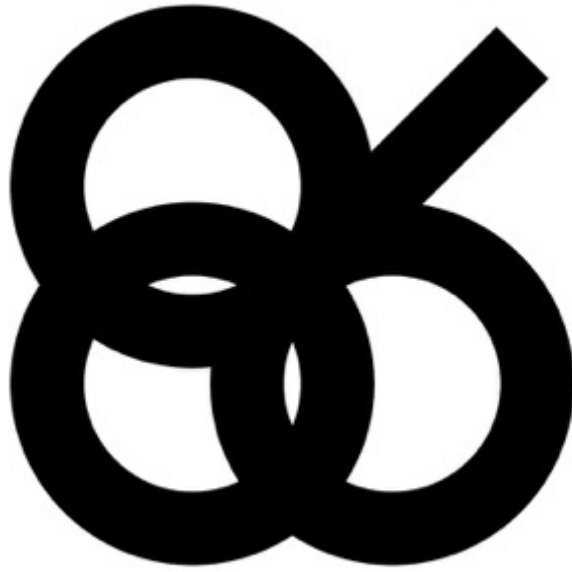


EXPO



AN UNOFFICIAL HISTORY

A Tale of Two Expos

1986 was the year that the World's Fair came to Vancouver. At that time, the city was struggling with a recession and high unemployment, it was uncertain whether it could grow and become a larger, more cosmopolitan city. 30 years later Vancouver is a vibrant, dynamic city, one that the whole world wants to both visit and own a piece of.

In 2016, the legacy of Expo 86 seems to break down into two camps: those that feel it messed up the city, turning it into a large resort community, where real estate is the primary industry; and those that participated in the Fair, as visitors, workers, musicians or entertainers, and for whom Expo 86 is a seminal experience in their lives. These two legacies suggest that a history of an event such as a World's Fair will always be derived from personal experiences, and these experiences can vary widely in their meaning and manifestations.

There were, and continue to be, wide ranging impacts to the City caused by the planning and construction of Expo, as well social and economic problems created by the political powers that implemented the Fair and created the strategies for foreign investment. This exhibition is not about these issues. It is about the personal histories of those that experienced Expo 86. It is about memory. It is about style. It is about families on a day out. It is about those that participated in welcoming the world to our place, and who had a damn good time doing it. It is about how we grow and change as individuals and our desire to embrace (or reject) our past selves.

It is also about how we remember and how we access those memories. We forget – and those under 20 have never known – a time before Facebook and Instagram, where every minute of one's life wasn't documented and stored. 1986 was a pre-digital age for photography and most of the works in the show have been sourced from basements, attics, storage lockers, and dusty cupboards. It wasn't easy to access these images, either by the curators or those who took the pictures. It often felt like an archeological excavation rather than an art show. Although many people remember Expo 86, and often have good stories to tell, the photo documentation was often difficult to come by, and people had to be prodded and cajoled to dig out the prints, slides and negatives.

This is truly *An Unofficial History* in that we have focused on quirky, personal images, to the exclusion of any attempt to document the Official Program of the Fair, or present selections from the myriad of souvenirs and ephemera generated by the event. Due to curatorial and practical reasons, we are only presenting a small selection of images compared to the total number of photos that were undoubtedly taken, but in many ways they represent a commonality of experience during that long summer in 1986 when we and our City came of age.

Chris Keatley, Curator
Pendulum Gallery



Working on the set of Rainbow War, 1985

Text: Saffron Henderson / Image: Bob Rogers

You know how there are some moments in life that you know are so special that you should savour them in your mind forever? Well, back in 1985, when we filmed *Rainbow War* for Expo 86, there were no camera phones, no easy digital snapshots, no Facebook or Twitter or Instagram feeds. Just my 16-year-old mind, and these sweet stills that were taken. When I auditioned for the part of the 'Red Princess', I understood very little except that Bob Rogers, director and producer, was looking for a young actress who was coordinated and comfortable with lots of movement. *Rainbow War* would be completely without dialogue and characters and rely heavily on physical expression, choreography, costumes, amazing music and elaborate sets/special effects. As a dancer, it sounded like fun to me!

I knew it was an important opportunity. The Expo 86 theme of Communication and Transportation would be very well illustrated by this project. I remember being so excited by the call back audition that I went home from it and promptly put the toaster in the freezer. Like you do, when you can feel that something wonderful might happen.

I don't recall how long we filmed for, I just remember missing a lot of school. I loved being on a set at Panorama in North Vancouver every day with an amazing cast and crew. I felt like a very special guest in Bob Rogers' magical universe. This universe included some other very talented guests, many actors that have since appeared in multiple other TV and film productions. Everyone from the costume designer and core extras to the catering staff, and the production crew, were kind, creative and supportive. Bob knew every drawing, every trick, every shot and splash of colour ahead of time. He had a great sense of humour. Watching him orchestrate this project was like watching a big kid in a candy store - having the time of his life. We got to be a part of a pre-CGI fairy tale. Imagine how differently this might be shot today!



I got to hang off a bridge (which was really just a piece of something hanging over a big pad for me to fall on). I was proud to feel like a stuntman for a minute! The hair designer streaked my hair with colourful paint and made it stand on end so that when I 'fell', my hair looked as if it were trailing above me. I even got to head to LA for filming part of the movie, I was picked up in a limo at LAX. How exciting!

Sixteen years old, sitting in the back of a stretch. I stayed at the Beverly Hilton, where I discovered that a hamburger and a coke could cost twenty-four dollars!

I'll never forget Bob saying to me, "You know what? No matter what you do in your career, I don't think this little project will ever fall off your resumé." He was right, since then, I've sung and danced around the world. I've been a part of many other film and TV projects and sang on people's albums in the studio, but the only project I've ever been a part of that was nominated for an Oscar was Rainbow War. It was also the only project that I've been stopped in the (Vancouver, mind you) street to discuss? You guessed it! Rainbow War! Peace through paint!

ABOUT RAINBOW WAR:

Rainbow War is a 19-minute animated/live action short film created for Expo 86, the 1986 World's Fair in Vancouver, BC. It was directed by Bob Rogers and cinematography was done by Reed Smoot. Rainbow War was nominated in the "Best Live Action Short" category for the 58th Academy Awards.

Image Details:

Gary Carre & Saffron Henderson, Yellow Boy and Red Princess

Action shot of the Red Princess being rescued from peril

Red Yellow and Blue Kingdoms are at war

All Images Donated by: BRC Imagination Arts

Photographer: Bob Rogers / Year: 1985



Expo 86 Opening Ceremonies, BC Place, May 2, 1986

My friend and I were part of a large choir of school children that sang O Canada in the opening ceremonies.

Image: Patricia Dick



Pre-Expo 86 Series, 1983

The Roundhouse photo series was part of a Pre-Expo 86 site documentary booklet project that I created during my time at Emily Carr University of Art + Design.

Image: Edward Wong



Digital Calliope, 1986

This Digital Calliope played Hi-Tech music for the visiting crowds at the Canada Pavilion. The photo was likely taken on the last day as Basil Watson & Marve Lewis prepped for the wrap party.

Image: Basil Watson



Al & Chad Neufeld, Sept., 1986

Proud father, first son, new adventure: my wife and I attended Expo many times while she was expecting, so it was only natural to bring our new son for a tour.

Image: Allan Neufeld



Working on the McBarge, 1986

My Daughter Tamiko Kraus worked on the McDonald's McBarge during the Fair. The McBarge's official Expo name was the Friendship 500.

Image: Manfred Kraus



Connor & Bryna Martin, 1986

Expo 86 was full of fun stuff for kids of all ages. Even though I worked full time, we squeezed in many visits on our season pass.

Image: Michelle Philippe



By Truck, Carriage or Foot, 1986

I was a groundskeeper at Expo. On days off I was frequently on site exploring and often sharing all the shortcuts and highlights at the Fair. It was such fun, but cleaning the toilets was not!

Image: David C. Jones



Ernie: He's Oh So Popular, 1986

Crowds gather to meet Ernie. He was popular with adults and children alike.

Image: Christine Leviczky Riek



Superhero Stops Monorail, 1986

A technician attempts to ascertain why the monorail has stopped. From below he seems to be the one doing the halting.

Image: Denis Bouvier



Jennifer Wees, Summer, 1986

Jennifer pretending to drive, hat waving, carefree, with hope for the future (and a car of her own) in that smile.

Image: Janet Wees



Log Rollers, 1986

An action shot of some performing log rollers. It doesn't get much more Canadian than this.

Image: Bill Cotter & Expo 86 Corporation



Steve Bickerdike & Friends, 1986

Visiting from Australia for Expo 86, I loved Vancouver so much that I moved here full time in 1989. Photo taken by Denice Cook.

Image: Steve Bickerdike



**Mom's Expo Photobomb,
July, 1986**

Expo 86 was great for photo-ops. My mom couldn't resist jumping into the frame of my shot of the Munich Festhaus.

Image: Patricia Bugera



Snow in Egypt, Feb 16, 1986

During Expo construction, it snowed for one day in mid-February, 1986. The Ramses Pavilion looms in a desert of snow as opposed to sand.

Image: Nigel Wilcox



Zeballos invites you to visit Expo 86

Image & Text: Doug Nordstrand

Back in 1986, I worked for International Forest Products, my job took me all over the province. While traveling on Vancouver Island, we stopped along the way in the town of Zeballos for lunch. Such a small town in the middle of a remote location. I found it somewhat amusing that the province was advertising the upcoming Expo in every nook and cranny. I had to take a picture of this signpost literally located in the middle of nowhere down a dusty gravel road. The government was really getting the word out!



Garbos' Garbage Pavilion, 1986

Image: Donna Boygo

Just 3 and 6 at the time, my kids were terrified of the street entertainer Garbos, who made even Oscar the Grouch seem friendly. Garbos did, however, turn my kids into committed recyclers!



Philip & Andrew Merrick, Kelly Tate & Barry McMeekan, July, 1986

Image & Text: Frances Sharman

Hot sun! A soaking from the plunging Log Chute was fun and everyone dried off quickly. Philip and Andrew were newly arrived from England to settle in Vancouver. They have since carried on the transportation theme in their lives, driving double decker buses in Victoria and flying airplanes out of Hong Kong.



Sid Ang & Joy Ang, July 2, 1986

Image: Jonna Ang

A snapshot taken 24 hours after spending the entire day on the Expo ground.



Connor Martin, 1986

Exploring the Expo UFO park on an overcast day.

Image: Michelle Philippe



Ernie Observing: Sisters Megan & Kristen, September, 1986

This is my sister and I marvelling at Expo Ernie, she seemed to be a bit more skeptical than I was.

Image: Kristen Reid



Hands Up! 1986

A street performer gets the crowd going. Everyone takes part in the fun.

Image: Christine Leviczky Riek



Ontario Pavilion Dismantling Team, Fall, 1986

Image features George Rout (far right), Kris Murty (next to Rout), and 3 other crew members.

Image: George Rout



Life Moves Pretty Fast, 1986

My younger brother Graham rides on a motorcycle with an enigmatic chap, as other modes of transportation are showcased behind them.

Image: Jeff Stackhouse



Halloween Expo Ernie, 1986

All dressed up and ready to walk the stage at a local Halloween costume contest in my "out of this world" Ernie costume, made by my mom. (Darlene Rich)

Image: Chris Rich



Ewan McNeil, The Beverly Sisters & Senegalese Guest, May 2, 1986

Image & Text: Ewan McNeil

The Bevs played at the 86 Street club for all of the staff of Expo 86. When this gentleman heard our congas and djembe intro, he jumped up on stage and danced with us. The bouncers wanted him off but he was cool so we let him dance the song out. That's me dancing with him. It was an exciting gig to play as the Expo opened the following day.



Drinking at the Unicorn Pub & Unicorn Patrons, 1986

Image: Greg King

The crowds at the Unicorn Pub play a drinking game with a member of the Irish Rovers band (left). A candid shot of two patrons of the Unicorn Pub (right).



London Bobby, 1986

Attempting to escape, Auntie is captured by London Bobby, forced to sit on his lap. He serenades her with old British dance-hall tunes. Dad grins in the background, Mum's already escaped.

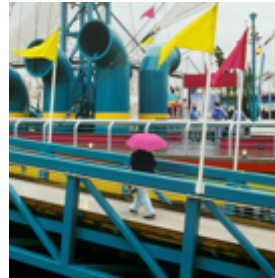
Image: Sarah & Valerie Joyce



Scott August, 1986

A vibrant background and an intense action shot. Who still has their Expo 86 cap?

Image: Donated by Scott August on behalf of Gary August (1948-2014)



Rainy Expo, May, 1986

I love capturing serendipitous moments on film. The pink umbrella, the bright flags and all the colours came together in an instant which I was able to capture.

Image: Colette Parsons



Vivian and Friend, 1986

I was 3 when I visited Expo 86. I honestly don't really remember anything, except having my picture taken in front of a lot of different things.

Image: Vivian Chan



Everybody Loved Highway 86

I went to Expo every day. People really engaged with Highway 86. There were plenty of interactive opportunities. The vibrant fashion of the times is juxtaposed against the monochrome Highway 86.

Image: Gerry Eckford



Keiko Okada, July 14, 1986

An unfulfilled, unquenchable, lingering wish left unanswered.

A promised phone call... never received.

To my end, what if, Keiko?

Image: Jim Chan



Expo Ernie with Construction Workers, 1983

The very start of Expo Ernie's grand promotional tour to get Expo up and off the ground.

Image: Bill Cotter & Expo 86 Corporation



Christine, Marvin & Rick Hansen, Expo 86 supported the *Man In Motion* World Tour with accessible spaces for people with disabilities. Every building on the site was wheelchair accessible.

Image: The Rick Hansen Foundation



Ingrid Tsui, Haley Tsui & Howdy, October 13, 1986

Local children meet *Howdy*, one of two official Calgary 1988 Winter Olympic Mascots.

Image: Patricia Haley-Tsui



Sam & Spencer Watt, August 1986 10-year-old Sam smiles for the camera, while 8-year-old brother Spencer gets a close up look of Expo Ernie.

Image: Allen & Jennifer Watt



False Creek Flats, 1985

Weekends, dad would get a break from working with kids placed in government care. From one of his 5am photo trips: the pre-Expo 86 site seen from 6th & Birch street.

Image: Vishva Hartt



Nadine Kubiny, Age 5, 1986

Nadine with Expo Ernie in front of his house (Science World).

Image: Pauline Davis Kubiny



Last Day of Expo 86

On the final day of the Fair some of the male and female hosting staff swapped uniforms for their last shift. (...not the RCMP though)

Image: Nigel Wilcox



Joyce & Jeff Holmes, 1986

It was well worth the fourteen-hour trip from Dawson Creek with our two small boys to take in the wonders of Expo 86

Image: Joyce Holmes



Road Trip, 1986

I drove with three friends from Prince George to Expo 86 in the spring to check out the hype. I went again a second time in September.

Image: Martin Kostian



Developing the Expo 86 Site Plan, Fall 1983

Image & Text: Rod Murayama

Large format illustrative site plan prepared by Expo 86 site planning staff. Partially CAD rendered, but mostly hand rendered with colour markers and pencil crayon, this plan was used as an Expo 86 marketing tool. It was presented to many different stakeholders in order to solicit participants for international, provincial, corporate pavilions and much more. Approximate size of drawing: 10 feet by 16 feet.

Rod Murayama worked for the Crown Corporation Expo 86 Site Development Division, the World's Fair theme was *Transportation and Communication: World in Motion- World in Touch*. Murayama's job title: Senior Site Designer. He worked with Richard Strong, a Landscape Architect, who was hired by Expo 86 under private contract as and responsible for the planning and design of the entire Expo 86 site. Murayama assisted Strong in the design process from inception to final site design. Richard Strong had previous experience in site design and valuable knowledge of fair/exposition site planning as he worked on La Ronde at Expo 67.

The Expo 86 site plan included numerous international exhibit pavilions, corporate and provincial pavilions, merchandising, food and restaurants and other entertainment facilities. Also incorporated into the design, numerous open space plazas. A 10-metre wide pedestrian circulation route extended throughout the entire site, along with an elevated people mover (train) incorporated into the middle of the main thoroughfare. A seawall along the entire waterfront of the site allowed access to the water's edge and circulation along its perimeter. The Site Development Team worked in unison to colour render the large scale illustrative site plan which was initially prepared by hand with technical pens and CAD drawings.



Three generations, Birth Time Traveling and Ernie
Devin Pihlainen, Carol Pihlainen & Walter Terentiuk

My son Devin was born while my father was visiting Expo 86. My father found out the good news after midnight Ottawa time, about 11 pm Vancouver time. Technically he learned of his grandson's birth on September 20, even though he was actually born September 21. The postcard my father sent to his just arrived grandson was postmarked on the day he was born. The words he wrote are touching: "...welcome to the wonders of spaceship earth, which you can help to improve". Both Devin and the Expo 86 piggy bank that my father bought for him are turning 30 this year! Devin now lives in Vancouver.

Ranger Gerry, Expo Ernie & BC Parks Moose Jerry, 1986
Image: Gerry Hayes



I was hired by a friend as a mascot escort, the most bizarre employment I've had.

Jerry was played by Alex Diakun, who went on to better, and much more challenging roles.



Remembering Expo 86 Through a Souvenir
Image & text: Jillian Glover

If you were a kid in the 80s growing up in Vancouver (like me), Expo 86 is probably one of your first memories. All of your family from Ontario or rural BC or wherever, came out to stay with you. You went to the fairgrounds regularly and got your passport stamped at all the pavilions. You rode the Skytrain, hugged Expo Ernie, and watched Rainbow War. As I grew up, I watched Vancouver grow up too. The city became more international, sophisticated and cosmopolitan after Expo 86.

I feel fortunate to be part of what is now considered its "coming out" party. Sadly, I never kept my souvenirs. But several years ago I was on a trip with my husband to Prince Edward Island and was lucky to find this Expo Ernie coin jar at an antique shop in an old, converted church. He has since returned with me to his hometown of Vancouver. Now I will share him with my two-year old son, who never got to experience this moment in his city's history.



Summer Santa Claus: Ruby Partridge

Text: Peter Partridge / Image: Patti Ricketts

This is Ruby Partridge, who at the age of 67, spent more than 100 days at Expo 86 playing Summer Santa Claus. We found out about it much later.

Mom would get up early in the morning to use her seniors bus pass and Expo season pass to spend the day at the fair, enjoying the sights and the events all to herself - or so we thought. Only in the last few days did we find out what Mom had been doing there in these little excursions.

She would arrive early on the Expo site and line up for timed admission tickets to the most popular shows. Armed with several sought after tickets, Mom would then spend hours patrolling the Expo grounds, and especially the long pavilion lines looking for out of town tourists, preferably elderly people uncomfortable in long queues or haggard couples with an armful of kids. Once Mom spied a likely group she would ask if they'd seen the more popular shows on the site. Usually the answer was "no". Often due to long line-ups, outsiders weren't aware until too late that there were advance timed tickets to line up for.

When Mom found the "right" people, she would welcome them to Vancouver and Expo on behalf of all of us in BC, and hand over the required amount of tickets for a show they may otherwise miss. Without exception her gesture was an instant hit with the visitors, and she'd make new friends.

She would always decline any credit for herself. She liked to tell folks that everyone who lived here was out to ensure that everyone had a good time - that everyone in BC was a host for the Fair.

Mom kept all this to herself until Expo had only a few days left. Her sadness prompted our curiosity, and two of her granddaughters, my daughters, accompanied her to the Fair. That's how we found out "Nana" was going to miss playing Summer Santa on behalf of us all.

Something's Happened Here

Each memory that we have is both a mutation and a convergence. Memory, is its own event horizon: a point of no return, beyond which events cannot affect an outside observer. The latter half of the definition makes sense, no one can conjure your memories, they are specific to you alone. It is often said that you can't relive the past, an obvious statement in the physical and temporal sense. But now, we also know that even in your memories, you literally can't relive anything. Your mind is constantly recalibrating the far past; in fact, all of the past is only ever a record of a more immediate recollection of itself. Similar to a game of telephone, when we envision an old memory, we are never recalling a specific isolated experience, we are recalling the, most recent, previous memory of that experience...which was actually a memory of the previously recalled version before that, and so on, and so forth.

Intertwined with past experience, overlain with existing knowledge, informed by the humdrum of our current bodily circumstance, and connected to the vibrations of our present mental state, each memory is never remembered the same way twice.

With this in mind, where does one begin to tell the collective story of an event that is thirty years past? Expo 86 spanned over 70 hectares and 164 days, it had over 22 million visitors. Apart from the 2010 Olympics, this event is likely British Columbia's and Vancouver's largest collectively remembered event in history.

There are the known facts on Expo 86 that can be found on Wikipedia and via several other official information channels. But there are also the millions of memories that were created over the course of the Fair's six month run. One can't even begin to imagine the mutations and convergences of these stories over the past thirty years.

It was a surprisingly laborious task gathering, scanning and printing images for this exhibition, over 200 photos were reviewed from 80 different sources. Describing the curatorial methodology and preparation for the show is an even more arduous task. It was a strange process, often guided heavily by intuition. As an 'unofficial history', perhaps the process and explanation are less interesting than the final result. Officially, what should be known, is that this exhibition represents an unconventional set of interpretations of Expo 86.

Visitors are invited to wade their way through the pastel short-shorts and knee high socks. The bright primary coloured, Lego-like architecture will serve as a visual harbinger, activating personal memories. Soon, these stories of magical ticket fairies, bizarre street performances and unforgettable road trips will resonate in the mind's eye.

Tune into all of these different intensities, let the frequency take hold.

Sunshine Frère
Exhibition Curator



AN UNOFFICIAL HISTORY

Contributing Photographers and Participants:

Jonna Ang, Scott August, Steve Bickerdike, Denis Bouvier, Donna Boygo, Patricia Bugera, Jim Chan, Vivian Chan, Bill Cotter, Patricia Dick, Gerry Eckford, Jillian Glover, Patricia Haley-Tsui, Vishva Hartt, Gerry Hayes & Mary Ballard, Saffron Henderson, Joyce Holmes, David C. Jones, Valerie & Sarah Joyce, Martin Kostian, Manfred Kraus, Pauline Davis Kubiny, Ewan McNeil, Rod Murayama, Doug Nordstrand, Allan Neufeld, Colette Parsons, Michelle Philippe, Devin Pihlainen, Chris Rich, Patti Ricketts, Kristen Reid, Christine Leviczky Riek, Bob Rogers, George Rout, Frances Sharman, Jeff Stackhouse, Basil Watson, Allen & Jennifer Watt, Janet Wees, Nigel Wilcox, Edward Wong, the Rick Hansen Foundation

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PENDULUM GALLERY

August 15 – September 17, 2016