

# Exhibition of Canadian photography begins European Tour

Carole Conde /  
Karl Beveridge:

Canada's new High Commissioner to London, Donald Macdonald, was at the Stills Gallery in Edinburgh on January 13 to open an exhibition of contemporary Canadian photography. The exhibition – which goes on display at the Canada House Gallery in London next month – is the first major showing of Canadian photography to be mounted in Britain for five years. It has been curated by Rob Powell, Director of the Stills Gallery, with the support of the Canadian Museum of Contemporary Photography in Ottawa, and Canada House, London.

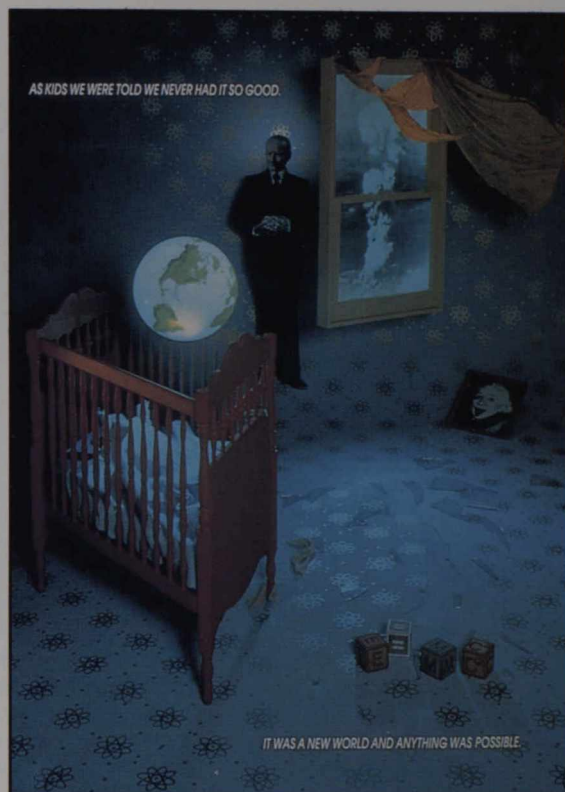
Entitled 'Power Plays', the exhibition addresses the theme of power in contemporary society through the eyes of five established Canadian photographers and one photographic partnership. 'All of them combine personal creativity with social concern,' says Rob Powell. 'However, their approaches are quite different, ranging from the documentary style of Lynne Cohen to the photomontages of Guimond and Sourkes'.

With the exception of Cohen, all of the exhibitors are making their UK debuts. Miklos Legrady, in an unusual series called 'Catastrophic

Donigan Cumming:



Pierre Guimond:



Theory', uses carefully staged and garishly-lit tableaux in a form of theatrical still-life to address the role of social taboo and mass media. In contrast, Cheryl Sourkes mixes text, book illustrations and photographs to make dense and multi-layered photograms which refer both to a highly personal mythology and to cultural systems of knowledge and power.

## Focus on political and social issues

The explosive colour photomontages of Pierre Guimond have a dreamlike, sometimes nightmarish, atmosphere that is achieved through the juxtaposition of media imagery. Donigan Cumming's images are disturbing, but at the same time they parody and challenge photography's social-documentary tradition. Lynne Cohen – whose work has recently been the subject of a book published by Aperture, New York – meticulously documents interior institutional spaces. She is represented by seven large-scale photographs in this exhibition.

Carole Conde and Karl Beveridge make up the photographic partnership. They have worked closely with specific communities and with trade unions over a number of years. Their art is essentially political, and they create intricate tableaux using actors, props and text to represent both labour history and current issues. Nuclear power is one such issue, and their series 'No Immediate Threat' will be featured in the upcoming exhibition, together with examples of their other work.

After its display at the Canada House Gallery in London, the exhibition will move to the Impressions Gallery in York; then in the spring, it will leave for the Continent.

