

# Landforms



Lloyd Godman

Photographs - 1983

# Low resolution version

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# Landforms

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All photographs - Lloyd Godman

# Lloyd Godman

Photographs 1983

# Landforms

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 just 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 issue 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 managed to invest in them a feeling of "evolving": which after viewing, does allow longevity of image - in that they have a movement backward and forward.

This movement is achieved by a number of methods which exploits our prejudiced towards seeing in 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 worlds complete and 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 something is constantly evolving as we move further away from the past into the future.

Land Forms" is the cumulative end 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 light has allowed him to gain a memory picture that he later translates into a constructed 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 in the way land forms over time. 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 a 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?

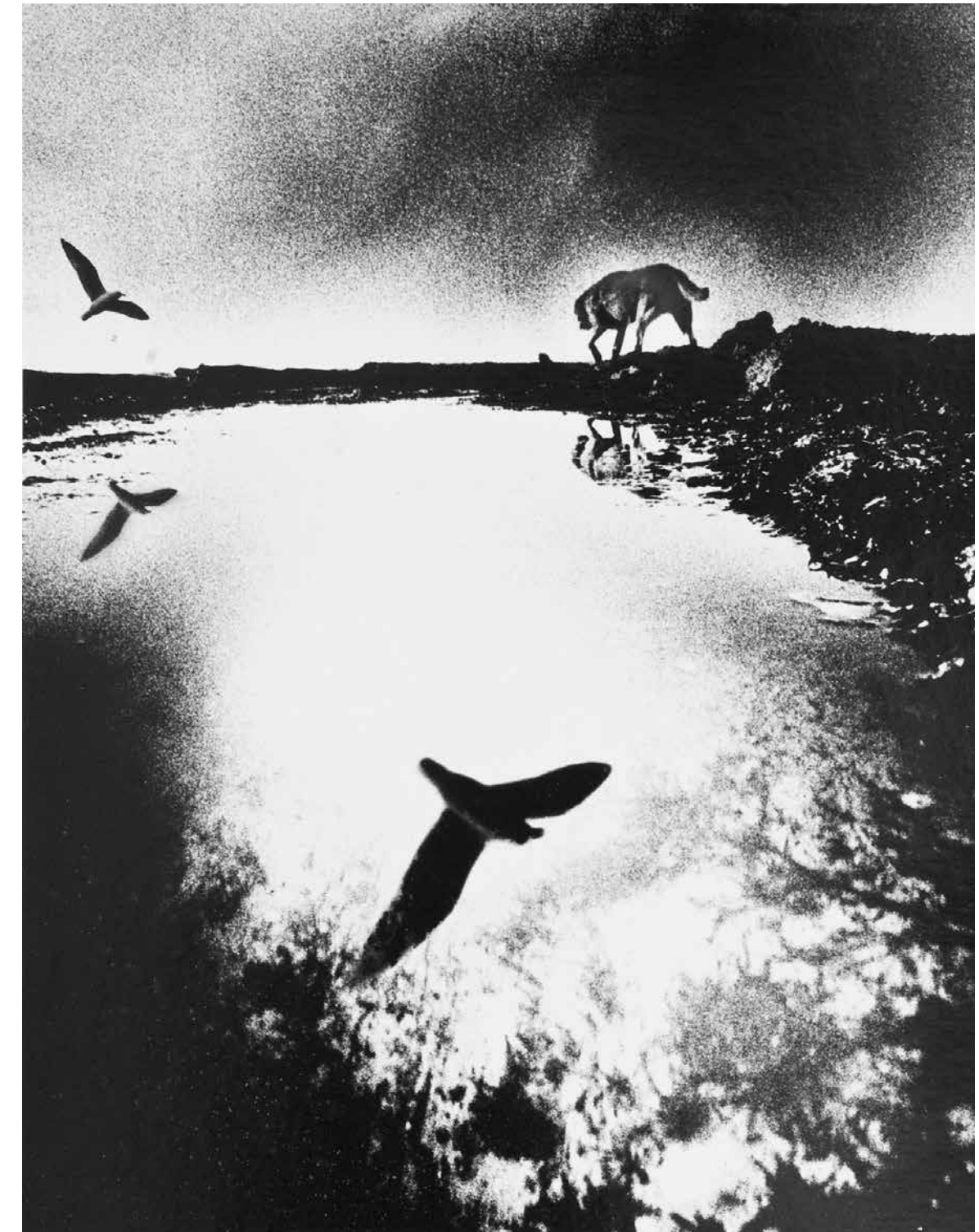
Godman lives in a Otago, in terms of overexposure almost Rotorua of the south; even the harshness of Central has been done to death - a province deep in the throes of tourist mania. In such a climate, it is important such alternatives and personal views it as those expressed in "Lands Forms" do survive.

Norman Meads 1983

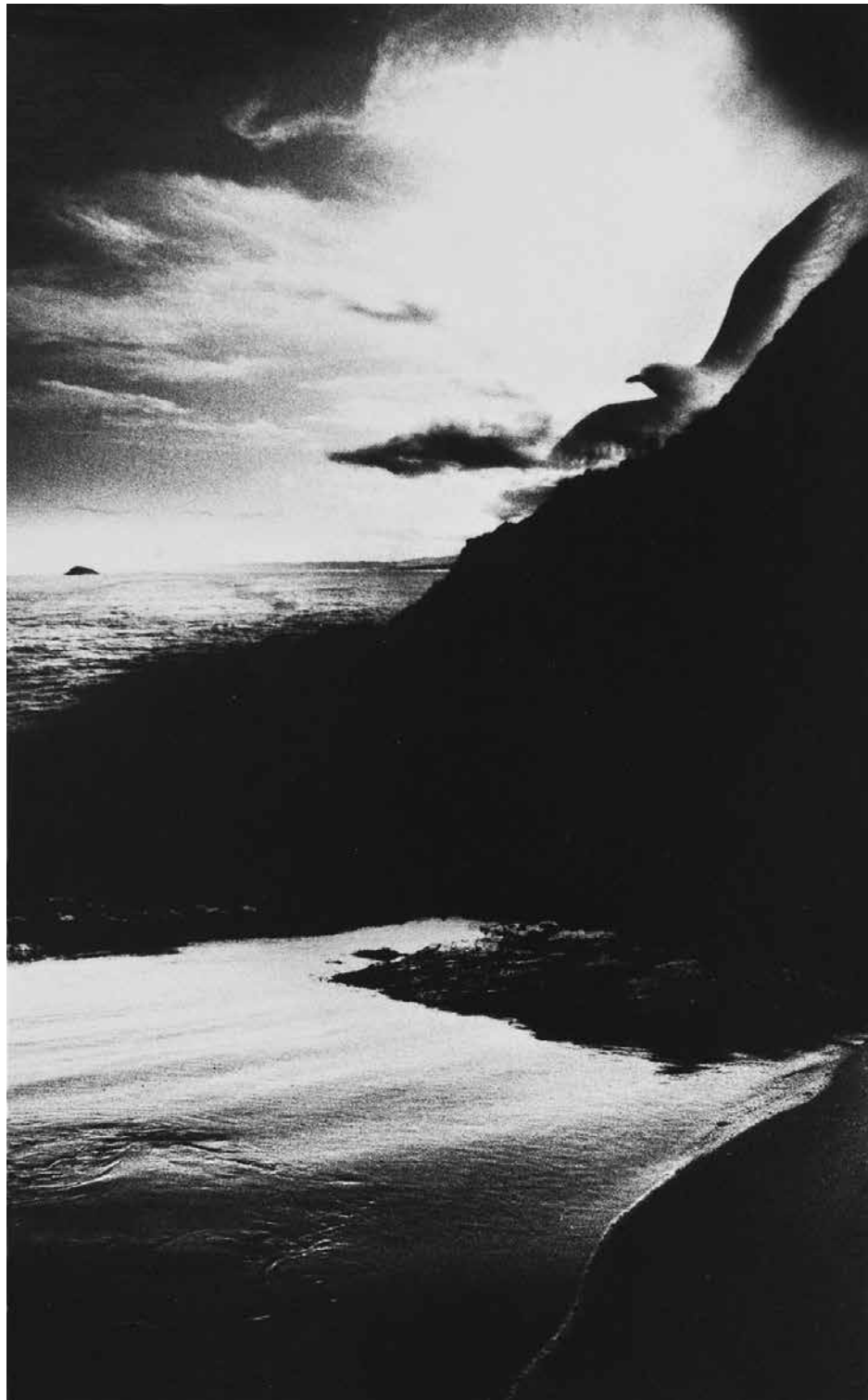


# Photographs

from the Landforms exhibition at Marshall Seifert Gallery Dunedin, N.Z. 1983



Landforms I - photomontage - 16" x 20" 1983



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



Landforms III - Life Cycle - photomontage -16" x 20" 1983





Landforms IV -Shag point - photomontage -16" x 20" 1983



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





Landforms VI - Back Beach Brighton - photomontage -16" x 20" 1983

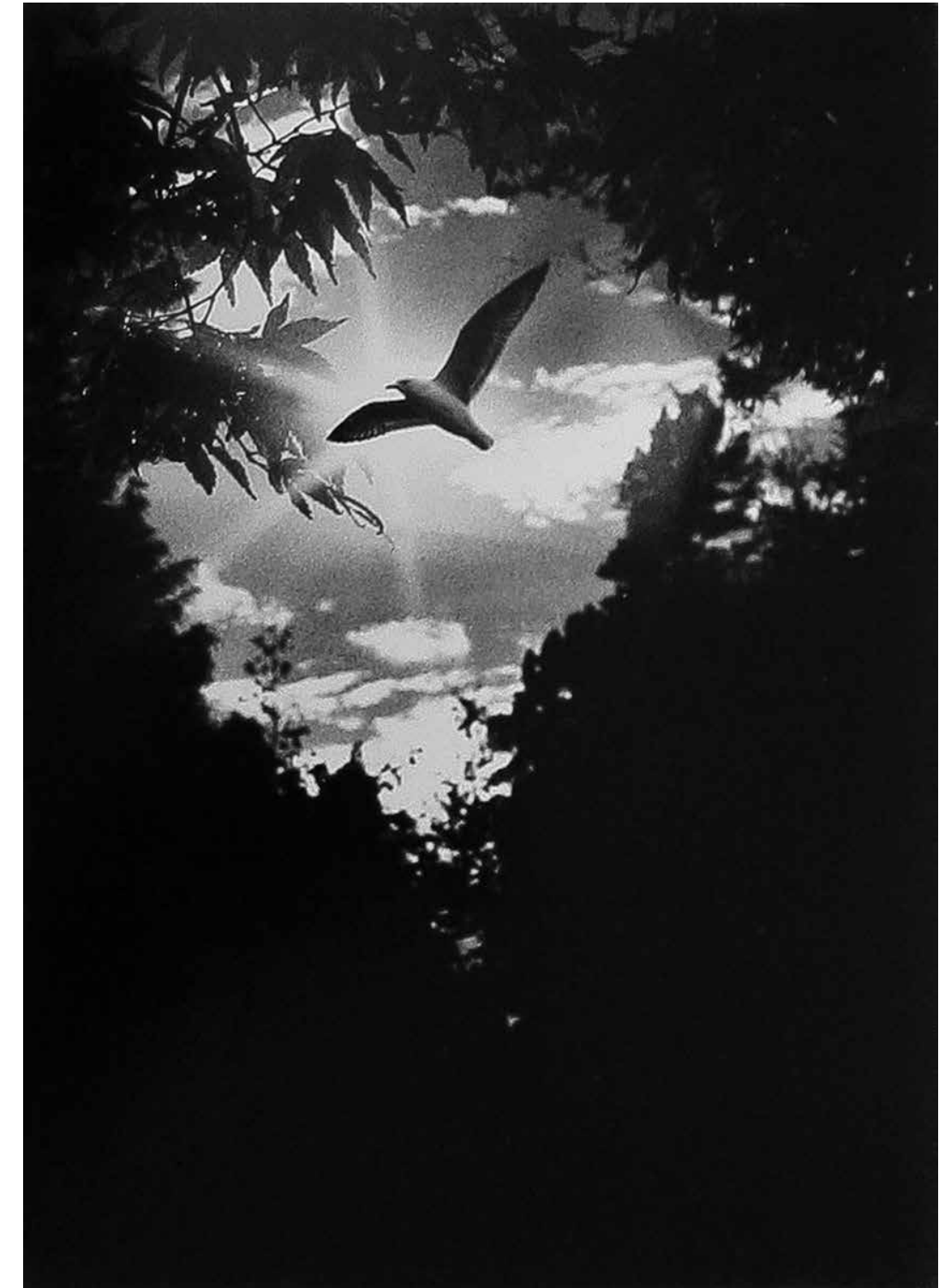


Landforms VII - The Hollow Blackhead - photomontage -20" x 24" 1983



# preliminary photographs

These works were created as experiments for the Landforms series



Freedom - photomontage -16" x 20" 1982



Flight dreaming - photomontage with sabbatier effect -16" x 20" 1982



Flight - photomontage -16" x 20" 1982



# Narrative

In 1983 Lloyd Godman exhibited his first major series of work - black & white photomontage images. All but one of these works were photo-montages. For the images where he used the montage technique the bird was a reoccurring motif and received a range of treatments. While each image was unique, these prints were copied and then an edition of ten prints made from the copy negative. The work was exhibited in his first solo exhibition at the Marshall Seifert Gallery, Dunedin, New Zealand. Seifert was a passionate supporter of the arts and was immediately drawn to Godman's unique vision and energy. Later, Seifert was to take the work to the National Gallery in Wellington only to be told by the curators "this is not the direction photography should be going". The direction of photography at the time was documentary. Godman never saw his works as locked into the ideology of a particular medium, rather the medium was simply a vehicle that one could use to express an idea. If a river was flowing in a certain direction it was always more interesting to explore up river than go with the flow to a known ocean.

At the time, Godman was inspired by use of the techniques of the complex works of Jerry Uelsmann. While the results might now appear easily achievable in photoshop, they were created well before the invention of photoshop (1988). The creative process involved working in the photographic darkroom and exposing selective aspects of different negatives onto the photographic paper. Correct enlargement, focus, exposure and alignment of each negative had to be carefully managed physically and in the imagination for it was not until the paper was developed that the result of the multiple exposures would be revealed. As many parts of the largely invisible process could go wrong, the images were difficult to create and a final image would only result after many frustrating attempts.

*I had first 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 The Otago Daily Times) in Dunedin New Zealand. I was dropped into the apprenticeship through my farther who felt it would be useful for me to have a trade. At the time I was involved in competitive swimming, which demanded training 3 times a day and clocking up as much as 30 km a week. Through the swimming net work my father had a friend who was electrician at the news paper and the two colluded to get me into the apprenticeship. Before*

*my 3rd year of high school ended, I left school at 15 and had completed the 5 year (10,000 hrs) appreciative before I was 20. It was an experience I endured but had little engagement in. However it did teach me the lesson of perseverance; that if I kept working in one direction one could achieve an end goal.*

*Some of my friends at the time were going to art school and I would watch them through the large arched windows of the great hall that housed the huge printing press on the ground floor, as they walked up Stuart St with their trendy threads, and bags spewing with art materials. An interesting aspect 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 in the red light spaces 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. There were two sets of darkrooms, the news photographers darkrooms and the process rooms and I found it easier to work in the process darkrooms.*

*It was not until about 2004 that Gary told me he was instructed by some of the photographers who felt threatened by the experimental work I was playing with to "keep me out of the darkrooms". But Gary 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 made \$ photographing 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.*

*At the time I lived for the weekends, when I could go surfing, listen to live rock music and take photographs of both.*

A few of these experimental photomontage works survived and are published on the following pages.

Godman had a great engagement with live music and associated with a wild band called Storm. With Alan James playing a blistering lead guitar, Tom Duff on bass, Craig Lawrence on drums and the amazing voice and high octane energy of John Sanderson their stage presence presented a dynamic force unmatched in the region, while the pulsing sound matched it. During on stage stunts they would smash up perspex signs and set fire to guitars and symbols with lighter fluid and Godman would photograph and film this with an 8mm movie camera. At one point Godman wrote to the Anglican Diocese seeking permission to film a performance on the tiered marble steps of St Paul's Cathedral where an old piano would be blown up during the performance. The piano was destined for the dump and the idea was to pull it to pieces so it was hanging by a thread and then install fire works inside which would trigger the collapse. In 2018 Allan James reminded Godman of the story and that at the time he could not understand how the church never replied.

*For one of the fire stunts, I photographed Storm with B&W infrared film, another time was with a 8 mm film camera.*

Once he finished his apprenticeship, from 1970 - 73 Lloyd worked on large construction projects in the North Island as an electrician. The sites offered high wages, had free accommodation and meals in construction huts - camp situation. The camps also had an appalling culture that shocked him.

*I suddenly saw a very low side of humanity I had never encountered. Gambling: there were workers who had worked on similar projects for decades and earned large amounts of money but had nothing at all to show for it. Every week their earnings were gambled away in high stakes games where they might win for awhile but ultimately lose and need to borrow money to get them through to the next payday.*

*Drunkenness: As you can imagine alcohol was synonymous with any time off the job. It was at a time when I had abandoned drinking and so the harsh*

*contrast of my sober perception to the inebriated state of many other workers often put me in conflict.*

*Violence: The drunkenness lead to violence which would tumble into the spaces between huts where arguments were common and fights often eventuated late at night.*

*Food: Around this time I became conscious of health food and had become a vegetarian. The camp had a kitchen and mess hall that provided meals around the clock. It was an eye opener to see already obese workers stuffing themselves with large amounts of the wrong food. Double or even triple helpings of steak eggs and chips followed by double sweets. The camp bread was white crap and I would purchase my own whole grain bread which the staff kept specially for me.*

*Women: The attitudes and abuse of women was appalling. At wild parties, they would be liquored up until they were paralytic and then set upon with by a gang of sex crazed thugs who would not only repeatedly rape them but penetrate them with Coke bottles half full of fizzed up liquid and other objects somehow thinking the whole thing was hilarious. Then the next day at breakfast they would skite about their exploits.*

*However, there was also a small number of workers who were fantastic to be with. They introduced me to yoga, a healthy life style and surfing. It was also a time when I continued to photograph rock bands including, Rolling Stones, Led Zeppelin, Joe Cocker, Black Sabbath.*

*After a few years, two of my co-workers, Gary Keys and Chris Brock suggested I should leave the place and go to Hawaii surfing.*



Photomontage experiment 1 - created in the Evening Star News Paper darkroom C 1969  
 The image is a combination of two negatives, one, the aerial perspective taken from the cliff top at Murdering Bay with a few cars in the car park, the other of Gary Barton Surfing the break at Murdering Bay. Across the centre of the image, there is an strong connection with the black basalt rocks of the point falling into the white water of the wave.



Photomontage experiment 2- created in the Evening Star News Paper darkroom C 1969  
 The image is a combination of two negatives:  
 one an image of Bob Paul's young son who would accompany him on his surf trips, and the second of Bob surfing at Murdering Bay.





Photomontage experiment 3- created in the Evening Star News Paper darkroom C 1969  
 I would often team up with other surfers to explore wild areas of the coast, in this case Ron Anderson and his VW.  
 The image is a combination of two negatives:  
 one of the car on a hillside, the other of someone surfing at Aramoana.



Photomontage experiment 4 - created in the Evening Star News Paper darkroom C 1969

The image is a combination of five negatives:  
 one the face, the others of various surfers.  
 The face shot was of a girl friend of the time, Jan Smith who lived on Stewart Island, I particularly liked the mystery of one eye closed while the other is open.





Alan James with his Fender stratocaster on fire during a wild *Storm*  
 Photographed with infrared film - 1969



Frame grabs from the 8 mm film of *Storm* 1969





Rolling Stones - Mick Jagger, Western Springs New Zealand - Feb 11 1973



Rolling Stones - Mick Jagger Keith Richards , Western Springs New Zealand



Joe Cocker - Western Springs New Zealand - 1972





Robert Plant, Led Zeppelin - Western Springs New Zealand - 1972

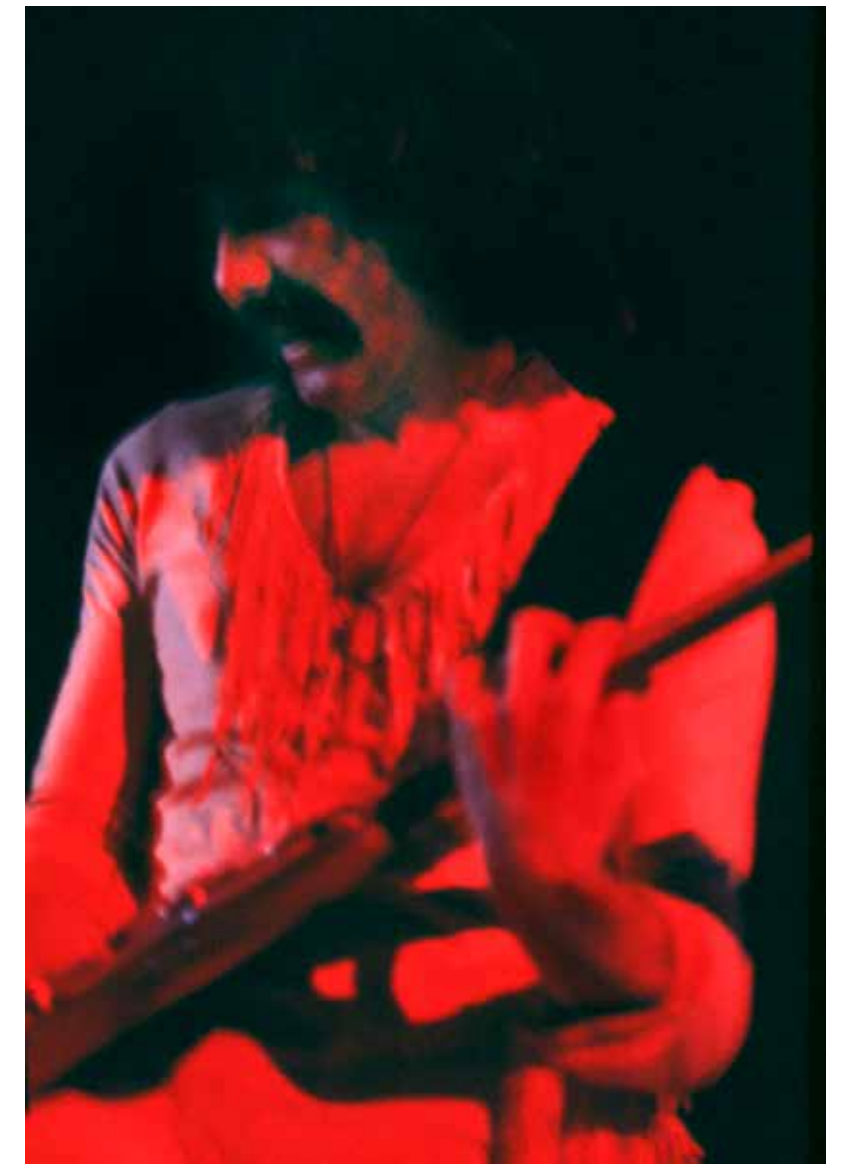


Jimmy Page, Led Zeppelin - Western Springs New Zealand - 1972

From shooting the Led Zeppelin concert I met promotor Robert Raymonds who gave me a pass to get back stage for the Ngaruawahia Music Festival - 1973. Raymonds selected the best images Lloyd shot of Zeppelin and bands like Black Sabbath etc, from Ngaruawahia for a book he was planning - the book never eventuated - the images disappeared. Of the 40 -50 images of Led Zeppelin I was let with 6. Raymonds became infamous for dodgy deals where bands etc. never got paid.



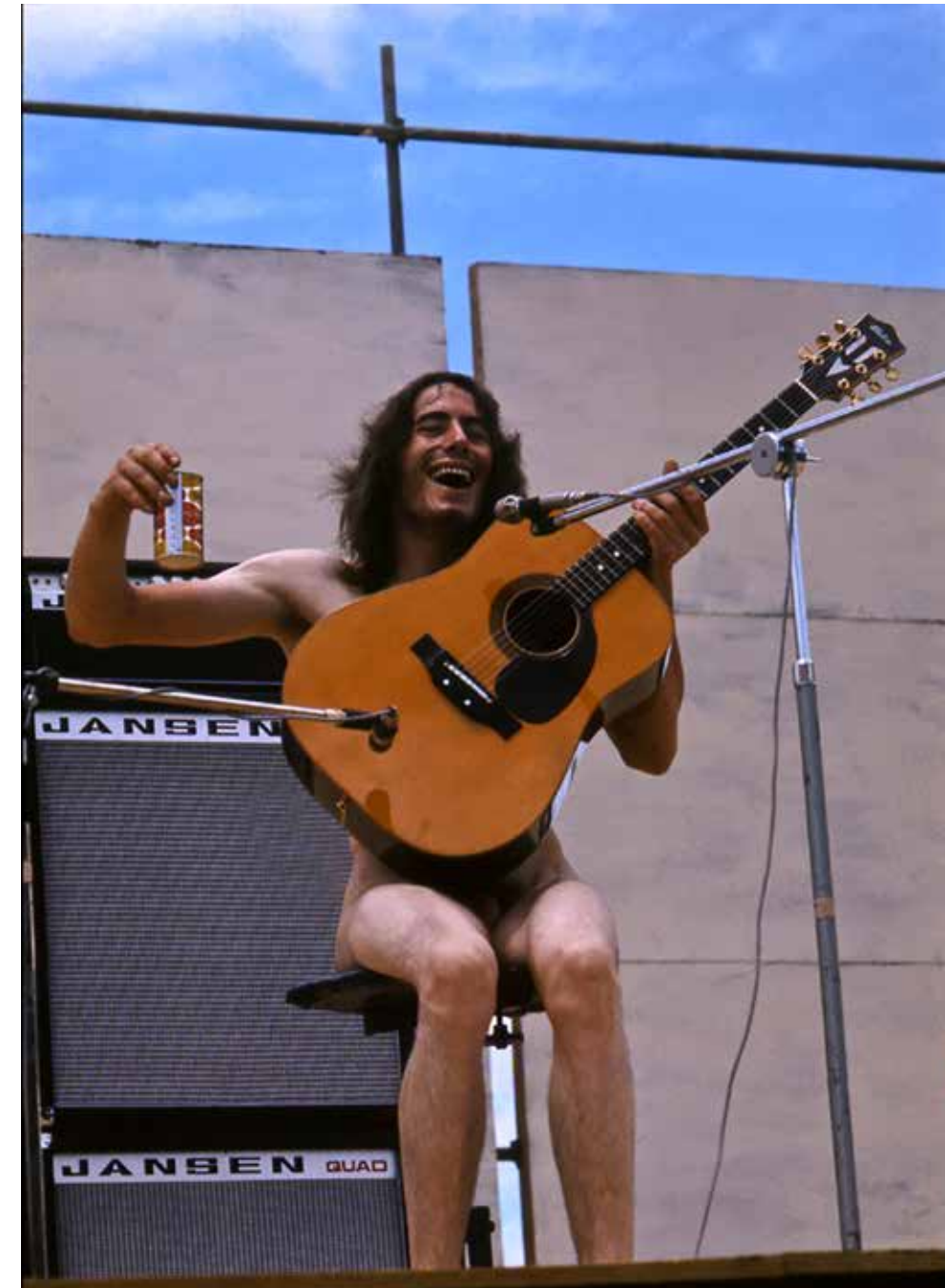
Tony Iommi, Black Sabbath, Ngaruawahia, Music Festival - 1973 - New Zealand







Itambu, Ngaruawahia Music Festival - 1973 - New Zealand



Corban Simpson, playing naked at the Ngaruawahia Music Festival - 1973 - New Zealand



# Hawaii

In 1973 Lloyd decided to surf Hawaii with Chris Brock who was a good friend of the legendary George Greenough. George’s footage for the last 13 minutes of the movie Crystal Voyager is a knock out – Pink Floyd composed the music in exchange for the footage for a light show. After the Hawaiian experience, Chris sailed from California to Australia with George, so Lloyd was informed about his work.

*George has always been a huge influence on me; he is so innovative and focused on his work.*

As Ha’ena State Park was coming into being with the break-up of the Hui Ku’ai Aina, actress Elisabeth Taylor’s brother purchased a parcel of coastal land in the area. Howard Taylor went to acquire building permits to construct a home on the property. However, the State would not grant him such a permit, since they were planning to condemn the land because of Tsunami risk. At the same time, however, they insisted that he still pay full taxes on the land. In disgust, Taylor turned the land over to the “flower power people.” Drifting young drop-outs from the outside world came to this piece of land and gradually came to form a makeshift community that took the name “[Taylor Camp](#)” that grew to 34 plastic houses.

*Chris knew of the camp from Tommy Taylor, Howard's son who had been in Australia, so we had a destination. This is where I lived with Robbie Giles, Chris Brock, Shelly and Fish, during the Hawaiian winter of 1973-4.*

*While in Hawaii, we lived for 9 months in a tree house constructed of clear plastic and bamboo that wound its way up three stories to the tree’s canopy. The grove of trees was on Elizabeth Taylor’s brothers land close to the beach. The developers were just building the first Condos along the beach front at Hanelei around this time. Coming from suburban Dunedin in the South of New Zealand, a place where walls and roofs were thick and insulated to keep out the cold, and windows were glassed, I was suddenly immersed deep in a tropical nature. It was fantastic!*

*There were no streets, lights, electricity, etc. and for many people it might have been threatening. But I delighted in the sounds of rain on the thin transparent*

*roof, thunder – lightening, the wind through the mesh windows, the sound of the ocean, the wing beat and call of the passing cardinal birds, every leaf falling on the roof and the plop of the falling Java Cherries hitting their mark. The moist scent of the earth, flowers and sounds of leaves talking to each other passed though the house with every rainfall. At this time I also began a small vegetable and herb garden out the back of the house. The total experience further strengthened my connections and sensitivity with nature.*

*The crazy stuff and wild times that happened in Hawaii would fill a book.*



Typical Taylor Camp Tree house close to the beach, we would walk down through these houses to check the surf



Chris Brock surfing Bobos break in 1974



Robbie Giles and Greg talking to Vinny Bryant at Polhale State Park Beach, Kauai, Hawaii, about the jet chambers - the idea of the holes in his board was that they suck air from the deck under the tail and give extra drive - Notice the asymmetric nature of the board chimes and the single jet chamber - so the board was specifically designed to straight and fast on rights.



Chris Brock in symmetrical meditation



Makana Peak, Bali Hai, From Haena, north shore of Kaua’i - Taylor camp was on the far right



Perfect conditions - 1974 I witnessed this huge clean swell hit Hanelai Bay Kauai. It was the largest rideable swell of the 73-4 season and I rode it on an air mat.



Chris Brock surfing Makua “the protector” (Tunnels) Haena, north shore of Kaua’i



*There was a vibrant alternative culture often with dope at the centre. Every full moon there was a party on the beach. On occasion I would go partying with Chris Taylor, Elizabeth's son. One evening a few days before Christmas we were on a cliff top at Makahoa Point over looking the building swell when a limousine pulled up and a bunch of people got out. One was Chris who introduced us to his mother. We had a short chat and then they drove off. It was not until they had gone that we suddenly realized, - that it was Liz Taylor.*

*I would often surf with the stylish Billy Hamilton and a couple of times he asked if I could baby sit his kids. Turned out one of these kids was Laird Hamilton the big wave legend, co-inventor of tow-in surfing, and the foil board.*

*At one point I had a job washing dishes at the Dolphin Restaurant which still operates today. All sorts of famous people came in to dine, and the going rate was to leave a joint under the plate for a tip. Part of my role was to make sure the joints never went in the sink. At the end of the night the staff would smoke the tips and head home. For me that was a bike ride where I had to negotiate the local Hawaiian dogs who had been trained to chase anything on a bike.*

*Some of the work from this period was published in Australian Photography magazine Oct 1978. And best of all we surfed amazing waves every day. A film was made on the camp The Edge of Paradise - Taylor Camp 1969 -77 by John Wehrheim.*

*Without doubt this amazing experience was fundamental to the evolution of my work as an artist and my current projects with sustainable living plant works.*



Lloyd paddling up a wave at the Heana shore dump on a hodge man air mat



Christmas dinner Taylor Camp 1973 - from left to right - Robbie Giles - ? Rev John Taylor - ? , Robin, Kenny



The plastic Tree house, Taylor Camp, where Lloyd lived. The tree house was the closest to the road and on the highest ground from the ocean



At a day net fishing with the locals - the kids on the right are Lyon & Liard Hamilton



Ben - made these amazing boards from wood cut from local trees.



An areal view from Makana Peak, Bali Hai, the mountain above Taylor camp Haena, Hawaii, 1974 - Lloyd's house is on the right of the track leading into the bush



## Art School

After retuning to New Zealand in 1974 Godman worked as an electrician again for his father installing and maintaining fire and burglar alarms. Then in 1976 he secured a position working as a photographic and audio-visual technician at the Otago Polytechnic.

*The strange thing was that where the administrative offices were located I had attended Saturday painting classes when I was 12.*

As technician, he got to see and photograph all kinds of strange things from construction sites, landslides, hair dressing, to exhibits of corpses and dismembered portions of people in medical museums for the physiotherapy Department.

*The real up side of this job was that the institute included an art school and as part of my role I had to photograph plates from art books for lectures. I had a constant flow of art books dropped off to be photographed and I always found time to look at the images and read the relevant text. I just absorbed this stuff like a blotter.*

*Better still, lecturers like Frances Pound invited me to attend some of their lectures. I absorbed valuable information and gained a sensibility to both historical and contemporary art. Some of the lecturers encouraged my creative ideas and photography.*

*A relationship was negotiated with the Dunedin Public Art Gallery where I would photograph current exhibitions producing three transparencies of each work. One copy was for the Art School teaching collection, one copy for the gallery and the other was for the artist. I was fortunate to photograph major exhibitions by Grahame Sydney, Jeffrey Harris, Ralph Hotere and Peter Nichols. I also photographed historical works by Petrus Van der Valden, Colin McCahon, Rita Angus, Frances Hodgkins, Monet, Claude Lorrain and many others. To do so I had to get the lighting right, so I spent days in the gallery and learned to look carefully at art works particularly at how light plays on the surface of a painting. I realized that what is photographed is not the object itself but light reflected from the object.*

*Exposed to the creative culture of the Art School, I began to sense that I too could create a serious body of work and have it exhibited in a gallery, and this is how the Landforms project developed. I was actually in charge of a well equipped darkroom, and I began to experiment creatively.*



Francis Pound, writer and art critic - Photograph - Lloyd Godman 1980



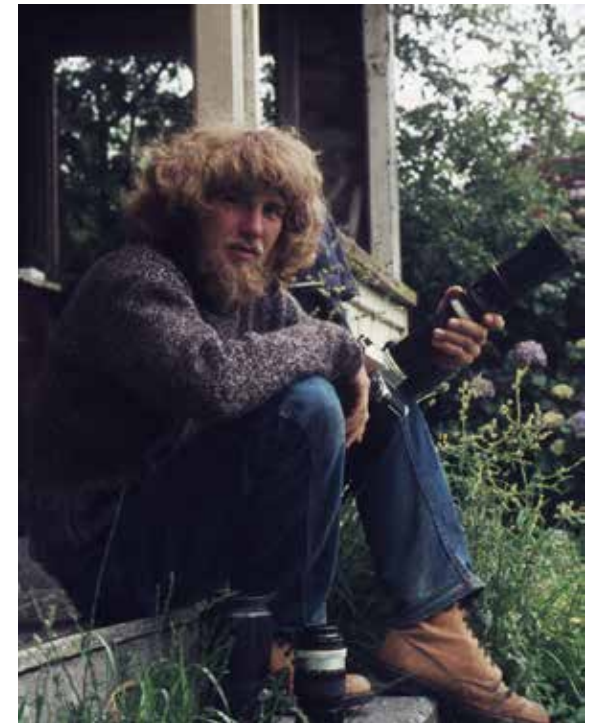
Lloyd Godman began his creative work in photo based projects which inspired an interest in light and later photosynthesis . He is now described as an ecological artist and Avant gardener. Lloyd has an MFA from RMIT University Melbourne (1999). He has had over 45 solo exhibitions and been included in more than 270 group exhibitions. He established and was head of the photo section at the School of Art Otago Polytechnic New Zealand for 20 years before moving to Melbourne in 2005. He now lives with his partner Tess Edwards at St Andrews where they help run the Baldessin Press.

*"Lloyd Godman is one of a new breed of environmental artists whose work is directly influencing 'green' building design....."Godman's installations are the result of a unique blend of botanical science, environmental awareness and artistic expression. All three elements are intrinsic to the practical realisation of his polymathic vision".*

John Power - Editor of Facility Management Magazine Aug 2011

Many of his projects have been published as [E books](#)

<http://lloydgodman.net/Publications/books1.html>



Lloyd Godman at Chris Brock's house kaikoura 1973