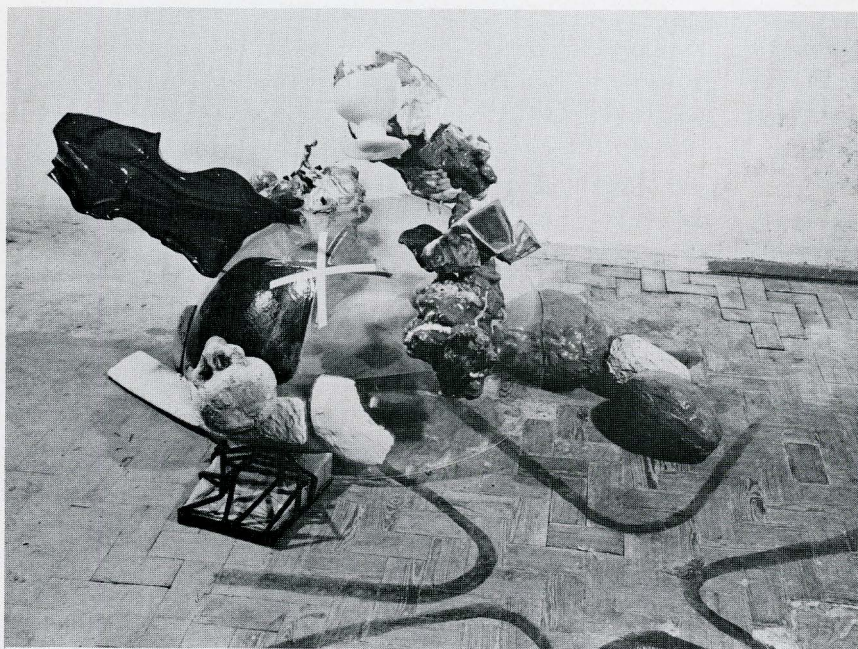


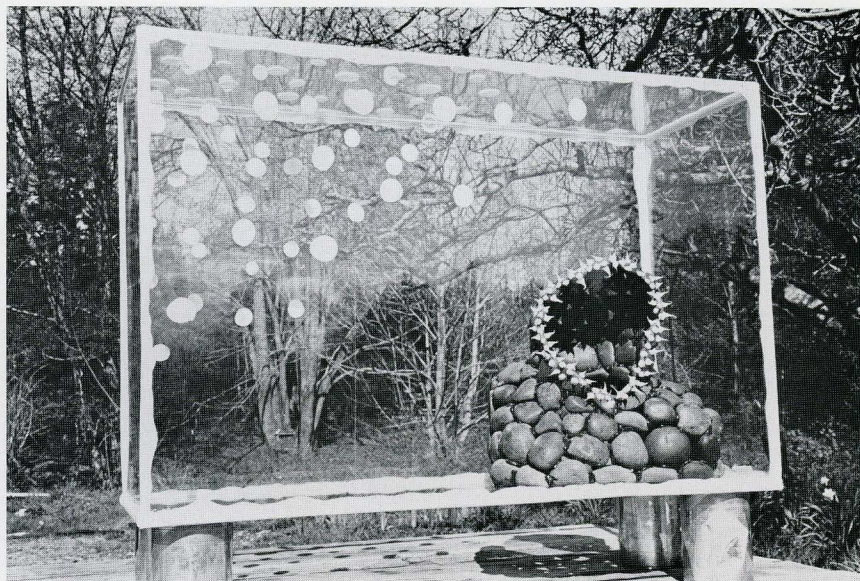
Jerry Pethick / VISIONS IN THE BLOOD

What I think I'm doing remains somewhat constant, but the emphasis as well as the means changes all the time. Certain details of the whole picture are heightened, like sitting in the sun of my attention for a span. Now the autonomy of space as an entity is in rapport with tangibility and density; but

Billy Little / VOLUMINOUS LUMINOSITY: SOME SCENTS OF JERRY PETHICK'S WORK

The work of world master prestidigitator of glass and plastic and firewood visionary image-systems Jerry Pethick has a universal appeal; cowpersons and cognoscenti alike are drawn to his brilliant and startling conglomerates. The satin-shirt-shitkickers, the Orphics and Dionysians, delight in the shiny, raw and surprising nature of his





earlier capsulated attempts tended to be looking for a structure that would allow the fragmentary elements to cohere as a composite. A unifying search that would revert to a linear portrayal, like the wire in barbed wire, the fragments sharp and separate refusing to find their niche, but at best being strung along a line (washing line, gordian knot or spaghetti strands), with nodes of periodic clarity. (This structured perception was entirely outside me, the facets of content gleaned from within; frustrating separation started to transform itself slowly when I became interested in intersecting lines.)

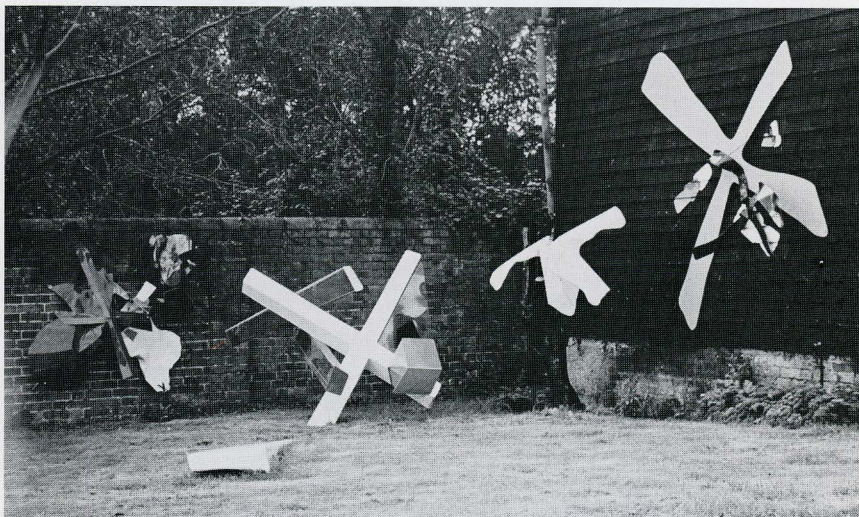
materials, the playfulness of the composition and the fluttering light. The très raffiné Apollonians, the theorists, the semioticians, can fully employ their analytic apparatus and hermetic discourses; deconstructing his narrative, synthesizing his oppositions, illuminating his double and triple entendres, the recurring geometries and archetypes, not to mention the winking lumen.

Thinker, inventor, sculptor, poet, crate-maker, potato digger, Pethick silicons his genius piece by piece: light bulb, picture tube, retort, meter cover, washer agitator, wine bottles, frypan lid, 6cm black stones, grey stones, blown glass stones, automobile tires, glass beehives, sheetmetal cat, tin panda, propane tank, washer

It started as a grounding, an earthiness, the feeling of orientation when seeing two sidewalks meet and continue along the pathways after intersecting. Gradually for me it came to mean different viewpoints, literally positions of view in space along those tracks. A

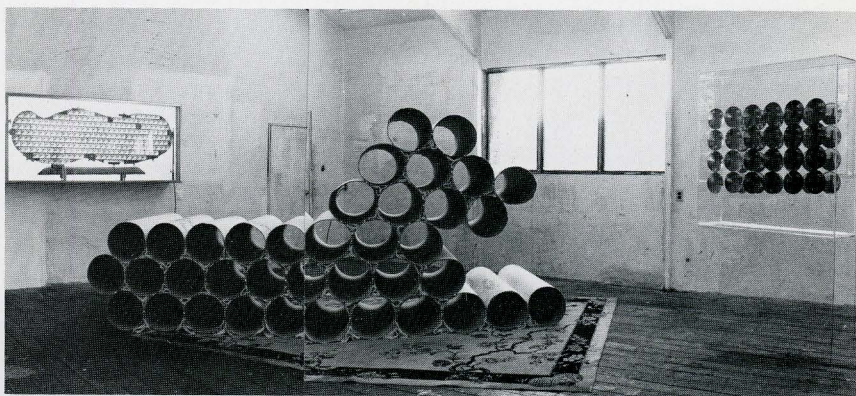
tumbler, marbles, stove lids, mirror shards, cardboard tubes, lawn chair parts. Seriously funny materials metamorphose in his anti-gravity masterpieces, his radiant transparent space (relation)ships.

Born in London, Ontario, his work is as Canadian as ice — the glacial white and auroral defraction



construct becoming an elaborate and diffused model that turned into a kind of reality because of my extended interest in the nature of light and holographic perception of infinite viewpoints. This turned both the attempts of formal equilibrium of material-based work, and the unifying view for the separated aesthetics and function, dichotomy, to adhere comfortably with

vibrations dominate his palette; his representations are rooted in the landscape and in family history. Years in London and San Francisco and Paris, synthesizing current ideas and new techniques and experimental optics, have made his work as up-to-the-minute as room temperature fusion. His interests emphasize low resolution technologies to transmit dreamlike reconstructions acting on that fuzzy area between the



diversity. It helped me discern some differences between knowing and knowledge, observation and learned responses, and to understand phenomena as symbiotic aspects of perception nurturing discoveries in thought and vision which foster personal coherence.

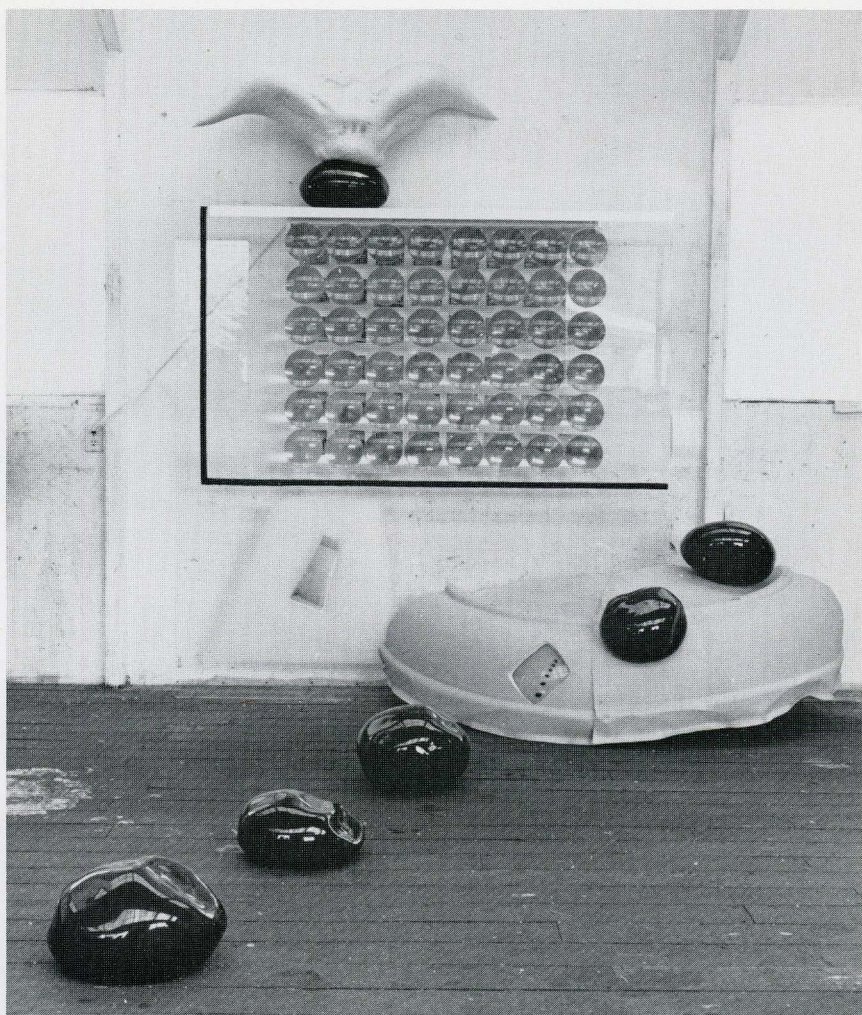
My current work is trying to relate aspects of image and volume of deep illusory space, presently landscape space, to the presence of tangible sculptural elements. These elements exist in proximity to the volume of the integral photo array. The pseudoscopic space that I am working with (which usually is inversed totally back to front) is corrected somewhat by altering the order of the rows of images top to bottom; this manipulation still gives a reverse parallax, but the sensually created volume exists through what corrections the brain automatically makes as

subliminal and the apparent. When he sees another possible way of seeing it he chases it, this pioneer of holography: he rigs it up so you and I can share the view.

For almost thirty years his research has been at the forefront, advancing the technology of photo-representation — some might say all-around-seeing. In his latest work, he's truly an apparitionist, manipulating ghostly visitations from the past through the low-tech timegate of the snapshot and the mass-produced plastic fresnel lens, provoking a vision you can almost fall into, or move into and set up housekeeping.

Step toward a Pethick landscape and your focal point will never be the same. Two parallel planes and you alone in your eyesight with this pseudoscopic vision:

*lens/image lens/image lens/image lens/image
lens/image lens/image lens/image lens/image
lens/image lens/image lens/image lens/image
lens/image lens/image lens/image lens/image
dozens and dozens of snapshots, the*





it adjusts the composite image to a point of acceptance. I intend a diverse play of solid space created by the illusory system and the real density of object form. The optically tangible, apparent here, attempts to encapsulate the space and sensibilities of landscape and represent it as object. It's the glimpsed space that interacts; the low resolution image is held captive, verifying the reality of space.

The nature of the work I see as a conglomerate of elements without hierarchy, these elements floating or statically held in a medium, a transparent medium like air, water, glass, anti-gravity fields, imaginary situations allowing space a position of

same subject, slightly varying angles of view: a cabin and a meadow, a boat and a bridge, a brewery, a dog's dream, a mountaintop. Even the twenty-fourth letter of our alphabet, the simple seeming *x* resonating with all of its implications; as crossing, as intersection, as interference, as influence, as cancellation, as unknown, as warning, as past, as multiplier, as potency, as location, making his mark on the dotted zone, the lens dotted zone. Of course, the real crossing is the double crossing from the optic nerve to the brain and back out in front of you, the many projecting the one shimmering intangible 36 times (6 x 6) the size. Mirages, imager, imagest. Gertrude Stein told me to say he fills the space with space. Jumpin jehosephat, it's a mini-mirrorkle, he makes new space available, he draws it out of your

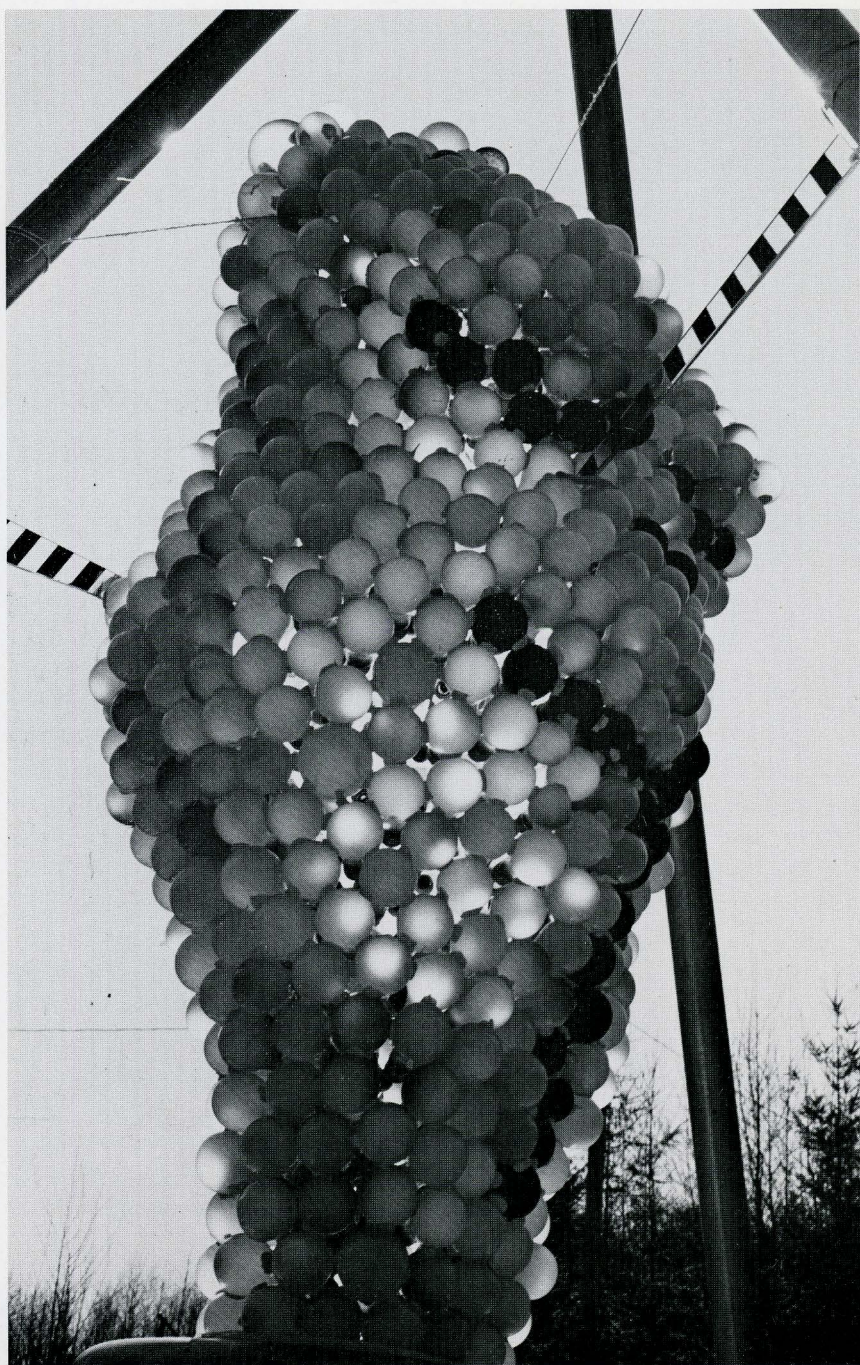


equality: a democracy of only matter and space, both submerged in time without physical structure. These recognitions of the residue of expression, as definite and precise, are one of the specific locations of creative outflow which makes poetic sense of the hard reality of form.

Visions in the blood doesn't refer to genetics or history, nor does it mean vision is in the blood. I think of it as a medium that touches the whole body, the liquid that moves past the liver, through the heart, into the brain, under the tongue. It is within creation, procreation and scepticism. It connects everything with a shared osmosis, nearly a totality. It touches internally like

optic nerve and lets it loose between... You know the between, the what's-the- difference between!

A maker of voluminous intensity his work is phanopoeic, ideogrammatic, incorporates time, he defers and he refers, offering homage through literal and technical reference to the artists and innovators that have opened his eyes and enabled him to carry on: Krieghoff, Pissaro, Seurat, Duchamp, Brancusi, Pitseolak. A story sculpting teller he makes you see through space and into space. Solid and memorable and mammoth space filled with light, flooding your sight. His work might be seen as a visual fugue with images and themes recurring over the decades seen from a slightly different angle or in a different material or in a new setting or time. The tornado, the cyclone of his creative consciousness



the currents and tides of the global oceans, like long rivers, like the breeze invisibly eddying the air, whispering and moving, glimpses tumbling into water: like vision itself, brushing over reality, caressing and sightless, sensing the space among the snowflakes.



whips everyday objects out of their predictable relationships and into the dynamic crosscurrents of history, affection and dream, generating his ultra-cool four-dimensional glass and aluminum poems, a tangible music.

Chances are, even if you've seen only one Pethick sculpture, you'll remember it vividly even twenty years later. The lightbulb Venus, if you should ever cast your eyes on that (it's part of the Permanent collection at the Vancouver Art Gallery), you'll remember that into your next incarnation. That gorgeous hunk, the bottle man, Le Semeur, is a futurist piece as unforgettable as Nude Descending a Staircase. Duchamp would have danced with that gentle green giant, Boccioni jiggin' the fiddle. Marcel on tiptoes whispers, "Ou va le vin?" Gone to veritas and beauty every one!

Billy Little is a poet and a former Director of the Pitt International Galleries in Vancouver.

Jerry Pethick /

Drawings: Hand; camera; miner's light; bottle; vortex; "the black river and smoke dead on the table"; spectacles; horseshoe.