

Jerry Pethick: Shooting the Sun/Splitting the Pie

VANCOUVER ART GALLERY, VANCOUVER BC – Oct 24, 2015-Jan 10, 2016 As happened in the early 1980s when the Vancouver Art Gallery announced its move to its current home, the VAG's recent

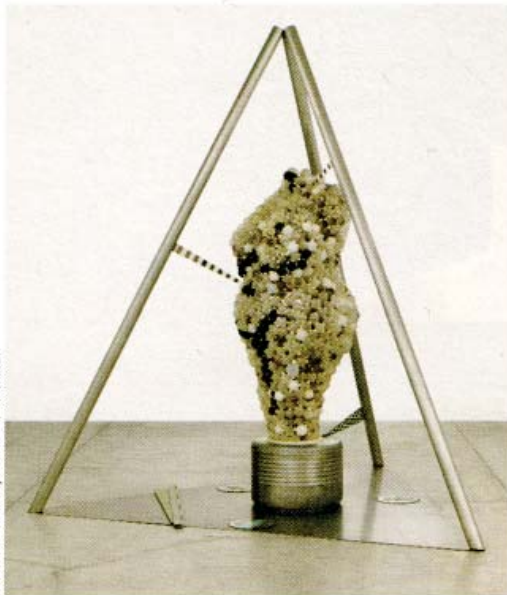


PHOTO: TREVOR MILLS, VANCOUVER ART GALLERY

Jerry Pethick, *The Replica of Willendorf: Post Prehistoric* (1981-82), light bulbs, silicone, aluminum, glass, mirror [Vancouver Art Gallery, Vancouver BC, Oct 24-Jan 10]

announcement of a new building has inspired reflection on the region's art and artists. This time, the local art historical narrative is not just being extended (to include recent developments in sculpture and installation) but revised. A parallel might be seen in Vancouver's shift from abstracted landscape painting in the post-WW II period to photoconceptual picture-making in the 1980s – a revision abetted through the sculptural montage of Jerry Pethick.

Although the Hornby Island-based Pethick passed away in 2003, his influence on younger artists continues to grow. His best-known works are his "bias arrays": sculptures that include screens of gridded lenses positioned between the viewer and a bank of photographs whose content is related to the larger work. Many of these sculptures were made from discarded household objects. Other materials, such as Spectra foil and silicone sealant, were purchased inexpensively from hardware stores.

But of all Pethick's achievements, perhaps his greatest are the works that transcend method and process (think of the sculptural montage aspect in

Brian Jungen's masks made from skinned Nike trainers). As for content, Pethick's playful folksiness is evoked in the sculptures of Myfanwy MacLeod and the installations of Geoffrey Farmer. *Michael Turner*