that he is an art educator. But he is also a man who has decided to stay out of the art teaching system and play a new game, ignoring the galleries, the art schools, the museums, the committees and the boards of directors and take his education directly to the public. It did not work out exactly like this because he had not been long at it when he was called into Simon Fraser University, brand new, as part of a brand new department — the Visual Arts, Communications Centre.

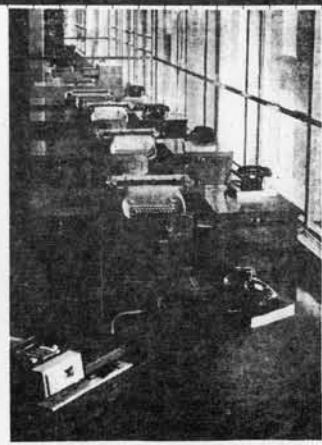
So Baxter for the sake of the art he believes in has turned impresario, impresario being a man who has ideas and ideas that he knows how to use the world and its organizations, its strengths and weaknesses to promote his idea.

If he did this just within art circles, Baxter might only be an "up-and-coming young artist or art teacher" but because he ignores art circles (although they have ceased to give him) he becomes an impresario, as well as an artist.

What is Baxter's art? LOOK—in the key word. Yves K. French became a word. Yves means look at while the English "look" means look and see, and look into, etc., all rolled together. Baxter's looking is a complicated thing which involves time and concentration, feeling into individuality.

And from looking comes doing, or creating things, not making works of art but personal sensitive things, as real artists not computerized when regarded in pre-conceived ways of seeing have done since the beginning of time. It has become more and more difficult as man's art and his way of seeing has become more and more sophisticated.

The art of today is very much tied to the social setup; the gallery



If you look again, N.E. Thing's thing might be art

— which gave him a place, a budget and a public. Then there was the Canada Council and some new art galleries in Vancouver and Toronto and pretty soon Baxter found himself with a lot of helpers in his direct approach to the public.

But the problem was that these "helpers" all had their own ideas about what art is, as you have your ideas and I have mine and as Baxter also continued to have.

So Baxter for the sake of the art he believes in has turned impresario, impresario being a man who has ideas and ideas that he knows how to use the world and its organizations, its strengths and weaknesses to promote his idea.

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The art of today is very much tied to the social setup; the gallery

(Continued on page 13)

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## Description

N.E. THING COMPANY LIMITED

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# INFORMATION

N.E. THING CO. LTD.

1419 Riverside Drive North Vancouver B.C. Canada

Date

1974

Project

NOT STUPID AS A PAINTER

Number

1.

*Not Stupid as a painter*

*Not Stupid as a painter*

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Description

N.E. THING & CO. passed out pieces of paper with the phrase "Stupid as a painter" said by Marcel Duchamp. we asked the recipients to take a pencil and write in front of this statement NOT, therefore making a statement with NETCO a work of art worth 50¢ (we told them this after they wrote NOT in front) therefore in the room of 100 we potentially generated \$5000.00 & caused the people there to decide if what had happened was destructive.



# INFORMATION

N.E. THING CO. LTD.

1419 Riverside Drive North Vancouver B.C. Canada

Date

1975

Project

THE YEAR 1975

Number

1



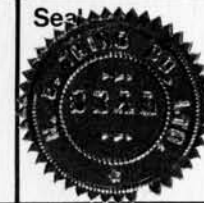
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Description

N. E. THING COMPANY LIMITED

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Seal





# INFORMATION

N.E. THING CO. LTD.

1419 Riverside Drive North Vancouver B.C. Canada

Date

1975

Project

SITE OF EYESCREAM RESTAURANT & PHOTO LAB.

Number

3



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Description

2041 & 2043 W 4th AVE. VANCOUVER, B.C. SITE WHERE RESTAURANT WAS BUILT. ALSO SITE WHERE N.E. PROFESSIONAL PHOTOGRAPHIC DISPLAY LABS LTD. IS LOCATED.

N.E. THING COMPANY LIMITED

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# INFORMATION

N.E. THING CO. LTD.

1419 Riverside Drive North Vancouver B.C. Canada

Date

1975

Project

CAPILANO REVIEW ARTICLE

Number

1



## N. E. THING COMPANY SECTION

*An Illustrated Introduction*

*A Selection of N. E. Thing Co. Acts*

*N. E. Thing is Art & Other Definitions*

*Images*

*Interview*

## AN ILLUSTRATED INTRODUCTION TO THE N. E. THING CO. LTD.

N. E. Thing is Art: Theory and Practice.

*N. E. Thing is Art is a slogan of the N. E. Thing Co. Ltd. Incorporated in 1966 by its co-presidents, Iain and Ingrid Baxter, the N. E. Thing Co. Ltd. is Art, and Art (Visual Sensitivity Information) is its business.*

When I first met Iain Baxter in 1964, he had recently completed a Masters degree in painting at Washington State University and had returned to Canada to accept a teaching position at the University of British Columbia. His wife Ingrid was principally involved in raising their children.

By 1964, Iain's painting had developed through Abstract Expressionism, and out the other side in search of a contemporary realism. He imitated, briefly, the style of Giorgio Morandi, but Morandi's humble, kitchen still lifes and sober country *vedute* held no lasting interest. Soon Iain was composing still life and landscape assemblages out of squashed or whole detergent bottles and plywood clouds and trees. These compositions were transformed by the Vacuum Form machine into one-piece, buterate and acrylic bas-reliefs. Next he made "bagged landscapes" and "inflatables" of heat-sealed vinyl. By 1966 he had moved from fashionable non-objective and abstract painting into the still fresh and controversial arena of Pop Art.

He made and exhibited his Javex-bottle Vacuum Forms, his "inflatables" and "bagged landscapes" in a Canadian scene innocent, as yet, of the impact of the banal and commercial themes and methods of New York and London based Pop. He was Vancouver's most noticed experimenter in subject and medium, winning the purchase awards at the Vancouver Art Gallery's Annual Exhibitions in 1963-66, and staging exhibitions at the UBC Fine Arts Gallery that attracted critical attention.

His art was satirized in a Norris cartoon in the Vancouver *Sun*. *Sun* art critic, David Watmough, ruminated over his art in an article called, "Our Life Savagely Shafted."

No piece that he showed and no event he took part in was as daring as the *concept* through which he, and now his wife Ingrid, moved and thought. In 1966, Iain and Ingrid set up a business with themselves as co-presidents. The N. E. Thing Co. Ltd. was to be a company with a philosophy and purpose. It would devote itself to the dissemination of:

*Sensitivity Information (SI) ... based on the idea that everything in the world is information (thoughts, things, facts, ideas, emotions etc.) and that all information is confronted by one's body and senses and then processed in a practical or sensitive manner ... Sensitivity Information (was and is) N. E. Thing Co.'s new terminology for the older word CULTURE.*

It would divide Sensitivity information into the following areas: Visual Sensitivity Information (VSI) — painting, sculpture, prints, architecture, books, design etc.; Sound Sensitivity Information (SSI) — music, poetry (read aloud), singing, oratory, etc.; Moving Sensitivity Information (MSI) — dance, sports, etc.; Experiential Sensitivity Information (ESI) — events that combine aspects of all other areas. And, using a construct invented in 1965, the N. E. Thing Co. would designate certain artworks and objects as A.R.T. (Aesthetically Rejected Things) or A.C.T. (Aesthetically Claimed Things). What was chosen as A.C.T. or rejected as A.R.T. from the world of reality and the art of others would be judged by the N. E. Thing Co.'s "stringent standards."

By entering wholeheartedly into the fact and theory of the N. E. Thing Co. Ltd., the Baxters moved firmly away from seeing the artist's



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Description

MAJOR ARTICLE WRITTEN BY ANN ROSENBERG, VANCOUVER, B.C.



# INFORMATION

N.E. THING CO. LTD.

1419 Riverside Drive North Vancouver B.C. Canada

Date

1975

Project

CAPILANO REVIEW ARTICLE

Number

2

role as *artmaker* to seeing his role as *perceiver*. Anything seen, heard, felt or thought by either of them would be considered as suitable content for data to be seen, heard, felt or thought of by the viewer. The viewer, in participating in the documentary fragments they presented as Sensitivity Information, takes part in the specific culture that created Iain and Ingrid; the viewer, in turn, is recreated by the culture they create. The Baxters' viewpoint logically extends Marcel Duchamp's insight that the artist through his works becomes a *mediumistic being*. N. E. Thing Co. products, however, are concrete and data giving, the antithesis of Duchamp's alchemical subjects. As much as Duchamp, however, the Baxters hope their art and performances will document the existential process of their own *becoming* and will engage and challenge the intelligence and sensuality of the spectator/participant.

As early as 1965, before the N. E. Thing Co. was formed, Iain was extending the traditional role of the artist beyond artmaker to performer. During the Festival of Contemporary Arts at UBC, which was called *The Medium is the Message* (out of respect for Marshall McLuhan), he destroyed a giant block of ice with a blowtorch. This act of wilful melting, entitled *2 Tons of Ice Sculpture: Beauty through Destruction, Disintegration and Disappearance*, challenged the spectator to consider this performance as "beautiful" and as Art. At the next Festival, the N. E. Thing Co. acted as "curator" for an eccentric exhibition called *Bagged Place*. The show, held in the Fine Arts Gallery on campus, contained no artwork by Iain or Ingrid. They brought a complete set of tacky furnishings within a wood and plastic "bungalow" that they had constructed inside the gallery space. All objects — tables, chairs, beds, food, turds in the toilet — were shrouded mysteriously in plastic. *Bagged Place* was provoking because it lacked ordinary aesthetic standards, but it was irritating because it was not *made* (simply chosen and arranged) by the N. E. Thing Co. What the N. E. Thing Co. was going to *do* was likely to be at least as daring as anything it would choose to make. At the two festivals, the company became a *verb* — a very A.C.T.-ive verb.

In the ten years that have followed, N. E. Thing Co. products have found their way into an amazing number of group shows that have focussed upon almost every major trend in contemporary art — Pop Art, New Realism, Minimal Art, Conceptual Art — and upon many minor ripples in the mainstream currents — Plastics, Art by Telephone, Mail Art. The N. E. Thing Co. has been chosen to represent Canada or the West on several occasions. The dozens and dozens of participations in exhibitions attest to the Baxters' great knack for operating within the gallery systems, and for taking care to know and be thought important by as many art officials as possible. Good P.R. and the ability to see the humour and chutzpah of the game that must be played is one of the several major reasons for the N. E. Thing Co.'s "omnipresence." At the same time that the company will solicit for group-show places, it will cheekily distribute buttons that declare: "Art is All Over," "Artificial" and "N. E. Thing is Art."

Although the Baxters would admit to a penchant for novelty and enjoy being the first to use a material, explore a subject, create a certain kind of exhibition or performance, it is to the credit of the N. E. Thing Co. that especially when it acts alone or is in full charge of an event, all major products (from art shows through to movies) have integrity as a continuum — first of all because the business "philosophy" that was outlined in 1966 has provided a consistent but flexible viewpoint in which a diversity of experiments could be maintained; secondly, because over the years, the N. E. Thing Co. has found means of tying together the visual appearance of the products. Plastic and plexiglass remain important materials in which to create, package, or frame. Since 1965 photography of the documentary (not "arty") sort has assumed an increasingly major role in the preparation of artwork, and the artless, casually composed quality of photographic artworks carries over to the manufacture of uncut video and film records of events and experiences. Finally, all manner of business paraphernalia has been invented to stamp, seal, and otherwise claim for the company its products. A photo-silkscreened business form, for example, may be used as a background onto which photos and drawings of varying sizes and various subjects may be collaged; the business form background becomes, then, a major device to organize and homogenize in a visual way the diverse contents of an exhibition.

The seals and the stamps replace the traditional artist's signature and add bright colour to works assembled in a gallery.

Not simply by the broad definition it provides, the N. E. Thing Co. produces art in various media that receives serious and frequent attention by galleries and the art press. Although occasionally a critic finds a subject banal or an object aesthetically weak, I think there is no person familiar with the contemporary art scene as a whole who would not state that the N. E. Thing Co. has sustained over a very lengthy period a highly imaginative, inventive, flexible but well-integrated body of work. But I think there is another aspect of the N. E. Thing Co. character that begs special examination, and that is the role it assumes as educator of the senses. Art to the N. E. Thing Co. is Sensitivity Information that must be disseminated in order to increase the happiness and self-awareness of the general public, to improve, in the company's terms, the *Gross National Good*. When discussing public education, the Baxters become very excited and approach the subject with a "missionary zeal." What they do, it seems to me, is to arrange games for willing players. And play — the open-ended, exploratory, free-association play of happy children in which the rules adjust as the game is played — is what their artworks, events, videos and films are about. The games are sometimes played out principally by the Baxters themselves with the spectator participating with his eyes and mind; others invite direct response.

So what are the "games," what are the "rules," how and what does the viewer learn? Perhaps these questions can be answered best through a careful scrutiny of one project the N. E. Thing Co. completed between 1966 and the present.

In the *Piles* show of 1968, held at UBC's Fine Arts Gallery, the company worked with students. Within the gallery space, piles of material (eggshells, metal shavings, hair, etc.) were arranged in pyramid shapes on box-like plinths placed in a row. The material chosen from commonplace possibilities was elevated to the status of art by being brought into a gallery and set up with the formality usually associated with *serious* works of sculpture. Each pile of debris was arranged in a "geometric" shape and each pile could be appreciated (or not appreciated) through a consideration of its formal artistic properties — colour, texture, *presence*. Each pyramid put forward a variety of abstract subjects for consideration: animate/inanimate; metallic/organic; man-made/machine-made. The sequence was arranged tonally, like an artist's palette.

The piles-as-sculpture were supplemented by a slide show of other piles to be discovered around the city — at car wreckers, in untidy backyards, in bakeries, on after-dinner tables. A road map directed spectators to see certain piles, to rediscover the urban environment with piles in mind. A pile of postcards of piles was the catalogue for the exhibition.

The exhibition in a playful, quasi-scientific way explored the meaning of the word *piles*. The "game" tested the spectator's definition of *sculpture*. Can anything be seen and understood as sculpture that is organized by an artist within a gallery space? Are the urban piles the spectator chooses to see sculpture? What, if anything, separates the artist from the spectator?

This exhibition is typical of N. E. Thing Co. shows. All play with the concept of the definition of Art; all suggest, by implication, that the spectator must take charge of his perceptions to savour them, nourish them and use *them* in the way that the N. E. Thing Co. implies. If we could and would do that, our lives would be more full and joyful, because the Baxters teach us to celebrate and recreate the *commonplace*.

In choosing to present the N. E. Thing Co. as Art in *The Capilano Review*, I engaged myself in an act of Retro-Aesthetics — a Baxter term for the process of going back to consider something that had a powerful personal meaning in order to see how it looks and feels from the perspective of *the now*. I am still excited by the ideas and products of the N. E. Thing Co. and continue to educate myself through the process of the Baxters' experience.

— A.R.

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## A SELECTION OF N. E. THING COMPANY A.C.T.'S.

### 1. The Incorporation of the N. E. Thing Co. Ltd., 1966.

In 1966 the N. E. Thing Co. Ltd. was formed. Its business was the organization and dissemination of Sensitivity Information. Sensitivity Information would be considered under the following categories: Visual Sensitivity Information; Sound Sensitivity Information; Moving Sensitivity Information; Experiential Sensitivity Information. Works in all categories could be judged as records of A.R.T. (Aesthetically Rejected Thing) or A.C.T. (Aesthetically Claimed Thing). All choices were to be personal, hence, arbitrary.

### 2. *Aquatics*, Simon Fraser University, 1967.

This event was the first overt manifestation of N. E. Thing Co.'s interest in sport performance (Moving Sensitivity Information) and to this project Ingrid brought her expertise in water ballet. Centennial year was celebrated through the acts of swimming, making music and dancing in the water. *Aquatics* was the first act in a construct called Retro-Aesthetics — the re-viewing/re-doing of something enjoyed in the past to check out the experience for its feel in the present.

### 3. *Piles*, Fine Arts Gallery, UBC, 1968.

N. E. Thing Co. organized this exhibition in co-operation with Fine Arts students at UBC. Within the gallery space "piles" of materials (egg-shells, hair, metal shavings) were set up on formal podia to elicit a strong visual/tactile response. A series of colour slides of piles selected from the urban environment was constantly on view, and a map directed the viewer into the city to inspect more piles. A generous pile of black and white photos served as a catalogue to the show and as a record of the concept.

### 4. *Fashion Show*, Burnaby Art Gallery, 1968.

N. E. Thing Co. claims to have invented the term *wearable* at the time of this exhibition, to designate clothing that is "worn as sculpture," that transforms body shape but is dependent on the body for some of its support. Karen Rowden and Evelyn Roth contributed some of their own wearables to the fashion show. The N. E. Thing Co.'s contributions were sculpted in plastic.

### 5. *5 Mile Section: Longest Movie in the World*, 1969.

The movie runs five minutes and is a direct uncut record of a five-mile stretch on Ontario's Trans-Canada highway. The movie camera was hand-held in the Baxter truck. The Baxters, interested in the idea contained in the movie described above, submitted a request for funds to make *5,000 Mile Movie* in centennial year. It was intended to be:

a film (measuring) Canada's life line (the Trans-Canada highway). The film (would show) geographical, cultural and ethnic variations... The viewer (would) be able to wander in and out of the movie for eight days... the movie sound track will include sections of ambient noise and interviews of people en route — a talk-show on wheels.

In 1976 the Baxters plan to re-submit the 5,000 mile movie request hoping that it will be considered worth sponsoring in the more economical medium of colour-video.

### 6. *Trans V.S.I. Connection NSCAD-NETCO*, Halifax, Nova Scotia, 1969.

A 100-page document is the record of the Nova Scotia/N. E. Thing Company (NSCAD-NETCO) "connection." Iain was teaching at the Nova Scotia College of Art and Design and the booklet shows the results of the interchange of information. Although the pamphlet is of indifferent visual quality it is very amusing to read. A receptive student writes of her project: *Put a Fairly Large Rock in the Crotch of a Tree:*

*This type of art is something you have to do to appreciate yourself before you can make other people understand it.*

An uncomprehending receiver of a Telex message at Inuvik sent back these words:

HAVE JUST READ UR MESS AND CANNOT MAKE HEADS OR TAILS OF IT PLS ADV IF IT IS PACIFIC WESTERN INUVIK U WANT OR ANOTHER COMPANY PLS EXPLAIN UR MESSAGE

### 7. *Building Structure*, Carman Lamanna Gallery, Toronto, 1969.

N. E. Thing Co. presented the act of building and the resulting balloon frame\* structure as sculpture at the Carman Lamanna Gallery. *Building Structure*, as "minimal" as a Sol LeWitt piece, was accompanied by a display of NETCO products.

\*The balloon frame is the essential two-by-four, post and lintel construction that underlies most North American domestic architecture.

### 8. *N. E. Thing Co. Calendar*, 10th Sao Paulo Biennial, 1969.

The N. E. Thing Co. A.C.T. & A.R.T. Depts. were selected to represent Canada's printmaking activities. The company prepared a calendar illustrated by a photograph of a product for each month. I remember a local printmaker being angry at this choice saying the N. E. Thing Company did not make prints. NETCO, of course, was chosen because it did not make prints, but used photography instead of traditional graphic media.

### 9. *Report on the Activities of the N. E. Thing Co. at the National Gallery of Canada*, Ottawa, June/July, 1969.

This exhibition was a major setting forth of the N. E. Thing Co.'s ideas and products. The whole exhibit took place in the real offices on the main floor of the NGO and in spaces erected by the company out of balloon frame and plywood. The visual effect of this exhibit was *department store* — an aesthetic (or non-aesthetic) that did not invite enthusiastic gallery response. The show, however, was a thorough visualization of ideas at the centre of NETCO current interests.

### 10. *Clichés Visualized*, 1969.

A thirty-minute videotape transforming English Language clichés into Visual Sensitivity Information.

### 11. *Buyer Supplier Night*, 1970.

A videotape probe into a male Buyer/Supplier gathering in Vancouver.

### 12. *Your Employee and Motivation*, Renton Washington, 1970.

N. E. Thing Co. co-presidents participated as consultants to data processing managers at Renton, Washington.

### 13. *Business Philosophy*, 1970.

A pamphlet created for distribution to the International Convention of Data Processing Managers Association in Seattle, Washington.

### 14. *Art and Computers*, Simon Fraser University, 1970.

The N. E. Thing Co. co-presidents conceived and organized a conference on this subject at Simon Fraser University.

### 15. *N. E. Thing Co. as Consultant re Viewer Participation*, 1970.

N. E. Thing Co. acted in Ottawa regarding a special TV show using television for direct viewer participation.

### 16. *North American Time Zone Photo V.S.I. Simultaneity*, October, 1970.

An N. E. Thing Co. publication dealing with the simultaneous photography of pre-selected subject matter by six Canadian photographers at the same moment in time in the six time zones in Canada.

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17. *B.C. Almanac* (a publication of the National Film Board), 1970.

N. E. Thing Co. contributed a selection of photographs to this group project. Like other artists included, their work concerned giving information and did not approach traditional "art" photography. NETCO's contribution was visually interesting and coherent in content.

18. N. E. Thing Co. Ltd. co-president is made Academician, Royal Academy of Art, 1970.

19. *Network*, 1970.

Transmission of Visual Sensitivity Information between several schools and the N. E. Thing Co. Ltd., as effected by Telex and Telecopiers. Participating institutions were: Pacific Lutheran University, Tacoma; Henry Gallery, Seattle; University of British Columbia; Nova Scotia College of Art and Design and the Museum of Modern Art, New York.

20. N. E. Thing Co. Ltd. becomes member of the Vancouver Board of Trade, 1971.

21. Elaine Baxter changes her name to Ingrid (formerly her middle name) which, co-incidentally, made her initials and Iain's the same.

22. *Historical Aesthetic Projects*, 1971.

While in Europe on a Senior Canada Council Grant, the N. E. Thing Co. Ltd. carried out the following projects:

1. Reversal of Columbus' Voyage: N. E. Thing Co. Discovers Europe
2. All Roads Lead to Rome
3. Loch Ness Mystery
4. Seeing Galileo's Laws of Gravity from the Leaning Tower of Pisa.

23. N. E. Thing Co. sponsors a hockey team in Downsview, Ontario, 1972.

24. *N. E. Thing Co. Sensitivity Information Research on Snow, Ice, Water, the North and the General Phenomenon of Winter*, Banff, 1973/4, (Winter).

This exhibition held at the Peter Whyte Gallery, Banff, was one of the most important presentations of NETCO-THINK. All the material was presented on business form backgrounds and all subjects related wittily to the concept of winter. Skiing was presented as a drawing and sculpting skill, visual/verbal plays were made on many Canadian experiences of the north, e.g. ARTIC (misspelled). A vinyl snowcap was designed for a snow-less mountain. The exhibition was an evocative and humorous "snow-job."

25. *N. E. Thing Co.: Research with Language, Food and Colour*, 1974.

This exhibition, organized by Chris Youngs, took place at the Owens Art Gallery in Sackville, New Brunswick. It investigated the correspondence between colour language used in association with food and food products and the real colour of these products. Suitable experiments were performed on food purchased from a local supermarket and the food was arranged within the gallery space on tables in a clinical fashion.

26. *N. E. Thing Co. Ltd. Sensitivity Information: Language/Sex*, 1974.

A variation upon the theme of the "food" show and earlier work in English Language Clichés Visualized, this show contained photos illustrative of sexual parts, sexual actions and the words applied to these parts and actions. There were also works exploring non-sexual clichés and children's jingles.

27. *And They Had Issue*, 1975.

This was an exhibition at York University of the birth certificates and genealogy of the Baxters' families. Two plinths — one for each of their children — were erected. During one day, the children, Erian and Tor, sat on their podia to demonstrate that the most artistic product of anyone is his/her children.

28. *Monopoly Game With Real Money*, York University, 1975.

This event took place within a Toronto Dominion Bank on the campus of York University. Real money was used in the game. A videotape was made as a record of the game.

29. N. E. Thing Co. buys into *Vancouver Magazine*, 1975.

30. N. E. Thing Co. creates a photo lab for CIBACHROME, 1974.

Called the N. E. Professional Photographic Display Labs Ltd., this company produces fine colour photography by a special process.

31. N. E. Thing Co. Thinks toward a Celebration of the Body show for the Agnes Etherington Gallery, London, as a tribute to the Olympics, June 20 - July 31, 1976.

32. N. E. Thing Co. Thinks towards an exhibition at the Vancouver Art Gallery, December 1, 1976.



33. N. E. Thing Co. Thinks towards the opening of the I Scream, You Scream, We All Scream for Eye Scream Parlour Ltd. on West 4th next to the Cibachrome Outfit.

34. The N. E. Thing Co. is always thinking about their on-going project, *What Is Art?*

- A.R.

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## INTERVIEW / N. E. THING CO.

Iain and Ingrid Baxter, co-presidents of the N. E. Thing Co., were interviewed on the evening of February 23rd at Ann Rosenberg's house. Paul Greco, journalist, Paul Mitchell, partner in the Eye Scream Parlour, and Steve Harris of The Capilano Review were present. They are indicated by initials in the text.

The interview began with Paul Greco asking Ann Rosenberg why the N. E. Thing Co. was of interest to her. Ann replied that the company was of interest chiefly because it demonstrated that art could be chosen, designated. She noted that while N. E. Thing Co. products had artistic value, they were not principally concerned with traditional craftsmanship.

**InB** There is craftsmanship in everything we do. It's just not the usual recognizable oil-painting technique-y craftsmanship — the kind of crafts that usually apply to the whole field of art.

**PG** So what kind of craftsmanship is entailed in your art?

**InB** The total making of, presenting your object (first of all) is a professionalism, and a craftsmanship in the basic concept of the idea. There is craftsmanship at that level. And then to take it beyond that, to present it in any form to anyone to understand, there is craftsmanship also involved. But it may involve photography, or it may involve knowing how to walk your fingers through the Yellow Pages, or how to use the right business format, or whatever else. But those are all levels of craftsmanship.

**AR** For example you use photographs: you have in many of your works a sense of the quick take.

**InB** Sometimes we use *bad* photographs, but they're perfectly used.

**AR** Sometimes they're bad, and that's okay. Within your aesthetic, that's proper.

**InB** And we do. I know oftentimes we're criticized for just that. People who are used to judging things for the artsy-craftsy direction of craftsmanship will pick up on that because it's a very easy thing to tag to.

**IB** And also a lot of people think everything we do is very easy to do, so it's very simple or easy.

**PG** Well, how do you defend yourself on that?

**InB** I can imagine just as I've done.

**PG** ... the criticism that it looks so easy: well, arranging rocks in a pile. I'm just purposefully playing devil's advocate.

**IB** Everything's easy once you've seen it done. When someone sees it — oh, well, a kid could do that. *Of course*, because you've seen the realization of the idea, or the thing that may appear very simple, but it's a whole thought process that's gone on.

**InB** So basically, I guess we're emphasizing the idea.

**SH** It's all related to Sensitivity Information, right?

**InB** Mm hm.

**SH** So that everything is worked through that idea, then.

**InB** That we sort of evolved as a method of explaining to people what we're doing, because you come up with the whole basic "what is art?" question. Is this "art"; is a pile of rocks "art"? And we have so much hanging into that word "art" that the general public has clouded their minds with, that they can't see art. And so this is why we've introduced the concept of "sensitivity information."

**PG** Using your own broad definition of art: have you ever had a failure in any pieces you've done? Aren't you building in a safety factor for yourselves?

**InB** Our failures are in the garbage can. (Laughter)

**PG** Have they actually appeared in the garbage can?

**InB** Oh yeah; I think some things you do toss out. I don't think you would publicly present ... I think you work through an idea and you reject it, on one level. The garbage can may be a back corner of our mind or something, rather than the can outside.

**IB** Sometimes you get things that are just too trite.

**InB** And looking back, you have things that you're more pleased with or more satisfied with than others, or some things that you wish you'd done slightly differently.

**IB** It's also interesting to look back, say ten years ago, at things we did. And you realize that your maturity and your understanding were at a certain level. And you go back and appreciate how good *those* were given that limited knowledge.

**AR** I found, thinking back, that most of the things that I saw I still like to the same degree. I'm a little more puzzled about where you are right now.

**InB** That would probably be true if you went back at any single point in time; you would be puzzled at our "now" position.

**PG** I think more so now. Listen, I heard a criticism of you guys recently: that you're at kind of a plateau now and you really haven't re-established your presence on the West Coast.

**IB** That's great.

**InB** Perhaps that's our magnum opus. (Laughter)

**PG** The criticism is that you're really casting about wildly, and you haven't really focused on anything.

**InB** No, we're focusing. Focusing like hell.

**PG** Okay, that brings us into the whole economic thing.

**InB** Because that is our focus and direction, very solidly.

**PG** Hey, what the hell are you guys doing?

**InB** Bending the corkscrew and enjoying the feel. (Laughter)

**PG** No, seriously. In terms of getting out with these commercial ventures, why and how do you rationalize it?

**InB** I don't see it as getting out; out is the wrong word. It's getting deeper in, if anything.

**AR** Could we backtrack then, because what I wanted to ask is this: why are you as artists interested in business, and why do you keep nibbling on it, and what's happening.

**InB** That goes back a long way, doesn't it? Really to the very basics of what Iain began right at the very first. That folding screen is really a questioning of system. Can you take painting, as we had flowed through, and put it on a traditional Japanese format (the folding screen) which then gave you a totally new dimension? So that's questioning a system.

**IB** That very much upset the Japanese, by the way, because they have this traditional way with those paper things because their society is so ritualized. The folding screens are supposed to be done with suni ink.\*

\*Note: Iain was in Japan on a painting scholarship in 1961. — AR

**InB** It was always so, huh? They had art galleries in department stores; so this is the next thing. Can you have art in department stores, in a public place, where you have far more people flowing through than you ever do if your art gallery is isolated? The traditional system of a gallery is to hang something on the wall, forget it for the next month ... We began thinking: well, 8,000 people come through a gallery in a month; 20,000 go through IBM in three days.

**PG** Looking back, can you see a real seminal thing in terms of the business involvement? You talk about the Japanese screen and Japanese department stores, but even beyond that was there something in either of you that said, "Business intrigues me"?

**InB** This was what I was building up to: that we were questioning systems. Can we present our visual ideas and our sensitivity information inside another kind of space? So what we're doing with the Eye Scream Parlour is building a vehicle to make visual statements, or sensitivity statements, or cultural statements of one sort or another. And so, the business *has* to be a financially rewarding thing for everyone involved. It has to turn bucks, so to speak. But the main point is to attempt to present a totally new, interesting environment for people to be in, to see new ideas to support. Maybe artists should no longer remain only in galleries and isolated spaces; they have a responsibility to the community.

**AR** I think we all sense that funds are drying up fast, and there's going to be this big, horrible depression or whatever; that artists are the first to lose their opportunity for grants. So it's a rational act also to survive, and also not lose your stance. For some artists to say, "Okay, I'm suddenly in business," you say, "Oh, sold out, eh?"

**InB** We're sold in. (Laughter)

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PG You can rationalize it beautifully. How much of this is serendipity? If you had gone after and got a really nice York University-type job here, would you have gone into these business ventures with the same vengeance?

IB I think they would have happened, but maybe a little slower.

PG I'll have to admit that your leanings have always been that way.

InB There is a matter of necessity involved, I think.

IB But it was going to come at one point or other. We knew we wanted to go through with these things to find out what it was like.

PG Is the Cibachrome thing much more of a straight commercial venture with less room to play around visually?

InB Yes and no...

IB (to Ingrid) I think yes and no, like you're saying.

PG Give me an example, then.

InB (to Iain) Which one do you want?

IB On the one hand "yes" — that's a tattoo I want to do one day. The way to do it is: I want to have a "no" and a "yes" in my hands so when a question comes up I can say, well, on the one hand "yes," on the other hand "no." I want to have them in my palm. (Laughter) The Cibachrome thing has been taking a good year or two to set up. It's much more complicated in one way than the restaurant idea, because it takes time to build its reputation.

PG Eventually what could happen with Cibachrome?

IB We see it functioning: we see the thing as theatre, and as re-organizing information. Here's a good point about it: we just bought space on the B.C. Directory — that secret book that has everybody's name and where they work. A guy phones up and says do you want to put an ad in, and we say okay. So we always

check into everything, and the art side of this happened. And I said, can we ever get on the cover? He said, sometimes there's a space available, and I think there's one right now. So he phones and he finds out that there's an outside strip on the cover available. It's amazing how they sell this. There's one strip; it's three-quarters of an inch. When you buy that, you automatically get a full page inside, and everything happens for you because you're on the cover.

So I got to thinking, and we talked about it. We decided they should have a ruler. So we put a ruler on, right on the edge, so people can measure things because you always want to measure pencils and stuff, right? So the ruler says: "We Measure Up — N. E. Professional Photo Display Lab — We Measure Up, see page such-and-such." Now maybe we'll do a print of this book, and it will say, because I know exactly how many books there are, because I can phone them, there's that many inches. All those inches, and the concept of the whole thing. It just opens up all the potential. If we ever show in a major art gallery again, then we will just churn all that stuff back in there, present all sides of it, juggle it, and give you new ways of looking at things.

AR Do you suppose that when you do your Art Gallery show in the next year that you'll be starting to refer to your businesses?

IB Oh yeah: it's going to start moving. We have a show coming up in the Vancouver Art Gallery with about half the Gallery in next December. When that goes on, we'll be heavily promoting — just presenting all these businesses, right inside a public space. It'll be like putting a burr under the saddle of that situation which will then probably upset people in a very healthy way.

AR You'll have to have an ice cream parlour right in the gallery.

IB That's what we're going to do. We'll give tickets for ten cents off a cone, all kinds of things. Plus, we'll probably take heavy :ds out that month. We'll be able to say, no business in Vancouver has ever had a show in an art gallery!

We want to have videotapes of how to lick a cone. We were thinking of having a contest of beautiful women just sitting licking cones, and see which is the most beautiful girl that can

lick a cone. We could go into a whole, erotic level like that which would be really fun. But it also has the seriousness of like, A & W does Miss Teen Canada. Maybe we will have an ice cream cone art show from various paintings and stuff.

PM You were saying before that, to make a business work, you've got to go through with the same processes that you do to make a piece of art work. And to make the artwork function, you have to do the same sort of thing as in the business.

IB In our society there are certain businessmen — a number of men are just super geniuses in terms of the level of sensitivity they move to — using all the tools in the structure they work with.

PG Does the word "satire" say anything to you in terms of what you're doing? I just have to get that out of the way. I mean, just that word, bald, unadorned: does it explain anything of what you're doing? Or is that too weak a word, or is it not precise enough, or is it relevant? I just want to throw it on the table.

InB (Looking) Find it? (Laughter)

PG It's reeling around there, waiting to be seen.

IB A lot of those words work for us, like wit, and satire, and irony.

PG Those are three very distinct words.

InB What do you mean by satire, then?

PG I guess I have to get your definition.

SH I haven't thought of you as real satirists, although you always approach everything with a sense of humour.

PG (To Steve) Then what do you see them as?

InB We've been to Yuma, and have a sense thereof. (Laughter) I guess as you say it Paul, I don't really know what you mean.

IB But whatever it is, I think we do some of it. (Laughter) I think that if you can juggle humour and satire and irony, you can get new insights. That's what McLuhan talks about: using satire and humour as probes for getting new ways of looking at things. I think we've been just doing them intuitively.

InB Can you think of anything more satirical than an N. E. Thing Company? An artist doing a business? Bizarre!

SH I was reading through *Six Years* at the library. It said that the reason Lucy Lippard was so interested in you initially was that you were carrying out many investigations simultaneously with American artists without being aware of what they were doing as well. How much were you aware of current conceptual trends?

InB No, a lot of the stuff... An example is: up at Simon Fraser, we dug a quart hole and put a quart of paint in it. And I think a week later we saw in *Look Magazine* (which was still alive at that time) that Larry Weiner had filled a hole in the earth with paint. And his approach to that same thing was a different approach. We did a quart and a quart. There are differences involved in it.

IB That's one of the problems you suffer: being provincial. It's the same problem [*The Capilano Review*] suffers from in terms of the magazines that come out of New York or London, or other quarters. It's the very idea that, for some reason, if you happen to live in a major city or the major power base, then everything else that happens outside is not as crucial or important. We've always been fighting against that.

InB We were hit — we've not been to New York very many times — I think me only twice — but I was really struck by the provincialism of New York, how extremely narrow it was. Unless it happened in New York, it hadn't happened at all. They're so closed to everything that's going on — it was amazing to me. And it's only people like Lucy that break out of that and realize there are things happening elsewhere, and have a bit of conscience, responsibility, wherewithal to bring it into New York to get it into the galleries.

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**IB** Like for instance, when they did that big show of information in New York several years ago, '69 or something; it was a major show of people all over the world doing this information thing. Then the review in *Newsweek* covered mostly the guys in New York. And I've talked to Lucy Lippard and people, and what happens is the guy who writes it lives there and knows these few people. And he just phones them and says, hey, have you got a photograph Joe, or Jack, and the guy runs a photograph in.

And so we wrote a letter to the editor which said that the whole information show was based on the theory of communication and the exchange of ideas, and that they were so provincial they couldn't even use the processes involved in the show to find out and to contact other people in various parts of the country. You can pick up a phone and phone somebody, and take the thing down in telex or whatever. There's piles of stuff, right? And it's very frustrating when you can't really do anything about it unless you move to New York. Or, if you decide to stay somewhere else and just comment on it, then you have to get more powerful so you can hit New York with a certain power.

And we've done essentially some of that because we were able to make it into *Time International* and on the covers of certain magazines. It all happened by just using media. A lady asked for a bunch of information for an article. She somehow got our name through Lucy and she phoned us. And so I sent her a telex — a telegram right to her house — just using the systems where someone else wouldn't do it. They might phone, or walk to her place or something. And it just amazed her because she couldn't believe that someone would do those things. So it was using, penetrating through very powerful means.

**PM** Was that why you put a telex machine in your office?

**IB** Yeah. It's really a useful tool.

**AR** Do you still have one?

**IB** No, I haven't been able to pay for one. But we'll eventually get one, in the restaurant or someplace.

We've been very much involved with all those things, and the sad thing is these things cost a lot of money. And I think artists have had one of the worst shakes. All artists — I'm talking theatre, music and everybody. In universities, in terms of research. Because they don't want to give funds to guys that do research in areas considered non-scientific or something. But I think it's just as valid in terms of making our lives more wholesome and more understandable and more reasonable to deal with everything. But the arts don't get the research grants, right? I fully agree with having research on health activities and so on, but the health of our people may be very much concerned with the fact that they aren't having a healthy balance with quality of life.

**SH** So what the problem is, is probably that things are divided into categories — and certain categories are allowed that research money and others aren't.

**IB** I think categoritis is one of our worst diseases.

**PG** One of the things I want to get, in terms of the piece I want to do on you guys for the book, is why you came back to the West Coast. Is it strictly an anti-Toronto, anti-Eastern feeling, or is it really because the West Coast means something to you?

**InB** You know *precisely* why we came back here. (Laughter) Why are you here?

**PG** Exactly. But I want to get all the people I talk to, to talk about the coast, or B.C.

**InB** One of my ways of describing that is when we had the trip to Europe: a year to travel around, explore our roots, meet our relatives and see where we came from. We were on the Isle of Skye and ran into a girl who spoke Gaelic. We said, "Are you from Skye?" And she said, "Aye, I belong to Skye." And I had not heard it put that way. And so then, of course, immediately

the question goes falling over yourself: where do you belong? And I think if I have any definition of a feeling of belonging to any part of the landscape or world or whatever, it's Vancouver.

**IB** Let's look at an idea I'm thinking of now; that possibly when you create certain major ideas in your life in a certain locality, the environmental ideas themselves are the reason you want to stay there — because of the ideation that evolved.

**InB** That happened at a certain point, huh? We talk about our aesthetic being based on distance; and this meaning from Toronto, from New York, from the whole publishing centres of our industry.

**PG** The reason I'm here is because everything has happened in Toronto, as far as I'm concerned. There's so many possibilities here. It's still unformed. The frontier quality... frontier meaning not a boundary in the conventional sense, but a place unexplored.

**IB** Just what I said earlier: the frontier could be the problem of trying to deal with provincialism. Because I think that's a major problem in the world. It's a problem of the Third World: all these smaller countries trying to deal with these big countries.

**PG** You're dealing with the long distance.

**IB** It's a way of trying to do something about everything.

**InB** Some people need New York, some people need Toronto, and we don't seem to have that need. Our work is cut out for us.

**PG** Self-contained?

**InB** It doesn't really matter where we are. We don't have to have the stimulus of lots of other happenings and doings to continue to do what we're doing.

**IB** But it does matter that it happens.

**PG** Are you implying that in terms of stimulus, there's less here for you people than there is in Toronto or New York?

**InB** No, I'm perhaps implying almost the opposite. Because like I was explaining before: being hit with the provincialism of New York — it really hit me.

We were involved in the Sao Paulo Exhibition at that time, and the New York artists were boycotting it. And if you went to a New York art party and you had not agreed to boycott the Sao Paulo Exhibition, you were absolutely ostracized. It was that kind of social group pressure. At that time we were doing the A.C.T.s and A.R.T.s, and one of the acts that we claimed was workers turning chili beans, you know; it had a nice formation.

**AR** That must have made you very popular. (Laughter)

**IB** But they were writing letters, and Lucy and those guys were telling us as Canadians to go along with this whole thing. And we felt, we're in a different country and there's a different point of view.

**InB** No, I think our stimulus is broader than any locale, perhaps. I think the stimulus for our work...

**IB** It's from all locales, and at the same time, from one.

**AR** But what you're really into is the art of living. If people know what they ought to know about a lot of art: that it does involve style, and attitudes, and sensuality and intellect and all those things... But most people don't take the trouble to attach those values to art or even think that art is more than something to look at.

**IB** Part of our driving force is all of that, and I don't know how it comes out.

PLEASE COMPLETE AND RETURN

Description

N.E. THING COMPANY LIMITED

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# INFORMATION

N.E. THING CO. LTD.

1419 Riverside Drive North Vancouver B.C. Canada

Date

1975

Project

CAPILANO REVIEW ARTICLE

Number

9



## IMAGES

Iain Baxter, detail, exhibition poster for *Gas, Plastic, & Bagged Works*, Art Gallery of Victoria, 1966.

*Still Life*, 9" x 9", etching, artist's proof, 1965.

*Still Life: 1 Javex Bottle*, 22½" x 14½" vacuum-formed plastic, 1964

N. E. Thing Co. Ltd. *Hockey Team: Downview*, Ontario, 3" x 5", mounted color photo, 1972-3.

*Studies for Works in S.I.R. on Snow, Ice, Water, etc.*, 3" x 5", black/white photos, 1968.

*Cibachrome Photo Lab*, 4th & Burrard, Vancouver, 1974.

*Act #32: Seven Steel Piling: Gravel Filled, White Lake Narrows*, Ontario, Canada, 27½" x 40", black/white photo, 1968.

*See*, 18" x 18", felt pen on offset litho, 1973.

*Galileo's Experiment Seen*, 40" x 40", felt pen & photo on offset litho, 1971.

*Cash in Hand*, 19½" x 23½", hand-tinted black/white photo, 1972.

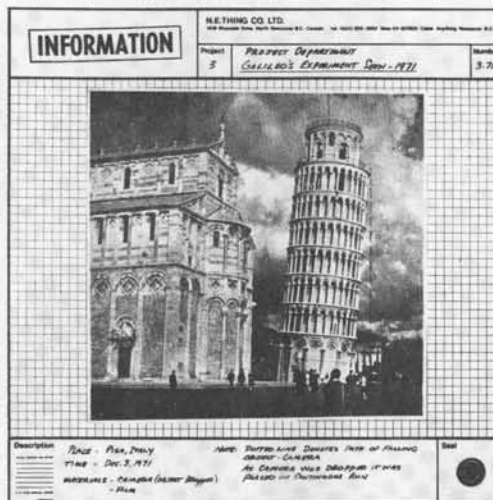
*Planning*, 16" x 19", black/white photo 1969.

*President of a Company: Face Screwing*, 36" x 42", mounted color photos, 1969.

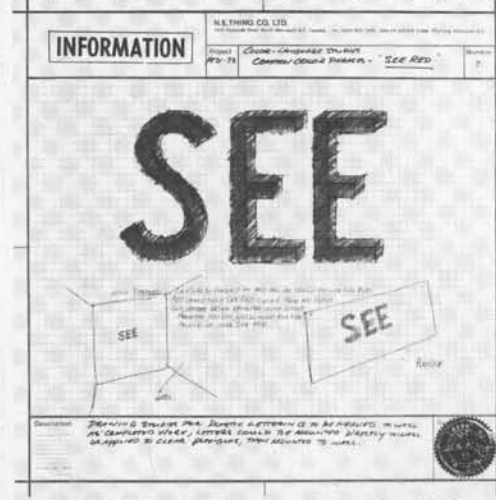
*Ingrid Baxter*, detail of above.

*Stamping Machine*, 8" x 10", black/white photo study, 1974.

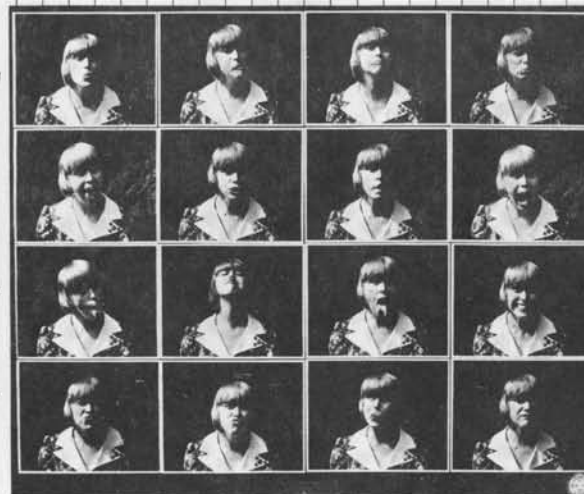
Photography: Tod Greenaway reshot these images from the archives of the N. E. Thing Co. Ltd.



DESCRIPTION: *Place - Pisa, Italy*  
 TIME - Dec. 3, 1971  
 MATERIALS - CANADA (Silver Daguer)  
 - Film



DESCRIPTION: *Planning is based on the plastic experiment of the artist, in which the Canadian's money, letters, Canada's 100 million dollar money, wrapped in clear plastic, then subjected to heat.*



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## Description

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1419 Riverside Drive North Vancouver B.C. Canada

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THE YEAR 1976

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1.



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# INFORMATION

N.E. THING CO. LTD.

1419 Riverside Drive North Vancouver B.C. Canada

Date

1976

Project

OLYMPICS POSTER

Number

1.



SKETCHES FOR PHOTO CONCEPT.

PLEASE COMPLETE AND RETURN

Description N.E. THING CO. WAS SELECTED TO DO OLYMPIC POSTER FOR OLYMPIC GAMES IN MONTREAL, SUMMER 1976.

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# INFORMATION

N.E. THING CO. LTD.

1419 Riverside Drive North Vancouver B.C. Canada

Date

1976

Project *AGNES ETHERINGTON ART GALLERY, KINGSTON, ONT.*

*CELEBRATION OF THE BODY - JUNE 19 - JULY 2/76*

Number

## CELEBRATION OF THE BODY

The occurrence of the Olympic Games in Canada at Montreal and Kingston provides the unique opportunity to demonstrate the aesthetic concerns and relationships which occur in athletic and art activity. A recent development in the visual arts is the direct use of the body, in many instances the artist's own body, as a medium for aesthetic expression. There is at the same time a great deal of interest in the aesthetics of movement and physical expression in athletics. A similar interest is creating a heightened awareness of basic movement qualities within contemporary dance.

This is a special opportunity to raise people's awareness of themselves, their bodies, and their forms in relationship to the contest and the performance. **CELEBRATION OF THE BODY** is intended to do just that and is a tribute to the original concept of the Olympics. The exhibition has several areas of concern: the historical, showing how the arts have used human movement in sport and art for visual aesthetic expression; the contemporary body-art phenomena, showing the current activities in visual arts where the artist uses his or her own body for their visual expression; the athletic, showing the actual Olympics through the use of video and photographs and athletic participation; the performance, including many forms of dance and photographs of dancers; and body awareness, showing all else to do with the body... Yoga, streakers, fitness experts, body painting, etc.

The total objective throughout the **CELEBRATION OF THE BODY** will be to demonstrate the place of the body in athletics and fine arts. It will be the first time such a major focusing will have taken place in the world. It is also a celebration and tribute to the true spirit of the Olympics and a fresh look at the aesthetic totality of expression of the human body.

The N.E. THING CO. LTD. would like to thank the Agnes Etherington Art Centre for inviting us to create our exhibition to celebrate the Olympics. We've enjoyed working with Michael Bell and gratefully appreciate his patience and enthusiasm from C to C — conception to conclusion. Thanks also to his capable crew, without whom this celebration would not have happened.

N.E. THING CO. LTD., 1976

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N.E. THING CO. LTD. 1976

Description

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The **CELEBRATION OF THE BODY** was conceived as a bridge between the athletic and cultural programmes of the 1976 Olympics. In the initial considerations of the Agnes Etherington Art Centre's contribution to Kingston's cultural programme for the 1976 Olympics we came to the conclusion that the one thing in common to both the artistic and the athletic activity was the human body and that there was an occasion to focus upon and to celebrate its central position. Rather than selecting a number of works for a simple art exhibition, we engaged the N.E. THING CO. LTD. to bring together multi-media documentation of the use of the body in both spheres of activity ranging from individual works by artists concerned with the body to non-art things and activities which would help by association to enhance our awareness of our bodies. The human body has been used in the history of the visual arts to demonstrate the ideal, to suggest beauty and virtue and to underline the central place of Man in the Universe. Needless to say the human body has also been used to show ugliness and shame and the insignificance of Man in the Universe; reality perhaps rests somewhere in between.

An exhibition of this kind would not be possible without the assistance of many individuals and organizations: we are extremely appreciative of the assistance of Len Dover, John Knowlton and Nancy Helwig of the Kingston Olympic Public Events Committee, Percy Waxer of the Cultural Olympics Coordinating Office of the Province of Ontario, Peeter Sepp of the Ontario Arts Council and Philip Fry (while of the Canada Council) for their encouragement and advice, and, of course, the following lenders to the exhibition: The National Gallery of Canada, The National Geographic Society, The Art Gallery of Ontario, Don Bonham, Carmen Lamanna Gallery, Joel Fafard, Galerie 1640, Avrom Isaacs and the Isaacs Gallery, Kim Ondaatje, David Silcox and Christopher Youngs.

There are many individuals on the campus who have assisted in a variety of ways and we thank them for their patience, too.

The following individuals and publications graciously permitted us to reprint articles for the documentation package: David Best, Barrie Hale, Lucy Lippard, *Art in America*, *Avalanche*, *The British Journal of Aesthetics*, and the *Canadian Magazine*. Ingrid and Iain Baxter loaned their bodies for the folder images.

The **CELEBRATION OF THE BODY** was made possible by the Ministry of Culture and Recreation with the proceeds of Wintario, the City of Kingston and the Canada Council.

Michael Bell  
Director

Description

*N.E. THING CO. WAS ASKED TO ORGANIZE (ACT AS CURATORS) FOR THIS SHOW TO CELEBRATE THE OLYMPICS WHILE IT WAS IN CANADA. FUNDING CAME FROM WINTARIO LOTTERY CAMPAIGN.*

Seal



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# INFORMATION

N.E. THING CO. LTD.

1419 Riverside Drive North Vancouver B.C. Canada

Date

1976

Project

CELEBRATION OF THE BODY

Number

1

THIS CELEBRATION OF THE BODY EXHIBITION IS ONLY THE TIP OF THE ICEBERG, PRESENTING ONLY A FEW OF THE MANY WAYS OF FOCUSING ON THE BODY ESTHETICALLY. UNFORTUNATELY, MANY VISUAL ARTISTS, DANCERS, MUSICIANS, AND BODY PERFORMERS OF ALL KINDS ARE NOT INCLUDED BECAUSE OF LIMITATIONS IN TIME AND BUDGET.

HOWEVER, WE HOPE THIS CELEBRATION OF THE BODY EXHIBITION WILL OPEN NEW WAYS OF SEEING AND SENSING ONE OF THE MOST WONDERFUL CREATIONS EVER — ME AND YOU.

*J. Bette*  
*Ingrid Bayle*

CO-PRESIDENTS  
N.E. THING CO. LTD.  
JUNE, 1976



PLEASE COMPLETE AND RETURN

Description

Project DONE FOR OLYMPIC GAMES WHEN THEY WERE HELD IN CANADA.  
"CELEBRATION OF THE BODY" AN N.E. THING CO. CONCEPT WAS DONE FOR AGNES STICKINGTON ATLET  
CENTRE, Director Michael Bell.

N.E. THING COMPANY LIMITED

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# INFORMATION

N.E. THING CO. LTD.

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Date

1976

Project

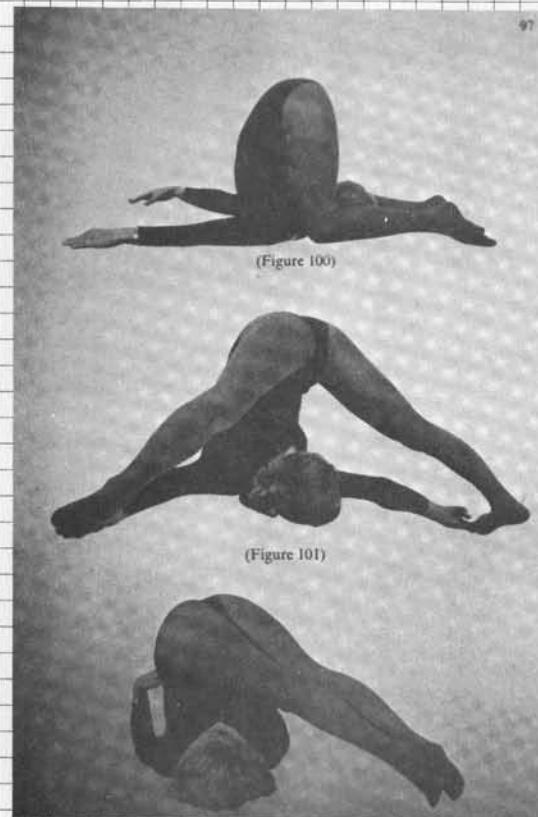
Celebration of the body - Kingston, ONT.

Number

1.



(A)



(B)

(Figure 100)

(Figure 101)

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Description (A) Jessie Owens jumping broad jump at 1936 Olympics.

(B) Karen Ziebroff performing Yoga.

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# INFORMATION

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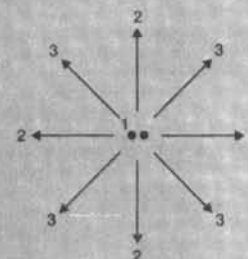
CELEBRATION OF THE BODY

Number

1



Positions of gaze: 1--primary, 2--secondary, 3--tertiary



NATIONAL CHINA: CHILANG'S FROGMEN TROOPS PERFORMING MUSCLE BUILDING BACKBENDS AS PART OF THEIR TRAINING PROGRAM.

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Description

PHOTOS FROM "Celebration of the Body" Catalog.





# INFORMATION

N.E. THING CO. LTD.

1419 Riverside Drive North Vancouver B.C. Canada

Date

1976

Project

ARTICLE

Number

1.

THE WHIG-STANDARD — FRIDAY, JUNE 18, 1976

PAGE A-1



Henri Richard (left) by Joe Fafard and The Competitor by R. Tait McKenzie, in Celebration of the Body exhibition at Agnes Etherington Art Centre,

By ROGER BAINBRIDGE  
Staff Reporter

The ancient Greeks looked upon the Olympic games as a celebration of the human body.

When the Olympics were first held, more than 2,700 years ago, the festivities included not only athletic games, but also dance and poetry competitions.

It was with this tradition in mind that Agnes Etherington Art Centre Director Michael Bell, in connection with N.E. Thing Co. Ltd. of Vancouver, conceived the ambitious six-week long exhibition, Celebration of the Body, which opens Saturday at the art centre.

The unique feature of this exhibition is that it consists of film presentations, live performances, and visual demonstrations, as well as a static display. Something new will take place almost every day, and the live events will range from a physical fitness test, to a demonstration of body painting.

The project has been in the works for two years, said Bell. The art centre wanted to mount a major exhibition that would be relevant to the Olympics, and at the same time linked to the artistic community.

"We decided to use the body as the common factor between athletics and the visual arts."

N.E. Thing Co. Ltd. is a whimsical name adopted in the '60s by Iain and Ingrid Baxter, who organized the exhibition in consultation with Michael Bell. The Baxters have for many years focused their attention on unusual, often unique projects in the world of art.

The goal of Celebration of the Body — which combines an historic account of the subject with contemporary explorations — is to make people more aware of the body as a means of expressing beauty in both art and athletics.

The official opening will take place at 3 p.m. Saturday. Mayor George Speal, and

Douglas McCullough, assistant deputy minister of culture and recreation, will officiate.

But activities will get under way at the art centre at p.m., with outdoor field demonstrations by the Queen's University Track Club, and the Kingston Gymnastics Club. At 1:30 p.m., the Kingston Community Ballet Association will give a demonstration, and at 3:30 p.m., Naresh Seth will instruct a Yoga class.

On Sunday — and also on July 31, the final day of the exhibition, the epic-length film of the 1936 Olympic games in Berlin, Olympia Parts I and II, by the noted director Leni Riefenstahl, will be shown.

Over 30 shorter films will be shown throughout the six weeks — art films, experimental films, works by the National Film Board and the National Geographic Society, and classics, such as Charlie Chaplin's The Immigrant, and Buster Keaton's, Cops.

A six-hour video-tape program of con-

temporary art performances, by artists such as Eric Cameron, Michael Hayden, Bruce Nauman, and Lisa Steele, will be shown daily. And during the Olympics, a television set will be placed in the gallery so that visitors may watch coverage of the games.

Artists Clive Robertson, Paul Woodward, Richard Cohen, Dennis Oppenheim, and others will perform works during the exhibition. There will also be performances by mime artist Paul Gaulin, and the modern dance company, La Groupe de la Place Royale.

Represented in the static exhibition, are Canadian artists Dennis Burton, John Greer, Marsha Karr, Michael Snow, Colette Whiten, John MacGregor, and Joyce Wieland.

A model of a human torso that can be taken apart, a human skeleton, a representation of the 12 stages of embryo development and a Toledo weigh scale, are also part of the comprehensive exhibition.

PLEASE COMPLETE AND RETURN

Description ARTICLE APPEARED IN WHIG-STANDARD TO DESCRIBE ENORMOUS N.E. THING CO. SHOW "CELEBRATION OF THE BODY" HELD AT AGNES ETHERINGTON GALLERY, QUEEN'S UNIVERSITY, KINGSTON, DURING OLYMPIC GAMES, 1976.

N.E. THING COMPANY LIMITED

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# INFORMATION

N.E. THING CO. LTD.

1419 Riverside Drive North Vancouver B.C. Canada

Date

1976

Project

17 CANADIAN ARTISTS. - VANC. ART GALLERY

Number

1.

## N. E. THING CO., LTD.

1419 Riverside Drive, North Vancouver

Tel. 926-5554

Iain Baxter, President

Ingrid Baxter, Co-President

(Rearranged and compressed, like wood chips, from a tape recording made on Friday, April 9, 1976. The dialogue is between a Questioner and an Answerer.)

Q: Were you always a corporation?

A: The corporation was formed and registered in 1966. It began as an aesthetic umbrella because we wanted to work in different ways—in the landscape, in a formalist way, and to solve the problem of criticism that might be aimed at us that we didn't know what we were doing. The corporation was divided into various departments.

Q: Why do you have a President and a Co-President?

A: Because there is a B.C. law that says that a company can have only one president. Iain comes first in the alphabet, so he is President; Ingrid comes second, so she is Co-President. Next year we may decree that the alphabet go backwards.

Q: Do you separate the business aspects of the N.E. Thing Co. from the artistic ones?

A: Everything is related. There is commercialism in the art and gallery world, just as there is art in our Cibachrome and restaurant businesses.

Q: Perhaps in presenting this interview for the catalogue, I will write about what was said rather than to put it into question and answer form.

A: Oh, good. Then there's a chance to get misquoted.... there's hope.

Q: Do you record ideas as they flash so that you can pursue them later?

A: No. I always figure that if it's been there once, it will come back again; it will seep through.

Q: Do you think that art is magic?

A: I think that life is magic. Business is magic. Take the fish roe business. It begins with these poor little things in the sea ready to have babies, swimming along merrily. They run into a net; suddenly it starts at three or four dollars a pound, then it escalates in the warehouses, and finally retails at twelve dollars a pound in Japan. In the meantime many people are making a living from it. They get bread and butter and food; they can even buy art with it. That's magic.

Q: Do you depend on intuition?

A: Yes and no. We do a great deal of rationality on top of intuition.

Q: Is there play or playfulness involved in what you do?

A: Playfulness is the highest form of living. Play is how we work, and our works are the result of play.

Q: Are there strange little things you do to get your artistic motor going? Like circling the room three times and tossing drops of baby oil into the air?

A: No baby oil. Just deadlines, that's our inspiration. You can get a high energy level when you know you have to do it.

Q: Would you say something about one of the works you have in the show?

A: Yes. It's called PETER PIPER PICKED. Very common; everybody knows it the way they know Mother Goose. We like the jumbling and

stumbling of words that takes place when we try to recite "Peter Piper picked a peck of pickled peppers". We have photographs of pickles with condoms on them. It works on a number of levels: language, visual structure, memory. We've related verbal play with visual play with memory play with cultural play with just plain play. It's part of an on-going series dealing with art and language. One, two buckle my shoe.

Q: Is there a continuity in your work. For instance, how does it relate to your earlier experiences in Japan?

A: We studied Zen, and have carried that over into other ways of doing things—like looking at life as an absurdity. We roll with things; we can bear the sound of one hand clapping.

Q: Do you concern yourselves with the human condition and try to alleviate it?

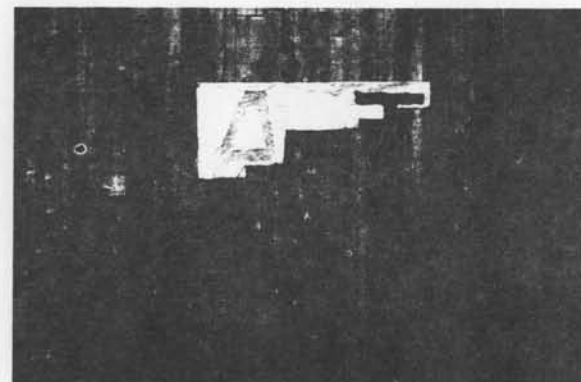
A: By making life more interesting for others, we may indirectly help to alleviate the human condition. We up your aesthetic quality of life; we up your creativity. We celebrate the ordinary.

Q: Do you feel any sense of mission?

A: We're not missionaries. In an interview sometime ago the question came up about whether or not we have any missionary zeal. When we tried to repeat the phrase, it came out sounding like "mickdenary deal" and then "missionary deal".

Q: "Missionary deal"—that gives you both worlds, doesn't it.

A: We'll have to give you our button which reads "Eunuchiversity".



N. E. THING CO. LTD.  
32, A Piece of Art

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## Description

See



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N.E. THING PAGE: VANCOUVER PAGE.

Number

2

## THE N.E. THING PAGE

COLOR LANGUAGE PRINT

V.S.I. - Visual Sensitivity Information

SEE TRUE MR.  
POWER in the LIME  
ORANGE PAGES  
with envy **BEAUTY**  
MISS LIE MATTER  
people eater  
MOVIE SEA HI HO  
CRATE good as MS.  
SNOW HOUSE  
TICKLED wild yonder  
BETTY THUMB **BALL**  
PROSE HERRING

Signed

Why do we say "White Elephant" and "Greenhorn"? In our everyday speech we use common words that have color connected to their normal meanings. Take crayons, colored pens or pencils, etc. and color each word or phrase with its appropriate color. Sign the finished print, frame it and hang it on your wall. You now have an original, hand-colored print created by you and the N.E. Thing Co. Ltd.

\*N.E. THING CO. LTD. July 1975. (Include total page when framing.)

\* If excluded well, value of print could be up to \$50 on the open art market.



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Description

Special project by N.E. THING CO. TO CREATE PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT IN ART CONCEPTS. NETCO HAS DONE SEVERAL PROJECTS INVOLVING THE PUBLIC IN ART. MOST RECENT IS NEW PHOTO MURAL AT TAXATION BUILDING, SURREY.

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Seal





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1976

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VANCOUVER MAGAZINE

Number

2

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May 1978

Vol. 11, No. 5

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On The Heroin Trail

By Garry Marchant

Two months ago, Thailand's opium farmers were receiving \$25 or so per pound for their raw product. Vancouver dealers may now be paying \$40,000 per pound for the 50 percent pure heroin refined from it. By the time it reaches the city's 6,500 addicts, it will be worth some \$30,000 per ounce. One way or the other, we all pay that price. This article follows opium from a hill tribesman's field to a downtown Vancouver arrest.

34

Silly Faces

By Daniel Wood

It is common for the well-known — even entertainers — to maintain a certain dignity of carriage and expression when in the public eye. Here, though, we ask them to let down their guards and show us the kinds of faces we all like to pull in front of the mirror when nobody is watching. 27 good sports go along with the joke.

39

Myths & Facts Concerning The Thoroughbreds

By Buzz Ware

Lives there a punter who hasn't adopted at least a part of the turf's great mythology to the detriment of his or her wallet? Ware, a freelance writer who can usually be found sporting a grey derby in the Table Terrace at Exhibition Park, addresses several commonly held misconceptions about the nature of the nags.

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Nelson Skalbania

By Paul Grescoe

Once upon a time, he had to stay away from school while his pants were being washed, but today he buys and sells \$400 million of real estate in a good year and has a life-style and level of personal fitness that very few forty-year-olds can match.

52

That Blessed Boat

By James Barber

Wherein we confront that magnificent obsession boat owners have with their beloved hulls, the energy they exert and the money they spend. Includes a photo-listing of handsome chandlerly plus a guide — furnished by George Rallison — of sailing schools for adults and youths.

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July, 1975

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The Good, Old CPR

Donald Gutstein

Adapted from architect Gutstein's  
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A distinctly partisan view of urban  
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25 Tennis Everyone

Roger Smith

If you've ever felt pressured to  
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of snappy dudes on the sidelines,  
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Sean Rossiter

Dan Cornejo, a freshly graduated  
regional planner, put the brakes on  
Fairview development with what was  
a blatantly illegal freeze, then  
got tenants, homeowners and develop-  
ers to agree upon a common policy  
before council. His actions, says  
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original electoral platform.

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VANCOUVER 3

PLEASE COMPLETE AND RETURN

Description

N.E. THING CO. BUYS INTO VANCOUVER MAGAZINE TO SAVE FAILING  
MAGAZINE. OTHER PARTNERS ARE PAUL & AUDREY GRESCOE &  
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WE ACTED AS CREATIVE CONSULTANTS.

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ARTICLE

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1.

## ON THE TOWN

with Jack Moore

Eye Scream, 2043 West Fourth Ave., 732-6571



For a number of years now, Fourth Avenue has been the best street in town for interesting business enterprises. Scarcely a week has gone by in the last decade when an examination of the street would not produce at least one new commercial enterprise of a novel or curious nature.

This one, however, caps them all. The name alone is enough to pique most people's curiosity, and one look at the aluminum-and-neon facade on the place is pretty well sure to get you wondering what's inside.

Eye Scream is short for I Scream, You Scream, We All Scream For Eye Scream Parlours Ltd. (the longest corporate name in British Columbia,) and it's what happens when a man who has spent his life as a visual artist goes into the restaurant business.

To say the place is an assault on the eyeballs is to understate the case rather badly. There is nowhere inside this establishment you can look without encountering something visually stimulating.

Try these: The tiles on the tile floor as you walk in are arranged to spell "TILES." The cups say CUP on them. Likewise the saucers, plates, glasses and goblets. Russ Columbo music oozes through the sound system, and one entire section of wall is given over to those wonderful, hideous old pieces of



plaster fruit people used to hang on kitchen walls.

A drunken mannequin sprawls over the bar next to a red-neon-lit notice board where the message changes daily. (The night we were there it said: "Some men are wise and some are otherwise." Quite so.)

Ian Baxter, the man who mas-

terminded Eye Scream, is a well-known Canadian artist and former university professor who sees the place as a vehicle for ideas — and there are plenty of them in evidence. The keynote, he says, is "quality frivolity."

"I don't want the place to ever be finished," he says. "It should be an ongoing artistic project with all

kinds of participants. Right now I'm commissioning a lot of well-known Canadian artists to build the tables for the dining room. The results could be very interesting."

No question. In fact, the whole Eye Scream concept is interesting.

No, make that "fascinating." Everything in the place is a little outrageous. If it hadn't been done in such exquisite taste, it would be the most nerve-wracking restaurant in town. But somehow, the total effect is amusing rather than upsetting.

The food is worthwhile, too. Chef Ernst Kuhn does the odd outrageous thing in the kitchen (one of the steaks has wheels on it,) but the net result is an excellent and comprehensive bill of fare.

For openers, I'd recommend the Oysters Michelangelo (six of the little sweethearts, baked with cheese on a bed of spinach, at \$3.95,) or one might try the Group of Seven Snails (a baker's half-dozen, in garlic butter with puff pastries, at \$3.80). There's also Swedish-style marinated salmon (\$3.75,) a sweet-and-sour marinated beef skewer called Cho Cho, (\$7.95,) vegetable tempura (\$6.25,) at \$2.50, and Bunderfleisch (an chicken breast Renaissance (in unusual Swiss dried beef dish, at puff pastry with mushroom mousse, at \$8.25,) and real Dover sole, \$4.45).

I'll personally vouch for the De-served with ginger and pineapple, vil Steak Butterfly (with Dijon at \$9.25).

mustard and asparagus, at \$8.75.) And for dessert, no fewer than and Miss Bumps could do nothing two waiters will cheerfully bring but rave about the steak and sea-around a selection of cakes too evil food combination (with crab, and calorie-crammed to describe lobster, scallops and shrimp in a in detail (95 cents to \$1.85 a slice). white wine sauce, at \$12.95). The Cheap it's not, but the food is

tournedos a la Bordelaise (with among the best I've ever tasted in marrow and red wine sauce,) goes this town, and there's no question for \$9.75, the filet mignon on about Eye Scream being an enter-

wheels for the same and the house taining place to spend an evening. hamburger (ground when you or- It is, without a doubt, the most

der and served with what the attention-grabbing enterprise on menu says are "elegant topping-the street.

s,") costs \$6.95.

There's also shrimp tempura isn't an easy claim to make, either.

And on Fourth Avenue, that

There's also shrimp tempura isn't an easy claim to make, either.

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Description *Appeared in Vancouver Guide.*

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# INFORMATION

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TRANSPARENT THINGS.

Number

1.

made to the viewer is controlled by the photographs the artist chooses to take. Thus the documentation itself virtually becomes the work of art. For, as William M. Ivins has pointed out, "at any given moment, the accepted report of an event is of greater importance than the event, for what we think about and act upon is the symbolic report and not the concrete event itself." In this instance, Mackenzie is able to condition the viewer's perception rather as if he were a Baroque sculptor siting a work so that it could be seen only from a single view-point.

Much else in *Transparent Things* relies on the surrogate nature of documentation, especially Richards Jarden's efforts to dematerialize himself in front of the camera in *Disappearing (Screened)*, and the information sheets that hint at General Idea's subversive, semiotic parodies of the cultural phenomena of the age. In the *Notion of Motion*, Bill Jones has created a complex work that hovers disturbingly between private narrative and a treatise on the grammar of photography. By contrast, Michael Snow's *Morning in Holland* appears at first glance deceptively simple. A prolonged view reveals a far more complicated work, made by subtraction and indicating at each stage the nature of its own creation.

For the viewer more accustomed to the pure photographic tradition, there are other pieces that appear more readily accessible, most notably Suzy Lake's morphological self-transformations. Bill Vazan's exploration of a visual sphere and Pierre Boogaerts' fastidious re-arrangement of the sky above in "Synthetisation" du Ciel. In this context, the N.E. Thing Company of Vancouver appear as the populists of camera art, addicts of the visual one-liner. *One, Two, Three, Four, Five, Six, Seven, Eight, Nine, Ten*, for example, is part of an ongoing visual dictionary of a rich oral tradition of rhymes. Somewhat more ambitious, their *Leaning Tower of Pisa* is an elaborate re-run, complete with physical as well as photographic evidence, of Galileo's mythic experiments. And in *A Painting To Match the Couch*, Iain and Ingrid Baxter continue what the critic Lucy Lippard once called "a direct and expanded attack on the idea of art" — an attack, which, like most of those generated within the system it condemns — seems cheerfully doomed to failure.

Geoffrey James, Ottawa 1977

pour une séquence. Le même, Bill Jones a réalisé avec une notion de Motion une oeuvre complexe qui hésite entre la narration personnelle et le traité de grammaire photographique. Au contraire, *Matin de Hollande* de Michael Snow donne au premier abord une impression de simplicité trompeuse. Un regard plus attentif y découvre une oeuvre beaucoup plus complexe, articulée par soustraction et marquant à chaque étape la nature de sa création.

D'autres pièces paraissent plus immédiatement accessibles au spectateur habitué à la tradition de la photographie "pure", particulièrement les auto-transformations morphologiques de Suzy Lake, les explorations d'un champ de vision par Bill Vazan et les patients arrangements de ciel de Pierre Boogaerts dans "Synthetisation" du Ciel. Avec son penchant pour la formule visuelle toute faite, le N.E. Thing Co. de Vancouver apparaît dans ce contexte comme un vulgarisateur du "photographisme". *Un, deux, trois, quatre, cinq, six, sept, huit, neuf, dix*, par exemple, participe à l'élaboration d'un dictionnaire visuel à partir d'une riche tradition orale de comptines. Plus ambitieuse, leur *Tour Penchée de Pise* élabore au moyen de constats physiques et photographiques une minutieuse reprise des expériences légendaires de Galilée. Dans *Un Tableau assorti au Canapé*, Iain et Ingrid Baxter continuent leur entreprise que le critique Lucy Lippard a déjà qualifiée "d'attaque directe et exubérante de la notion d'art". Cette attaque, comme la plupart de celles engendrées au sein même du système qu'elle dénonce, semble destinée fatalement à un joyeux échec.

Geoffrey James, Ottawa 1977



N.E. THING CO.  
Vancouver, B.C./C.B. 1966  
(Iain & Ingrid Baxter)  
ONE, TWO, THREE, FOUR, FIVE, SIX, SEVEN,  
EIGHT, NINE, TEN  
1972  
cinq photographes/photographies en couleur  
(5 sections)  
10.5 x 51 cm each/chaque



N.E. THING CO.  
Vancouver, B.C./C.B. 1966  
(Iain & Ingrid Baxter)  
NECK, NECKS, NECK  
1969  
cinq photographes/photographies en couleur  
(5 sections)  
39 x 49 cm each/chaque

PLEASE COMPLETE AND RETURN

Description

Canada Council Arts Bank exhibition

N.E. THING COMPANY LIMITED

Trade Mark ©



# INFORMATION

N.E. THING CO. LTD.

1419 Riverside Drive North Vancouver B.C. Canada

Date

1977

Project

PRESIDENTS OF A COMPANY WITH 99 ON THEIR FAXES  
1977

Number

1.



PLEASE COMPLETE AND RETURN

Description

40X50 - HAND TINTED BLACK & WHITE PHOTO - 1977

N.E. THING COMPANY LIMITED

Trade Mark ©



# INFORMATION

N.E. THING CO. LTD.

1419 Riverside Drive North Vancouver B.C. Canada

Date

1978

Project

THE YEAR 1978

Number

1



PLEASE COMPLETE AND RETURN

Description

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# INFORMATION

N.E. THING CO. LTD.

1419 Riverside Drive North Vancouver B.C. Canada

Date  
1978

Project

**THE VANCOUVER ART GALLERY**

ANOTHER 2 PROJECTS: DEC. 11, 1977 - JAN. 8, 1978

Number

1.

## ANOTHER 2 PROJECTS:



Row 1: L-R. HOUSE, GREEN, WHITEHEAD.  
Row 2. YOUNG, PINK, GRAY, WINTER, WINTER, PIPE, BLACK, BLACK  
Row 3. VALENTINE, PINK, APPLE, GOOD, BEACH, LIGHT, FLAG, FLAG, CORNER, WHITE, CORNER.  
Row 4. SAY, YACHT, YACHT, HOUSE, APPLE, UNDERWOOD, HELPS, WITH, STICK, WHITE.  
Row 5. WOOD, WHITEHEAD, RAIN, WITH, STICK, KETTLE.

## PEOPLE/LANGUAGE



N.E. THING CO.'S  
**EYE SCREAM**

RESTAURANT/GALLERY

2043 W. 4TH VANCOUVER, 7326571

PLEASE COMPLETE AND RETURN

Description

ORGANIZED BY:  
THE VANCOUVER ART GALLERY

FUNDED BY: B.C. CULTURAL FUND &  
THE CANADA COUNCIL.

\* THE OPENING BEGINS AT EYE SCREAM  
WITH COFFEE & CROISSANTS FROM 12 NOON - 2 PM  
DEC. 11 (SUNDAY)

\* AND, CONTINUES AT THE VANCOUVER ART  
GALLERY, 1145 W. GEORGIA ST. UNTIL 5 PM.  
EXHIBITION RUNS THROUGH JAN. 8, 1978

N.E. THING COMPANY LIMITED

Trade Mark ©



# INFORMATION

N.E. THING CO. LTD.

1419 Riverside Drive North Vancouver B.C. Canada

Date  
1978

Project *U.A.N.C. ART GALLERY PEOPLE/LANGUAGE #*  
*ANOTHER 2 PROJECTS: EYE SCREAM RESTAURANT*

Number  
1



Eye Scream. (Continued from p. 1) This is a group portrait of members of the Vancouver Art Gallery staff and artists, taken by the N.E. Thing Co. (Continued from p. 1) This is a group portrait of members of the Vancouver Art Gallery staff and artists, taken by the N.E. Thing Co. (Continued from p. 1) This is a group portrait of members of the Vancouver Art Gallery staff and artists, taken by the N.E. Thing Co.

"Beauty is in the eye of the beholder" is a well-known expression which has a meaning shared by most speakers of the English language. However, to Vancouver artists Lin and Ingrid Baxter, co-presidents of The N.E. Thing Co. Ltd., this expression probably means a different semantics, possibly a vision of an eye with the word beauty printed neatly within, a photographic record of the ambiguity of the phrase itself. For several years now, The N.E. Thing Co. Ltd. has been playing with the nuances of language in diverse and absorbing ways, drawing attention to both the subtle and the concrete aspects of language terms. The body of this artistic endeavor has been labelled *Sensitivity Information Research* by The N.E. Thing Co. Ltd., is in itself a verbal step away from the visual noun art. (The latter would possibly be depicted by The N.E. Thing Co. with a photograph of the former mayor of Vancouver.)

To understand The N.E. Thing Co.'s work, it is necessary to have the kinds of verbal or linguistic elements they employ, to use them to break down our sensitivities to language - in other words, to begin in a small way to think in their about language, to go inside its logic. Clearly there has been no target of their work: "As the body" shows as a human figure in action, almost with a basket, or "Have the hand that looks you" recalled as a hand fixed between a gleaming set of mirrors. English alongside with such clichés, groups of words which linguists refer to as idioms, phrases or sentences that have lost the combinatorial meaning of the individual words. In fact one of them, the pre-arranged takes over, because as familiar as the literal one takes out, false from our consciousness, suit out of The N.E. Thing Co.'s visual translation puts at back in touch with the original scene.

While the above idiom conjures up direct visual scenes, others are less direct. One source of such phrases is the use of colour terms in adjectives and nouns, although the colour labels are no longer extended. In the phrase "red in," "new blue," and "purple prove" The N.E. Thing Co. Ltd. has presented the words in, prove and prove in the colour adjectives, blue and purple respectively, a graphic return to the basic meaning of the individual words. Here too is a different twist: the "white" in is short for "the word is an what," this interpretation indicating that we are now being meta-linguistic, not only using words but talking about them.

The similarity of these linguistic structures results from many expressions or sentences in language being ambiguous. There is typically one concrete or expressed meaning, and other less obvious, even unrealized, alternatives if one works them out. The N.E. Thing Co.



People/Language. (Continued from p. 1) This is a group portrait of members of the Vancouver Art Gallery staff and artists, taken by the N.E. Thing Co. (Continued from p. 1) This is a group portrait of members of the Vancouver Art Gallery staff and artists, taken by the N.E. Thing Co. (Continued from p. 1) This is a group portrait of members of the Vancouver Art Gallery staff and artists, taken by the N.E. Thing Co.

Ltd. photographs in this group focus on the hidden subtext of English syntax, a set of rules so allusive that provides us with the capacity to remove the hidden meanings. The irony is in the often incredibly intricate and visual dimensions of these semantic structures. These visual semantic structures with language take still another turn in The N.E. Thing Co.'s December show at The Vancouver Art Gallery, which deals with one use of verbal labels for things and people. In language we have what are called common nouns, labels for entire classes of objects: "house" and "cat" and proper nouns which refer to individuals: "Mary," "Susan." While these two sets are usually distinct, there are a number of instances where common nouns also are common nouns, and even verbs, adjectives and prepositions. Thus, we can have Mr. Yacht, Mrs. White and Mr. Day. In The N.E. Thing Co. Ltd., rather they have taken photographs of more than 10 Vancouver residents whose names contribute such an overlap, and created a diversity of visual effects with them. One of the most direct is to command us of the quality of these names, choosing Mr. Wood with a piece of wood, Mrs. Underwood with a piece of wood, Mr. Yacht with a yacht. As in the work of others, we are reminded of the concrete referential quality of linguistic names, like Young Good, Green.

In this exhibition, however, The N.E. Thing Co. goes beyond the level of ambiguity, to become involved in the relation between language and other kinds of symbolization. Language is a symbolic system in that we take some arbitrary sequence of sounds and socially agree that it will refer to some object or act in the world; the word *dog* indicates a specific class of four-legged creatures. This chain is arbitrary in that other languages will select other sound sequences for this reference, as in the French *chien*. In The N.E. Thing Co. Ltd. exhibition, the people whose names are verbal symbols for concrete objects and characteristics are used in many instances as the symbol itself, as if to be named Wood is to have a direct symbolic relation to wood itself. In this way phrases such as "Young Green Apple" can be constructed by simply putting the three people who have these names together; the people are now the symbols. To juxtapose Mr. Wood with a piece of wood suggests that Mr. Wood is a label himself, a non-verbal reference term to the object in question.

Symbolization is involved not just in language but in graphic arts. To draw a sketch, paint a picture, can represent as an interpretation, yet more small piece of reality. Here the link is not just arbitrary, as in language, but iconic, where the representation leaves some resemblance to the original object or scene. When The N.E. Thing Co. Ltd. shows Mr. Yacht with a piece of a yacht, we are not only the explicit symbolization, but the mixing of two distinct symbolization processes, a union which creates a very different way of the goal of

representing reality. By doing this The N.E. Thing Co. is bringing out the shared link of symbolization, an ability which is uniquely human.

A significant aspect of all The N.E. Thing Co.'s attempts to raise our linguistic consciousness, to show our attention to the concrete, third sense of words, the ambiguity of sentences, and the symbolic quality of language is that they have their roots in the cognitive nature of the young child's world. As shown in Jean Piaget's work, *The Child's Conception of the World*, the young child is first aware of the arbitrariness of language, but instead sees a natural link between a verbal label and an object. The son is called cat because it is the son, as if the sounds are linked to the object in some inherent way. Someone named that would also be fully linked. Also, the young child has a great deal of difficulty with idioms, taking the literal meaning of those expressions. Consequently, a phrase like "in a minute" is not temporal for the young child, but spatial, as the child will wonder how something can get into a minute. The N.E. Thing Co.'s work in this area reflects the child's concrete processing and active analysis of linguistic references.

Young children frequently mix language with other forms of symbolization, as if all forms of symbols were intimately related. For example, when children first learn to read, they mix the written words at times as if they were pictures of the objects referred to rather than verbal labels. In the early stages, a child who asked to read a sentence such as "The duck is in the water" below a picture of a duck may in some cases go back and forth between the words and the picture, seeing that and pointing to either the word or the picture, as if the two were interchangeable.

As adults we have altered our conceptions, developed abstract skills, to correct reflective skills. And there lies the impact of The N.E. Thing Co.'s diverse art forms. They make us break away from our acquired, habitual forms of language, return us to the arbitrariness of the young child's first exposure to the intricacies of language. And yet, since there is adult cognition, we think about what's taking place, reflect on the arbitrariness, the loss of verbal images. We are guided into an evaluation of the intrinsic systems and symbolic aspects of our language.

David Ingram

David Ingram is an associate professor in the Department of Linguistics, UBC.

THE N.E. THING CO. LTD.  
Another 2 Projects:  
People/Language  
Eye Scream Restaurant  
The above exhibition will be presented at The Vancouver Art Gallery, December 11, 1977, to January 8, 1978. The exhibition is funded by The Canada Council.

Vancouver, December 1977 - January 1978 / 13

# VANGUARD

THE VANCOUVER ART GALLERY

DECEMBER 1977 - JANUARY 1978

25 CENTS



Description

Third Triennale  
Classroom  
PERMIT No. 2020  
VANCOUVER, B.C.

N.E. THING CO. LTD.

1419 Riverside Drive North Vancouver B.C. Canada

Another 2 Projects:  
People/Language  
Eye Scream Restaurant

The above exhibition will be presented at The Vancouver Art Gallery, December 11, 1977, to January 8, 1978. The exhibition is funded by The Canada Council.

Vancouver, December 1977 - January 1978 / 13

Vancouver, December 1977 - January 1978 / 13

Vancouver, December 1977 - January 1978 / 13

PLEASE COMPLETE AND RETURN

Description *VANCOUVER ART GALLERY MONTHLY MAGAZINE.*

N.E. THING COMPANY LIMITED

Form May 78





# INFORMATION

N.E. THING CO. LTD.

1419 Riverside Drive North Vancouver B.C. Canada

Date

1978

Project

VANCOUVER ART GALLERY People/Language &  
ANOTHER 2 PROJECTS: EYE SCREAM RESTAURANT

Number

1.

The N.E. THING CO. LTD. (NETCO) long ago understood -- as does anyone who works in an art gallery -- that the word "art" is as a red flag to the bull. Sooner or later nearly everyone is going to be enraged at something on the walls or floors because it does not conform to their definition of art.

To attempt to get around this problem, as well as to respond to rumblings that have been taking place in art since the early 20th century, NETCO devised a series of categories to replace the word "art", and came up with these inventions: SENSITIVITY INFORMATION (a generic term to embrace all forms of cultural expression); SOUND SENSITIVITY INFORMATION (for the arts which are produced to be received aurally); MOVING SENSITIVITY INFORMATION (for the more kinetic events, like movies, dance, mountain climbing); EXPERIENTIAL SENSITIVITY INFORMATION (to cover activities which contain a number of elements, some of them heretofore unclassifiable); and VISUAL SENSITIVITY INFORMATION (to be used instead of "art", "fine art", "visual art", thus making the artist into a VISUAL INFORMER).

That portion of the current TWO PROJECTS exhibition subtitled "EYE SCREAM -Restaurant/Gallery", because of its interdisciplinary nature, comes under the heading, EXPERIENTIAL SENSITIVITY INFORMATION. It includes the documented process which NETCO underwent in establishing the Eye Scream Restaurant, together with certain language references which emerged from it. It is, in NETCO's words, a "vehicle for perceptual ideas, a sculptural container," the contents of which are "food information". It is also a business, which fits neatly into the corporate side of N.E. THING CO.

PEOPLE/LANGUAGE is the most recent development of a series on language which commenced in 1973 in an exhibition at York University called COLOR/LANGUAGE, followed by two projects in 1974: one at Mt. Allison University (FOOD/LANGUAGE), and the other at the Bau-Xi Gallery, Vancouver (SEX/LANGUAGE). Because these were essentially visual, they were included under the category, VISUAL SENSITIVITY INFORMATION.

PEOPLE/LANGUAGE, presently on view, involved the gathering together in mid-October of a group of people whose names were the same as common words: nouns, adjectives, verbs, adverbs. At that meeting, the people were placed in certain contexts expressive of their names, which were then photographed and videotaped. The results are presented here.

Both parts of these TWO PROJECTS have a bearing upon what has been called "narrative art", or art with a story line expressed both visually and verbally, related to conceptual art -- one of the aspects of the contemporary mainstream.

Perhaps the clue to understanding the nature of NETCO's artistic goals is to see them as involved with a continuing exploration into the relationship to each other of unexpected things, with the implied message, "We are all human; life is not necessarily terrible, at least where we live; for it can be an adventure if we learn to let go of rigid ideas." This is certainly an optimistic attitude, seemingly at variance with newspaper headlines, but very much in tune with how certain philosophers and scientists have responded to human developments on earth since the earliest beginnings. NETCO's glass is half full, not half empty.

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N.E. THING COMPANY LIMITED

Trade Mark ©

Description

INTRODUCTORY ARTICLE BY ALVIN BALKIND, CHIEF CURATOR, VANCOUVER ART GALLERY.



# INFORMATION

N.E. THING CO. LTD.

1419 Riverside Drive North Vancouver B.C. Canada

Date

1978

Project

VANCOUVER ART GALLERY People Language &  
ANOTHER 2 PROJECTS: EYE SCREAM RESTAURANT

Number

1.

The means by which NETCO goes about its explorations is indissolubly tied to the highs, the surrogate orgasms, of creativity: the ability to see that which, until then, had not been recognized; the capacity for making discoveries that anyone might have made if only their minds had been open to them (Isaac Newton and the apple; Robert Fulton and steam).

One of the prime reasons why this can happen to artists and inventors and rarely to others is that the artist's character contains a large element of "play". It has been observed that young children are able to respond to art in an uncomplicated, non-judgmental, way because they are still in the play stage of their lives. As they grow older, this begins to dissolve into the seriousness, even the solemnity, of grown up behavior. For reasons not yet clearly postulated, creative people succeed in getting past the difficult period of adolescence with their predilection for play intact. The games change, but the techniques remain essentially the same. (It would, however, be a grave error to equate play with frivolousness, either in children or artists, although that, too, has not been ignored by NETCO. Some time ago they came up with a category they called "Quality Frivolity".)

Play and playfulness are absolutely central to the spirit of NETCO and to that of its two principals, Iain and Ingrid Baxter. Their minds leap with the agility of mountain goats, nimbly jumping from crag to crag in spite of the deep ravines that lie below. Not even a conversation with the Baxters proceeds along conventional lines. In such a conversation, no single direction can easily be perceived. What we get is broken field running, swerving, forays into language coinages, into new ideas, quick (and often funny) insights. One example of this took place during an interview for the catalogue of the exhibition, 17 CANADIAN ARTISTS, when the question was asked, "Do you think art is magic?" The spontaneous reply:

I think that life is magic. Business is magic. Take the fish roe business. It begins with these poor little things in the sea ready to have babies, swimming along merrily. They run into a net; suddenly it starts at three or four dollars a pound, then it escalates in the warehouses, and finally retails at twelve dollars a pound in Japan. In the meantime, many people are making a living from it. They get bread and butter and food; they can even buy art with it. That's magic.

PLEASE COMPLETE AND RETURN

Description

CONTINUATION ALVIN BALKIND'S ARTICLE ON N.E. THING CO. LTD.

N.E. THING COMPANY LIMITED

Trade Mark ©



# INFORMATION

N.E. THING CO. LTD.

1419 Riverside Drive North Vancouver B.C. Canada

Date

1978

Project

VANCOUVER ART GALLERY People/Language &  
ANOTHER 2 PROJECTS: EYE SCREAM RESTAURANT.

Number

1.

In this paragraph there lies a species of summation of the N.E. THING CO. The first step it takes is to switch the word "art" onto another plane called "life". At this point, the word "business" appears - part of the NETCO rationale. Then the example: the fish roe business -- surely the last subject that would spring to our minds in a discussion on magic in art. It is converted into a faintly sad, yet funny, metaphor for life, with overtones of Zen absurdity. After that, a graceful and humanistic glide into a concern for the economic well-being of people, followed, in a coda, by a droll swipe at art and a return to the word "magic". Full circle. We have gotten a characteristic serving of playfulness, metamorphosis, seriousness, social comment, wit, pathos, irreverence, sympathy, amused detachment, astonishment, and a twinkle in the eye. In this pluralistic amalgam of elements -- not unlike the chance meeting, billions of years ago, of the chemical elements which produced life on earth -- we see how Ingrid and Iain Baxter, how NETCO, look at the world.

It is this world view, combined with a strong artistic consciousness, and pushed along by a high level of imaginative energy, which has, in the past, produced such hallmark exhibitions as BAGGED PLACE, PILES, N.E. THING CO. AT THE NATIONAL GALLERY, CELEBRATION OF THE BODY, and many others, and led to invitations to many international exhibitions like INFORMATION, at the Museum of Modern Art.

In an otherwise wicked world, the N.E. THING CO. LTD. and Iain and Ingrid Baxter, in the final analysis, stand for much that is positive, tolerant, informed, and open to change. By example and by indirection, they attempt to alter the rigid, the negative, the destructive forces in society which, if they could manage it, would reduce the Baxters and you and me to mindless pawns to the greater glory of pure power.

ALVIN BALKIND  
Chief Curator

PLEASE COMPLETE AND RETURN

Description CONTINUATION OF ALVIN BALKIND'S ARTICLE ON N.E. THING CO. LTD.

N.E. THING COMPANY LIMITED

Trade Mark ©





# INFORMATION

N.E. THING CO. LTD.

1419 Riverside Drive North Vancouver B.C. Canada

Date

1978

Project

VANCOUVER ART GALLERY.  
ANOTHER 2 PROJECTS - People / Language

Number

1.



→ MS. GOOD  
→ MR. PINK  
→ MR. APPLE  
→ MS. BIRTH  
→ MR. YOUNG  
→ MR. GREEN  
→ MR. APPLE

PLEASE COMPLETE AND RETURN

Description

GOOD PINK APPLE WITH YOUNG GREEN APPLE - 1977

SIZE: 30"x40" CIBACHROME PHOTOS. SHELF: 12"x60"

MATERIALS: CIBACHROME, 2 APPLES, SHELF, 72"x18".

N.E. THING COMPANY LIMITED

Trade Mark ©



# INFORMATION

N.E. THING CO. LTD.

1419 Riverside Drive North Vancouver B.C. Canada

Date

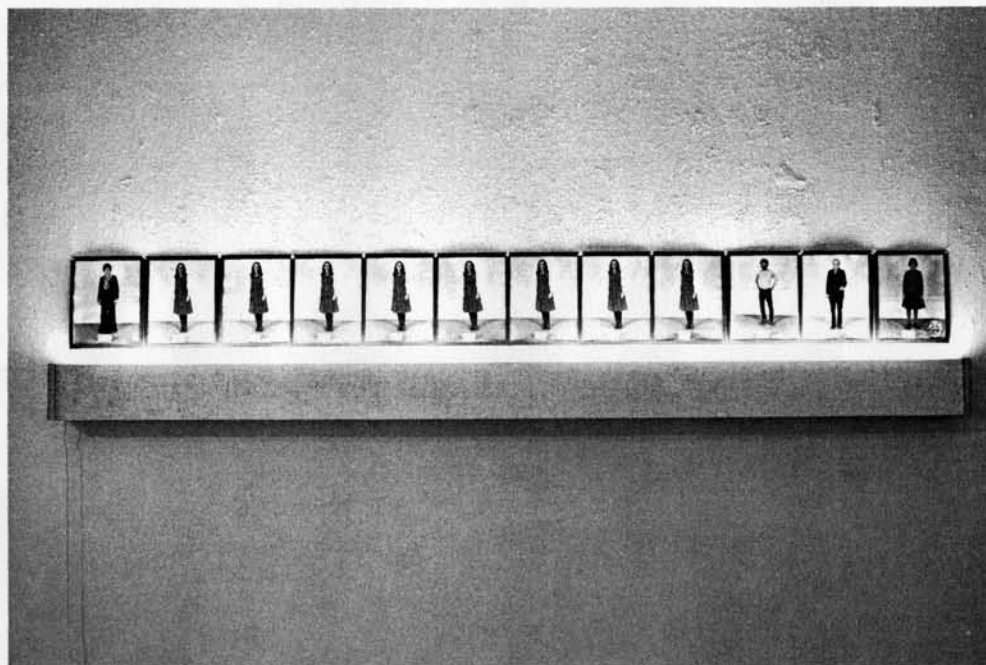
1978

Project

ANOTHER 2 PROTECTS: people/language

Number

1.



AN 8 FOOT  
GREEN FLUORESCENT  
LIGHT IS DIRECTED  
UPWARDS BATHING  
THE BLACK & WHITE  
PHOTOS IN GREEN LIGHT

→ MS. GREEN  
→ MS. FOOT  
→ MS. FOOT  
→ MS. FOOT  
→ MS. FOOT  
→ MS. FOOT  
→ MS. FOOT  
→ MS. FOOT  
→ MS. FOOT  
→ MS. FOOT  
→ MS. GREEN  
→ MS. LIGHT  
→ MS. HELPS

PLEASE COMPLETE AND RETURN

Description

GOOD EIGHT FOOT GREEN LIGHT HELPS-1977

SIZE: 8' X 16" X 8", 1977.

MATERIALS: FLUORESCENT LIGHTS, HAND TINTED BLACK & WHITE PHOTOS, MOUNTING

N.E. THING COMPANY LIMITED

Trade Mark ©



# INFORMATION

N.E. THING CO. LTD.

1419 Riverside Drive North Vancouver B.C. Canada

Date

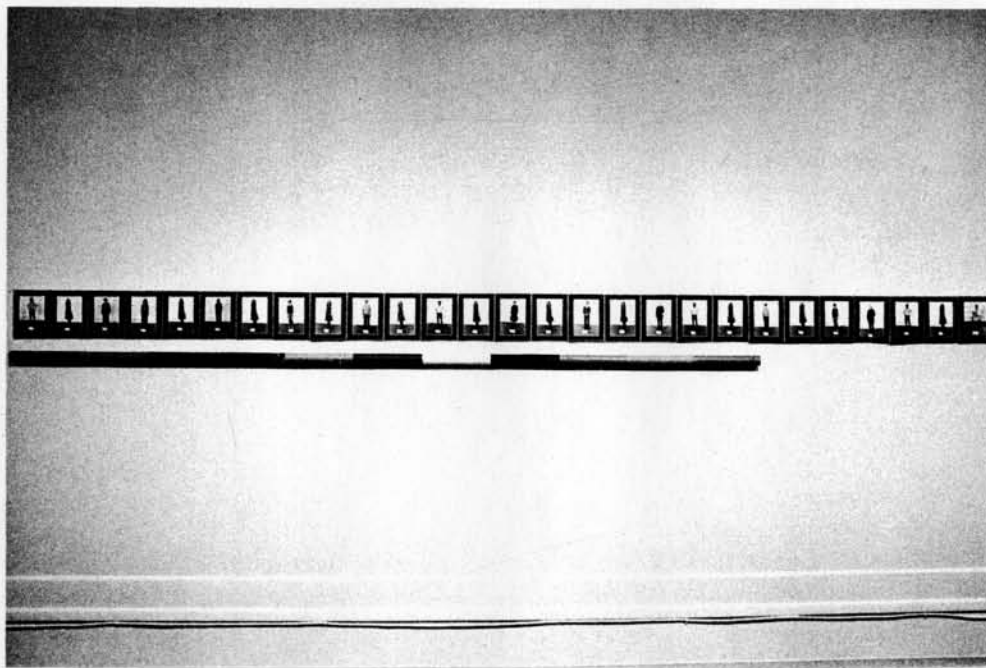
1978

Project

Vancouver Art Gallery

Number

ANOTHER 2 PROJECTS: People/Language



NAMES IN PHOTOS  
APPEAR IN THIS  
SEQUENCE AND REFER  
TO EACH ONE FOOT SECTION  
ON THE ELEVEN FOOT PIPE →

GREEN  
FOOT  
GOOD  
GRAY  
FOOT  
BLACK  
FOOT  
YOUNG  
FOOT  
PINK  
FOOT  
GREEN  
FOOT  
WHITE  
FOOT  
BLACK  
FOOT  
LIGHT  
GREEN  
FOOT  
PINK  
FOOT  
YOUNG  
LIGHT  
GREEN  
FOOT  
PIPE

PLEASE COMPLETE AND RETURN

Description

11 FOOT PIPE - 1977

Size: 11 FOOT PIPE, STEEL, MARKED OFF AT 1 FOOT PRINTED SECTIONS WHICH RELATE  
TO THE CONCEPT OF THIS MAJOR PIPE PIECE.

PHOTO

TOTAL SIZE: 14'

N.E. THING COMPANY LIMITED

Trade Mark ©





# INFORMATION

N.E. THING CO. LTD.

1419 Riverside Drive North Vancouver B.C. Canada

Date

1978

Project

VANCOUVER ART CRAWL ONLY  
ANOTHER 2 PROJECTS: People/Language

Number

1.



\* IMMEDIATELY TO THE RIGHT OF THE PHOTO IS THE PHYSICAL SET UP OF THE ARRANGEMENT.  
2 BLACK KETTLES (picture of Mr. With) & A PIECE OF WOOD.

PLEASE COMPLETE AND RETURN

Description

GOOD BLACK KETTLES WITH WOOD - 1977

Size: 60" x 14" x 14"

MATERIALS: PLYWOOD SHELVES, 2 PORTRAIT FRAMES, 2 BLACK KETTLES, PLUS 2'4" x 14".

N.E. THING COMPANY LIMITED

Trade Mark ©



# INFORMATION

N.E. THING CO. LTD.

1419 Riverside Drive North Vancouver B.C. Canada

Date

1978

Project

VANCOUVER ART GALLERY

Number

1

ANOTHER 2 PROJECTS: People / Language



PLEASE COMPLETE AND RETURN

Description

WOOD ON KETTLE, KETTLE ON WOOD - 1977

SIZE: 40" X 80" X 12"

MATERIALS: 2 KETTLES, 2 BOARDS (WOOD) (2) 30" X 40" CIRA PHOTOS.

N.E. THING COMPANY LIMITED

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# INFORMATION

N.E. THING CO. LTD.

1419 Riverside Drive North Vancouver B.C. Canada

Date

1978

Project

VANCOUVER ART GALLERY  
ANOTHER 2 PROJECTS: People/Language

Number

1.



PLEASE COMPLETE AND RETURN

Description

COLOR KETTLES WITH WHITE PIPE: 1977

SIZE: 108" X 30" X 72"

MATERIALS : TABLE, KETTLES FROM 2ND HAND STORE.

N.E. THING COMPANY LIMITED

Trade Mark ©





# INFORMATION

N.E. THING CO. LTD.  
1419 Riverside Drive North Vancouver B.C. Canada

Date  
1978

Project VANCOUVER ART GALLERY  
ANOTHER 2 PROJECTS: People/Language

Number  
1.



Left Side  
Top photo - MR. WOOD  
then MS. UNDERWOOD  
h h  
h h  
h h  
h h  
1  
5

Right Side top is MS. UNDERWOOD  
MS. UNDERWOOD  
h h  
h h  
h h  
MR. WOOD 1  
5

How CIBACHROMES  
ARE ATTACHED

PLEASE COMPLETE AND RETURN

Description

SCULPTURE: WOOD UNDERWOOD - 1977

SIZE: 18" x 18" x 6"

MATERIALS: COLORED CIBACHROMES, PLASTIC MOUNTS, 18" x 18" BEAMS 6' LONG

N.E. THING COMPANY LIMITED  
Trade Mark ©



# INFORMATION

N.E. THING CO. LTD.

1419 Riverside Drive North Vancouver B.C. Canada

Date

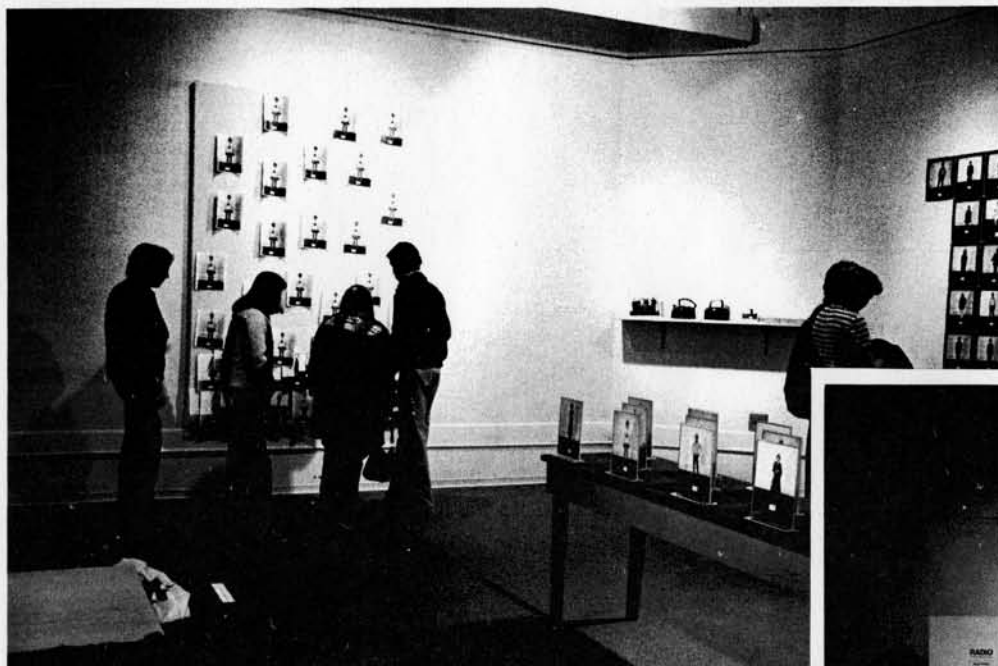
1978

Project

VANCOUVER ART GALLERY EYE'S CREAM RESTAURANT.  
ANOTHER 2 PROJECTS: People / language

Number

1



PLEASE COMPLETE AND RETURN

Description

ENVIRONMENTAL SHOTS OF PEOPLE ATTENDING OPENING AT VANCOUVER ART GALLERY. DECEMBER 11/77.

N.E. THING COMPANY LIMITED

Trade Mark ©



# INFORMATION

N.E. THING CO. LTD.

1419 Riverside Drive North Vancouver B.C. Canada

Date

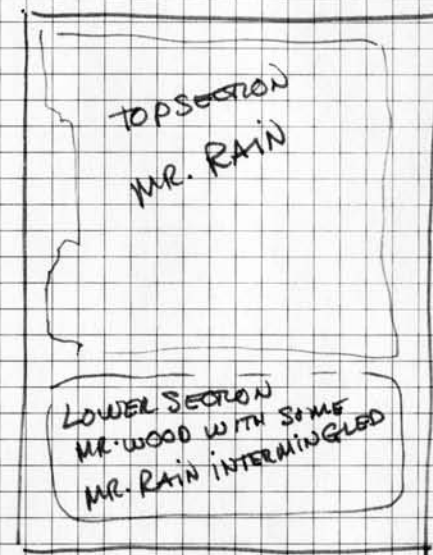
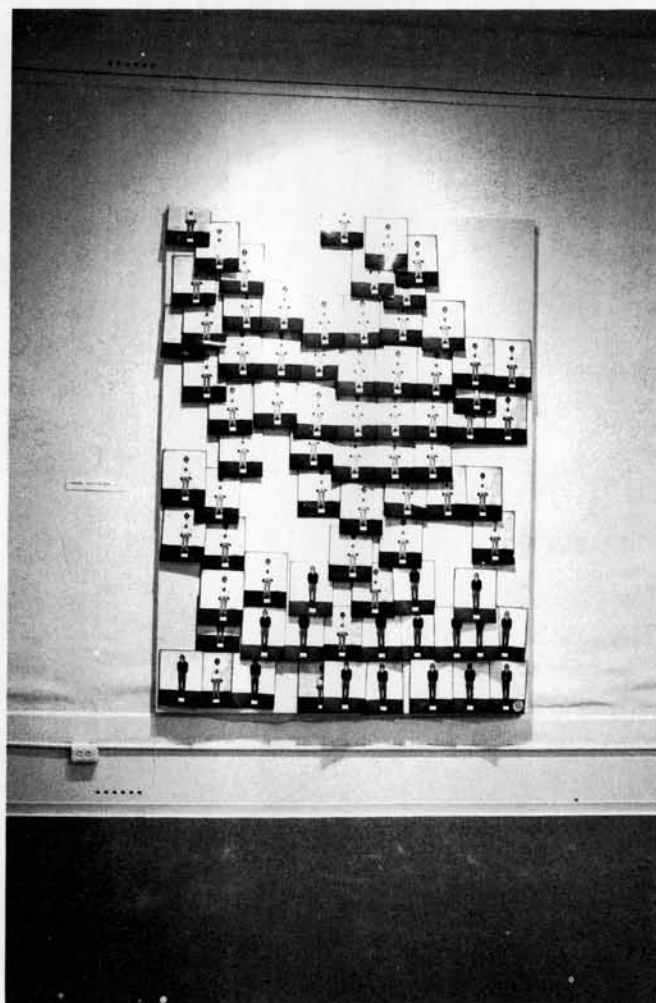
1978

Project

VANCOUVER ART GALLERY  
ANOTHER 2 PROJECTS: People/Language

Number

1:



PLEASE COMPLETE AND RETURN

Description

LANDSCAPE: RAIN IN THE WOODS - 1977

Size: 60" X 84"

MATERIALS: CANVAS, CIBACHROME PHOTOS.

N.E. THING COMPANY LIMITED

Trade Mark ©





# INFORMATION

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Date

1978

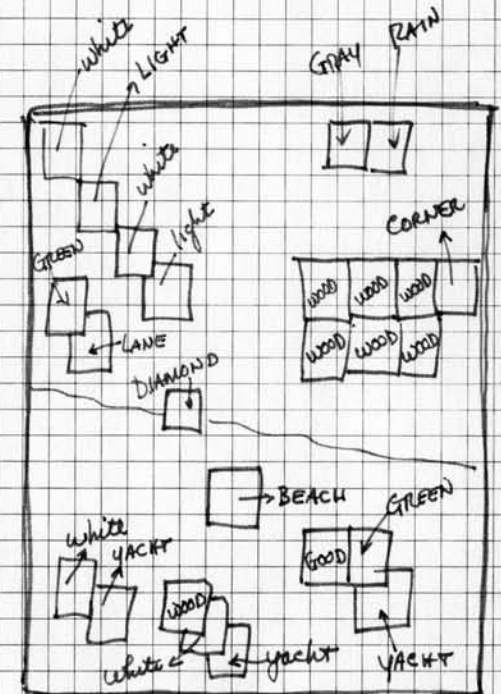
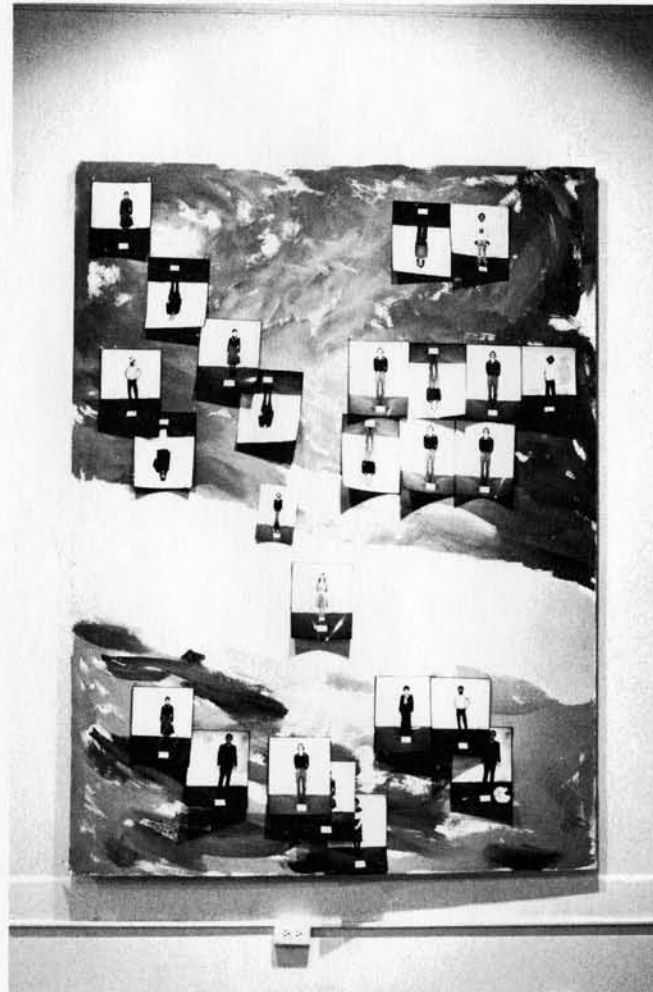
Project

VANCOUVER ART GALLERY

ANOTHER 2 PROJECTS: People/Language

Number

1



Drawing of photo placement  
Showing Names and position

PLEASE COMPLETE AND RETURN

Description

LANDSCAPE WITH WHITE LIGHT SHAFT & DIAMOND, 1972

Size: 72" x 96"

materials: CANVAS, DRAPERY HOOKS, CHROMO PICTURES.

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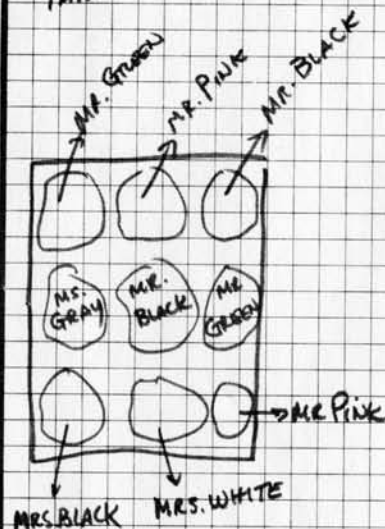
Project

VANCOUVER ART GALLERY

Number

A NOTHER 2 PROJECTS: People/Language 1.

PANEL #1.

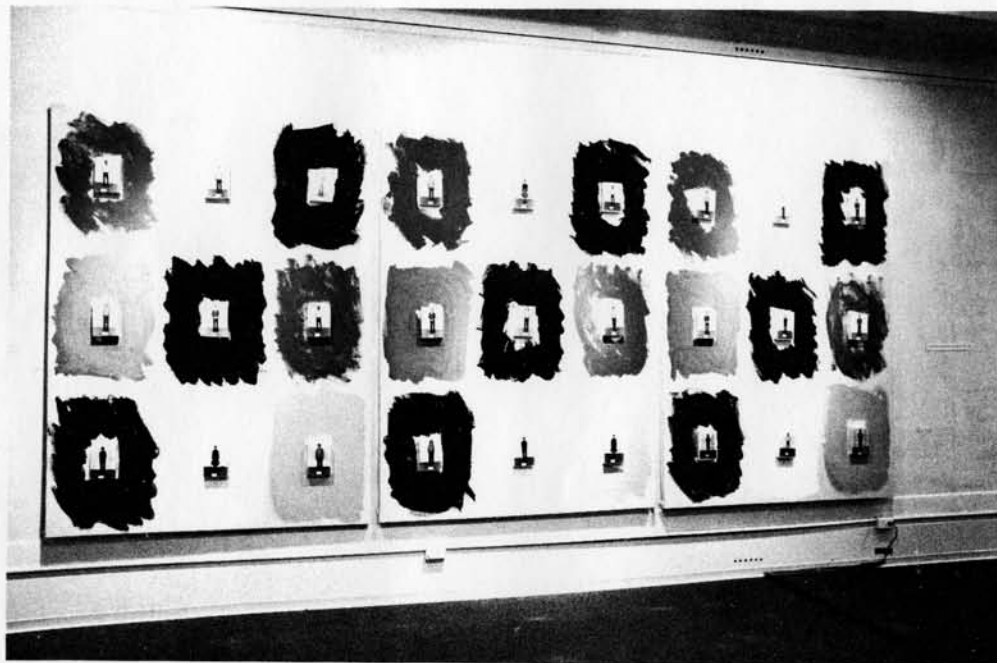


\*THE MOUNTED PHOTO WAS ATTACHED BY DRAPERY HOOKS TO THE APPROPRIATE COLOR. NAME & COLOR MATCHED.

Panel 1.

Panel 2

Panel 3



PANEL #2.

NO NAMES & NO COLORS MATCH.

PANEL #3.

SOME NAMES & COLORS MATCH SO IT IS PARTLY RIGHT & PARTLY WRONG

PLEASE COMPLETE AND RETURN

Description

COLOR COMPOSITION: RIGHT, WRONG & PARTLY RIGHT - 1977

SIZE: 84" X 180" (TRIPTYCH)

MATERIALS: CANVAS, PAINT, DRAPERY HOOKS, CIBACHROME PHOTOS, PLASTIC PHOTO MOUNTS.

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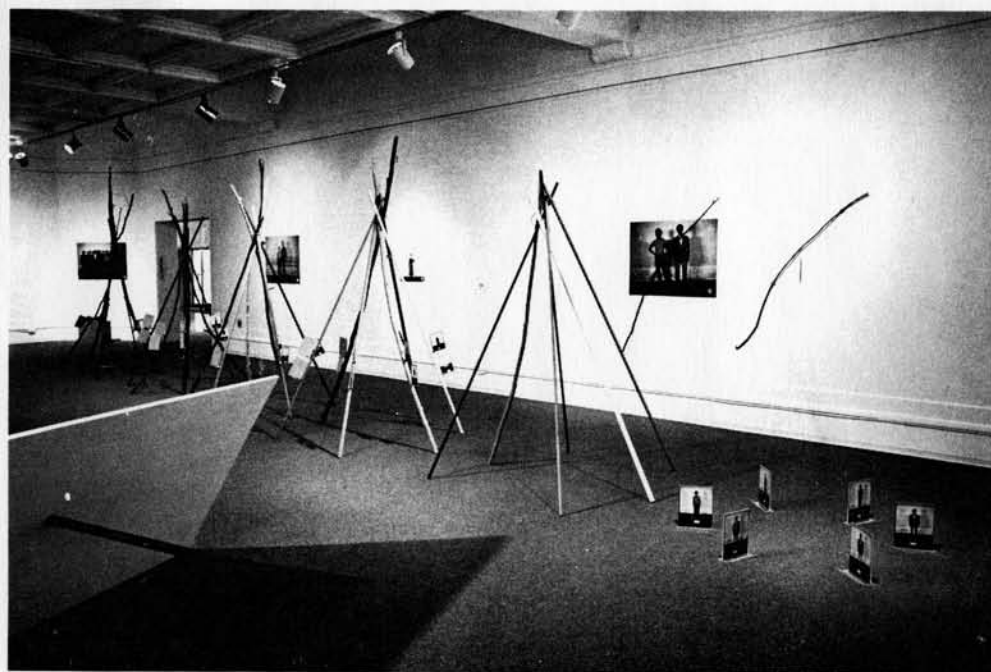
Vancouver Art Gallery  
ANOTHER 2 PROJECTS: People/language

Number

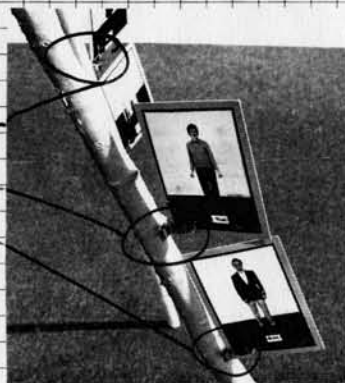
1



\* IN BACK GROUND IS WORK  
CALLED  
GREEN STICK - 1977



DETAIL OF HOW PHOTOS  
ARE ATTACHED TO THE  
STICKS & PIPES



PLEASE COMPLETE AND RETURN

Description

COLORED STICKS & PIPES - 1977

SIZE: 8' X 30' X 6'

MATERIALS: GALVANIZED PIPE, PAINT, STICKS, PHOTO HOLDERS, CIBACHROME PHOTOS, CLIPS.

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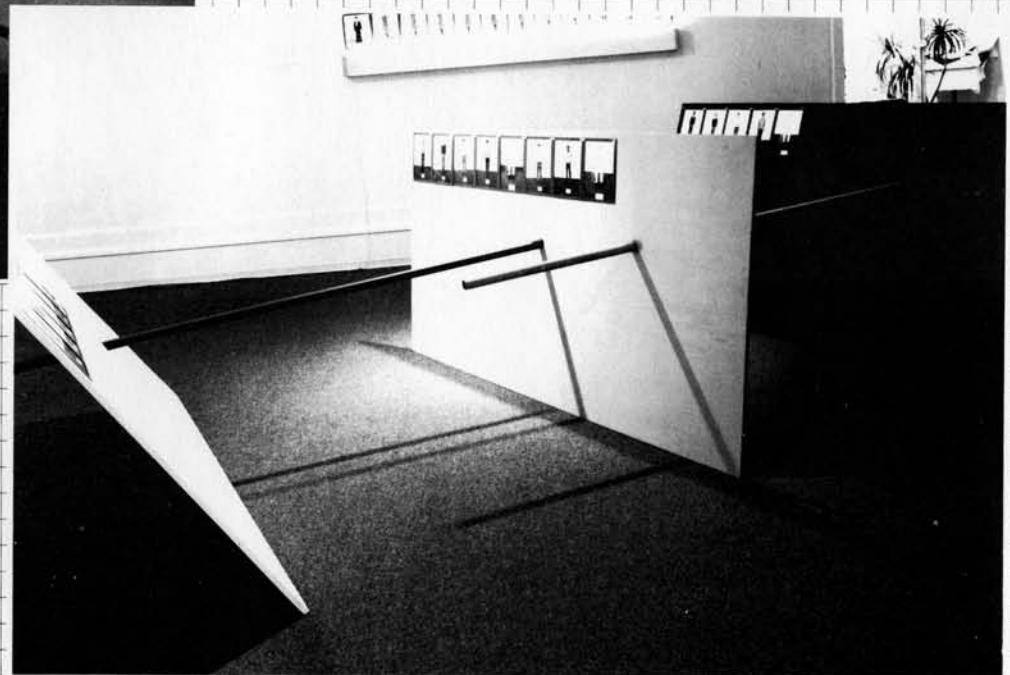
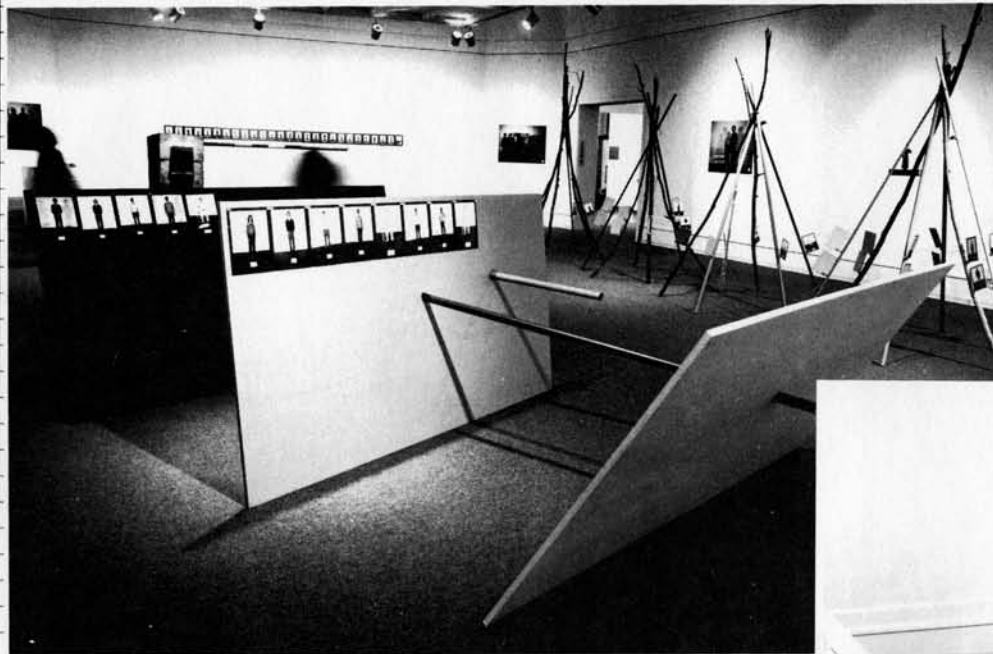
1978

Project

Vancouver Art Gallery  
ANOTHER 2 PROJECTS: People / Language

Number

1



PLEASE COMPLETE AND RETURN

Description

SCULPTURE: BLACK, GRAY, WHITE WOOD WITH GREEN & PINK PIPES - 1977

SIZE: 9' X 8' X 12'

MATERIALS: 3 sheets plywood, Black, white, gray paint, CIBACHROME PHOTOS, MOUNTS, & 2 ALUMINUM PIPES.

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Date

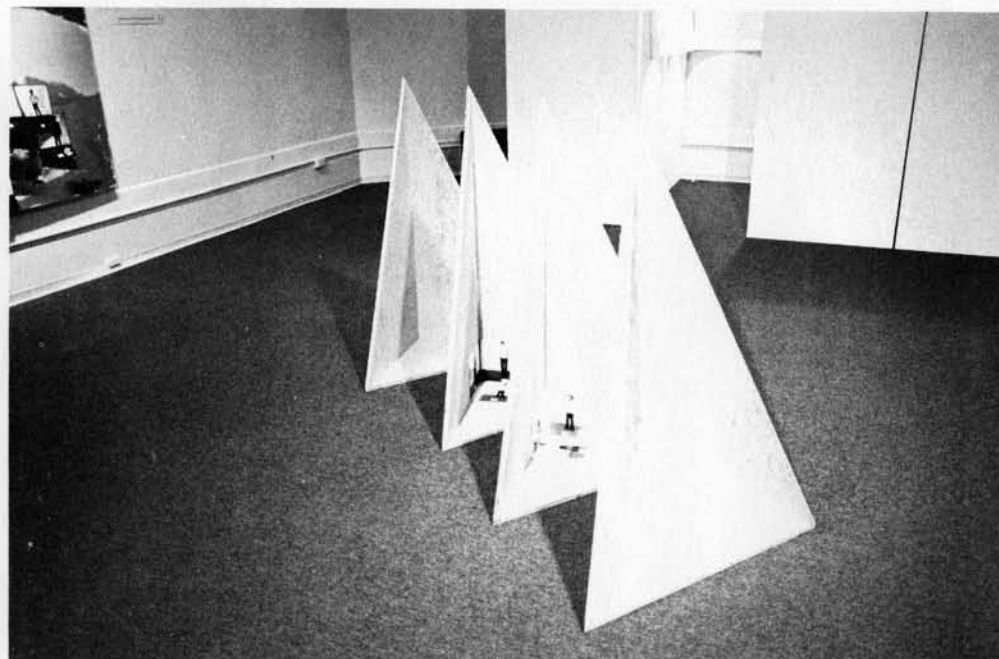
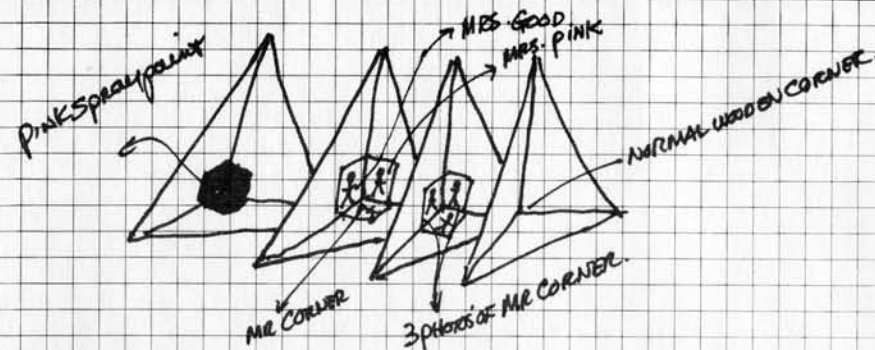
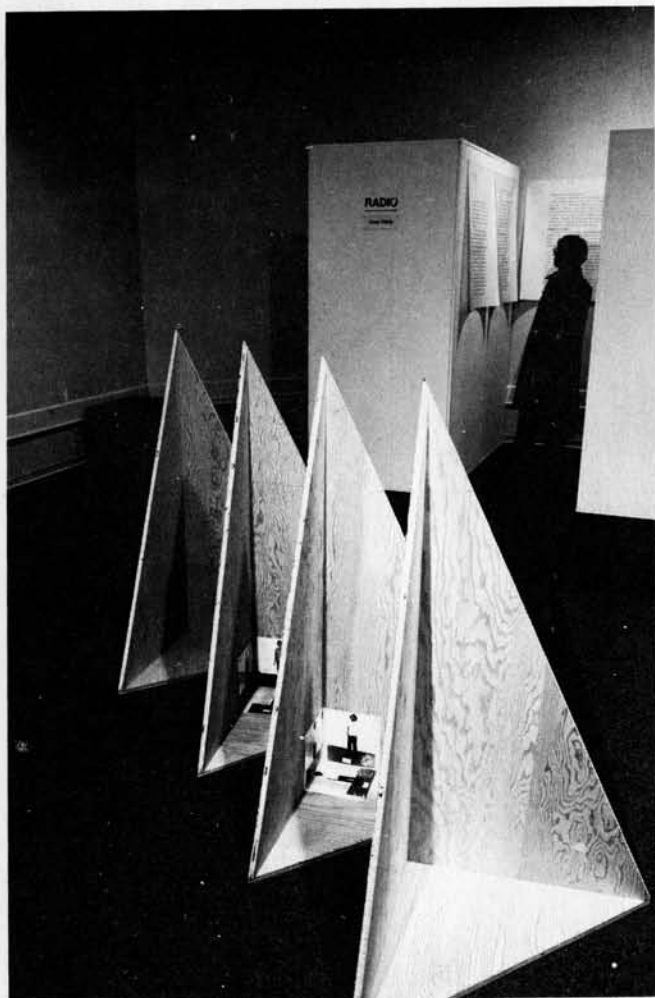
1978

Project

Vancouver Art Gallery  
ANOTHER 2 PROJECTS: People Language

Number

1



PLEASE COMPLETE AND RETURN

Description

4 CORNERS - 1977

SIZE: 48" X 24" X 18"

MATERIALS: PLYWOOD, BLACK & WHITE PHOTOS, CIBACHROME PHOTOS, PINK spray BOMB PAINT.

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1978

Project

ANOTHER 2 PROJECT: people / Language

Number

1



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Description

PIA SHANDEL, T.V. COMMENTATOR FOR CHANNEL 13 CKVL, VAN COVBE.  
MS SHANDEL PARTICIPATED IN DOCUMENTING THIS PROJECT AND ASSISTED IN  
PRODUCING A T.V. TAPE WHICH GAVE THE FEELINGS ASSOCIATED WITH THE GATHERING  
OF THESE PEOPLE.





# INFORMATION

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Date  
1978

Project

EYE SCREAM RESTAURANT

Number

ANOTHER 2 PROJECTS: People/Language 1



PLEASE COMPLETE AND RETURN

Description

MEDIA BOOTHS FOR DISPLAYING THE INFORMATION CREATED BY  
PAUL GRESCOE (MAGAZINE) ART PERRY (NEWSPAPER) ANNE PETRIE (RADIO) &  
PIA SHANDEL (TELEVISION)

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# INFORMATION

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Date

1978

Project

VANCOUVER ART GALLERY

ANOTHER 2 PROJECTS: People/Language

Number

1

TRANSCRIPTION OF INTERVIEWS BY ANN PETRIE, OF THE CBC,

WITH PARTICIPANTS IN N.E. THING CO. EXHIBITION, PEOPLE/

LANGUAGE

Ann Petrie Mrs Pink, can you tell me what you are doing right now?

Mrs Pink I am painting a little corner here. I am transposing with Mr Green. It means that pink is jumping to his green and his green is jumping to my pin Pollinating.

AP Ooooh, my goodness, Mrs Pink. Sounds rather racy to me.

Mrs Pink Get old Green in here, it was his idea.

AP Mrs Pink are you feeling good about your name tonight?

Mrs Pink Better than ever. Yes, better than ever.

AP Well, does this mean that at times you have felt bad about your name.

Mrs Pink Well, no, I haven't felt too bad about pink, but I felt better about my other name.

AP And what was your other name?

Mrs Pink Baldwin.

AP You like Baldwin better than Pink?

Mrs Pink Yes, because everybody asks how to spell Pink and they confuse it with Fink and other words. I've been called Mrs Dink before, at London Drugs.

Mr Green This is Mr Green speaking and that's all they say. "E" on the end, no. I'm not from New

York, and I am not Jewish.

AP Well, Mr Green you have been sort of, we might say, messing around with Mrs Pink here.

Mr Green Messing around with Mrs Pink has been most enjoyable.

AP Do you think Mr Green, that you and Mrs Pink have anything in common?

Mr Green She's wearing a pink sweater and I'm wearing a green sweater. Complementary opposites in the colour scale.

AP Have you ever had any strong feelings about Mr Green?

Mr Green Yeah, as a professional artist, I've run into so many Greens that you get to a point where you walk into a gallery in a strange city and there's another Green on the wall. And you say, my God, he's got my last name. And like, in the art world a last name is most important to be unique. If you are just a Mr Green, or Mr Black, or Mr Brown, then you have got so much more competition. I went through a real crisis about that until I said, "Well shit, if Smith can make it, if two Smiths can make it in New York City, well one Green can make it in Vancouver or wherever he wants to do it.

AP You could become a chartreuse.

Mr Green Or a viridian or a vert.

Ms Grey I don't paint in grey.

AP Oh, you're a painter?

Ms Grey Yeah.

AP But look, you could sell this. This could be big.

Anonymous Ms Grey paints in grey.

Ms Grey Ms Grey doesn't paint in grey. Every other colour but grey.

Mr Whitehead You know the usual pimple jokes, whitehead, blackhead, whatever. I still get phone calls - kids phoning up saying "Oh, I'm sorry, I've got the wrong pimple." You get it all the time. Somebody dials up. You know, looks in the phone book, dials the phone number: "Hello, is Mr Blackhead there?" "No" "Oh, I'm sorry I've got the wrong pimple."

AP What do you say?

Mr Whitehead Nothing.

Ms Grey As long as anyone doesn't say "You look like a Grey". Fine. When I'm in school and I wear grey, and I say my last name, and they say "Oh, Grey - you better wear grey next time so I know," and I don't, I refuse to.

PLEASE COMPLETE AND RETURN

Description

ANN PETRIE'S TAPE USED IN people/Language Exhibition in the Radio Booth. MS. PETRIE TALKED TO ALL THE PEOPLE INVOLVED IN THE people/Language Project.

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# INFORMATION

N.E. THING CO. LTD.

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Date

1978

Project

Vancouver Art Gallery  
ANOTHER 2 PROJECTS: People/Language

Number

1.

Mr Light

The only thing they ever said since I was in school was, "Let there be light," and that was about the only pun they ever made, except some closer friends call me Candle, but that's about the only thing.

AP

Well, you know, those are better jokes than the ones I have heard from other people. You know, "Let there be light" is pretty dramatic. Well, OK, didn't mean very much to me. But I have come to the conclusion that, what's in a name? If you make a remark, even if you want it to be funny, or think it's funny about somebody else's name - I don't feel that it can ever have any positive vibrations. I feel that I would go through life avoiding making a pun or fun of anybody's name.

AP

Ms Beach, we have not had a chance to talk yet.

Ms Beach

It's getting so late in the evening, who can talk?

AP

Well, Ms Beach, if you don't mind me saying, I saw you being rather friendly with Mr Light.

Ms Beach

Yes, we are rather friendly. Well, he would really like me to refer to him as my lover, and that's what he is. So we are pretty friendly.

AP

Well, if you two either decide to get married, or do something serious, you could become Mr and Mrs Beach Light.

Ms Beach

That's right. We travelled under that name. You know, on the airline bags you have to put something, so we put Beach Light.

AP

Isn't that wonderful!

Ms Beach

Yes, it is.

AP

So you are very conscious of your name?

Ms Beach

Yes, I am. Mostly because people ask me to spell it. On the phone they think it is going to be Beech instead of Bea, and I say "No, it's like going to the beach," and then you know how to spell it.

AP

When you met Mr Light did you feel that you had something in common? I mean as far as names go?

Ms Beach

As far as our names go, no.

AP

It's only something you discovered afterwards, I guess.

Ms Beach

That's it. No, it didn't immediately strike us. There were other things, somehow yes.

AP

Well, I hope you stick with Mr Light.

Ms Beach

Thank you.

AP

I mean I hope you are not attracted to a house. Do you think you could be a Mrs Beach House?

Mrs Beach

Beach House. I have already done that. No, no. In the pictures.

AP

Oh, good.

Ms Beach

Only in pictures.

AP

Because Mr House is married to Mrs House.

Ms Beach

Yes, I understand that.

AP

We wouldn't want to start anything.

Ms Beach

Actually we were Beach Houses, put that one on.

Mr House

My father's name is Cliff House and he always takes his picture in San Francisco in the famous restaurant, Cliff House, big sign - he has his picture taken every year. He goes down there and he smiles and has his picture taken beside Cliff House. It's very ridiculous.

AP

Well, Mr House, Jr., what is your first name?

Mr House

My name is Ted House.

AP

So, I guess your father Cliff decided that he should straighten things out when you came along?

Ted House

Yes, he could have called me Maxwell House, or Publishing House, or Outhouse; but it was Ted, just straight Ted.

AP

Have you ever in a moment of real anxiety thought about changing your name?

Ted House

No, I kind of like my name.

AP

You've had the family crest drawn up?

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Description

CONTINUATION OF ANNU PETRIE'S TAPE.

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# INFORMATION

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Date  
1978

Project

Vancouver Art Gallery  
ANOTHER 2 PROJECTS: People/Language

Number

1.

Ted House Yeah, right, we did that whole routine; my dad really liked that, we did that one Christmas.

Mrs House It's sort of interesting because my in-laws, Mr and Mrs Cliff House, live in a very neat house in Victoria.

Ted House Yeah, it was built in 1889.

Mrs House Built in 1889 and last Christmas we gave them a picture of the house, and the year before, we gave them a coat of arms for the house.

Ted House I have fourteen brothers, and one sister we have a whole huge house.

Mrs House His parents, you see, run a group house for foster children.

Ted House Yeah, that's right for foster children, a lot of little houses running around, that's right.

AP What do you think about what's going on here tonight? What is this all about?

Ted House I think it's great, I think it's super, I really like the fact that everyone here feels important, they all have an identity, everyone's running around feeling like all of a sudden ... I've talked to more people tonight who have said the same things I have said, they've said "Oh yeah, we have such a common name that it confuses everybody." You know I think it's really great.

AP Ms Good, what's happened to you today?

Good Slightly inebriated above anything else.

Good Gained a few extra pounds.

AP How are you feeling about your name now?

Good Oh, it's a good name. Actually I've had too much wine, you shouldn't be talking to me.

Anonymous My thoughts are more censored on feeling that people need to be drawn together on a pretext, to become friendly and to be able to talk to each other, because we are all strangers here and we have worked up quite a nice feeling together, by the end of the evening.

I was really very pleased and surprised and excited because if you had asked me what my real hobby was, I would say human relations.

And I was able here to go to anybody with a name on their back, and say, "Hello, Mrs Black," and they reacted in that way, and this is just beautiful. Because I feel that's what the world needs. Because with these apartment houses, you know, you push the button and then someone says, "Who the hell are you?" and you can't even go ... We need this communication and what we did tonight is a great part of that.

AP Grey, what about it?

Grey It's my name.

Mr Pink It's a cheerful grey, though. Grey is usually rather associated with dull.

AP It's also an artist.

Mr Pink But Janet is far from dull, rather cheerful, right?

AP Is it Mr and Mrs Grey that I am speaking to?

Mr Pink No, NO, NO.

Mr Pink Pink.

AP I am speaking to Miss Grey and Mr Pink. You have sort of gotten together, I mean, you know, gotten to know each other tonight?

Miss Grey Oh yeah.

AP Hmmm, what does Mrs Pink feel about this?

I feel fine because I think Mrs Grey is terrific.

AP What do you think that Iain and Ingrid are doing here tonight?

Anonymous Female I think it's a difficult question to answer, because it's like nothing I have ever seen before, let me put it that way. Is it something new?

Iain Baxter We're a community.

Ingrid Baxter Super, I really appreciated all the people.

Iain Baxter It's really great, I think everyone learned a lot; we learned a lot; and I think it does a lot for building a kind of esprit de corps between people and their names.

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Description

CONTINUATION OF ANN PETRIE'S TAPE

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# INFORMATION

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Date

1978

Project

VANCOUVER ART GALLERY  
ANOTHER 2 PROJECTS: People Language

Number

1

Ingrid Baxter We have a whole new society, they have  
developed a whole new society. Tonight.  
Have you heard of SUN? Society for the  
Preservation of Unusual Names?

AP Did you learn anything tonight that you  
didn't expect to learn?  
A re-affirmation of people again.

Ingrid Baxter You can get a bunch of strangers together for  
a ridiculous reason or not, and all of them  
interact and have a great deal of fun and  
appreciate each other and have respect for  
each other. We formulated a whole lot of  
ideas we would like to be done, partly to  
make sure that the idea flowed, that in a  
way, it's really not necessary because they  
kept coming up with them. You know when you  
were working with that group and that long  
sentence, that was super, SAY, GOOD, GREY,  
PINK, BEACH, HOUSE, WITH, WHITE, WINTER, LIGHT,  
~~BLACK~~  
WITH, YOUNG ~~BLACK~~ CAT.

Iain Baxter Everyone remembered their names, very good.

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Description CONTINUATION OF ANN PETRIE'S TAPE.

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Date

1978

Project

VANCOUVER ART GALLERY

ANOTHER 2 PROJECTS: People/Language

Number

1.

Meet the Houses, Corners, Kettles and Pipes

## N. E. Thing goes in gallery name game

The following article has been verified as a legitimate work of art.

Authorized as such by Alvin Balkind, chief curator of the Vancouver Art Gallery, and the co-presidents of N. E. Thing Co. (Ingrid and Iain Baxter), what you are about to read will become part of the Baxters' exhibition opening Sunday at the gallery.

All of this raises some interesting and ethical questions about the role of the art critic. First and foremost is the fact that, by allowing this story to be displayed in a public art gallery, I will inevitably be authorizing its use as hype for N. E. Thing.

But I have yet to see a critique — positive or negative — that has not been used by either the artists or the galleries for their own benefit. It seems to be an unwritten code that any review is a good review. Names in print and all that.

Purists will, no doubt, feel that a critic should remain aloof, at a perceptible distance from his subject. To become part of the exhibition I review could be viewed as an incestuous bit of tail-biting, an accusation directed at artists who wrote heavy-handed accounts on their own work in journals such as Artforum during the late-1960s.

My reason for accepting the invitation of the Vancouver Art Gallery and N. E. Thing Co. to be part of the exhibit — Another 2 Projects: People/Language and Eye Scream — is predicated on the Baxters' attitude to



art perry

ART

two rather down-played premises in mainstream art: entertainment and commercialism.

Any artists who refer to themselves as a company and who use the Vancouver Art Gallery as a promotional forum for their Eye Scream restaurant on a grant from the Canada Council have more gall and honesty than anyone I can think of outside of Warhol and his Andy Mat restaurant chain. There is something refreshingly deviant about the whole exercise.

As for the entertainment value of the exhibition, I can't remember the last time a gallery, an artist and a critic got together for a good time, but that's what they're trying to do with Another 2 Projects.

The most entertaining factor of this exhibit, though, is completely divorced from the world of art. It is a group of people who were picked from the Vancouver telephone directory because their surnames read as nouns or adjectives.

In the white pages, the Baxters found Mr. and Mrs. House, the Kettles, Ms. Say, Mr. Corner, Mrs. Pipe, Mr. and Mrs. Pink, the Whites — hundreds of the city's prime nouns and adjectives (as well as one lonely preposition, Mr. With). They were all invited to a pre-exhibition get-together at the gallery (see photo above) where they mixed and mingled into memorable phrases.

Mr. Black met Mrs. Kettle. Ms. Say met Mr. Gray. Mr. Winter met Mr. White. Mrs. Pink wore a rose-colored sweater, and Mr. Rain said the whole idea was "like a mystery novel where people gather together for an unknown reason."

As the evening progressed, the purpose unfolded. Guided in front of cameras and asked to speak into cassette recorders, the assembled name-people realized they were being documented for the sake of fine art — with the exhibition featuring their voices and photographs as well as constructions depicting their names (such as something called Still Life: Apples with Pipe and Kettles). It would become, they were told, the basis for the current exhibition.

Mrs. Pipe, a spry 92, was tickled. Mr. Valentine blew a kiss in the excitement, and Mr. & Mrs. Flag waved frantically. All were glad to be part of the art process.

If you have been left out of the art process simply because your surname doesn't jibe with an object or adjective, don't fret. The newspaper you are reading is also part of the Another 2 Projects exhibit. Published in a limited edition (limited to today's Province). Who knows, it may even increase in value.

Even if it doesn't, N. E. Thing Co. has again proved that art is more than a superficial game.

It's an entertaining and profitable name game. And, if you don't believe me, my name isn't Art.



There is a House (front row, left), a couple of Blacks (second row, right), a Valentine in the third row (left), and even a White-Kettle combination (top row, right) in the People/Language and Eye Scream exhibition opening Sunday at the Vancouver Art Gallery.

PLEASE COMPLETE AND RETURN

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.....  
.....  
.....

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Description

ARTICLE BY ART PERRY ON PEOPLE INVOLVED IN People/Language project.

Seal





# INFORMATION

N.E. THING CO. LTD.

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Date

1978

Project

Vancouver Art Gallery  
ANOTHER 2 PROJECTS: People/Language

Number

1

JAN 21, 1978  
**THE Canadian**  
the province

## Name Game

If Mr. Say and Ms. Gray, Mr. Green and Mrs. Pink come to your party, you've got an art show

**M**rs. Black arrived at the party in a black velvet suit. Only that afternoon another guest, Mr. Light, had repaired two electric lights. The bracelet Mrs. Yacht was wearing had a charm in the shape of a sailboat. Ms. Gray, clad in a gray sweater, was an art student. And Mr. Say seldom stopped talking.

It would have been a conventional wine and cheese party if the 41 guests hadn't had one thing in common: last names that sounded like everyday objects, colors, qualities or parts of speech — in one case even a preposition. Mrs. With, meet Miss Helps. Mr. Green, this is Mrs. Pink. Hey, Wood, do you know Box? It was such a punster's dream that it should have been a nightmare for the people at the party. But for once, everybody in the room answered to common nouns or verbs or adjectives and together they could celebrate their extraordinary surnames instead of having to spell them out or feel embarrassed about them or futilely try to ignore them.

The guests were more than partygoers: they were willing participants in an exhibition at the Vancouver Art Gallery. A photographer was recording their presence that late autumn evening and, a month later, their pictures would become part of a major gallery show by Iain and Ingrid Baxter, husband and wife and West Coast artists whose antic works make Andy Warhol (of the Pop-Art Campbell's soup cans) look like Norman Rockwell. (of the sentimental *Saturday Evening Post* covers).

In the cause of art, the Baxters have played Monopoly with thousands of dollars of real money in a Toronto bank; dropped a movie camera from the top of the Leaning Tower of Pisa to record, on the way down, Galileo's Law of Gravity; and displayed their own son and daughter on pedestals to demonstrate that the ultimate creative act is a child. They've mocked the middle-class tendency to use art as decoration by exhibiting a full-sized sofa in front of a picture of the same sofa, then entitling the piece *A Painting To Match the Couch*.

The Baxters have long called themselves the N.E. Thing Co. Ltd., but lately they've entered the realm of real business in Vancouver by buying and then selling a photo laboratory and opening a funky but elegant restaurant cum art gallery named Eye Scream.

For artists, the Baxters have been intimately involved in the community. Iain — a former junior ski champion in Alberta, with a bachelor's degree in zoology and a master's in education — has taught fine arts at Simon Fraser University, the University of British Columbia and York University in Toronto. Ingrid — who's taking her master's in physical education — teaches piano and swimming. And together they involved the community in the creation of their recent Vancouver Art Gallery show entitled *Another Two Projects*.

One project centred on their restaurant-gallery with bizarre, funny photographs of sober-suited people smothered in whipped cream, or lying on an actual bed heaped with lettuce, or with fried eggs on their cheeks (*Presidents Of N.E. Thing Co. With Egg On Their Face*).

The other project was an account of the party for guests with exceptional surnames. The Baxters not only recorded the event in photographs, but they also invited journalists to chronicle the party and present their reports as part of the final exhibition. Gallery-goers could hear taped interviews by a radio reporter, see film coverage by a TV hostess and read an art critic's review from the Vancouver *Province*. The critic, coincidentally, is named Art — Art Perry.

The only people at the party with meaningless names were the hosts, but Vancouver Art Gallery curator Alvin Balkind compensated for his by greeting guests with a handshake and a "Hi, Alvin's the name and art's the game." A couple who came early, Mr. and Mrs. Jan With, wandered about looking as if they'd got off at the wrong bus stop. Like the others, invited by letter and follow-up telephone calls, they had simply been picked out of the phone book. Jan With explained that his last name is Norwegian and pronounced "Wit." His wife, Phyllis, wondered: "What part of speech are we anyway?"

The young Glenn Young pointed out that his original Chinese name could have had several English spellings. As it was, he's always been assured: "You'll never get old" and "You'll always die Young." Milton Yacht's name is also a translation — in Russian it's pronounced "Yut." His wife's butcher calls her Mrs. Longboat.

As guests arrived, they were given

BY PAUL GRESCOE

name signs to be worn on their backs. Judy Miles insisted on rechristening herself The Kilometre Kid. ("What's the matter with you? Haven't you been converted to metric?")

Mrs. White was seen standing next to Mrs. Winter.

Agnes Corner came with her 26-year-old son Mark, the last male Corner in a family that traces its ancestry back to the 1400s. It's an old British name that may be topographical in origin but is more likely occupational, a contraction of "corner." As a child, Mark would be taunted by kids crying: "Corners are square!" Nowadays only computers



The Baxters with egg on their face.

seem to mock him, refusing to accept his surname as legitimate.

The grown-up Wilf Kettle still gets teased — "When you're hot, you're hot" — and his wife has people telling her: "There you go, Elaine Kettle, letting off steam again." The couple reported that the *Guinness Book of World Records* includes a Canadian Kettle, a Captain Wilson Kettle of Port Aux Basques, Newfoundland, who died in 1963 at the age of 102, leaving a total of 582 living descendants.

Looking for a good mate to his name at the party, all law student David Rain could find was Mr. Light — to produce a "Light Rain." "It's a Scottish name," Rain said, "but it has a double root: the rain that comes down and the queen's reign — the power and the might, and the precipitation."

Mrs. David Pink was chatting with James Valentine, a hairdresser.

When Maria Newberry was about to wed Edward House, her only concern about her married name was its brevity. "It's such a straightforward name that it confused people. I had to say 'House — like doors and windows.'" Her husband and his family enjoy the name: "My

father's name is Cliff House and he always goes to San Francisco and gets his picture taken in front of the restaurant there with the same name. And we have family jokes: 'Maxwell is in the coffee business.' I threatened to name my son Publishing." In fact, as a pop keyboard musician and songwriter, he has a publishing company named Hot House Music.

Alan White mentioned that practical jokers phone to ask: "Is this the White House?" He replies: "One moment please... President speaking."

The middle-aged Bruce Box, a purchasing agent and a bit-part actor with the CBC, was wary about attending the party: "Is this going to cost me something? Is this a front for something that could be illicit?" As he relaxed, he told about the time he called the police to report a stolen car and gave his name "Box, B-O-X." To which the woman on the switchboard responded: "How do you spell that?"

Frollicking around the gallery like a young Groucho Marx, Al Say mentioned the aptness of his surname — as a Xerox technician, he's in the communications business. And the name has literary significance, he said, because it appears in Shakespeare's *Henry II*. He meant *Henry VI, Part Two*, where Lord Say is beheaded by a band of rebels after a melodramatic speech that begins: "Hear me but speak." At one point the voluble Al Say played a drunk with an American flag as he posed for a photograph to be titled "Oh, Say, can you see?"

The rosy-cheeked Maxine Apple munches on a Delicious apple.

Gunter Light proudly observed that he was indeed lightfooted. In fact a paralyzed foot does not prevent him from playing tennis and crawling around on roofs in his job as a home repairman. He is 74.

But the oldest guest was the gray-haired Mrs. Blanche Pipe, who arrived with her daughter in one hand and a cane in the other. "There's lots worse names," she remarked. "Pipe comes from England; it seems nearly everybody was named after some utensil." She felt somewhat out of place at the party, she admitted. She was, after all, 92. But when asked how the Baxters had persuaded her to attend such an outrageous affair, she replied with pluck that pleased the artists: "I'm not too old to be curious."

PLEASE COMPLETE AND RETURN

.....  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....

N.E. THING COMPANY LIMITED

Trade Mark ©

Description *ARTICLE BY PAUL GRESCOE, WHICH APPEARED IN THE CANADIAN MAGAZINE, JAN. 21, 1978. GRESCOE IS ONE OF CANADA'S BEST KNOWN FEATURE WRITERS.*



# INFORMATION

N.E. THING CO. LTD.

1419 Riverside Drive North Vancouver B.C. Canada

Date

1978

Project

VANCOUVER ART GALLERY

ANOTHER 2 PROJECTS: EYE SCREAM RESTAURANT

Number

1



PLEASE COMPLETE AND RETURN

Description

FRONT OF EYE SCREAM RESTAURANT AT 2043 W 4TH, VANCOUVER B.C.  
DESIGNED BY IAIN BAXTER & ALLAN CLARKE, BUILT BY MURRAY DAWSON, IAIN BAXTER,  
DAN ROBERTS, BOB JAMES, BRUCE EATON & PARTNERS OF ROBERTS. BUILT DURING  
1996 & OPENED APRIL 7, 1977. PLUS BOB EDWARDS & CHUCK

N.E. THING COMPANY LIMITED  
Trade Mark ©



# INFORMATION

N.E. THING CO. LTD.

1419 Riverside Drive North Vancouver B.C. Canada

Date

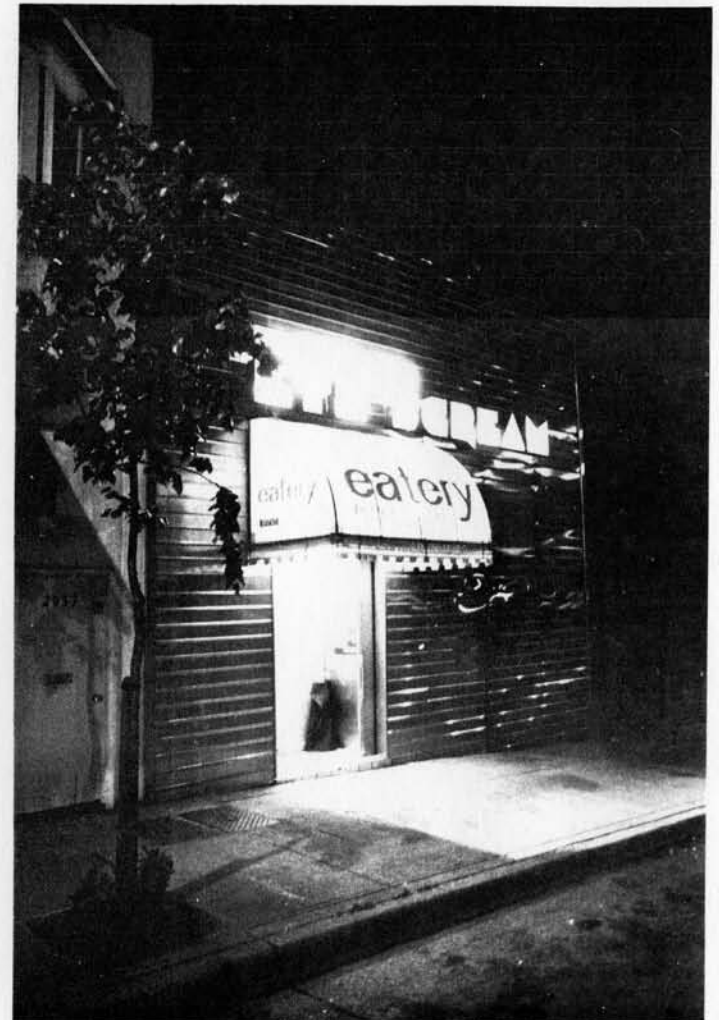
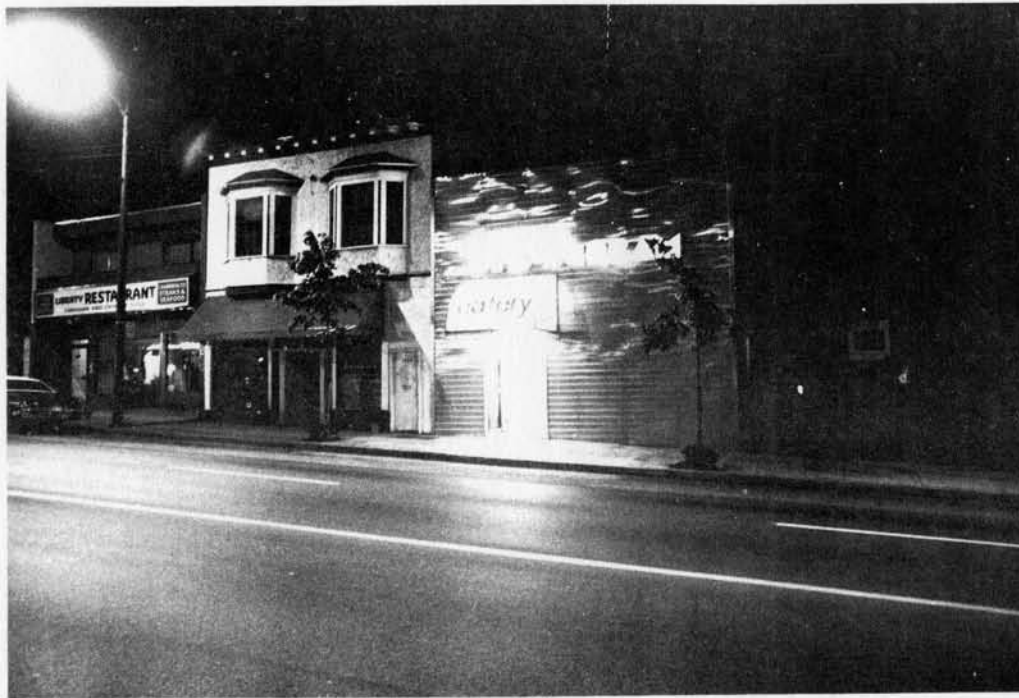
1978

Project

VANCOUVER ART GALLERY  
ANOTHER 2 PROJECTS: EYE SCREAM RESTAURANT

Number

1



PLEASE COMPLETE AND RETURN

Description

N.E. THING COMPANY LIMITED

Trade Mark ©





# INFORMATION

N.E. THING CO. LTD.

1419 Riverside Drive North Vancouver B.C. Canada

Date

1978

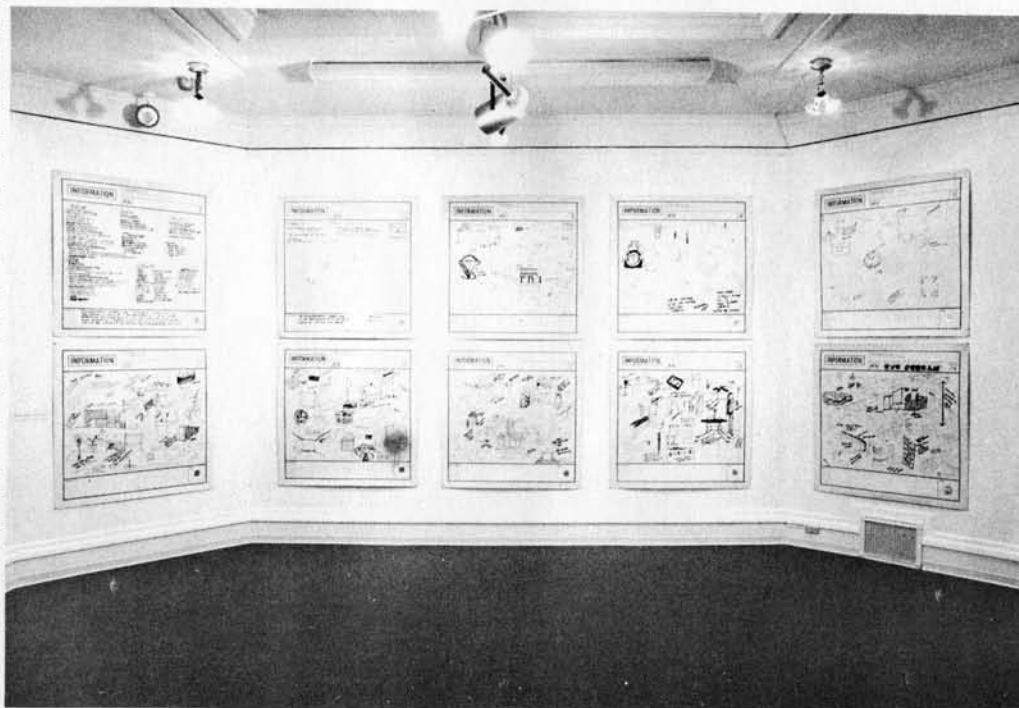
Project

VANCOUVER ART GALLERY

ANOTHER 2 PROJECTS: EYE SCREAM RESTAURANT

Number

1



PLEASE COMPLETE AND RETURN

Description

DRAWINGS AND SKETCHES ABOUT EYE SCREAM RESTAURANT. THESE WERE  
LEFT ON WALLS AND WORKED ON DURING ENTIRE BUILDING OF THE  
RESTAURANT. IN VANCOUVER, B.C. THE RESTAURANT WILL BE A FORUM FOR IDEAS  
(VISUAL, AURAL, MOVEMENT, & A CELEBRATION OF THE ORDINARY) IT WILL BE AN  
N.E. THING CO. VEHICLE FOR CHANGE, CULTURE, QUALITY FRIVOLITY, SENSITIVITY INFORMATION,  
ANYTHING.

N.E. THING COMPANY LIMITED

Trade Mark ©



# INFORMATION

N.E. THING CO. LTD.

1419 Riverside Drive North Vancouver B.C. Canada

Date

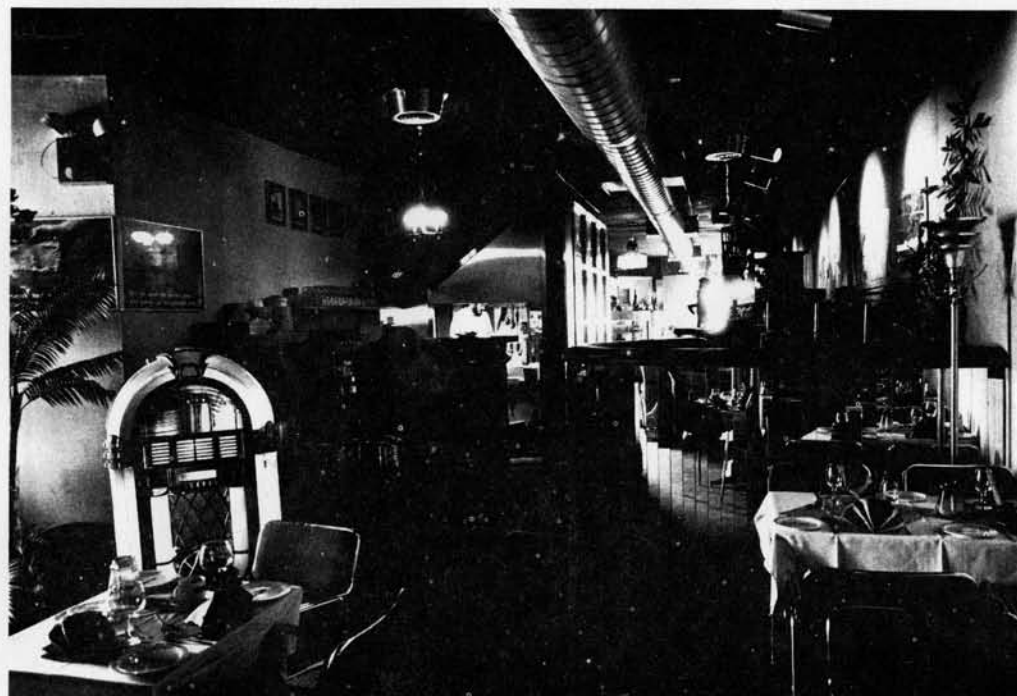
1978

Project

ANOTHER 2 PROJECTS: EYESCREEN RESTAURANT

Number

1



PLEASE COMPLETE AND RETURN

Description

INTERIOR VIEW, WHERE OPENING OF "ANOTHER 2 PROJECTS" WAS HELD.  
GENERAL MANAGER, IAN DEWAR USING CALCULATOR.

N.E. THING COMPANY LIMITED

Trade Mark ©



# INFORMATION

N.E. THING CO. LTD.

1419 Riverside Drive North Vancouver B.C. Canada

Date

1978

Project

Vancouver Art Gallery  
ANOTHER 2 PROJECTS: EYE SCREAM RESTAURANT

Number

1



PLEASE COMPLETE AND RETURN

Description

"A WAITER DOLLOPPED WITH WHIPPED CREAM & TOPPED WITH CHERRIES" - 1977

Size: 20" x 30" x 40"

Materials: Colored Cibachrome, Table, Cloth.

N.E. THING COMPANY LIMITED

Trade Mark ©





# INFORMATION

N.E. THING CO. LTD.

1419 Riverside Drive North Vancouver B.C. Canada

Date

1978

Project

Vancouver Art Gallery

ANOTHER 2 PROJECTS: EYE SCREAM RESTAURANT

Number

1



PLEASE COMPLETE AND RETURN

Description

"A WAITER STUFFED WITH CELERY" 1977

SIZE: 30"X40", HAND TINTED, BLACK & WHITE PHOTO.

N.E. THING COMPANY LIMITED

Trade Mark ©



# INFORMATION

N.E. THING CO. LTD.

1419 Riverside Drive North Vancouver B.C. Canada

Date  
1978

Project *VANCOUVER ART GALLERY*  
*ANOTHER 2 PROJECTS: EYE SCREAM RESTAURANT*

Number  
1



PLEASE COMPLETE AND RETURN

Description

"OWNERS OF A RESTAURANT ON A BED OF LETTUCE" 1977

SIZE 30"X40", HAND TINTED, BLACK & WHITE PHOTO.

N.E. THING COMPANY LIMITED

Trade Mark ©



# INFORMATION

N.E. THING CO. LTD.

1419 Riverside Drive North Vancouver B.C. Canada

Date

1978

Project

Vancouver Art Gallery

ANOTHER 2 PROJECTS: EYE SCREAM RESTAURANT

Number

1



PLEASE COMPLETE AND RETURN

Description

"Co-President, N.E. Thing Co., as an Open Faced Sandwich" - 1977

N.E. THING COMPANY LIMITED

Trade Mark ©

Size: 30"x40" Black & white, Hand tinted photo.





# INFORMATION

N.E. THING CO. LTD.

1419 Riverside Drive North Vancouver B.C. Canada

Date

1978

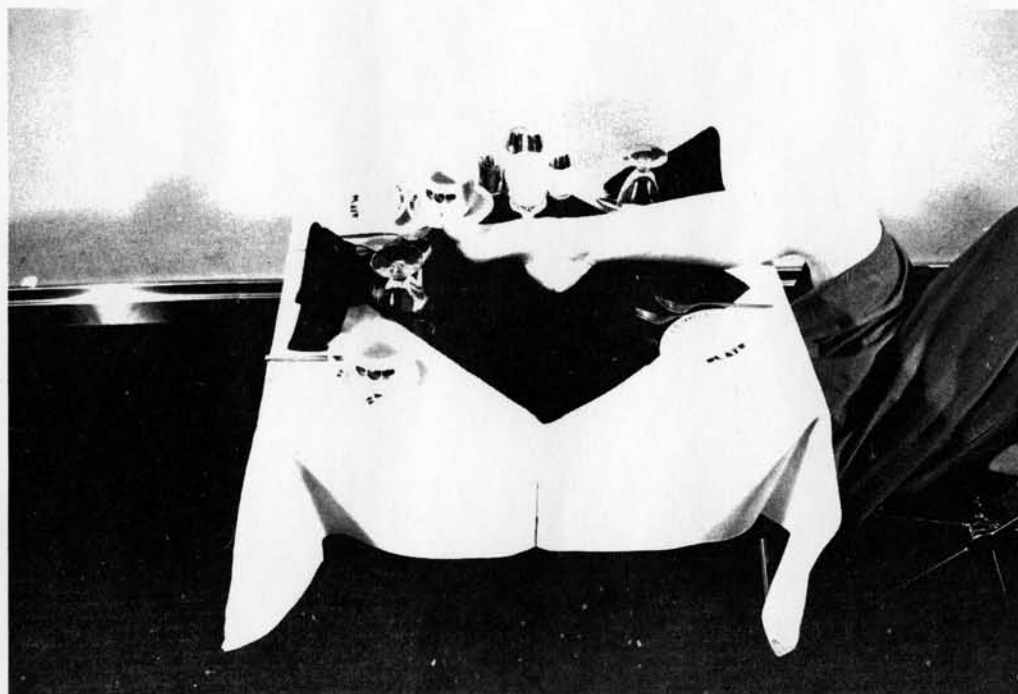
Project

VANCOUVER ART GALLERY

ANOTHER 2 PROJECTS: EYE SCREAM RESTAURANT

Number

1



PLEASE COMPLETE AND RETURN

Description

"A WAITRESS' LEG GENEROUSLY BLUSHED WITH BUTTER"-1977

Size: 20" X 30" X 40"

MATERIALS: COLORED CIBACHROME, TABLE CLOTH.

N.E. THING COMPANY LIMITED

Trade Mark ©



# INFORMATION

N.E. THING CO. LTD.

1419 Riverside Drive North Vancouver B.C. Canada

Date

1978

Project

VANCOUVER ART GALLERY

ANOTHER 2 PROJECTS: EYE SCREAM RESTAURANT

Number

1



PLEASE COMPLETE AND RETURN

Description

ANOTHER VIEW OF ENVIRONMENTAL SETUP OF TYPICAL TABLE AT EYE SCREAM. SHOWS SETUP OF UTENSILS. SOUNDS OF RESTAURANT WERE PLAYED INTO THIS ROOM FROM SPEAKER SET ON TOP OF LIGHT STANDARD TO RIGHT OF TABLE.

N.E. THING COMPANY LIMITED

Trade Mark ©



# INFORMATION

N.E. THING CO. LTD.

1419 Riverside Drive North Vancouver B.C. Canada

Date

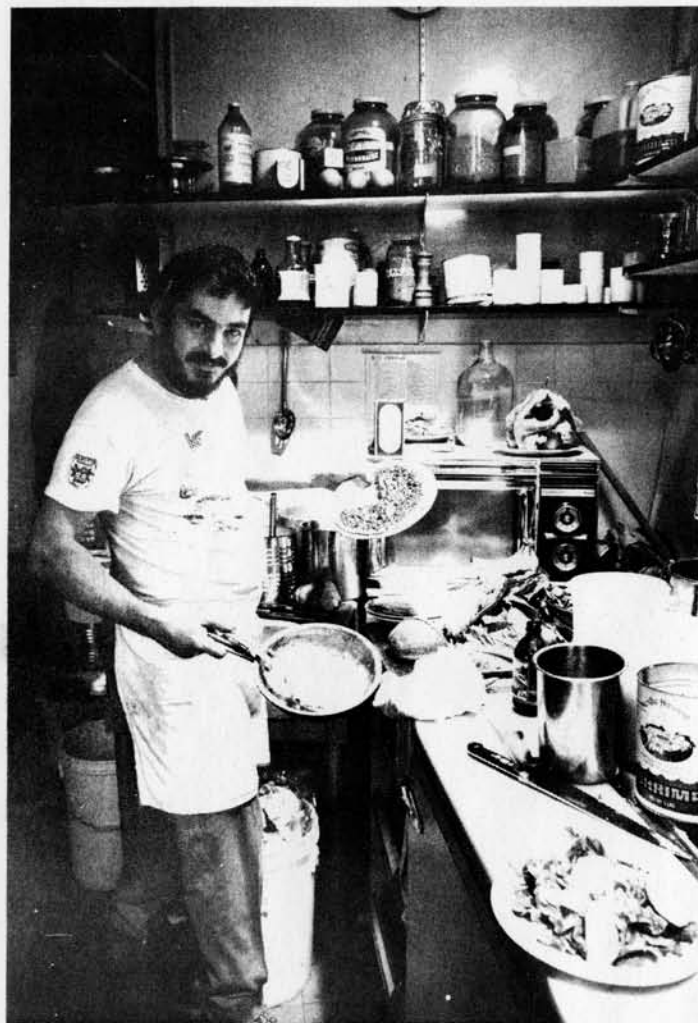
1978

Project

ANOTHER 2 PROJECTS: EYE SCREAM RESTAURANT

Number

1



PLEASE COMPLETE AND RETURN

Description

INTERIOR VIEW OF KITCHEN SHOW SOME SALAD DISHES.  
CHEF, JIM TAYLOR DISPLAYS HIS FAMOUS HOME MADE PIG, ONE  
OF EYE SCREAM'S SPECIALTIES.

N.E. THING COMPANY LIMITED

Trade Mark ©

Seal





# INFORMATION

N.E. THING CO. LTD.

1419 Riverside Drive North Vancouver B.C. Canada

Date

1978

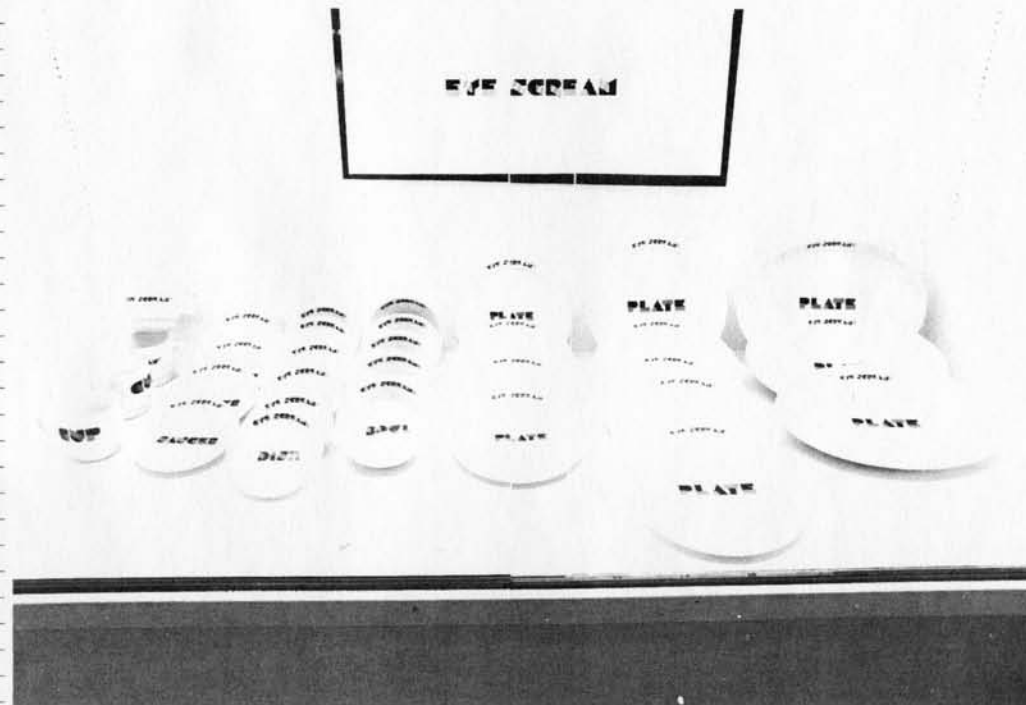
Project

Vancouver Art Gallery

ANOTHER 2 PROJECTS: EYESCREEN RESTAURANT

Number

/



PLEASE COMPLETE AND RETURN

Description

DISPLAY CASE IN GALLERY SHOWING EYE SCREEN SPECIALLY  
DESIGNED (BY IAIN BAXTER) DISHES & CUPS ETC. THESE ARE THE NORMAL  
DISHES USED IN THE RESTAURANT. THEY ARE ALSO FOR SALE AS ART ITEMS.



N.E. THING COMPANY LIMITED

Trade Mark ©

# INFORMATION

N.E. THING CO. LTD.

1419 Riverside Drive North Vancouver B.C. Canada

Date

1978

Project

VANCOUVER ART GALLERY  
ANOTHER 2 PROJECTS: EYE SCREAM RESTAURANT

Number

/



PLEASE COMPLETE AND RETURN

Description

"OWNERS OF A RESTAURANT PILED HIGH & TOPPED WITH WHIPPED CREAM & CHERRY" - 1977

SIZE: 30"X40" HAND TINTED BLACK & WHITE PHOTO.

N.E. THING COMPANY LIMITED

Trade Mark ©



# INFORMATION

N.E. THING CO. LTD.

1419 Riverside Drive North Vancouver B.C. Canada

Date

1978

Project

ARTICLES

Number

1.

## B.C.: a few cracks in a facade of prosperity

Despite slumps in paper and mining, B.C.'s economy will outperform the national average

BY GEORGE FROEHLICH

The current state of B.C.'s economy is neatly symbolized by the failure of Ian Baxter's \$8.50 hamburger and the success of the restaurant that served it. Baxter is a west coast conceptual artist who, with his wife Ingrid and two partners, Murray and Ian Dawson, invested \$150,000 in opening a restaurant-cum-art gallery last April. They called it N.E. Thing Co.'s Eye Scream. With its shimmering aluminum front, its art-deco mirrors and stainless steel décor, with Cubist Salads and Group of Seven Snails on the menu, Eye Scream has already established itself as one of Vancouver's trendier eateries. It's already making money.

The restaurant's success demonstrates that British Columbia's economy is still rich enough to support all manner of elegant frumpies—but not, apparently, a hamburger that costs \$8.50. What you get for that price is 8 oz. of freshly-ground beef and a bun specially developed by an Austrian baker, plus caviar or anchovies on the side, all served on a stainless-steel pedestal. "But we're taking it off the menu," says Baxter. "It isn't selling. The town isn't sophisticated enough to support it."

Baxter himself, who tends to treat entrepreneurship as an art form, should appreciate the symbolism. For, although the provincial economy is expected to outperform the national average in 1978, the sky is definitely not the limit. The outlook is a thicket of contradictions.

The forest industry is facing weak pulp and paper markets, but the lumber sector is booming. Mining is in a slump, since base metal prices are depressed and vast coal developments that were proposed a few years ago have been postponed by the worldwide economic slowdown.

Also in a slump, despite the minis-

trations of a free-enterprise Social Credit government, is that fragile entity known as investor confidence. A recent survey of business attitudes by the B.C. Chamber of Commerce underscores that point. The chamber's president, Eldio Salvador, summed up

the mood: "Excessive red tape at the federal, provincial and municipal levels, insufficient availability of venture capital, high wage rates and benefits, size of the market, the high level of corporate income tax and the general business climate in the

## Prince George: Waiting...

PRINCE GEORGE: A consulting engineer says it all for this city of 63,000 in northern B.C.: "Prince George will be booming once the Alcan pipeline gets built." But then Prince George has always been dependent upon the boom-or-bust cycles that characterize the province's economy. Local business is still doing nicely at the moment, despite the fact that pulp mills in the area aren't operating at rated capacities because of the worldwide slowdown in pulp and paper demand. That's on the one hand. On the other is the expectation, held by many residents, that Prince George will become a major supply and services centre for the pipeline—probably second only to Vancouver.

Yvonne Harris is planning director of the Regional District of Fraser (population 79,000) in Prince George. "Even though building permits are not as strong as they were," she says, "commercial expansion in the city, especially in the retail and office accommodation areas, is still clipping along." But this situation is not likely to continue into the new year. The lumber mills encircling the area, which were busier than ever last summer, thanks to

strong U.S. housing starts, have slowed. As a result, Prince George must hang in there until the economic effects of the pipeline begin to be felt. And that's two years away, at the earliest. VANCOUVER: "The small businessman in Vancouver today is concerned," says Bob Morrow, the provincial director of the Canadian Federation of Independent Business. "For starters, he knows that his lot will only improve when general economic conditions improve. And besides, given the tough times, the small businessman cannot cope as well as big business does. Unlike the big companies, small firms do not have all the expertise readily available, and that hurts." This presupposes that the biggies are smiling, which is not necessarily true across the board. The hotel and restaurant field, for instance, is so sluggish that, as one innkeeper comments, "Even the people on expense accounts seem to be cutting back."

The segment of Vancouver's business community likely to do best in 1978 is retailing. The past three months have been good and this upswing is likely

Continued on page 53

art

## VAG sells out to N.E. Thing Company

By DAVID MORTON

The trouble with N.E. Thing Company's Two Projects show at the Vancouver Art Gallery is that if you go to the gallery hungry, you might be tempted to go for lunch at Ian and Ingrid Baxter's Eye Scream Restaurant. Two Projects is little more than a giant advertisement for this restaurant conveniently owned by the co-presidents of N.E. Thing Company.

N.E. Thing Company Ltd. (NETCO), is an art concept created by Vancouver artists Ian and Ingrid Baxter. It is dedicated specifically to the exploration of the meaning of the word "art," but more generally society's attitudes to the entire English language.

NETCO addresses itself to different aspects of language and transfers words into visual imagery. In an earlier show, the Baxters concerned themselves with clichés. Clichés are phrases that have lost the combined meanings of individual words. Through use of these, the new meanings take over and become so familiar that the literal meanings are forgotten.

NETCO would react to a cliché such as "Kick the bucket" by showing a human leg in the act of kicking a bucket. Irony is created by the juxtaposition of the phrase with both literal and figurative meanings.

Implicit in this kind of thing is humour and playfulness. The absurdity of NETCO's shows are

sure to bring a smile to the viewer whether or not they fit into his or her definition of art.

The shame of the Two Projects show is that a relatively interesting idea is ruined by the presentation of the exhibits and the publicity stunts for the Eye Scream Restaurant/Gallery. Before the viewer enters the show there is what appears to be an introduction to NETCO and the Two Projects on view. But the introduction becomes an explanation, even a rationalization for what is about to be seen inside the gallery.

The introduction concerns itself with the ambiguity of the word "art." "Sooner or later, nearly everyone is going to be enraged at something on the walls or the floors

(of an art gallery) because it does not conform to their definition of art."

It goes on to explain that NETCO, in an attempt to get around this ambiguity, has created a more accurate term for the word. They call art in general Sensitivity Information. It can be broken down into such categories as Sound Sensitivity Information, sensory information which is received aurally, and Visual Sensitivity Information, which accounts for the visual arts.

If N.E. Thing Company is trying to solve the ambiguity of the word "art," they fail both in idea and execution. The label of Visual Sensitivity can by no means answer the judgements of the viewer who asks the old question, "But is it art?"

One of the two projects on display is entitled People/Language. It was brought about by the gathering together of 50 Vancouver residents with surnames consisting of common nouns, verbs, adjectives and adverbs.

Such people as Mr. Green, Mr. Young, Ms. Pink and Mrs. Pipe were photographed with name cards identifying them at their feet. The photographs were then compiled to form statements with the surnames of the people. A piece entitled "Young Green Apple" consists simply of Mr. Young, Mr. Green and Ms. Apple grouped in that order in one photograph.

The work of art is then completed by the addition of an object, or objects, which are described in the picture. In the above case, the photograph would be accompanied by a fresh green apple.

The idea is interesting, but carried to the extent that is shown

at the Vancouver Art Gallery, the idea becomes repetitive. After catching on to the idea, and a few smiles, the viewer can only momentarily enjoy the variations before they become tired.

The second project to be seen at the Gallery is the Eye Scream Restaurant/Gallery exhibit. There is little to be said of this except that it consists of visual displays of things that might be encountered in the actual restaurant. One piece shows a table with three seated dummies being served by a waiter.

Celebration of the ordinary is fine to an extent, and a restaurant is relatively ordinary. But the idea of using an art gallery as a place to advertise Eye Scream, whether or not it is indeed unique, does not conform to this reviewer's definition of art. Art is not just anything, that much can be said.

As if the mere presence of typical scenes in the Eye Scream restaurant wasn't enough, N.E. Thing Company manages to obtain even more publicity by inviting representative members of various media to cover the People/Language event.

Such people as Art Perry, Province art critic, and Pia Shandel of CKVU were on hand at the name gathering and were informed by the Baxters that they were participating in an art event. The subsequent articles, and radio and television shows would be certified works of art as well, they were informed.

It is a fine way to attract publicity to say that anything produced by certain members of the media is a work of art. It is interesting that such flattery would fool these people, including the Vancouver Art Gallery.

(B)

### BUSINESS REPLY CARD

No Postage Stamp Necessary if Mailed in Canada

Postage will be paid by



### Canadian Business

59 Front Street East  
Toronto, Ontario  
M5E 9Z9

PLEASE COMPLETE AND RETURN

Description

(A.) Canadian Business, Editor, Ross Alexander  
(B.) University of B.C. student paper

N.E. THING COMPANY LIMITED

Trade Mark ©





# INFORMATION

N.E. THING CO. LTD.

1419 Riverside Drive North Vancouver B.C. Canada

Date

1978

Project

EYE SCREAM RESTAURANT

Number

1.

N.E. THING CO.'S  
**EYE SCREAM**

732-6571

RESTAURANT/GALLERY  
2043 WEST 4TH AVENUE,  
VANCOUVER, B.C. CANADA

N.E. THING CO.'S  
**EYE SCREAM**  
2043 WEST 4TH AVENUE, VANCOUVER, BRITISH COLUMBIA V6J 1N3

N.E. THING CO.'S  
**EYE SCREAM**  
eatory

"ONE OF NORTH AMERICA'S MOST  
UNUSUAL RESTAURANTS"

Dinner - After Theater.  
Specializing in Great Hamburgers.  
"The Best Handmade Pecan Pie"

LIVE ENTERTAINMENT  
TUESDAY TO SATURDAY

A place where people can meet, eat, relax  
and see the art gallery.  
Dining 6 p.m. to 2 a.m.  
Reservations recommended:  
732-6571  
2043 West 4th Ave.  
2 blocks west of Burrard  
just over the bridge

N.E. THING CO.'S  
**EYE SCREAM**

N.E. THING CO.'S  
**EYE SCREAM**

EYE SCREAM

EYE SCREAM RESTAURANT 2043 W. 4TH AVE. VANC. 732-6571

NO MATCHES

N.E. THING CO.'S  
**EYE SCREAM**  
2043 WEST 4TH AVENUE, VANCOUVER, B.C. CANADA

N.E. THING CO.'S  
**EYE**

**SCREEN**  
732

N.E. THING CO.'S  
**EYE SCREAM**

EYE SCREAM RESTAURANT 2043 W. 4TH AVE. VANC. 732-6571

PLEASE COMPLETE AND RETURN

Description

MATCH BOX TOP LEFT  
IF WHEN MATCHES ARE  
ALL GONE THE EMPTY  
BOX SAYS NO MATCHES.

N.E. THING COMPANY LIMITED  
Trade Mark ©



# INFORMATION

N.E. THING CO. LTD.

1419 Riverside Drive North Vancouver B.C. Canada

Date

1978

Project

EYE SCREAM RESTAURANT

Number

1.



typical ad  
for EYE SCREAM  
RESTAURANT  
which is in  
Vancouver Magazine.

Look!

**EYE SCREAM**  
N.E. THING CO.  
**EYE SCREAM**  
N.E. THING CO.  
**EYE SCREAM**  
N.E. THING CO.  
RESTAURANT-GALLERY  
2043 W. 4TH  
773-0371  
NEW

"One of North America's  
most unusual restaurants"

Dinner - After Theatre  
Specializing in  
Great Hamburgers

Open until 2:00am  
Reservations recommended.  
For Ontario see Restaurant Guide.

PLEASE COMPLETE AND RETURN

Description

INTERIOR VIEWS

N.E. THING COMPANY LIMITED

Trade Mark, ©



# INFORMATION

N.E. THING CO. LTD.

1419 Riverside Drive North Vancouver B.C. Canada

Date

1978

Project

VANCOUVER ART GALLERY  
ANOTHER 2 PROJECTS: EYE SCREAM RESTAURANT

Number

1



PLEASE COMPLETE AND RETURN

Description

"OWNERS OF A RESTAURANT TOPPED WITH WHIPPED CREAM & CHERRIES" 1977

size: 40" x 50", HAND TINTED BLACK & WHITE PHOTO:  
LEFT TO ~~RIGHT~~ RIGHT: IAN DAWSON, INGRID BAXTER, IAIN BAXTER, MURRAY DAWSON

N.E. THING COMPANY LIMITED

Trade Mark ©





# INFORMATION

N.E. THING CO. LTD.

1419 Riverside Drive North Vancouver B.C. Canada

Date

1978

Project

EYE SCREAM RESTAURANT

Number

1



N. E. THING CO.'S

**EYE SCREAM**®

PLEASE COMPLETE AND RETURN

Description

EYE SCREAM WAS PLANNED IN 1976, BUILT IN 1976-77 & OPENED FOR BUSINESS APRIL 7, 1977. IT IS OWNED BY IAIN & INGRID BAXTER & IAN DAWSON & MURRAY DAWSON. IT IS LOCATED AT 2043 WEST 4TH AVE. VANCOUVER, B.C. CANADA PHONE 732.6571. THE WALLS ARE PLANNED TO BE AN ART GALLERY.

N.E. THING COMPANY LIMITED

Trade Mark ©



# INFORMATION

N.E. THING CO. LTD.

1419 Riverside Drive North Vancouver B.C. Canada

Date

1978

Project

EYESCREAM RESTAURANT

Number

1.

A.



C



B.



D.



PLEASE COMPLETE AND RETURN

Description

A. SHOT OF COFFEE BAR AREA

C. SHOT OF DINNING ROOM

B. SHOT OF BAR

D. SHOT OF KITCHEN & JIM TAYLOR, CHEF.

N.E. THING COMPANY LIMITED

Trade Mark ©

Se



# INFORMATION

N.E. THING CO. LTD.

1419 Riverside Drive North Vancouver B.C. Canada

Date

1978

Project

EYE SCREAM RESTAURANT

Number

1.

(A)



(B)



(C)

PLEASE COMPLETE AND RETURN

Description (A) SHOWS EYE SCREAM SPECIAL DISHES

(B) UNIQUE "FILLET ON WHEELS" STEAK WITH CUCUMBER WHEELS

(C) IAIN BAXTER SELF PORTRAIT PHOTO.

N.E. THING COMPANY LIMITED

Trade Mark ©





# INFORMATION

N.E. THING CO. LTD.

1419 Riverside Drive North Vancouver B.C. Canada

Date

1978

Project

EYE SCREAM RESTAURANT

Number

1



PLEASE COMPLETE AND RETURN

Description

PRESIDENT OF A COMPANY WRAPPED WITH BACON-1977

(40X50 HAND TINTED B & W PHOTO)

PRESIDENT OF A COMPANY DECORATED WITH FRUIT-1977  
(40X50 HAND TINTED B & W PHOTO)



N.E. THING COMPANY LIMITED

Trade Mark ©

# INFORMATION

N.E. THING CO. LTD.

1419 Riverside Drive North Vancouver B.C. Canada

Date

1978

Project

EYE SCREAM RESTAURANT

Number

/

For nearly a decade, Ingrid and Iain Baxter (below) and the N.E. Thing Co. have been laughing at the pseudo-sophistication of the art world. Now, their jibes on conceptual art can be found on the menu at the Eye Scream restaurant-cum-gallery on West Fourth. And they're delicious!

—ross kenward photos



N.E. Thing Co. has shown us the lighter side of art for almost 10 years.

Under the direction of co-presidents Iain and Ingrid Baxter, the company has produced humorous (or at least witty) versions of Conceptual Art.

Conceptual Art, as its name implies, is art of ideas — a thought or a concept is the essence of the work of art. Therefore, whatever wild or eccentric proposal comes to mind, it can be transferred into the Conceptual Art arena.

Over the years, the Baxters have produced, among many projects, art idea buttons. One button reads *Eunuchiversity*, the place of learning where the student gets an education without any well, anyway, other buttons have the letters *IQ* printed on their lower

edge, for those people with — you guessed it — a low IQ.

Or there is the classic in-joke button reading simply *VIP*. Those wearers who feel smug with such buttons pinned onto their lapels usually don't realize the Baxter-key that decodes the letters to mean Visually Illiterate Persons. Printed in almost indistinguishable tones of blue and black, the button causes many observers to remark "but I can't see a thing." Oh, such fun and games in N.E. Thing Co.'s warehouse of ideas.

But not all their ideas have been frivolous witticisms. An exhibition that coincided with the Montreal Olympics, entitled *Celebration of the Body*, depicted some worthwhile images of the potential of our bodily selves.

## Looking at the lighter side of art

# N. E. Thing Co. decorates dinner menu

Of late though, the Baxters' energies have gone into their West Fourth Avenue restaurant-gallery, Eye Scream.

Eye Scream is as conceptual as their previous versions of idea-art. The front facade of the building is covered with a windowless blanket of aluminum truck siding. And all the restaurant's plates are cleverly labelled "plate" in a distinctive and decorative type-face, while dishes read "dish", glasses read "glass" and even the tile floor reinforces the obvious with inlaid letters spelling "tile".

The Eye Scream menu carries the Baxter's playfulness to your dinner. You can order Group of Seven Snails, Oysters Michelangelo, Cubist Shrimp Salad, and their big number, *Fillet Mignon on Wheels*. This classic bit of food-

art-cum-idea-art supports an upright fillet with mushroom and cucumber wheels. Of course, pushing it around your plate becomes somewhat messy but, as always, it's the idea that counts.

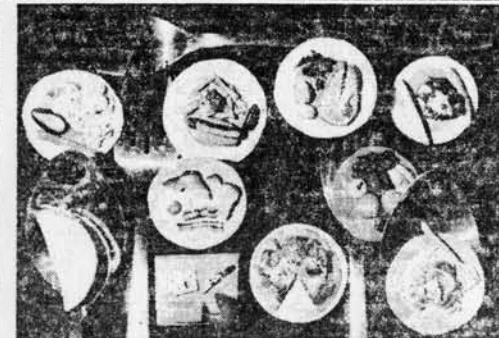
Over the last few months, the restaurant also has arranged a number of art exhibitions in its dining area. Only one of these shows seemed to offend the dining clientele. This was a collection of crucifixes. As Ingrid Baxter remarked: "The Jesus show was not a crowd-pleaser."

Yet a current display of so-called *Edi Baubles* — or miniature plastic sculptures — won't offend even the most sensitive diner. These small fried-egg earrings, salmon brooches and fillet-on-wheels necklaces are all created by Leah Skulski.

Skulski, who at one time was a flautist for the Victoria Symphony Orchestra, has developed her idea of plastic wearables from her skill as a dollhouse designer. Her jewelry is perfectly crafted in true edible brilliance. From her dolls to her avocado salad (all no larger than a silver dollar), there is a flawless accuracy.

In another setting, Skulski's *Edi Baubles* might appear kitsch or insignificant. But in Eye Scream they become another witty piece of idea-art.

It's not every place a burger-brooch will be taken seriously as art.



Now the Baxters have something that appeals to both gourmet and esthetic tastes called *Edi Baubles* — miniature plastic sculptures entitled, among other things, *Oysters Michelangelo* and *Cubist Shrimp*.

art  
perry



ART

PLEASE COMPLETE AND RETURN

Description

ARTICLE IN VANCOUVER SUN BY ART PERRY.

N.E. THING COMPANY LIMITED

Trade Mark ©



# INFORMATION

N.E. THING CO. LTD.

1419 Riverside Drive North Vancouver B.C. Canada

Date

1978

Project

EYE SCREAM RESTAURANT

Number

1

TORONTO STAR Aug 27/77.  
Anything goes

## B.C.'s Eye Scream gallery

BY KAY KRITZWISER

VANCOUVER

FROM THE beginning (1966) when Iain and Ingrid Baxter founded their N. E. Thing Co. Ltd. in Vancouver, anything has gone and still goes. Now it is Eye Scream, the cafe cum gallery they opened in April where they serve Group of Seven Snails (Burgundy style with garlic butter and puff pastry) and on the walls, bright bouncy graphics and paintings by such Vancouver artists as Toni Onley, Jack Shadbolt and Gary Lee Nova.

The catering to the arts of canvas and cuisine is just another peak in a long fusion of ideas by this husband and wife team — ideas which resulted in projects brilliantly inventive, plausible, ridiculous, scientific, witty, strangely beautiful, at times absolutely mad, and now this Eye Scream venture at 2041 West 4th Ave.

I think back to the first time I saw an N. E. Thing project in 1966, when a group calling themselves IT swathed in black floor-length hoods appeared at Albert White Gallery in Toronto. What IT did still puzzles me. And the building structure, at Carmen Lamanna Gallery where they outlined the interior with clean smelling lumber and we all had to hop across two-by-fours on the floor. Or the same structural idea transferred to the street floor area of the National Gallery of Canada. And in 1973, when Iain Baxter was visiting professor at York University department of fine arts and N. E. Thing Co. presented an incredibly interesting project, 51 Celebration of the ordinary. Not the least of that were the 26 sculptures posed by their children Tor and Erian, intended as a tender celebration of parenthood under the biblical banner And They had Issue.

Eye Scream, behind its shiny

aluminum windowless front, its tall sculptured lettering and red door is a sophisticated but friendly place full of low-keyed visual impacts.

Like the white fan twirling from the ceiling, the black and white tile floors, the enormous blowup of a sun-kissed tomato in the drinks lounge where there are white candles, lots of mirrors and red banquettes. Very elegant.

In the dining room the graphics on the wall make their own competitive appeal in a room all cool Art Deco touches beneath the exposed aluminum ducts on the ceiling. The Baxters scrounged cannily from old hotels and display centres to collect their authentic Art Deco examples from that clean, sterile period. With a 10-year preoc-

cupation with information systems, the Baxters, not surprisingly could not resist documenting the daily progress of the building of Eye Scream. The information sheets mounted on drywall panels set an interesting and permanent record on one wall.

French records play softly and Ernst Kuhn the young chef in tall toque comes to the door of his kitchen, aloof, assured. He's 25 years old and was trained in Swiss kitchens since he was 15. I think, judging from our meal, the young man knows what he's about and Baxter at the helm, is no mean chef himself.

I paid obeisance to the old boys by ordering Group of Seven Snails, one of us ordered Oysters Michelangelo (oysters on a bed of spinach baked with cheese).

Between us we tried Dover Sole Turner (stuffed with shrimp and clams), Scallops Renoir (in white wine sauce and mushrooms) and we all had Abstract Organic Salad (greens in season, mushrooms with herb dressing.)

We agreed the Haute Oldenburger (Eye Scream's civilized hamburger freshly ground when you order to honor Claes Oldenburg who else?) must wait for another time. So, alas, must the ice cream, though the menu makes much more of such wicked blandishments as Souffle glace Grand Marnier and parfait with liqueur of your choice than it does of ice cream.

As to that, the Eye Scream label is really a compromise. The cafe is registered as the Baxters intended under the name of I Scream, You Scream, We All Scream for Ice Cream, but that was whittled down to Eye Scream.

Eye Scream is very much a family affair for son Tor, now 16 worked 18 hours a day to help with the building while Erian can mix up a powerful milkshake to any 15-year-old's taste. Ingrid who is co-president of N. E. Thing Co. Ltd. has a bachelor of arts degree in music and is working toward a master's degree in physical education at Washington State University, with synchronized swimming one of her special talents. With the Baxters in the operation of Eye Scream is a third partner, Murray Dawson.

Baxter who is working on another N. E. Thing Co. project for exhibition at the Art Gallery of Vancouver in November, has another iron in the fire. In the adjoining building on West 4th Avenue, he is a partner with N. E. Professional Photographic Display Labs Ltd. which accounts for the big glossy Cibachrome blowups on Eye Scream's walls.



Ingrid Baxter and Joan Murray chat in cafe

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Description

REVIEW IN TORONTO GLOBE & MAIL

N. E. THING COMPANY LIMITED

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N.E. THING CO. LTD.

1419 Riverside Drive North Vancouver B.C. Canada

Date

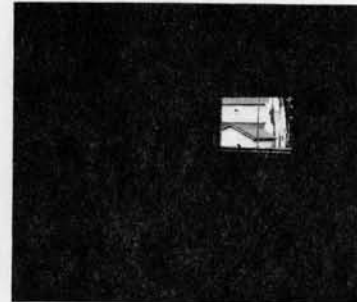
1966/78

Project

THROUGH THE YEARS:  
PHOTOGRAPHS TAKEN WHILE DRIVING & WALKING

Number

1.



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Date

1966/73

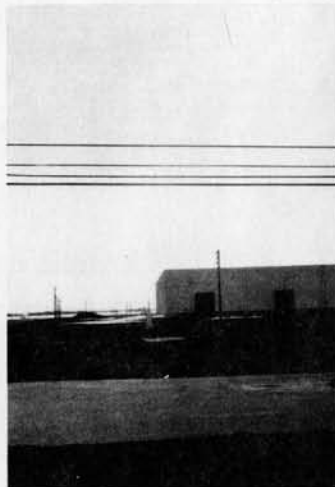
Project

THROUGH THE YEARS:

PHOTOS TAKEN WHILE DRIVING & WALKING

Number

1.



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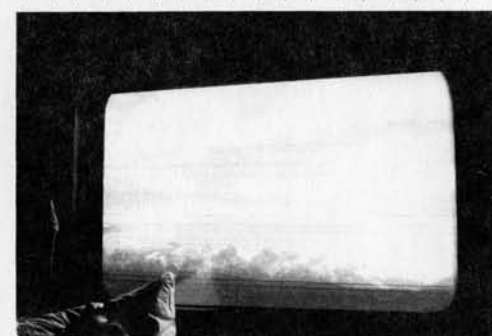
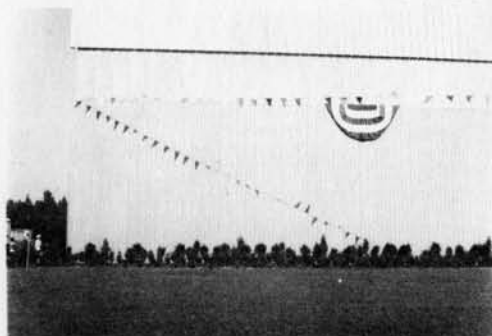
1419 Riverside Drive North Vancouver B.C. Canada

Date  
1966/78

Project *THROUGH THE YEARS:*  
*PHOTOS TAKEN WHILE DRIVING & WACKING*

Number

1.



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Description

N.E. THING COMPANY LIMITED

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# INFORMATION

N.E. THING CO. LTD.

1419 Riverside Drive North Vancouver B.C. Canada

Date

1970/78

Project

CORPORATE & MONETARY CLICHES - 1970

Number

1.



(E.)

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N.E. THING COMPANY LIMITED

Trade Mark ©

Description (E.) PHOTO OF JIM WONG PERFORMING, N.E. THING CO. CLICHE. —  
"COUNTING MONEY"-1970. MR. WONG KINDLY AGREED TO PERFORM  
THESE CLICHES AGAIN FOR NETCO. FROM HIS CORPORATE INVESTMENT  
OFFICES IN DOWNTOWN VANCOUVER RECENTLY IN 1978.

Seal



# INFORMATION

N.E. THING CO. LTD.

1419 Riverside Drive North Vancouver B.C. Canada

Date  
1970/78

Project

CORPORATE MONETARY CLICHES - 1970

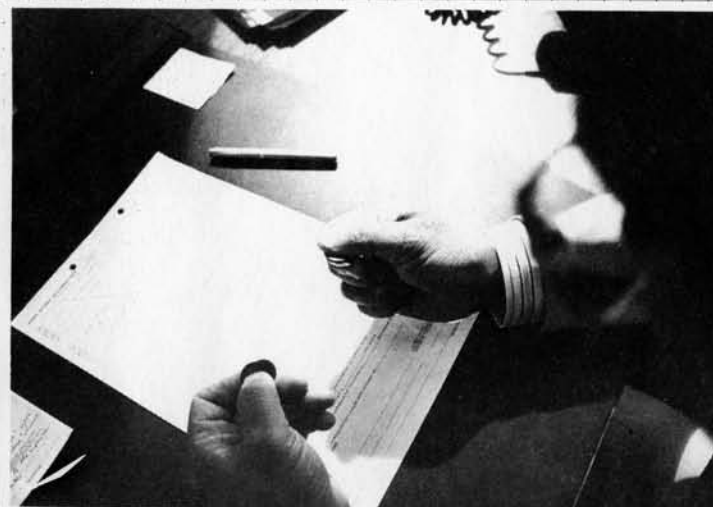
Number

1.

(A.)



(C.)



(B.)



(D.)



PLEASE COMPLETE AND RETURN

Description (A.) "PUT YOUR MONEY WHERE YOUR MOUTH IS." - 1970 \* THIS RECENT SERIES OF BARBER  
(B.) "HAVING MONEY TO BURN." - 1970 N.E. THING CO. CLICHES WAS  
(C.) "PENNY PINCHING." - 1970 PERFORMED RECENTLY 1978, BY  
(D.) "PASSING THE BUCK." - 1970 AN INVESTOR FRIEND, J. WONG, WHO  
KNOWS BETTER THAN ANYONE THE  
MEANING OF THESE CLICHES. A  
SERIES OF THESE CLICHES WILL BE PERFORMED  
USING VIDEO TAPE THIS YEAR.

N.E. THING COMPANY LIMITED

Trade Mark ©



# INFORMATION

N.E. THING CO. LTD.

1419 Riverside Drive North Vancouver B.C. Canada

Date

1978

Project

10<sup>TH</sup> INTERNATIONAL SCULPTURE SYMPOSIUM

Number

1.

Sculpture Today  
May 31-June 4, 1978  
York University, Toronto

# S/10

## Last Call to Conference

The 10th International Sculpture Conference in Canada is being called a "watershed" conference. Never before have so many renowned figures in the world of sculpture and art been brought together—over 150 participants including sculptors, educators, fabricators, scientists, museum curators, art critics and writers—in an unparalleled program of multiple-choice panels, seminars, workshops, performances and special events.

Special added guests:

Iain Baxter  
Ivan Karp  
Rosalind Krauss  
Marshall McLuhan  
Edward Kienholz

April 1978 Update

Canada/1978  
S/10

10th International  
Sculpture Conference  
55 Bloor Street West  
Suite 1405  
Toronto, Ontario  
Canada M4W 1A5

### Additional Conference Highlights:

**Sky Sculpture**—A giant helium-filled mylar inflatable will be launched by Howard Woody over Lake Ontario, as part of the Saturday afternoon environmental events at Harbourfront. Over 100 people will participate in the send-off, and the subsequent aircraft tracking.

**Monumental Sculpture**—an exhibition at the Toronto Dominion Centre. From May to August, seven massive-scale sculptures by Canadian artists will be located in the plaza of Toronto's most dramatic business complex, which was designed by architect, Mies van der Rohe.

**Honorary Doctorates**—To commemorate the 10th International Sculpture Conference, York University is conferring the degree of Doctor of Letters upon two important sculptors: Bill Reid, Canada's most acclaimed Haida Indian carver from British Columbia, and George Rickey, the senior American sculptor, who pioneered in the field of kinetics.

**Conference Poster**—Every delegate will receive a copy of the special commemorative 10th International Sculpture Conference poster, created to celebrate the occasion and made possible through a grant from Benson & Hedges (Canada) Limited.

This is your last opportunity to take advantage of the \$25 pre-conference discount, offered to those who register before May 1, 1978.

**ACT NOW!**  
Send your cheque today and  
be part of the exciting Toronto  
Conference!

### Accommodation

York University was selected as the site for the Conference because it best meets the Conference requirements. One of Canada's newest universities with the largest faculty of Fine Arts in Canada, it has excellent studio facilities for workshops and demonstrations, modern lecture halls with the latest audio-visual equipment, large lounges and dining halls. It is located on the outskirts of Toronto, 15 minutes from the Toronto International Airport.

### New Conference Services:

#### Individual Slide Presentation Program

Delegates wishing to show their slides at the Conference should bring them to the registration area, in a carousel with a maximum of twenty 35 mm. slides. Slides will be shown on a continuous, first-come-first-serve basis. A printed schedule listing the delegate's name and slide presentation will be posted.

#### Audio Archives Tapes

As a new feature of the Conference, all talks and panels are being taped. These tape cassettes will be for sale at the Conference, and subsequently by mail order.

#### Special Package for Spouses

Does your spouse want to come with you to Toronto, and attend only the special evening events? Due to the demand, the following special package has been worked out for non-conference attendees: Package 1: \$95 (Canadian) includes residence at York for 4 nights, and tickets for the 4 evening dinner events. Package 2: \$45 (Canadian) includes tickets for the 4 evening dinner events only.

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Description

IAIN BAXTER SPEAKS ON PANEL: ALTERNATIVES TO TEACHING - THUR, JUNE 1, 1978

N.E. THING COMPANY LIMITED

Trade Mark ©





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1419 Riverside Drive North Vancouver B.C. Canada

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1979

Project

STARTING THE YEAR 1

Number

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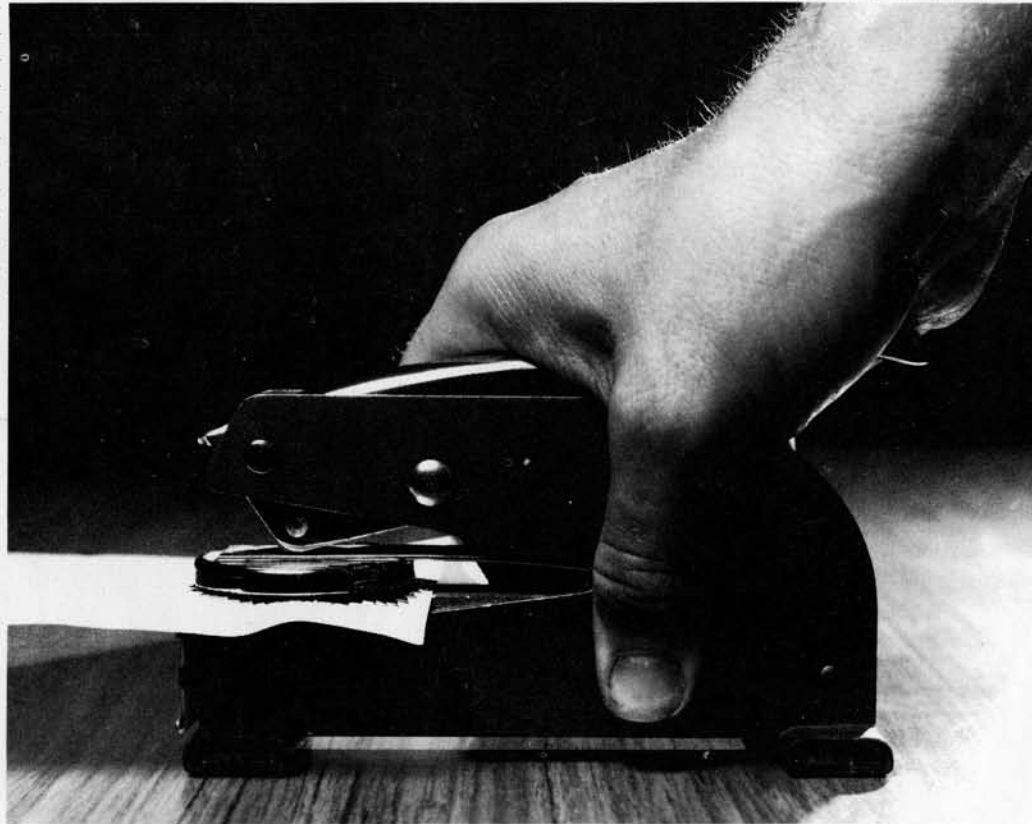
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Project

N.E. THING CO. CORPORATE IDENTITY

Number

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Description *SEALED*

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Date

Project

Number



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Description

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