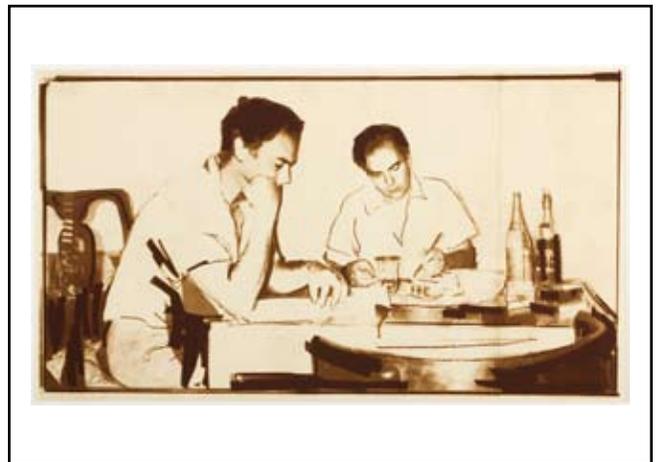


Ian Wallace

CRITIC AT WORK

Ian Wallace
BY CHRISTOPHER BRAYSHAW

Artist's Statement (2005)
IAN WALLACE



Ian Wallace
By Christopher Brayshaw, 1999

Ian Wallace was born in Shoreham, England in 1943, and moved to Vancouver with his family soon thereafter. Wallace obtained his BA from the University of British Columbia in 1966, and his MA in Art History in 1968. Along with his friend and student Jeff Wall, Wallace is credited with founding an intellectually rigorous “school” of conceptual photography that quickly gained international recognition. Wallace’s key insight was to recognise that until the late 1960s, much Vancouver art did not take into account new developments in avant-garde writing and artmaking, choosing instead to remain rooted in a regional, primarily landscape-based

Ian Wallace
Critic at Work, 1982

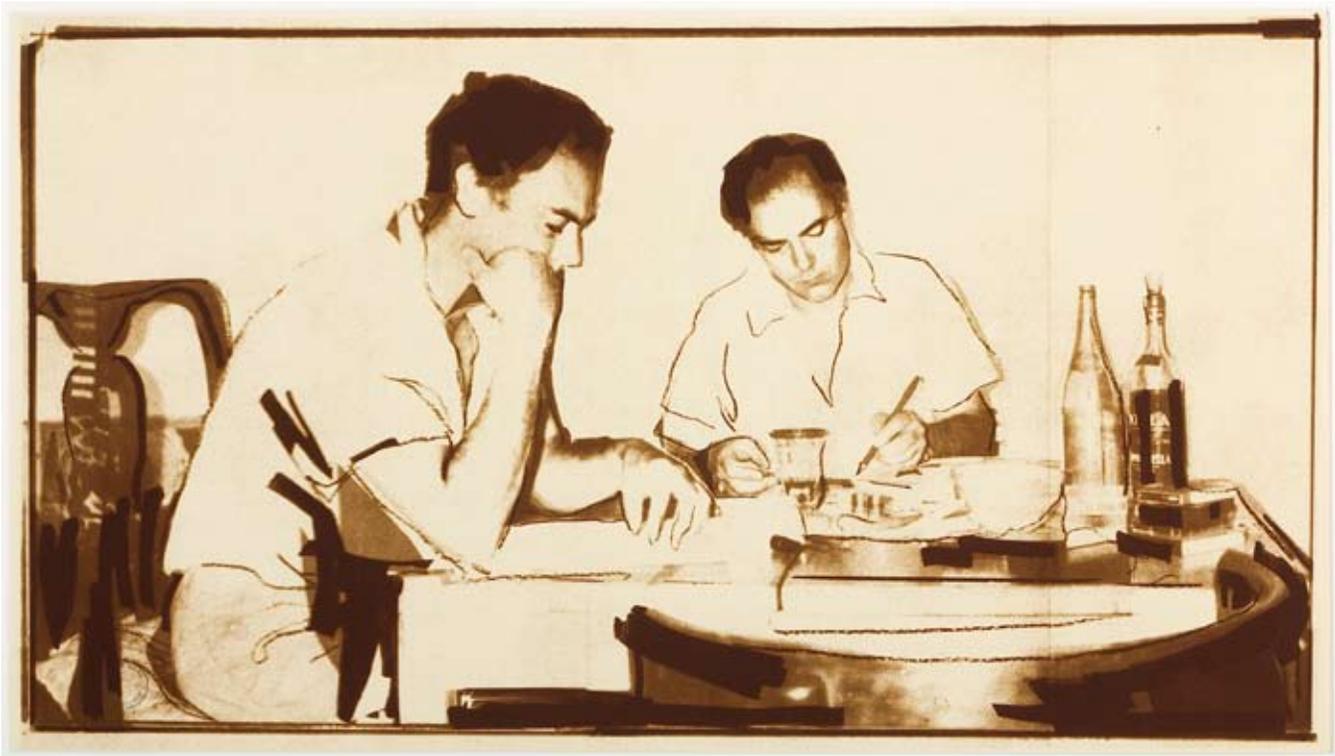
diazotype photographic print
on paper
(39.5 x 81.5 cm)
SAG 1986.08.01

Photograph by Cameron Heryet

tradition. Initially trained as a painter, Wallace's post-1968 work moved more and more toward the production of large scale photo-murals pairing photography and monochrome painting, whose influences included the work of abstract painters like Mondrian and Malevich, and the work of conceptual photographers like Robert Smithson and Dan Graham. Wallace has participated in numerous group and solo exhibitions both in Vancouver and abroad, including exhibitions at Catriona Jeffries Gallery, Presentation House Gallery, and the Vancouver Art Gallery.

Untitled (from Work Project) (1982), initially exhibited at the Vancouver Art Gallery, is representative of Wallace's interest in making visible each component of his artmaking process. For many artists, what matters is the production and presentation of a finished work; the thinking, sketches or models involved in the production of the finished work are

regarded as superfluous, and often discarded. *Contra* such thinking, Wallace regards the conceptualization of a new art work as a key component in the production process, and has consequently produced numerous works that depict him, or other artist friends, in the process of reflecting on work-in-progress, whether in the privacy of a home office or studio, or in a more public space like a downtown street. The motifs of the studio and the street recur frequently in Wallace's work, as places where, respectively, artists engage in dialogue with other citizens, and the place where the results of those dialogues and debates are absorbed and transformed through the artmaking process. Wallace's studio images also have important parallels in art history, such as the formal portraits artists like Manet and Rodchenko made of their artist friends at work.



Ian Wallace *Critic at Work*, 1982 diazotype photographic print on paper (39.5 x 81.5 cm) SAG 1986.08.01 Photograph by Cameron Heryet

Artist's Statement, 2005

A Commentary re *Critic at Work*, 1982 (also known as *Untitled (from Work Project)*, 1982, and *At Work*, 1983)

This image started as two black and white photographs that were montaged together and the background cut away. The montage was then rephotographed and printed as a high contrast kodalith transparency enlargement. Dropout in the kodalith was then altered by drawn outlines with grease pencil, felt pen and letraset. The resulting kodalith collage transparency was then printed in the dyazotype process. Reduced versions of these montages were also reproduced as postcards.

Critic at Work is part of a continuing and varied series of works related to the work process, both as the image of thinking and writing or intellectual work (as is featured in this particular example) and image of artistic materials and the environment of the studio in general. In this work I was ironically lampooning myself for taking myself so seriously as an intellectual artist. It was an attempt to confront and defuse the contradictions that can arise when an art historian practices also as an artist. The image was taken by myself using a time delay photograph in the apartment of a friend in Rome in the summer of 1982. At the time I was experiencing some frustration while attempting to quickly write an essay on the "Canadian Transavantgarde" (eventually published as "Anyone, Anywhere, Anything: The Trans-Avantgarde in Canada") requested by the Italian critic Achille Bonito Oliva for publication in *Flash Art* magazine. I was alone at the time and gratuitously montaged an image of myself keeping myself company, and, in some of the other images in the same series, of admonishing myself for not working hard enough. I

repeated this theme in a performance installation at Or Gallery in the spring of 1983 titled *At Work*.

Terms and Conditions

The images, texts, documentation, illustrations, designs, icons and all other content are protected by Canadian and international copyright laws. The content may be covered by other restrictions as well, including copyright and other proprietary rights held by third parties. The Surrey Art Gallery retains all rights, including copyright, in data, images, text and any other information. The Gallery expressly forbids the copying of any protected content, except for purposes of fair dealing, as defined by Canadian copyright law.

© Surrey Art Gallery, artists and authors.



An Open Book

a catalogue of artworks from the Surrey Art Gallery's Permanent Collection
 ISSN 1910-1392 ISBN 978-0-92018-177-5 Published 2007



13750-88 Avenue
 Surrey, BC V3W 3L1
 Phone: 604-501-5566
 artgallery@surrey.ca
 www.arts.surrey.ca
 www.surreytechlab.ca



Canada Council
 for the Arts

Conseil des Arts
 du Canada



BRITISH
 COLUMBIA
 ARTS COUNCIL
Supported by the Province of British Columbia