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Gordon Brent Ingram

Re-casting The Terminal City [part 3]

Squatting in 'Vancouverism': Public art & architecture after the Winter Olympics

Public art was part of the 2010 Olympics in Vancouver; there was some funding, some media coverage, and a few sites were transformed. What were the new spaces created and modes of cultural production, in deed the use of



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culture in Vancouver, that have emerged in this winter of the Olympics? What lessons can be offered, if any, to other contemporary arts and design communities in Canada and elsewhere? And there was such celebration of Vancouver, that a fuzzy construct was articulated for 'Vancouverism' that today has an unresolved and sometimes pernicious relationship between cultural production and the dynamics between public and privatizing art. In this essay, I explore when, so far, 'Vancouverism'¹ has become a cultural, design, 'planning', or ideological movement and when the term has been more of a foil for marketing over-priced real estate.² In particular, I am wondering what, in these supposedly new kinds of Vancouveristic urban designs, are the roles, 'the place' of public and other kinds of site-based art.



The new Woodward's towers and the restored Woodward's W sign from the historic centre of 19th Century Vancouver at Carrall and Water Street, January 2010, photograph by Gordon Brent Ingram



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January and February 2010 were the months to separate fact from fiction and ideas from hyperbole. By the end of February's Winter Olympics, the mounting bills and utter repetitiveness of Vancouver's self-promotion³ already cast a shadow over the notion that the city was ever ready to be any sort of urban example.⁴ Banded about were a few principles, even the bare bones of a future manifesto. What were the ideas and what were the actual achievements? Over the last century, Vancouver has been a centre for an array of social movements and ideological projects from the more utopian union organizing of the IWW, the Industrial Workers of the World, to a curiously effective advocacy of smaller numbers of people sharing beds and bedrooms to the activism of Greenpeace spawned in Kitsilano in the 1970s. Moving into the second decade of a new century, a few of the City of Vancouver's planning policies, along with the modernist sensibilities of a handful of architects, are being branded as a movement for sustainability through the emphasis on residential towers. But this talk of 'Vancouverism' comes at a time when many city cores throughout the world have already attained higher human densities more elegantly and with less severe ecological footprints. More troubling is the contradiction that much of the innovative architecture in Vancouver has been lower density and often better serves suburban than core urban neighbourhoods. In contrast, the supposedly Vancouveristic towers are repetitive, rarely involve lead designers who are locally based, generate heavy ecological footprints, will be increasingly expensive to maintain, and have included few technological innovations. And Greater Vancouver has as much sprawl as any other North American city.

In the recently marketed notions of 'Vancouverism', the roles of the city's public spaces, hard-fought notions of social justice, and contemporary art-making, involving sectors and movements often at odds with the towers built and marketed by a remarkably small number of transnational investors, remain unresolved. A few events in January and February, in the redeveloped Woodward's Building, the hallowed Western Front, and further afield, provide clues as to what work has been based on well-researched history and theory, what is the innovative design, what is advertising, and what is provincial hype. The opening of Trevor Boddy's exhibit, *Vancouverism*, in Vancouver's new Woodward's atrium on the 15th of January 2010 coincided with the unveiling of Stan Douglas's massive photo-based mural, "Abbott & Cordova, 7 August 1971," recalling the Gastown (police) Riots⁵; the recent completion of the two residential towers designed by Gregory Henriquez and developed by Ian



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Gillespie, structures that support both public housing units and tony condos; and the first use of Simon Fraser University's cavernous, Fei and Milton Wong Experimental Theatre where various figures such as Henriquez and Gillespie lounged and self-congratulated. On the same evening, the reconstructed tower with the Woodward's neon 'W', was lit and was turning for the first time in over 15 years.



The 15 January, 2010 celebration for the opening of the Woodward's Building, the unveiling of the Stan Douglas mural, "Abbott and Cordova, 7th August 1971 2009," the first use of the Simon Fraser University's Fei and Milton Wong Experimental Theatre, and the restoration of the 'W' (for Woodward's) turning sign. photograph by Gordon Brent Ingram

A week after the Woodward's celebrations, a more critical discussion of the role of architecture and public art in neighbourhood regeneration, *Coming Soon: Negotiating the Expectations of Art in the Public Sphere*⁶, was held as the first symposium of the just-opened Audain Gallery of Simon Fraser University @ Woodward's. Coming Soon began to publicly explore the implications for the expansion of cultural infrastructure in the Woodward's complex along with neighbourhood gentrification, the growing privatization of public space,



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the shortage of low-income housing, and homelessness. A week later, another symposium was held, *Learning From Vancouver*, at The Western Front and asked another set of questions about the limits of architectures of high-density redevelopment and the making of site-based art within the context of pressured real estate markets.⁷

Shadowing these events in January was the recent publication of an essay by Trevor Boddy entitled "Vision Deficit"⁸ that articulated a profound critique of Vancouver's urban planning and design establishment. But while Boddy celebrated 'Vision Deficit' at the January 15th opening of *Vancouverism*, he was already backpedalling from his core arguments.⁹ Given Boddy's central role in articulating a theory of Vancouverism, the curious contradictions between the *Vancouverism* exhibit, Vision Deficit The Essay, and what Boddy has stated in subsequent weeks warrants a closer look. And as almost a challenge to the erasures embodied in much of Olympics-synchronized Vancouverism was the installation of Ken Lum's comment on Vancouver's shift to neoliberal architecture, *from shangri-la to shangri-la*¹⁰, with three, doll-house-like replicas of historic squatters shacks placed at the foot of a new hotel and condominium tower that was also the product of the same Woodward's developer, Ian Gillespie. Untying this knot of contradictions from a winter of aggrandizement, historical referencing (and revisionism), boosterism, and ideological horse-trading is important given the pressures to redefine Vancouver after the Olympics and the inevitable contraction, and potential implosion, in the Canadian real estate bubble.¹¹ And in the midst of the Olympics spectacle were some lyrical and under-reported interventions as part of the Bright Light arts festival that brought "together the creative energy of fourteen arts organizations active in Vancouver's Downtown Eastside"¹² in manners that often said more about the urban texture of Vancouver than the pronouncements from the architect developers.



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HENRIQUEZ PARTNERS ARCHITECTS

STUDIO

WORK

IDEAS



Representation of the Woodward's Building project, as viewed aerially from the south-east, from the website of Henriquez Partners <http://www.henriquezpartners.com/>

The Woodward's Building as Concretizing Ideology

January 2010's Vancouverism danced around an unfinished complex, the redeveloped Woodward's Building: two new towers, a constructed department façade of a department store, and a performing arts centre. Not coincidentally, much of Vancouverism, as it has been articulated so far, is a celebration of a particular kind of public-private partnership where an exceptional amount of public funds went to developers to build 400 low income, public housing units while allowing some handsome profits to be made on sales of the adjacent condominium units. Now, Woodward's is also being marketed ideologically as an effective mode of creation of low income housing, by private developers, when less than a generation ago Canadian public agencies were supporting far more community oriented housing designs and getting units built more economically. But that was before a wave of neoliberalism conjured that private enterprise was more effective at spending public funds. And it remains to be seen whether or not such mixed housing will contribute to or slow gentrification in Gastown as part of the amorphous, Downtown Eastside.



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The new buildings in the Woodward's complex, designed by Gregory Henriquez¹³ were not even completed before they were being celebrated as a success. Initial audits related for social use, which Henriquez estimates at "4,000 people a day on site, living, working, shopping, playing, making art and using community services at Woodward's"¹⁴ as well as any contributions towards sustainability, especially in relationship to other new towers being built in other parts of the world, are a year or two away. Such supposed successes are more credibly declared after several years of evaluation – especially for a concept and design with severe deficiencies in terms of its long shadow in a neighbourhood already starved for winter light and its highly debateable contributions to heritage conservation¹⁵ and to sustainability transitions. So the Woodward's 'space', in particular the line between private and public where the *Vancouverism* exhibition was presented, remains contested and under ongoing examination.

At the unveiling fete on January 15th, such words as 'rebirth' (as in of the neighbourhood) and 'collaboration' (as in huge transfers of public resources to private developers) were invoked. Trevor Boddy went on to use terms such as 'mission', 'utopian', and 'mix of uses' stating, "Even by our standards, Woodward's is not normal. It took extraordinary dedication" [for private developers to insist on such excessive public subsidies]. Boddy sang Third Way incantations such as "function of healing" and "to make a liberal, inclusive state." There was a sprinkling of references to modernist visionary, Arthur Erickson, Vancouver's saint of concrete, and his 1955 high-density vision for the Vancouver Peninsula, *Plan 56*.¹⁶



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"Proposal for the redevelopment of the West End of Vancouver," Arthur Erickson, 1955, January and February, 2010 exhibit, "Vancouverism" curated by Trevor Boddy, Woodward's Building Atrium (drawing courtesy Erickson Collection Architectural Archive, University of Calgary)

Later on the evening of the 15th at the Fei and Milton Wong Experimental Theatre, the discussions become more cautious. Bathed in pink light on a white leather couch, developer Ian Gillespie noted that the extent of the long-term success of the Woodward's complex, especially for mixing low and high income groups, will "depend on the effectiveness of mental health programmes" – a pointed comment at a time when provincial cuts are putting the disabled, especially those with compromised mental health, increasingly at risk. Harkening back to Vancouver's boom and bust economy of a century and half century ago, the celebration on January 15th seemed to be more about the project having gotten as far as being near completion without running out of money – with supposedly 92% of closure of sales on the luxury condo units having taken place on schedule. Or was some celebrating about the fact that the developer had supposedly made a relatively high level of profit on subsidized housing? Or was there something profound about a kinder, gentler form of neoliberalism with even greater transfers of public resources to private developers? This was the rather dire form of urban utopianism in Vancouver in the winter of 2010.



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The root of any authentic celebration, on the evening of January 15th, was that various governments and developers had ever collaborated at all, in the early 21st Century, for the sake of low-income housing. In this way, the 21st Century Woodward's came full circle with the original Woodward constructions, the first department store on Canada's West Coast of a century earlier, which displaced and destroyed small businesses on the block.¹⁷ A closer look at this so-called 'body heat'¹⁸ mode of gentrification, of using a particularly wide set of government subsidies from municipal variations (that are eventually paid for by municipal ratepayers) to education funding as in the case of the Simon Fraser University gallery and theatre to grants to artists projects, to repopulated a declining neighbourhood, infers a responsibility to a community – especially when the government funding for the low-income housing, that provides homes for but a few artists, has been provided at effectively above-market returns. In other words, the developer of Woodward's made money off of subsidies to the arts in at least three different ways: in funding directly to arts facilities [involving funds that were then transferred to the developer], through supposedly bringing more artists back into the neighbourhood through being paid to build low-income housing [involving more funds to be transferred to the developer], and through marketing the repackaging of these social subsidies as effective community amenities as crucial to the private marketing of the hundreds of still very expensive and small condo apartments [that lead to even more funds being transferred to the developer].

While this supposedly privately financed model of gentrification-through-cultural-infrastructure is now being applied in nearly every major city on earth, the public money that went into pay for 'space' for the arts, in the Woodward's building, has undoubtedly been more per square foot than has been seen anywhere at any time. And during this Winter-of-the-Woodward's-Honeymoon, the unresolved problems of the design of the block, from its impacts on a heritage neighbourhood to blockage of light the difficulties of maintaining such towers efficiently – not unlike the kinds of perennial problems with modernist towers that a few decades back pushed such high density forms of urbanism out of favour – became more and not less evident. But even an article in the relatively progressive website, The Tyee, gushed uncritically.¹⁹



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model of the Woodward's redevelopment, Henriquez & Partners Vancouverism exhibit, Vancouver, January 2010 photograph by Gordon Brent Ingram

Consumer dilemmas:

Which brand of *Vancouverism* is worthy buying?

Before exploring some of the specific conversations in *Vancouverism* it is necessary to examine the development of the term and where it originated and how its usage has shifted and remained malleable. The term 'Vancouverism' was first used widely in a 2005 article in the New York Times.



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"The surrounding 40-acre area, much of it opened up after highways damaged in the 1989 earthquake were demolished, is to become San Francisco's most densely populated neighborhood, based on a planning model known as Vancouverism. Named after the city in British Columbia, Vancouverism is characterized by tall, but widely separated, slender towers interspersed with low-rise buildings, public spaces, small parks and pedestrian-friendly streetscapes and facades to minimize the impact of a high-density population."²⁰

At the time of the writing of the 2005 article, the only neighbourhood in Vancouver that fit that description was the Concord Pacific redevelopment along False Creek the lands nearly all of which having been acquired by the Province of British Columbia for Expo 86 and then sold in one block, after a huge amount of public controversy in 1987 and 1988,²¹ to then Hong Kong-based Concord Pacific. The sales of the early Yaletown towers built by Concord Pacific were lucrative and the controlling figure in the group, Li Ka Shing, had a rapprochement with Beijing and expanded his operations into other parts of China. In the meantime, the Vancouver division was further developed by Stanley Kwok and Bing Thom with their concepts the bases for the urban and building designs. And little more than a decade later, this relatively small neighbourhood (that involved a lot of capital and heavily subsidized mortgages) was being equated with so-called 'Vancouverism'.

Much of the *Vancouverism* exhibit, at least the version that was shown at Woodward's redevelopment in January and February of 2010, celebrated a corporate culture where the work of developers, planners and designers were conflated under the guise of 'collaboration'. Such a form of neoliberal urbanism affords corporate entities, such as Concord Pacific which also has large projects in Hong Kong and Beijing, the status of architect while effecting side-lining community-based designs and innovations. In the case of Vancouverism as a redevelopment style, more innovative West Coast planning policies and designs of specific buildings and public space that have involved a more diverse set of contributors most not receiving (or effectively giving) funds to multinational developers, are ignored.²² So the supposedly exceptional level of collaboration celebrated in Vancouver codifies a particularly neoliberal notion of planning and design processes and of urbanism in general.



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What undermines the credibility of the *Vancouverism* exhibit is how Trevor Boddy has linked the two decades of bland towers by Concord Pacific with Gregory Henriquez's efforts to design a more purposefully democratic and innovative spaces. Even more problematic is how *Vancouverism* and the discourse it generated conflated these high-density residential projects and the relatively small Yaletown neighbourhood with distinct aspects of the overall planning strategy of the City of Vancouver²³ – even though most other cities in the world also have neighbourhoods of residential towers, though they may be better designed and constructed, than those in Vancouver. In other words, there is nothing sufficiently distinctive about Vancouver's towers to warrant a badge of exceptionalism such as 'Vancouverism'. The greatest contradiction in the *Vancouverism* exhibit at Woodward's is that most of the important architectural works do not include, and even suggest a counter narrative to, residential towers especially the 1983 redevelopment of Robson Square by Arthur Erickson and Cornelia Oberlander, Erickson's 1976 Museum of Anthropology. And many of these projects are for relatively low buildings (such as most of those at the Olympic Village) with many quite a distance from the areas of towers in Vancouver's core.

So if the works in *Vancouverism* do not conform to the definition of Vancouverism, what do they describe? Other than Erickson's Museum of Anthropology, most of the designs barely work with or celebrate respective sites – within Vancouver's spectacular landscape. Views, both those afforded and those removed, by projects are poorly described (suggesting that they were poorly considered in respective design processes). And few of these projects other than the Olympic Village²⁴ that is still being audited, engage seriously in current or past standards for sustainability such as the LEED certification system. But well after many Vancouver architects began engaging in sustainability transitions, most of the designers included in the *Vancouverism* exhibit were avoided engaging in standards such as LEED. To the rest of the country and world, the whole notion of Vancouverism as based on the evidence in this exhibit begins to smell of a stale kind of provincialism brought out of a cupboard for guests coming for the Winter Olympics.

It is a relief that in Boddy's pantheon of local corporate architecture, he mercifully relieves us, in *Vancouverism*, of mention of the works of the Paul Merrick group that was publicly chastised not so long ago.²⁵ In contrast, the



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absence, from *Vancouverism*, of celebrated West Coast figures, most notably Bill Pechet and Stephanie Robb²⁶ whose work spans a range of design disciplines, is problematic and suggests Boddy recycling the cronyism that afflicted the West Coast modernism for so long. Similarly, the absence of examples of the wealth of contemporary West Coast landscape architects, so deeply engaged with sites and sustainability, as well as innovative residential architects is problematic. Worse, *Vancouverism* the exhibit is obstructive to explorations of the wealth of innovative design and urbanism in the region. With so much missing, I am forced to wonder whether or not the relatively high degree of 'private' financial support for the *Vancouverism* exhibits, from London to Paris to Vancouver, by Woodward's developer Ian Gillespie²⁷, has constrained critical discussion of the work in the exhibit – including Erickson's.

There is another problem in the *Vancouverism* exhibit that suggests historical revisionism. It remains to be determined how much of central Vancouver's pedestrian-oriented, higher density character was the product of a supposedly enlightened partnership through architects being dominated by developers. A well-established historical narrative, one that is well-substantiated, describes how much of central Vancouver has been more the product of the municipal political economy coping with a wave of community activism in the 1960s and 1970s that precluded a system of freeways, limited mass evictions for redevelopment, and than initially put significant constraints on the designs of Concord Pacific. While Boddy has argued that the *Vancouverism* exhibit was something of a correction for what he has stated as excessive credit given developers and planners, with insufficient acknowledgement of pioneering architects such as Erickson²⁸, the murkiness of the relationships between planning parameters, design process, and developer bottom lines continues to become more opaque the more talked up is so-called Vancouverism.

After visiting the *Vancouverism* exhibit a score of times, I was left with the question of whether or not the few substantive principles teased out of the examples are more those of the architects or more those of Boddy as the theoretician. Has Boddy's interpretation of Vancouverism simply been enabling a group of architects and developers at the expense of developing his own manifesto or even school of architecture (which still appears to me more like a grab-bag of principles of the most socially responsible, contemporary design viable under neoliberalism)?



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fragment of Stan Douglas's "Abbott and Cordova, 7th August 1971" (2009) Inkjet in Laminate Glass
photograph by Gordon Brent Ingram

Public art and community memory under Vancouverism

So how can public art and community memory fare in a zone of state subsidized real estate speculation for the generation of private space (largely for the middle class)? The cultural centre-piece at Woodward's may tell us where arts production and artists can fit in to landscapes of real estate inflation. Stan Douglas's "Abbott & Cordova, 7 August 1971"²⁹ is a massive photographic installation that uncomfortably extends the parameters of photography, public art, and monumental art in general. "Abbott & Cordova, 7 August 1971" is an exceptional achievement in the Vancouver-based artist's rich body of work – and perhaps his most 'public' in it being permanently installed outdoors and indoors in a strategic site in the neighbourhood. And how has Douglas brought a discussion of history back to one of the most strategic historic neighbourhoods in Canada in terms of early multicultural alliances and labour activism?



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More than in any of his other works, Douglas aligns with Mexican political muralists of the early Twentieth Century with a re-creation of police violence, at the Woodward's block, four decades before. But rather than a painting, this work is a massive, backlit photograph, almost a homage to the stage historical reconstructions of Vancouverite Jeff Wall, that is installed on both side of the same wall. And given the different lighting between the outdoor representation of the heavily constructed photograph and the indoor luminescence over the course of a day and event, that duality, in itself, adds to the discussion of the importance of and critical interpretation of recent urban history.

More of a departure in the canon of murals is the examination, in "Abbott & Cordova, 7 August 1971," of the relationship of police violence, which Douglas linked in a short public comment on January 15th, to the subsequent decline along Hastings Street (an area now facing rapid gentrification due to the Woodward's redevelopment). The 1971 police riot was reconstructed by Douglas on a set at the Pacific National Exhibition. The scene of the police violence and resistance to it was certainly not celebrated in the iconography of the mural as heroic. Instead, the youthful bodies being bundled off by the police come to symbolize how the old Downtown of Vancouver, a multicultural public sphere, was effectively abducted and depopulated. The deep greys, blacks and browns suggest other uses of history, of the melancholy of lost opportunities. In this way, this double-sided photograph is a stark departure from a long cannon of political murals that while celebrating resistance to violence of states, oligarchies and capital have rarely looked as closely at the damage and impacts of social conflict. and state repression. The oppressed don't really triumph here but those sufficiently broken and who have survived might one day qualify for a paltry amount of subsidized public housing. There is no romanticism in "Abbott & Cordova, 7 August 1971." The result is stark and, for a North American city that has been less able than many to confront its history of police violence, almost embarrassing. "Abbott & Cordova, 7 August 1971" is a reminder that the panopticon gaze of contemporary culture is upon the Woodward's complex even if there are hints of a movie set in Douglas's muralism.



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fragment of Stan Douglas's "Abbott and Cordova, 7th August 1971" (2009) Inkjet in Laminated Glass
photograph by Gordon Brent Ingram

There are two constraints on the credibility of "Abbott & Cordova, 7 August 1971" that reflect the limits of Douglas's work. Like much of the historically based pieces by Douglas, 'Abbott & Cordova, 7 August 1971' is short on historical research and thin, verging on cliché, on theory. Given all of Vancouver's moments of activism and repression, in the 1970s alone, serious questions remain about the relative importance of the police riot at Abbott & Cordova, adjacent to the site of the mural, on the 7th of August, 1971. And the link between this particular police violence, the progressive impoverishment of the neighbourhood, and the journeys and hardships of the over several thousand of its current residents who are effectively homeless remains poorly researched. Police violence clearly did play a huge part in the decline of the neighbourhood in that period but most of the abuse was hidden and did not involve a well-documented riot. In this way the 7th of August 1971 riot becomes more of a distraction, a surrogate for broader knowledge and clarity. What took place in that decade and what followed was the dismantling of one of Canada's earliest crossroads for multiculturalism and working-class



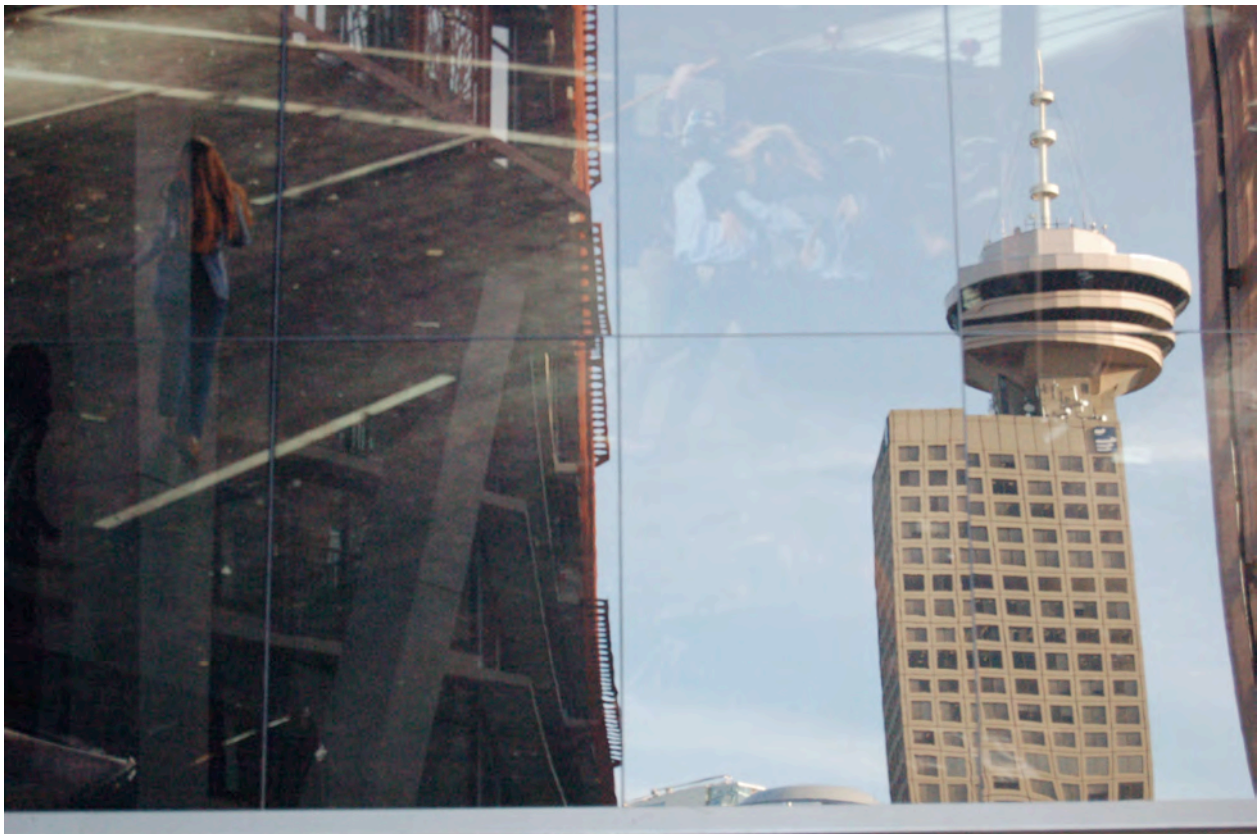
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activism. The evacuation of what was only later labelled the 'Downtown Eastside' was partly because a range of previously ghettoized ethnic groups finally had the economic clout and human rights protections to move out into the less expensive suburbs while the white working-class that were left either bled into Vancouver's middle-class – or remained in the neighbourhood because of institutions such as unions, coops, and subsidized housing along with related jobs. The demographic vacuum that resulted was only partially a result of police violence.



fragment of the exterior face of Stan Douglas's two-sided "Abbott and Cordova, 7th August 1971" (2009) Inkjet in Laminate Glass, with reflections of one of the Woodward's towers to the right and the Simon Fraser University Harbour Tower on the right, photograph by Gordon Brent Ingram

What does give "Abbott & Cordova, 7 August 1971" credence is that this was on one of the last 'police riots' in a long history of violent altercations largely initiated by the forces of the City of Vancouver and public knowledge of these events have largely been erased. And curiously, there were no representatives of the City of Vancouver Police at the January 15th unveiling even trying to distance themselves from the old violence or even suggesting there was some



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kind of ongoing process of truth and reconciliation. Instead, the historical conversation about police abuse in the neighbourhood has been truncated (while violence against the most vulnerable continues today). While big and shiny, "Abbott & Cordova, 7 August 1971" says something about history, as if public memory were a commodity to be reworked as part of marketing edgy real estate, there is little acknowledgement of the economic cycles and restructuring that could one day see impoverishment of incoming residents especially as a housing prices, for the units in Woodward's, may not remain so high.³⁰

The other somewhat 'Vancouveristic' contradiction embedded in "Abbott & Cordova, 7 August 1971" is the erasure in the tableau. All of the discernible faces in the mural are of European heritages. Douglas has effectively whitewashed Vancouver's old multiracial downtown. Perhaps he was anticipating the new demographic resulting from the redevelopment. The August 1971 episode took place in the decade when this same neighbourhood, formerly a major centre for multiculturalism within Canada, was largely emptied of people of colour – with most except the elderly leaving happily. The violence portrayed in the reconstructed photograph as historical record was against young white people. This particular police riot was a relative exception – in targeting so-called 'white, middle-class kids'. The tableau does not even suggest, let alone reference, the century of white supremacist riots on the same streets, the forced relocation and urbanization of aboriginal communities (sometimes into and sometimes out of this neighbourhood), the deprivations forced on Chinese Canadians, the 1942 deportations and effective erasure of Japantown, and the vicious police entrapments and harassment of Indo-Canadians – all within three blocks of the site of the mural. The violence against white youth in 1971 was a historical after-thought for the City of Vancouver that eclipsed a century of daily police violence against people not of European heritage. For viewers with heritages not European, the effective racialization of 'Abbott & Cordova, 7 August 1971' can be confusing and discomfiting. Perhaps this error is the result of both Douglas's aversion for critical historical research, while engaging in monumental art about historical topics funded by developers, combined with his growing up in the elite West Point Grey, when his was one of the few African-Canadian families.³¹



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A closer look at the 15th of January, 2010 unveiling of the Stan Douglas mural, "Abbott and Cordova, 7th August 1971," photograph by Gordon Brent Ingram

The multiplicity of publics in Vancouver's public art: *Coming Soon?*

One of the first conversations of the kinds of difficult choices that will be necessary for making art in the public realm in post-Olympics Vancouver came at the opening of the major exhibition space at the Woodward's complex: Simon Fraser University's Audain Gallery. The first commissioned work for the Audain Gallery was by Ken Lum was shown in its Hastings Street windows just before the official opening of SFU Woodward's. Lum's 2009 - 2010, "I Said No" was a powerful beginning for what could become the region's centre for critical theory on the multiple publics of art and architecture. "I Said No" occupies a major historic site of Vancouver's retail culture where there were street windows throughout much of the 20th Century and explores the most basic impulses of refusal for engagement be it consumer culture, social contracts, or perhaps even the Winter Olympics. The work's power is in its ambiguity. For many decades Vancouverites were lured into the former department by the same kind of big type on paper banners advertising sales



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and other discounts. But in January the Gallery was advertising more of a kind of refusal compounded by a lack of access to the interior spaces from the street. The use of the retail sale typography was even more paradoxical given that the artist is fully aware that art, even public art, is often a form of consumption increasingly tied to the making of new wealth (even in a time of funding cuts to the arts). The ambiguity and intensity of "I Said No" aptly laid out the debates to come.



Ken Lum 2009 - 2010, "I Said No," Audain Gallery (East Hasting Street window), Vancouver, January 2010
photograph by Gordon Brent Ingram

A week after the opening of the Woodward's redevelopment, Audain Gallery held its first public meeting with the Coming Soon Public Symposium aimed "address questions regarding the different, and often competing, public and artistic expectations of art in the public sphere and art as a public discourse."³² Gallery Director Sabine Ritter stated that the Audain Gallery was expressly established out of "a commitment to art in the public sphere" public art must interact within a "locational identity" and competing notions of "publicness." Ritter went on to acknowledge divergent notions of public from "social



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homogeneity" to communities of difference and asked the central question for this early conversation of "Which publics do artists want to make alliances with?"

Within the discussion of multiple and heavily managed notions of 'publics' at *Coming Soon*, Lorna Brown's site-less but neighbourhood-specific piece, based on her long involvement in the Downtown Eastside, was the most compelling. Brown presented a digital work in progress where she "recombined" the more commonly used terms and phrases of 50 businesses and nongovernmental organizations in the neighbourhood. Brown noted that, "Mission statements are examples of euphemistic public identities." Through "indexing and archiving while introducing elements of chance" "in order to create a big myth," Brown created a nonsensical essay with allusions to sides of these groups that were more about social management and obtaining (dwindling amounts of) funding.

Emerging artist Jamie Hilder discussed a work in progress "exploring the actual city versus the manufactured image" to eventually produce a performance and video. Hilder sketched his initial practices around gathering information on and infiltrating the Downtown Ambassadors a subsidized but effectively private security business that collects data to make the case for more private security in the neighbourhood. Hilder concluded that Vancouver's Downtown Ambassadors were part of an "urban security mercenary movement." He discussed the implications of recent amendments to British Columbia's *Trespass Act* for removing undesirable individuals, especially poor and homeless people, from public space adjacent to urban private property.

Am Johal, who works in the office of Jenny Kwan, Member of the Provincial Legislature, for Vancouver-Mt.Pleasant, spoke about the recent history of the neighbourhood and the use, beginning in the neighbourhood activism of late 1960s, of the term 'Downtown Eastside'. Soon after, an aboriginal member of the audience noted that the area has a much longer history being labelled 'Skid Road' and a long-occupation by First Nations communities. Makiko Hara spoke about the engagement of Centre A Gallery, which is two blocks to the east of the Audain Gallery, with the public space of Hastings Street through using its very large glass windows for art installations that acknowledge the fluidity of the lines between the public and private.



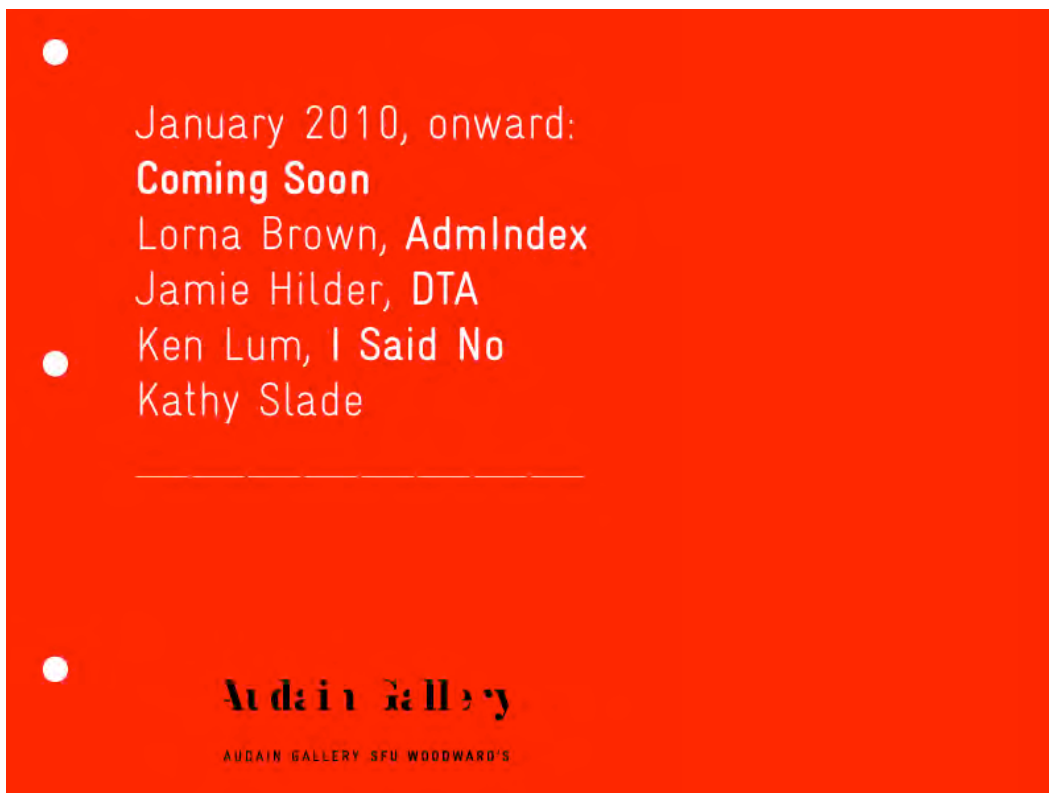
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Ken Lum spoke about his piece, "I Said No" that at the time was still installed in the Gallery and stated "Does the work try to redress some missing rights for some people?" "Am I trying to restore a voice to the people down here? My answer is 'No!'" Questions from the audience shifted to his piece installed the month before in East Vancouver, the so-called 'East Van Cross'.³³ Lum then distanced himself from the Christian iconography of that cross and argued that such symbols were used in "pre-Christian Roman times." Lum did not elaborate on his suggestion of what the alternative uses of what symbol might be – even though the allusion would be to Roman imperial crucifixions. And there was no mention of the fact that for all of the moneys that went into the arts in Vancouver around the Olympics, this work will be the only permanent piece of public art added to the 'East Van' neighbourhood – an area of the city that has the highest concentration of artists and studios in the city and where the resistance of the Olympics proposal, especially around the February 22, 2003 municipal referendum, was strongest – in no small part because of the relatively low combined levels of arts funding that have been historically been made available in British Columbia.



The invitation for the first public events of the Audain Gallery, Simon Fraser University at Woodward's in January and February of 2010



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Learning from Vancouver?

While *Coming Soon?* began to sketch a set of positions in opposition to those bankrolled by the Woodward's developers, the architecture panel at a conference at the Western Front a week later, *Learning from Vancouver*,³⁴ laid the basis for exposing Vancouverism as little more than a cultural variation on neoliberalism. In the panel on architecture, Matthew Soules first invoked Venturi and Brown's seminal 1972 *Learning from Los Vegas*³⁵ as a response to the crisis of modernity and the shift to postmodernism. He then argued that *Learning from Vancouver* was in response to a new crisis -- in the notions about and expectations for cities that have been transformed so thoroughly in just three decades. Soule went on to describe the shift in conceptions and expectations of urban form and function from relatively discreet and predictable ideas of cities, as "clear operating systems and clear boundaries" to multiple challenges to manageability especially from the proliferation of megacities and slums. In contrast to these urban zones of crisis, Vancouver provides a "manageable notion of a new kind of city -- at a time in history when there is something of an intellectual wasteland in terms of explorations of the possibilities of cities." Soule provided one example of this paucity of creative thinking in urbanism in the awarding of MIT's 2007 Kevin Lynch Award to Ray Spaxman, Larry Beasley, and Ann McAfee of the City of Vancouver Planning Department.³⁶

Soule went on to argue that within the global pantheon of urbanism, Vancouver has become "a mythic construct." "Vancouver is now one of these archetypes...that everyone looks to for precedents...as the liveable city." He noted that this particular urban myth conflates liveability with the designs of the Concord Pacific development along the north shore of False Creek where there was a particularly "collaborative" relationship between the public and private sectors, especially between one multinational corporation and the City of Vancouver as "a relative seamlessness of public and private."

Another characteristic of the Vancouver model, described by Soule, is the high open space ratio that for the Yaletown developments has been around 30% combined with podium towers with townhouses at their bases. Soule linked notions of liveability to marketing typologies emphasizing "views, air, sunlight" equated with "the good life" (for real estate marketing) that "creates a kind of urbanity that is oriented to order and opposed to anti-social mixing." In fact, the Yaletown redevelopment in Vancouver may have been the first



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time that a city was reorganized around the notion of "liveability." And a key requirement for liveability in Vancouver has been "heavy masterplanning" almost entirely driven by developers. Soule described two recent projects, in Toronto and Fort Worth, that invoked Vancouver in proposing high density developments reconnecting neighbourhoods to waterfront.

Soule went on to argue that so-called 'Vancouverism' is often a euphemism for the use of neoliberal political ideologies shaping economies but more within the Blairite project of The Third Way as articulated by Antony Giddens. Within the pantheon of redevelopment, the north side a Vancouver's False Creek is increasingly viewed as a kinder, gentler form of Canary Wharf-style redevelopment and gentrification - a quarter century after that expensive, and largely unsuccessful, redevelopment effort began in the East End of London that was the flagship of early, Thatcherite neoliberalism. In contrast, (North Side) False Creek-style 'Vancouverism' represents a supposedly "post-ideological political space" as a "collaboration between enlightened technocrats." Embodied in this supposed depoliticization is a shift away from "multiculturalism" and a politics of difference to a tacit planning-for-gentrification marked by "liberated pragmatism" and "ideas that work." "We can think of Vancouverism as a manifestation of post-political collaboration between Left and Right" - a kind of 'Third Way Urbanism' that has transcended, for now, the tensions between city centres and suburbs." Soule missed the link here between this form of pedestrian-based urbanization and economic growth in the information and creative sectors that requires and fosters a particularly adaptable and mobile middle class often engaged in hyper-consumerism. Instead, Soule invoked Slavoj Žižek's critique of The Third Way and noted that, "What is de-emphasized in 'Vancouverism' is the fact that the city is increasingly less affordable." Soule then began to explore an alternative to the so-called liveable city that would not require obfuscation of history or the obliteration of entire communities, such as those destroyed in the mid-1980s for Expo '86.

The points made by Glen Lowry and Henry Tsang in the presentation that followed, on their ongoing project exploring similarities with and differences between Vancouver's False Creek with the Dubai Marina in the United Arab Emirates, embodied less of a critique of Vancouverism and more a rambling discourse on "global mobilities"³⁷ (particularly their own through a large Canada Council grant). Lowry acknowledged how public space and institutions



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are undermined to build these new (Vancouveristic) locales of hyper-globalization. In these processes Tsang noted, "The relationship between artists, architects, and urban planning are becoming indistinguishable." Both Lowry and Tsang acknowledged the difficulties that plague arts projects that address the "specular and spectacular city" especially "the new city for an urban elite," for "new economies of leisure," and "the new pedestrian class." Perhaps the most nuanced research that this project has highlighted so far is about how in the last 1980s and early 1990s, Vancouver-based developer Stanley Kwok forged new ways for his employer, Concord Pacific, to work with, and effectively dominate, the Planning Department of the City of Vancouver under incoming Director, Larry Beasley.

Problematically, none of the theorizing and tentative analyses provided by Soule, Lowry and Tsang addressed squarely the removal and erasure of Squamish and Musqueam communities in False Creek, in little more than the half century before the years that first saw Concord Pacific and the growing links to Hong Kong and then Chinese capital. In contrast, Candice Hopkins did speak on erasure and the obliteration of communities but her example was far afield. Hopkins spoke on the removal of aboriginal communities and memory from the Canadian Prairies. Within a Western Canadian-wide analysis that has implications for False Creek, she linked the Métis rebellions to the 1938 *Metis Betterment Act* and the 1972 Aboriginal Tent Embassy as an encampment that functioned "as an alternative public space." What was so powerful about her thinking was the succinct linking of obliteration and erasure of prairie communities to contemporary forms of resistance extending to the West Coast. In all of the oppositional discussions around Vancouverism and the Winter Olympics, few presentations were as forward thinking that hers.

In the panel discussion that followed, Soule reflected that, "Vancouver may be less an innovator of urban form and more a signifier." He further noted that, "Vancouver has a function for cleaning up the image [of intensive redevelopment under the aegis of global capital] as a good free signifier." In other words, Vancouverism is more of a mode of masking, a set of tactics for camouflage and subterfuge of maintenance requirements for international capital, rather than a set of urban characteristics let alone planning and design principles.



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HENRIQUEZ PARTNERS ARCHITECTS

STUDIO

WORK

IDEAS



Representation of the Woodward's Building project, as viewed from the west, from the website of Henriquez Partners <http://www.henriquezpartners.com/>

Deficits: Vision | Consistency | Logic

The most intriguing aspect of this Winter of Vancouverism was the multiple positions taken by critic Trevor Boddy. In his essay, "Vision Deficit,"³⁸ Boddy attempted to conflate and then distance himself from a number of retrogressive City of Vancouver planning policies, and offices of city planning dominated by a small group of tower developers. Boddy attempted to align himself with the early vision of recently deceased, architect Arthur Erickson and a far less visionary group of the eminent designer's friends nearly all of whom were associated with the Trudeau-era Liberal Party and many of whom had some gain in the Government of Canada redevelopment of Granville Island (which tellingly is not mentioned in the Vancouveristic vision). "Vision Deficit" as a rant embodies an important argument that paradoxically turns on and calls into question the implicit arguments made just a year before when Boddy opened the *Vancouverism* exhibition in London. Within Boddy's bibliography, "Vision Deficit" has an important function in distancing himself from both the major funders of the dominant formation in the city's municipal politics, Vision Vancouver: the developers and purveyors of poorly constructed and over-priced condo real estate. These large developers have so much municipal



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influence that, regardless of the next city elections, this group are bound to lose some sway over the urban fabric. Another way to look at Boddy's distancing exercise in "Vision Deficit" is that there are now so many boring, expensive-to-maintain towers in central Vancouver that a new kind of developer is in ascendance, and backer in municipal politics. This new group of developers must adapt to smaller development sites (as those are the only ones still available) will foster smaller-scaled and more innovative designs, that in contrast to the massive-scale 'Vancouverism' developers will aspire to LEED certifications. At the same time, the donation landscape in municipal elections is shifting as Concord Pacific and Millennium move their capital to other cities with greater vulnerability and that provide higher returns. Boddy can anticipate this abrupt shift in urban design culture better than anyone. So with the nostalgia of *Vancouverism*, the exhibit, and the anticipation embodied in "Vision Deficit," Boddy has hedged his bets.



Trevor Boddy speaking about this essay, 'Vision Deficit' that was published in issue 24 of the Vancouver Review that he is showing to the audience, the opening of the Woodward's Building, 15th of January, 2010. The person sitting behind Boddy is Jim Green a former mayoral candidate and one of the community activists who supported the Henriquez design for the Woodward's redevelopment.



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"Vision Deficit" is a historic piece of design criticism for the West Coast where, historically, architects desperate for work and developers starving for investment have often been too cosy. "Vision Deficit" is far more cogent than Boddy's ill-fated critique, a few years back, of the architecture of the Paul Merrick group.³⁹ And "Vision Deficit" is a long ways away from the fog in his 2007 essay that was love-fest for four dubious towers designed and built by Concord Pacific. In that essay with Boddy mashed notions of low-income and high-maintenance towers with 'eco-density' and sustainability that gives new credence to the term 'green-washing'.⁴⁰

"Vision Deficit" is a beautiful rant – almost believable if Boddy had not started backpedalling as soon as it was in print. And regardless of which day it is and whether Boddy wants to confirm or deny that he believed what he wrote, there is poetry.

"[T]he 2010 Olympic Winter Games will forever be over-praised by the naïve and over-governed – those who buy into the cant of economic multiplier effects and multiplier effects upon the multiplier effects...this group will not doubt mis-credit the Games for ending the Great Recession, solidifying our [Vancouver's] destiny as a high-end resort of convenience for anxious global money, even for fixing potholes and smoothing out the lines of our city's visage."⁴¹

"Tragically, we have confused a real-estate boom with an economic boom[.]"⁴²

"[T]his province has become a passive state run by and for real-estate developers[.]"⁴³

VANOC [the local organization for the 2010 Winter Olympics] was utterly dominated by real estate interests (from the inception of Vancouver's bid for the Olympics).⁴⁴

There is a feigned kind of lost innocence when Boddy, who two years before gushed over Concord Pacific Corporation the 'architect, suggests, indirectly, that developers do not always think about the best interests of communities.



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"Welcome to the 'Developocracy' (or perhaps more mellifluous to the ears is 'Hustlervannia')...The Developocracy has coalesced over the past two decades to dominate this city[.]"⁴⁵

And Boddy's pique with the "developocracy" goes back nearly two decades to his disappointment with then Mayor Gordon Campbell's "design buffoonery" around the selection of Boston-based architect Moshe Safdie to design the downtown Vancouver Public Library building. Boddy's naiveté around the chequered legacy of the late planner, Peter Oberlander⁴⁶, is curious. The mythologizing of figures such as Oberlander, without acknowledging decades of low levels of public consultation in many of his projects suggests that Boddy is opting for nostalgia over precedents relevant for a very different era. A powerful concept that is not mentioned in *Vancouverism* the exhibit that is outlined in "Vision Deficit" is that of Vancouver's "unreal estate" where an extraordinarily high 18% of the recent housing dollar has gone into marketing costs while only 6% has gone into design (as defined in terms of architecture, engineering, landscape design – and related studies).⁴⁷ These lower levels of overall research and design contrast with the pressures on tower developers in much of the world today who are often scrambling for approvals through innovative designs emphasizing sustainability.



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Ken Lum *from shangri-la to shangri-la*, 2010 site-specific installation, Vancouver, photograph by Gordon Brent Ingram

Conclusions:

Vancouverism the brand gets stale quickly

"The problem of our inability to truly understand the city can be summed up in a sole name: Vancouver. A peaceful Canadian city, which has become the model, in the absence of others, of the more or less correct city, more or less friendly..." Rem Koolhaas 2009⁴⁸

How "more or less friendly" has Vancouver and Vancouverism been to site-based and other forms of public art, and production of contemporary culture in general, in the months leading up to and during the Winter Olympics? The architecture and the neoliberal designs have tended to dwarf the more innovative and community-centred art. Lucy Pullen's installation at Artspeak Gallery spoke of contemporary art in the city besieged and paralyzed; waiting out both the Winter Olympics and the latest West Coast wave of under-funding. But that Artspeak's major statement for the Olympics was hardly



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engagement in a city built by marginalized arts communities that have more often have thrived.⁴⁹ In contrast, Centre A's presentation of Brian Mulvihill's World Tea Party,⁵⁰ a now two-decade long series of performances, created a supple space for inclusion nearly entirely absent from a spectacle of bodies and sports that championed a relatively privileged and mythologized notion of Canadian experience. And with such dire news about funding cuts in the arts, the Light Bar, of Jinhan Ko and his collaborators, was the place to dance away the last of the arts funding and to forget what few opportunities for contemporary cultural production in Vancouver the near future may well bring.

Much of the outside world's notion of 'Vancouverism' is based on the Concord Pacific towers in Yaletown that was produced by a unique confluence, in the late 1980s, of British Columbia's high-handed provincial government, Hong-Kong-gone-to-Beijing capital, and a city planning department better able to serve large developers than to civic politicians and neighbourhood organizations. But the frenzied construction of bland towers in Yaletown, over the 1990s and the following decade, functioned almost as much to marginalise local architects such as Erickson and early sustainability initiatives as it did to generate handsome profits that soon enough were invested in the obliteration of the older neighbourhoods of China in the years leading up to the 2008 Olympics. And compared to these overseas conundrums that have provided the profit and motive for 'Vancouverism', the programming concepts of Gregory Henriquez and even the "shameful process"⁵¹ of dismantling a heritage district might even be argued as 'ethical'.

Perhaps the stable ideological core of 'Vancouverism' could be those conversations between Boddy and Erickson with the associated principles yet to be fully articulated. Rather than 'Vancouverism', a better label could be termed, 'Boddyism'. When Boddy is pressed on what makes 'Vancouverism' so distinct, he has stated that, 'We have density, but it's not just 'how high does it go.'⁵² But how different is 'Vancouverism' or how better is it from other forms of urbanism far more engaged in site, history, culture, and sustainability still remains, after a month of his blitz, an unanswered question. Given the ideological roots of the much touted Yaletown towers, and their economic and demographic functions in the onslaught of neoliberalism in the 1980s, today's 'Vancouverism' may just be the PR for a developer movement that has lost



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momentum since the 2008 economic crisis and the more recent tightening of mortgage lending in Canada.

As for 'Vancouverism' as a movement, why have a stable set of principles for a set of architectural practices serving highly mobile capital? Perhaps 'Vancouverism' is more effective (for developers) as a contradictory jumble of ideas, practices, and shadows of capital flows, is a surrogate for understandings of, in deed modes of inquiry into, the 21st Century city. Certainly the doubt feeds into a broader project of fragmenting urban planning and design into projects dominated by architects – and developers. Part heavy handed masterplanning, part quiet social and cultural erasure, a trope of avoidance of sustainable design practices, and tactics for well controlled public space, Vancouverism is more a reassurance to investors and a strata of the upper middle class, a sort of glossy prospectus, than a set of design principles. 'Vancouverism' largely side-steps philosophy and de-emphasizes political economy aside from what is absolutely necessary to make and sell condominium units. Rather than being a singular movement based on unifying principles, 'Vancouverism' represents an array of late modernist impulses, producing higher densities than exurbs, applied in proximity to a set of sites, landscapes, and communities the respective histories, cultures, demographics, and trajectories of which remain under-researched and eclipsed by residual forms of neo-colonialism, provincialism and hubris.

The most pernicious use for Vancouverism in the coming years is to conflate the designs for high density, heavy ecological footprint, energy guzzling, and excessive maintenance buildings with so-called 'eco-density' and with sustainability. Given that few of the developers of this Vancouveristic towers have ever bothered to engage in broadly accepted international criteria for sustainable architecture, most notable LEED standards, the conflation of towers, eco-density, and sustainability is just another developers' ruse, a scam to sell real estate while cutting corners. The fact that 'Vancouverism' as was articulated in January and February of 2010 could not distance itself from fraudulent assertions about eco-density such as those in the Shape Vancouver 2050 website⁵³, that is clearly a front for developers who have no intention of engaging in site-based forms sustainability, confirms that regardless of the vague and contradictory ideals Vancouverism the concept can be used to give credence where none is due.



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The marginal role of public art in Vancouveristic Vancouver was illustrated by the very quiet installation, and relative lack of public engagement, around the February installation of Ken Lum's *from shangri-la to shangri-la* site-specific installation.⁵⁴ The squatter shack architecture that Lum invokes was a truly 'Vancouveristic' architecture adapted to local conditions and often fusing native and settler (both European and Asian) technologies, aesthetics, and sensibilities. And since those nineteenth century innovations has come over a century of quiet, sensitive and ethical design, often linked to comparable centres such as Seattle, San Francisco, and Toronto through democratic social movements rather than by capital. Through the last two decades of especially cozy relationships between large developers working with global capital and the City of Vancouver Planning Department, these localized design processes, often relegated today to terms such as 'ecological design', have been largely erased. Small and truly local design and planning groups constitute the real intellectual basis for an authentic 'Vancouverism' that was sufficiently influential to force a kinder, gentler form of neoliberal brutalism. But while the name 'Vancouver' may have been hijacked and the principles largely denatured and made stale by the relentlessness of the condo industry, design principles truly for the West Coast and an authentic Vancouverism, continues to be explored and tested and outside of the unsustainable campuses of False Creek.

And as for public art, what are the new parameters, the operational rules and possibilities, in Vancouveristic Vancouver? How has Vancouver been transformed by an array of recent interventions such as those by the Toronto-Vancouver art collective, Instant Coffee? The limits of Lum's piece, *from shangri-la to shangri-la*, are telling. The locale entitled 'Offsite' is managed by the Vancouver Art Gallery and is located between the two Shangri-La towers: one a hotel and the other built and, with low levels of sales, still largely owned by Woodward's developer, Ian Gillespie. Offsite was part of planning negotiation between the developers and the City of Vancouver giving the former more freedom to building higher in exchange for ceding a small, temporary space for art at ground level. Lum's squatters shacks aptly represent art, especially site-based art, under Vancouverism – dwarfed into decorum to distract from the power of developers. And like the public art pieces erected with the Olympics cultural money, few disrupt, let alone transform, public space and associated social relationships.

Public art under Vancouverism has been relegated back to early modernist decorum and away from linking contentious culture and social memory to specific places.



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Vancouver's opportunities of a decade back to use public art to correct erasures have largely been squandered.⁵⁵ Perhaps a more powerful way to experience and decipher site-based art that engages with public space in Vancouver after the 2010 Olympics is through what critic Lisa Rochon has proposed as the current status of the most stable of the city's institutions of visual art the Vancouver Art Gallery. In the wake of massive funding cuts to the arts, bringing support to artist-run centres back to levels as low as more than two decades ago, Rochon has described the most secure contemporary arts organization in Vancouver as being in a state of "psychological homelessness."⁵⁶ After the Olympics, all of Vancouver's artists and designers who engage in questions of site, history, erasure, and multiple publics, some of which are still relatively autonomous from international capital, are all either squatters or truly homeless now. As for the remarkable fluidity of the ideas of the West Coast's major architecture critic, Trevor Boddy, the high costs of living in The Terminal City have generated a theoretical nomadism that has effectively robbed most critical thinkers of even the possibilities of ideological homes.

Notes

¹ The term 'Vancouverism' has not been used widely in the city nor has it been precisely identified. In recent years, 'Vancouverism' has been used primarily by Trevor Boddy especially for a travelling exhibition of a small group of Vancouver architects. The term was first used in mass media in *The New York Times* in 2005 (Lisa Chamberlain. 2005. Trying to Build the Grand Central of the West. *The New York Times* (December 28, 2005)).

² The following passage is but one example of the extent of the increasing blurring of Vancouverism as both an urban movement and a marketing ploy (as the bursting of the high costs of the current real estate bubble is widely acknowledged to be inevitable). "The re-imagining of downtown Vancouver as a residential neighbourhood, of attached homes, highrise and low-rise, and the re-imagining of the attached-home interior occurred more or less simultaneously, in the previous two decades. In that simultaneity is the possibility that the open-plan interior is as much an attribute of "Vancouverism" as are the more widely discussed attributes of the ideology, the creation of space between highrises, for example, with low-rises and public amenities." (Christina Symons. 2010. Open-plan interiors infuse small spaces with large life. *Vancouver Sun* (February 19, 2010)). <http://www.vancouversun.com/Open+plan+interiors+infuse+small+spaces+with+large+life/2586055/story.html>

³ One of the more tiresome pieces of a kind of self-congratulation combined with *faux* self-reflection on the eve of the Olympics was Gary Stephen Ross. 2010. A Tale of Two Cities: The Vancouver you see, and the one you don't. *The Walrus* (31 January 2010). <http://www.walrusmagazine.com/articles/2010.03-society-a-tale-of-two-cities/>

⁴ Douglas Haddow. 2010. Vancouver's Olympics head for disaster. Two weeks before the games and with police officers on every corner, Vancouver is far from an Olympic wonderland. *The Guardian* [guardian.co.uk](http://www.guardian.co.uk) (31 January 2010). <http://www.guardian.co.uk/commentisfree/cifamerica/2010/jan/31/vancouver-winter-olympics-police>

⁵ Robin Laurence. 2009. Vancouver artist Stan Douglas revisits the 1971 Gastown Riot. *Georgia Strait* (December 30, 2009).

⁶ The public symposium, Coming Soon: Negotiating the Expectations of Art in the Public Sphere, will be held at the Audain Gallery, Woodward's Building, Simon Fraser University, Vancouver, on Saturday, January 23, 2010. <http://www.artandeducation.net/announcements/view/948> and <http://sfuwoodwards.ca/audain.html>.



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⁷ The public symposium, Learning From Symposium, was held at Vancouver's Western Front on the 29th and 30th of January, 2010. <http://front.bc.ca/mediaarts/events/3314>

⁸ Trevor Boddy. 2009/10. Vision deficit. *Vancouver Review* 24: 8 – 13.

⁹ Don Hann and I ran into Trevor Boddy on the 31st of January, 2010, in the front of Vancouver's Roundhouse Community Centre. After Hann complimented Boddy on his "Vision deficit" essay, Boddy admitted that while the essay had "ruffled a few feathers," but that he was already back on good terms again with Director of the Planning Department of the City of Vancouver, Brent Toderian.

¹⁰ Ken Lum *from shangri-la to shangri-la*, 2010 site-specific installation, Vancouver. The banner accompanying the work states, "The work of Vancouver artist Ken Lum examines the way modernism and mass culture shape our individual experiences of contemporary life. Here Lum has created a site-specific artwork based on the squatters' shacks that once inhabited [sic] the north shore of Burrard Inlet, in an area commonly known as the Maplewood Mudflats. Positioned above shimmering surface of the Offsite reflecting pool, Lum's scale replicas of these now-destroyed dwellings appear as a lingering memory of a particular moment in the lower mainland's history, one that proposed a rustic concept of the ideal life that contrast dramatically with the visions of ordered perfection embodied in the surrounding architecture."

¹¹ Murray Dobbin. 2009. Why Canada's Housing Bubble Will Burst ("The largest sub-prime lender in the world is now the Canadian government."). *The Tyee.ca* (Vancouver). 22 Oct 2009. <http://thetyee.ca/Opinion/2009/10/22/BubbleWillBurst/> & Boyd Erman and Tara Perkins. 2010. Big Six banks urge Ottawa to tighten mortgage rules. *The Globe and Mail* (6 February, 2010).

¹² "Bright Light brings together the creative energy of fourteen arts organizations active in Vancouver's Downtown Eastside. Outdoor performances, video projections, urban planning demonstrations, social events and a parade are just some of the manifestations that animate the historical heart of the city. The group includes artist-run centres, a fashion artist, an architecture studio, a commercial gallery, an art publisher and a public gallery. Bright Light is one of a wide variety of public art projects that have been commissioned to mark the occasion of the Vancouver 2010 Olympics and Paralympic Games." www.bright-light.ca

¹³ Robert Enright. 2010. *Body Heat: The story of the Woodward's Redevelopment*. Vancouver: Simply Read Books/BLUEIMPRINT. ISBN-13: 978-1897476017.

¹⁴ Gregory Henriquez interviewed by Wendy Stueck. 2009. Gregory Henriquez: The architecture solution. *The Globe and Mail* (Feb. 18, 2009). <http://www.theglobeandmail.com/archives/article971237.ece>

¹⁵ "Referring to the relaxing of height restrictions in the heritage neighbourhood that allowed for the twin towers, Skip Towne of Vancouver asked, 'How is architecture 'ethical' if a neighbourhood's stakeholders, apparently solely for financial gain, cavalierly disregard and circumvent heritage protections that have been carefully preserved for generations?'" Gregory Henriquez interviewed by Wendy Stueck. 2009. Gregory Henriquez: The architecture solution. *The Globe and Mail* (Feb. 18, 2009). <http://www.theglobeandmail.com/archives/article971237.ece>

¹⁶ Arthur Erickson. 2006. *Arthur Erickson: Critical Works*. Nicholas Olsberg and Ricardo Castro (editors). Vancouver: Douglas & McIntyre and Vancouver Art Gallery.

¹⁷ One of the businesses that was displaced the first Woodward's 'redevelopment' in the years before World War I was the dry goods store owned by my paternal grandparents. Growing up with the oral histories about the Woodward family, their access to capital, and their engagement with employees and the community did shape some of my views of this subsequent redevelopment.



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¹⁸ Robert Enright. 2010. *Body Heat: The story of the Woodward's Redevelopment*.

¹⁹ Christine McLaren. 2010. Woodward's Designer Reveals Secrets: Architect Gregory Henriquez gives a tour of his creation's quirky nooks and crannies, and replies to his critics. *TheTyee.ca* (25 February 2010) <http://thetyee.ca/News/2010/02/25/GregoryHenriquez/>

²⁰ Lisa Chamberlain. 2005. Trying to Build the Grand Central of the West. *The New York Times* (December 28, 2005). <http://www.nytimes.com/2005/12/28/realestate/28transbay.html>

²¹ Province of British Columbia, 34th Parliament, 2nd Session, INDEX, Debates of the Legislative Assembly (Hansard), March 9, 1987 to March 11, 1988 http://qp.gov.bc.ca/Hansard/hansindx/34th2nd/34_02_index_C.htm See entries for Concord Pacific Developments Ltd.

²² And the one local studio of innovative designers that has been able to avoid economic marginalization has been Henriquez & Partners Vancouverism where Gregory Henriquez's had a long history of designing the more interesting of Vancouver's forest of bland towers going back to the 1970s and 1980s.

²³ Michael Sasges. 2010. Our 'ideology' of downtown residency speaks to the world's aspirations - Woodward's exhibit celebrates 50-year pursuit of density and amenity. *Vancouver Sun* (February 20, 2010). <http://www.vancouversun.com/ideology+downtown+residency+speaks+world+aspirations/2591055/story.html>

²⁴ Lisa Rochon. 2010. It took a village, but they got it right. *Globe and Mail* (February 13, 2010).

²⁵ Trevor Boddy. 2007. DWELLING: CONDOMINIUMS: DESIGN - A condo on the rocks. *Globe and Mail* (June 15, 2007). <http://www.theglobeandmail.com/real-estate/a-condo-on-the-rocks/article763585/>

²⁶ Pechet and Robb Studio [Bill Pechet and Stephanie Robb with essays by Christopher Macdonald and Greg Bellerby]. 2006. *Sweaterlodge* [Catalog for the exhibition representing Canada at the 10th Venice Biennale of Architecture from 10 September until 19 November, 2006]. Vancouver: Blueimprint.

²⁷ Don Hann and I ran into Trevor Boddy on the 31st of January, 2010, in the front of Vancouver's Roundhouse Community Centre, and Boddy stated that Ian Gillespie still owed him over \$13,000. for his commitment to funding part of the exhibit.

²⁸ "'There was no other scheme like this in the world at the time', says Boddy, who argues that politicians and urban planners have received far too much credit for the Vancouverism concept, and architects (in particular Erickson) have received far too little. 'The deck hands are claiming to be naval architects.' Boddy put the show together partly to set the record straight on this front," Marsha Lederman. 2010. Giving architects their due - Exhibition sets the record straight on Vancouverism, *The Globe and Mail* (January 13, 2010). <http://www.theglobeandmail.com/news/arts/giving-architects-their-due/article1429810/>

²⁹ The plaque below the inside manifestation of the work states,
"Stan Douglas
Abbott and Cordova, 7th August 1971
2009
Inkjet in Laminate Glass."

³⁰ Murray Dobbin. 2009. Why Canada's Housing Bubble Will Burst.

³¹ Stan Douglas, personal communication (at a dinner party), 1993, Vancouver.



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³² Coming Soon Public Symposium 23 January, 2010, Audain Gallery, SFU@Woodward's.
http://sfuwoodwards.ca/coming_soon.html

³³ Monument for East Vancouver. See Amanda Growe. 2010. What the heck is that? East Van cross. Georgia Straight (January 18, 2010). <http://www.straight.com/article-281162/vancouver/what-heck-east-van-cross>

³⁴ "Transportable Models for Shared Space" ("The Architecture Panel"), Saturday 30th of January, 2010, 4 - 6 p.m., Monika Szewczyk, Moderator. Presenters: Matthew Soules, Henry Tsang, Glen Lowry, and Candice Hopkins. Respondent: Clint Burnham. in the Learning from Vancouver Symposium at The Western Front in Vancouver, 29 - 31 January, 2010. <http://front.bc.ca/mediaarts/events/3314>.

³⁵ Robert Venturi, Denise Scott Brown and Steven Izenour. 1972 (revised 1977). *Learning from Las Vegas*. Cambridge Massachusetts: MIT Press.

³⁶ <http://dusp.mit.edu/p.lasso?t=7:4:0&detail=242>, <http://dusp.mit.edu/media/snaps/310.mov>

³⁷ While the level of engagement in the notion of 'mobilities' in the Lowry and Tsang was introductory, there is a growing body on the links between global capital and design and development practices. See Eugene J. McCann. forthcoming. Urban policy mobilities and global circuits of knowledge: Toward a research agenda. *Annals of the Association of American Geographers*.

³⁸ Trevor Boddy. 2009/10. Vision deficit. *Vancouver Review* 24: 8 – 13.

³⁹ Trevor Boddy. 2007. DWELLING: CONDOMINIUMS: DESIGN - A condo on the rocks. *Globe and Mail* (June 15, 2007). <http://www.theglobeandmail.com/real-estate/a-condo-on-the-rocks/article763585/>

⁴⁰ Trevor Boddy. 2007. Dwelling of the Year. A challenging site brings out the best: Concord Pacific's four tower Spectrum took a chunk of derelict land and created a model for Vancouver's eco-dense future. *Globe and Mail*. December 14, 2007.

⁴¹ Trevor Boddy. 2009/10. Vision deficit. page 8.

⁴² Trevor Boddy. 2009/10. Vision deficit. page 8.

⁴³ Trevor Boddy. 2009/10. Vision deficit. page 8.

⁴⁴ Trevor Boddy. 2009/10. Vision deficit.. page 11.

⁴⁵ Trevor Boddy. 2009/10. Vision deficit. page 12.

⁴⁶ Trevor Boddy. 2009/10. Vision deficit. page 12

⁴⁷ Trevor Boddy. 2009/10. Vision deficit. page 10.

⁴⁸ Rem Koolhaas. 2009. 'All architectures are survivors'. *a+t* (Madrid) (December 21, 2009)
http://www.aplust.net/permalink.php?atajo=_rem_koolhaas_all_architectures_are_survivors&busqueda=survivors

⁴⁹ Lucy Pullen, "I Would Prefer Not To," Installation, Artspeak Gallery, Vancouver, February 12 - March 21, 2010
<http://artspeak.ca/>



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⁵⁰ <http://www.centrea.org/>, <http://bright-light.ca/centre-a>, <http://www.worldteaparty.com/world-tea-party-at-the-2010-olympic-games>

⁵¹ Gregory Henriquez interviewed by Wendy Stueck. 2009. Gregory Henriquez: The architecture solution. *The Globe and Mail* (Feb. 18, 2009). <http://www.theglobeandmail.com/archives/article971237.ece>

⁵² Frances Bula. 2010 Architecture - Vancouver's architecture under the spotlight - Exhibit celebrates Vancouverism. *The Globe and Mail* (January 19, 2010). <http://www.theglobeandmail.com/news/national/british-columbia/vancouver-architecture-under-the-spotlight/article1435823/>

⁵³ <http://www.shapevancouver.com/>

⁵⁴ Ken Lum *from shangri-la to shangri-la*, 2010 site-specific installation, Vancouver.

⁵⁵ Gordon Brent Ingram 2000. Contests over social memory in waterfront Vancouver: Historical editing & obfuscation through public art. *on the w@terfront – art for social facilitation* (University of Barcelona) 2 (January 2000).

⁵⁶ Lisa Rochon. 2010. Getting its houses in order. *Globe and Mail* (Vancouver edition) 27 February, 2010: R4. <http://www.theglobeandmail.com/news/arts/getting-its-houses-in-order/article1482585/?cmpid=tgc>