

WEST END • DOWNTOWN • VALETOWN • KITSILANO • FALSE CREEK • MOUNT PLEASANT • COMMERCIAL DRIVE

OCT. 11-17, 2001

WESTENDER.COM

Priceless

VANCOUVER'S HUMAN VOICE



Photo: Doug Shanks

In Your Face

Why Vancouver is perfect for performance art

FLIPSIDE ■ THE HERMIT ■ LIZ REX

In Your Face

Why Vancouver is perfect for performance art

By Mary Frances Hill

In his first-ever live performance, Glenn Lewis opened an umbrella in front of an audience; out poured a storm of flowers.

This was 1960s Vancouver, when Lewis was an upstart artist in his 30s. Flower Peace was considered an avant-garde show, and arguably the first performance art piece in Vancouver and Canada.

Lewis, a man who went on to tour the continent and inspire the likes of Gathie Falk and many others to mix theatre, music, provocation and a sense of poetry, has grown up and aged. Now, he's come right back as a witness to the evolution of a medium that has grown under the unlikely influence of Vancouver itself.

Vancouver has always had its cultural critics: the city is a conservative stronghold, and the newness of it all—the absence of classic architecture, evidence of frontier mentality and an anti-intellectual bent—has long invited scorn among people who lay claim to being the cultural elite. But the fact that we don't have an artistic history

to tie us to the past is exactly what makes Vancouver a breeding ground for experiment and provocative performance arts, says Lewis, one of the founders of a performance art festival in 1979, whose retrospective show launches the Live Biennial at the Vancouver Art Gallery Oct. 13 to Nov. 30.

"There's a different feel about Vancouver, we don't have the artistic history here," he says.

"When you go to Montreal, for instance, it's as if you're going halfway to Europe. Here it's freer and much more open and experimental. There's no weight of heritage to haul you back."

Generally, performance art criss-crosses media: theatre, traditional art, spoken word, music. It's an event, a happening, that could transform an audience far more than any stroll through a serene gallery; it could strip away facades and blow open pretenses.

"The objective is to make people question what they see," says Lewis, who has written and leads Mondo Artie #6070 in the rotunda of the Vancouver Art Gallery Oct.



Mexico's Lorena Wolffer performs *Catwalk Envy* at The Western Front, during the Live Biennial

13. Mondo Artie uses 16 actor-artists from across Vancouver to enact the story of "Sleuthlips", an FBI agent looking for draft dodgers in the 1960s, who eventually arrives at an epiphany of his own.

Mondo Artie launches the Live Biennial, a six-week long series of performances at 16 different galleries across the city—and the first to honour the city's innovative artists since 1999. That year's Live festival honoured the 20 years since Lewis and artists Kim Tomczak and Paul Wong organized the Living Art

Performance Festival, in 1979. Grunt gallery director Glen Alteen, who spearheads the Live Biennial, is most proud of the "curatorial parameters" of the Live Biennial—in other words, the different personality that each performer and participating gallery brings to the mix.

In his introduction to *Live at the End of the Century*, a book on performance art in Vancouver, Brice Canyon admits "what is exactly meant by the term 'performance art' is still up for debate; it seems a general conclusion that while not everyone may know what performance art is, almost everyone knows what it isn't."

From the beginning, the art form went far beyond shock value and art expression and spilled over into political activism. In 1974, Vincent Trasov donned a costume, got a speaking sidekick and presented himself as Mr. Peanut, a bonafide candidate for Vancouver's mayoral seat. At a time when caricatures were rare, the Mr. Peanut phenomenon provided entertainment and revealed the inanity of the non-issues in the city

political environment. (The nut brought in 2,599 votes—3.4 per cent of the vote in an election that saw Art Phillips in the mayor's seat, over "Aldermen" Darlene Marzari, Art Cowie, Mike Harcourt, and Harry Rankin).

Since then, the venture of running for municipal office has devolved into knee-jerk political adventures, minus the insight; in the mid-1990s, voters could choose between Mayor Owen and Zippy the Circus Chimp, Sage Advice, Bugger and The Stainer.

If Mr. Peanut cracked open the shell (so to speak) of conventional public life, artists like Lorena Wolffer of Mexico have continued the tradition in more complex global ways.

Wolffer's *Catwalk Envy* at the Western Front involves a group of artists who reveal the harm that NAFTA has wreaked on the lives of Mexican women. At the grunt gallery, Diane Landry spins household objects on turntables; Gallery Gachet's Irene Loughlin pays a risky tribute to those who have died in a Downtown Eastside alley by

See PERFORMANCE page 23

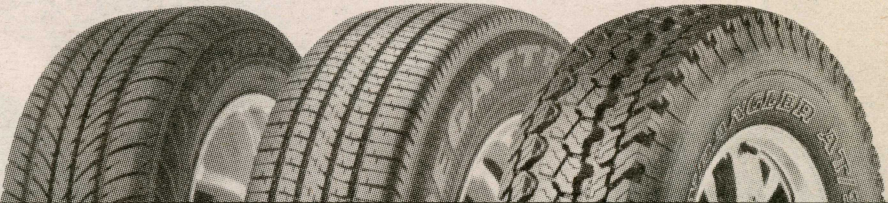
Savings by the Inch

HURRY IN! FROM OCTOBER 1 - 31, 2001 ONLY!

SAVE \$40
ON A SET OF FOUR
13-14" TIRES

SAVE \$60
ON A SET OF FOUR
15" TIRES

SAVE \$80
ON A SET OF FOUR
16-17" TIRES



GOODYEAR
AQUATRED 3

Outstanding wet & dry traction
130,000 km treadlife limited warranty
Available in 13, 14, 15, 16" sizes

GOODYEAR
REGATTA 2

All Season Touring Radial
125,000 km treadlife limited warranty
Available in 14, 15, 16" sizes

GOODYEAR
WRANGLER AT/S

Aggressive all-terrain traction
for pickups & SUVs
Available in 14, 15, 16, 17" sizes

3 WAYS TO WIN BIG WITH GOODYEAR'S DRIVE FOR GOLD!



1. Instant dealer rebates up to \$100

*Great dealer rebates—see a participating retailer for details.



2. Scratch 'n' Win

*Scratch 'n' win for cool prizes—shirts, discounts on auto service, a trip to Salt Lake City, and much, much more!



3. Win your Tire Purchase!

*Correctly predict how Team Canada will do in Salt Lake City, and win your tires for free!



Contest closes December 23, 2001. In order to claim a prize, you must correctly answer a Skill Testing Question. At the outset of the contest, there will be 1,112,000 prizes and/or discounts available to be won. The number of available prizes will be reduced as they are claimed throughout the contest. See your participating retailer for a copy of the full contest rules and regulations.



www.fountaintire.com

Savings by the Inch effective October 1-31, 2001 on selected Goodyear tires only. See retailer for complete details. Earn 1 AIR MILES® reward mile for every \$8 spent on Goodyear-brand passenger and light-truck tires and mechanical services. Earn 1 AIR MILES® reward mile for every \$20 spent on Dunlop-brand and Star-brand tires and on Goodyear-brand medium-truck and farm tires. ©™ Trademarks of AIR MILES® International Trading B.V. Used under license by Loyalty Management Group Canada Inc. and Goodyear Canada Inc.

\$100 INSTANT REBATE*

WRANGLER MT/R
Premium Off-Road Tire

Purchase a set of four (4) Wrangler MT/R tires between Sept. 1 and Nov. 30, 2001 and receive a \$100 instant rebate! (*\$25 per tire). Savings by the inch offer not valid on Wrangler MT/R. See retailer for details.



CHECK OUT THE HOTTEST REAL ESTATE MARKET STARTING ON PAGE 37



WESTENDER
VANCOUVER'S URBAN VOICE

Fountain Tire
Home of the Tire Experts



VANCOUVER

- 1750 Clark Drive
255-8494
- 2725 Kingsway
433-8300



Authorized
AirCare
Repair Centre

ABBOTSFORD

- 1454D Riverside Road • 859-3513
- 33286 South Fraser Way • 859-2202
- BURNABY
- 5850 Kingsway at Imperial • 437-4771
- COQUITLAM
- 2764 Barnet Hwy. • 941-3150
- DELTA
- 8209 - 120th St. • 591-1151
- 7489 Hume Avenue • 940-6388

MAPLE RIDGE

- 20610 Lougheed Hwy • 465-1933
- NORTH VANCOUVER
- 880 West 15th St. • 985-9131
- RICHMOND
- *5891 No. 3 Rd. • 273-3751
- 11051 Bridgeport Rd • 278-5500

SURREY

- 15392 Fraser Hwy. • 583-1948
- 13689 - 104th Ave. • 588-3077
- 19585 - 96 Ave. • 882-0036
- WHITE ROCK
- 2546 King George Hwy. • 535-3973

TIRE VALET
1-866-TIRES 2 U
(1-866-847-2728)



Dial 310-TIRE to be connected to the Fountain Tire nearest you!

*OPEN SUNDAY

PERFORMANCE

Continued from page 22

hanging off a fire escape in a neighbourhood alleyway; and New York's Larry Crone performs with artist/author Michael Turner and Rodney Graham in *A Country and Western Jamboree*, sponsored by the Or Gallery, at The Anza Club.

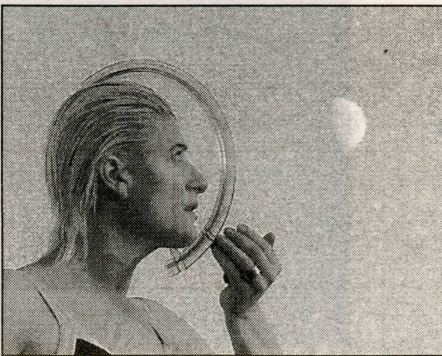
On Oct. 20, Vancouverites who recall the furor over Sniffy the Rat will get a chance to re-live it with Radix Theatre's Sniffy the Rat bus tour—a performance art event that mimics a tour bus and pays tribute to the 1990 Sniffy the Rat controversy, a performance art event that brought the world's attention to Vancouver.

The fact that such a controversial performance art piece (or media stunt) happened in Vancouver is not lost on Radix Theatre's Andrew Laurenson, a co-creator of the Sniffy The Rat anniversary bus tour.

"Vancouver does have this reputation for a lot of performance art activity....I did feel with the tour that being on a bus, it really gave a chance to learn about our city and where we live and the stories we have to tell," says Laurenson.

"We're always hearing stories from everywhere else. That's one thing that's always attracted me about Sniffy—it's a local story."

With video footage from the scandal, a bus-ride sing-along and dramatic re-enactments, Radix shows the Sniffy the Rat event helped the public strip away the cloak over its own hypocrisy. But it was the public, and the media attention stretching all the way to Asia and Europe that fueled its popularity, and, in the end, made it a perfect piece of performance.



Hester Reeve's 2001: *a space odyssey, an excavation of truth to be broadcast at the Grunt Gallery.*

That spontaneous audience reaction fuels the artist as well, according to David Yonge, or Yellowboy, who charmed young audiences at the Blinding Light!! Cinema with *Smell-o-Vision*, a send-up of the 1950s Hollywood cine-

ma gimmick.

On Nov. 2 at the Access Artist-Run Centre, he takes his cue from 1970s wrestling performance with *Yellow Diablo*, a show in which he'll be wired with 15 microphones as he wrestles objects that can't fight back. Like a car.

"Performance art is a new way of working for me, rather than being a

studio rat," says Yonge. "When people yell and scream and get into the show, that's great."

The thing that allows performance artists to buck trends that define other art forms is that there are no trends. There are no official rules for the performance artist. And because it's such a modern hybrid, there's no one who has set a standard.

"It has no Shakespeare, no Beethoven," says Alteen of the grunt gallery. "It isn't a methodology. There really isn't a practice of it, it isn't a discipline of theatre and music and dance. It exists as a history and it allows you a whole lot of freedom."

The diversity of Live Bien-



Glenn Lewis as Art Rat, with Vincent Travov's Mr. Peanut shell, from the book *Live at The End of the Century: Aspects of Performance Art in Vancouver*. For more info, log on to www.livevancouver.bc.ca

nial speaks to how independent the artistic scene is in Vancouver, and its popularity among gallery operators and art aficionados, he says.

room-only. To Alteen, that's a testament to the Vancouverites' acceptance of the art form in the last 22 years.

Performance art has ven-

tured so far into the "mainstream," Alteen says, that it's spilled out into the pop culture and trash-type TV.

"What I see as performance art is the way in which television has abandoned the narrative, with this 'reality TV' thing, and the *Survivor* phenomenon."

Lewis sees it spilling far into a more conservative realm of academia.

"I was talking to an artist yesterday who is going to Mexico for a conference on performance art. There was never such a thing before," he says. "This is being taught more in art schools and universities, it's become more acceptable, and institutionalized."



Cloverdale Paint Interior Decorating SALE!

WOW!
Book Order
WALLPAPER
up to **40% OFF**

& Save up to
30% off
all in-stock
wallpaper

Hurry!
Sale Ends
Oct. 21st

EcoLogic
The Legend Environmental Co. Paints
High Performance
finish **ON SALE!**



premium
super
eggshell
latex



OUR BEST SELLER!

\$28⁸⁸
3.75 LITRES



Show Your Card & Save[®]
Even More... see store for details!



AVOID LONG LINE-UPS

**Helpful &
Available
Staff**

- At Cloverdale Paint, you won't have any problem finding someone to help you.
- Talk to experienced, knowledgeable staff.
- Got a question? Email helpdesk@cloverdalepaint.com

or visit our new and improved website

www.cloverdalepaint.com

CLOVERDALE PAINT STORES

Port Kells Store
18763 - 96 Avenue
Surrey, BC V1P 3H3
(No In-Stock Wallpaper)

Newton Store
6950 King George Hwy
Surrey, BC V1P 3H3
596-1736

Maple Ridge Store
28691 Lougheed Hwy
Maple Ridge, BC V2X 1S9
465-8939

Chilliwack Store
45450 Luckakuck Way
Chilliwack, BC V2P 1S9
858-9697

White Rock Store
3033 King George Hwy
White Rock, BC V4B 1A1
531-6711

Langley Store
19638 Fraser Highway
Langley, BC V3A 2G4
533-2404

Mission Store
32790 Lougheed Hwy.
Mission, BC V2S 1L1
820-8661

Abbotsford Store
31789 South Fraser Way
Abbotsford, BC V2T 1V6
854-6516

NEW RICHMOND LOCATION
100 - 7771 Alderbridge Way
Richmond, BC V6X 4A1
273-9178

NEW COQUITLAM LOCATION
12 - 970 Westwood Street
Coquitlam, BC V3K 6A1
941-0743

Eco-FREE INFORMATION: Cloverdale Paint is a member of the British Columbia Paint & Decorating Association (BCPDA). This association is a not-for-profit organization and has no financial interest in the sale of paint. In keeping with the principles of the BC PDA, we have a nominal fee to cover the cost of the paint purchased to help fund the association's efforts. The fee is \$2.00 per gallon and is added to the purchase price at time of sale.

Check Your Yellow Pages for the Store Nearest You.

NOSFERATU

Wednesday, Oct. 31, 2001 8PM
ORPHEUM THEATRE

The original Dracula! This Silent Film classic marks the first and scariest film appearance of the most famous vampire of all. Based on Bram Stoker's classic novel, *Nosferatu* is a milestone of cinematic achievement – and you'll never have more fun being scared! Join us for this very special Halloween celebration, with *Nosferatu* and the full symphony orchestra!

Gillian Anderson, conductor



It's Halloween, so come in costume!

PRIZES WILL BE GIVEN OUT
FOR THE BEST COSTUMES!

Call VSO Customer Service
604.876.3434

or Ticketmaster
604.280.3311

- Tickets \$20 & \$25 service charges apply
- Single tickets available at all **ticketmaster** outlets or buy online at www.ticketmaster.ca
- for **GROUP SALES** information call **604.684.9100**

OFFICIAL AIRLINE
AIR CANADA

OFFICIAL VEHICLE
Audi

MEDIA SPONSORS
THE VANCOUVER SUN

Global

**VANCOUVER
SYMPHONY**
BRAMWELL TOVEY, Music Director

vancouversymphony.ca