



UFO-sex cult visits the city

BY G. GRAHAM SIMMS

The International Raelian Religion, a Switzerland-based extraterrestrial cult, brought their mission to Halifax for the first time last weekend.

To label the 40,000 plus person religion a UFO sex-cult would be an oversimplification and would not convey the complexity of the world view that the sect, with its strongest following in Quebec, has, but infact UFO sex-cult may, in the end, be an accurate general description to the outsider.

The founder, leader (or prophet, if you're a Raelian) and namesake of the 25 year old religion is Rael, and Rael is Claude Vorilhon — a French race car driver and sports journalist, who maintains that he met, received teachings from and visited the home planet of an extraterrestrial race known as the Elohim in a volcano in Auvergne, France in the early seventies.

"And that was the last time

he ate that mushroom" the skeptic might say.

But Rael is only one of thousands — perhaps upward of a million, according to a recent Roper Poll — who have experienced alien-type encounters. (Although, some may argue, forming a religion around himself in the roll of prophet may not have done much for his credibility).

Representatives of the wealthy non-profit organization gave their message Sunday to a small crowd at the George Dixon Recreation Centre on Brunswick Street. Looking rather pixie-ish and sporting necklaces with dangling UFO's and Stars of David, the members were typically young, attractive and friendly. The message they came to preach is revolutionary and sensationally surreal, but in many ways it is familiar — really an extremely literalist view of religion, science and mythology and it is essentially the same

message found at the core of the more dramatic New Age beliefs.

The presentation consisted of two videos and a brief talk by two Raelians, France and Dave.

They put forth the anomalies of Darwinism, history and today's society to provide overwhelming evidence that not only human, but perhaps all genetic life was seeded on earth by aliens. Specifically, our alien geneticist parents are called the Elohim (from the Old Testament) and they created the human race in their likeness in a laboratory.

So it is no surprise that they believe that Jesus was a hybrid of Mary and an Elohim — and that all the Prophets were contacted by the Elohim. Rael is their latest messenger.

The Raelian's prophet says his followers give up all vices except sex and take responsibility for their actions and emotions in all aspects of life. Sex is heartily

encouraged — and practiced among the Raelians. Rael's book *The Art Of Sensual Meditation* offers instructions for expanding one's sex life to its full potential — monogamous relationships are discouraged.

Rael is also an advocate of cloning and genetic engineering, expecting that it will lead to a sort of immortality for man. Two years ago they announced the formation of Valiant Venture Limited, the first company in the world to offer human cloning. The company is planning to eventually provide infertile or homosexual couples with a child cloned from the DNA of one of the partners. They will also store sample cells in order to clone in case of accidental death.

The Elohim also instructed Rael to build UFOland in Valcourt Quebec. The slightly cheezy theme park is dedicated to the future and space. It includes

replica's of a 26 foot DNA strand and the UFO that took Rael to the planet of the Elohim.

To prepare for the return of the Elohim, the Raelians have been attempting to build an "ET Embassy" in Jerusalem. The Israeli government, however, have not been completely receptive to the proposal, perhaps because they have been deporting plane loads of various messianic and apocalyptic cults who have been arriving in the holy city with bizarre agenda's in time for the turn of the millennium.

The Raelian representative, France, said that while the Israeli's have not completely denied them permission to build the Embassy, alternative plans exist to build the cosmic consul in Hawaii, Palestine or Egypt.

Halifax was just another stop on the groups tour, which included stops in Sydney and Bridgewater.


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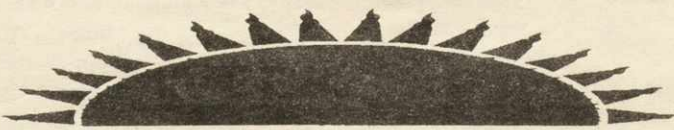
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The International Raelian Religion's interests

- Online sale of eggs from young, attractive females.
- Promotion of sex, but discouragement of reproduction/monogamy.
- Promotion of a continuing controlled genetic plan for the human race.
- Sales of clones from a Jamaican based company.

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