



Landforms

Photographs - Lloyd Godman

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In today's "society visual" we have become a conditioned to consume images - from every side we are bombarded with visual stimuli, to the point where we are indoctrinated to see the "message" almost without consideration for the image: in short the visual image has been reduced to being only the vehicle of the information contained within it.

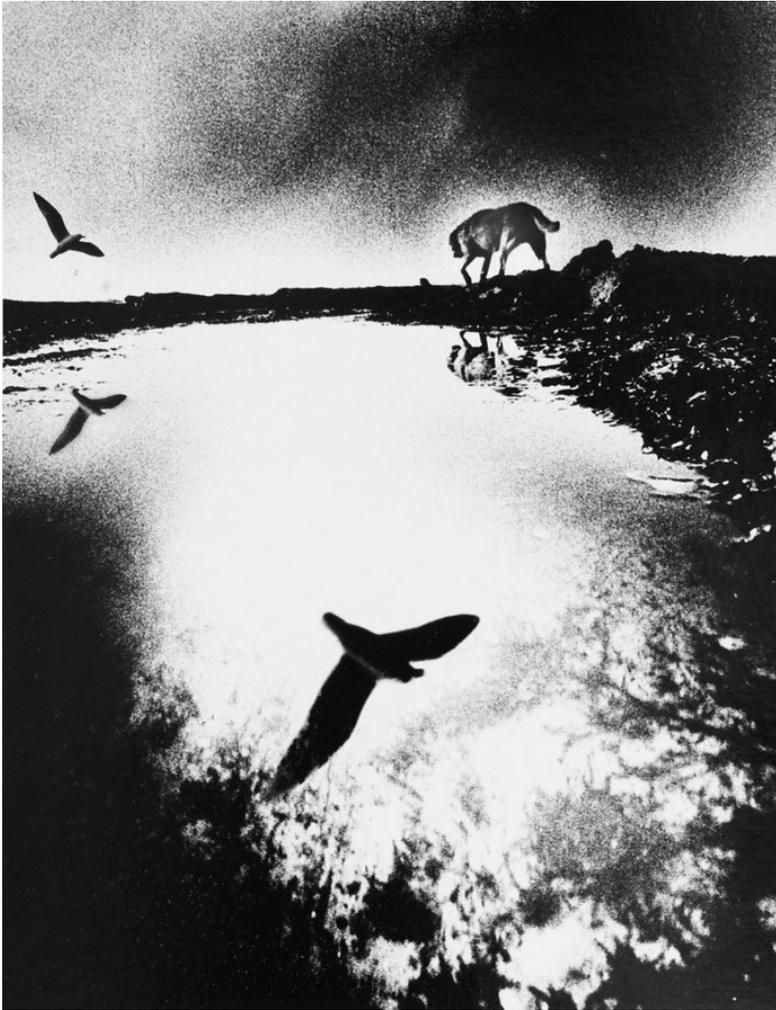
It is the prejudice we have the no-allowance of no other lifetime to the image, other than the moment of being seen, that is the most perplexing facing any artist concerned with the visual art form.

Lloyd Goldman in his recent exhibition of black and white photographs at the Marshall Seifert Gallery Dunedin, has by the use of a number of techniques and along managed to invest in them a feeling of "evolving": which alter viewing, does allow longevity of image- - in that they have a movement backward and forward. This movement is achieved by a number of methods and exploiting our prejudiced towards seeing and predictable ways. Initially we are enticed to see beyond the cursory by being offered a contradiction: that contradiction being the finished/unfinished appearance has work has. Apparently uncomplicated subject matter, the use of the black and white, and the strong historical feel Goldman installs in his work, all lead the viewer to contemplate words complete events past. In complete opposition to this is the very coarse grainy finish all of Goldman's work has; here one is led towards moments about to happen, things that might be. There is a very strong element of memory about this collection of photographs and that is something that is constantly evolving as we move further away from the past into the future.

“Land Forms” is the cumulative and of three year’s work for Godman. The fact that he has revisited most of his locations many times over a period of several years in every conceivable mood and a light has allowed him to gain a memory picture that he later translates into a photograph. A devotee of the Burton Brothers, he uses what he prefers to call a collage to overdress the initial image- with later images or impressions. Here I am sure the grainy finish to his work is done deliberately – perhaps as tiny granules as yet uncoded, or perhaps left to evolve and form new and different images – “Land Forms” The subtle control Godman has of this technique produces a pleasurable realization that having been shown an evolutionary starting point he then creates space for progression which viewers are invited to fill. They are maneuvered into this way of “seeing” by being offered some of Godman’s own progressions. In short, what Godman manages to say in his photographs is that the image is not stereotype it is personal- its interpretation belongs to none other than the person viewing it.

Land Forms has as its recurring theme a gull in flight – interestingly in some of photographs - a positive image - others are negative. Godman’s choice of the gull as central theme of “Land Forms” is particularly clever one because its image value stands astride the known and unknown - it is the fringe creature of land of sea of the air ... we know it at their parks, badgering the plow, looting the rubbish dump: yet we do not know it. Godman lives in a Otago, in terms of overexposure almost Rotorua of the south; even the harshness of Central has been done to death – a province deep in the throes of tourist mania. It is important such alternatives and personal views it as those expressed in “Lands Forms” do survive.

Norman Meads 1983



photomontage -16" x 20" 1983



Land forms I - photomontage -16" x 20" 1983



Life Cycle - photomontage - 16" x 20" 1983



Shag point - photomontage -16" x 20" 1983



South of Tunnel Beach - photomontage - 16" x 20" 1983



Back Beach Brighton 11.02 am - photomontage -16" x 20" 1983



The Hollow Blackhead - photomontage -20" x 24" 1983



Freedom - photomontage -16" x 20" 1983



Flight dreaming - photomontage with sabbatier effect -16" x 20" 1983



Flight - photomontage -16" x 20" 1983

In 1983 Lloyd Godman exhibited his first major series of work - a number of black & white photomontage images. While not all these works were montages, for the images that used this technique the bird was a reoccurring motif. While each original image was unique, these prints were copied and then an edition of ten prints made from the negative.

The work was exhibited in his first solo exhibition at the Marshall Seifert Gallery, Dunedin, New Zealand.

“I had used the montage technique many years before around 1969-70 while working as an apprentice electrician at the Evening Star news paper (this is now titled The Otago Daily Times) in Dunedin New Zealand. I fell into the apprenticeship through my father who felt it would be useful to have a trade. Some of my friends at the time were going to art school and I would watch them through the large windows of the great hall that housed the huge press, as they walked up Stuart St with their trendy threads, and bags spewing with art materials. An interesting aspect to this is that by the 1980s none of them continued to make art - although one was a medical illustrator. Of course it was a period when newspapers had great darkrooms and it was not long before I was sneaking into to experiment during extended lunch breaks etc. Gary Van der Mark who had been trained at the Royal Dutch Academy of Photography was working at the paper and was very encouraging of my work at the time.

It was not until about 2004 that Gary told me he was instructed to “keep me out of the darkrooms” and he argued that the work I was doing was highly creative and should be encouraged. So Gary would allow me in to to work when the head of the photographic department was not around. While Gary went on to run a highly successful commercial photographic studio where he photographed items for junk mail catalogues, in the conversation we had in 2004 he told me he was admiring of my relentless pursuit of my creative work. He said that for years he would see a feature on my work in the paper about another exhibition and then as he walked to work he would see a junk mail catalogue with his work discarded and blowing down the street which caused him to question the value of his work.



An early montage image from the surf movie *Javel* poster for produced around 1969 produced during my time at the Evening Star newspaper.

