Studied Naïveté: The Art of Ted Harrison

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Countless visitors to British Columbia's Expo '86 were dazzled by the artistic tour-de-force that was the façade of the Yukon Pavilion. An historic float plane, the "Queen of the North," was suspended in mid-air in front of a brightly painted northern sky. To walk "into" the painting was an unforgettable experience and knowledgeable visitors instantly recognized the distinctive style of Yukon artist Ted Harrison.

Harrison, something of a Renaissance man in his accomplishments, has the charm and disarming manner of an inveterate Yukoner. His accent, though, gives him away as an expatriate Englishman. Edward Hardy Harrison was born in the tiny village of Wingate, County Durham in 1926. He and his twin sister, Algar, were the children of a miner and there was little in the small coal-mining village to suggest the odyssey that would take the artist half way around the world to the Canadian North and, ultimately, to one of the boldest artistic styles in contemporary art.

Harrison was educated at Wingate Elementary School and Wellfield Grammar School. Early artistic promise was developed at Hartlepool College of Art from 1943 to 1945 when he left to serve in the Intelligence Corps of the British Army. From 1945 to 1948, his postings took him to India, Egypt, Kenya, Uganda and Somaliland. He mustered out at war's end and returned to Hartlepool to complete his rigorous, academic art training; he received the National Diploma in Design in 1950. A year later he obtained his Art Teacher's Diploma from King's College, University of Durham. He then began a life's work in teaching art that took him from Middlesborough, England to Cameron Highlands, Malaya in 1958; Te Kauwhata, New Zealand in 1963; back to County Durham in 1965, and finally to Canada in 1967.

After a one-year appointment on the Wabasca Indian Reservation in northern Alberta, the teacher discovered the Yukon Territory. With wife Nicky and young son Charles in tow, Harrison finally found what he had been seeking for so many years. In his

book *The Last Horizon* Harrison recalls the trials and tribulations of his initial trip to the Yukon Territory:

> Our goal was the little town of Carcross where I was to take up a teaching post in the small elementary school. The capacious vehicle we were travelling in was sold to me by an unscrupulous second-hand vendor in Edmonton and miles up the highway we discovered that it was using almost as much oil as gas — a "lemon" of the first water. Quarts of oil after leaving Dawson Creek, we arrived at a sign bearing the legend "Jake's Corner" — Turn Left for Carcross and Tagish." So left we turned — at least the wretched vehicle's steering worked — and drove down a winding gravelled road towards a new future in our chosen land.[1]

The magic of the landscape worked its charm. Many years later the artist's memory is still filled with the vivid details that he observed on that first view of his new home:

> The mountains were becoming steeper and our excitement was rising even higher that their peaks. Oh, the beauty of it all surpassed my wildest dreams! Soon we were passing Crag Lake upon whose shores lay our future cabin. It glittered like the sun, now high in the sky shining down with unabated brilliance. The dark silhouettes of the spruce and aspen trees allowed flashes of the lake's surface to catch the eye and I kept repeating, "It's fabulous, absolutely fabulous!" A culvert, which was being replaced under the road, caused a delay which heightened the tension, and when we were waved on, I urged the "lemon" to increase its speed. There before us lay Bennett Lake whose surface in the spring of '98 had been covered with rafts and boats of gold-seekers. Montana Mountain and others were still snow-capped. Before plunging down into the valley, I took in the whole vast wonderland of peaks and lakes. We had arrived in our Shangri-la.[2]

The Yukon has been an unending source of artistic inspiration for Harrison since that first prescient view twenty years ago. His eye for detail and openness to new experiences has resulted in a growing body of visual distillations that are impressive in their number and immediacy. For example, the philosopher in the artist wrote about the value of minus-fifty-degree temperatures and other "riches" to be experienced in the North:

> Like all Yukon converts, perhaps I tended to see the world through rose-coloured spectacles of a personal enthusiasm which cannot be shared. However, in time, many people came to me and said that their idea of the Yukon had been shown to them in my work; the fallen

garbage can with its contents pawed over by dogs and ravens, the silhouette of bright parkas against the snow. All these things I noticed and enjoyed as being valuable experiences. We tend to look for mountains to open, and become saddened or frustrated when only a mouse appears after all the roaring commotion. How much more exciting it can be to observe the smaller things in life, such as the play of clouds weaving in the sky, or to walk out into a minus-fifty-degree temperature and see the smoke from many hearths climbing in vertical columns as if the cabins were suspended on strings. Men and animals, women and children, people plodding along on snowshoes, skiing with a gaily-coloured pom-pom dagling from a bonnet, or packing along buckets of water from the lake all combine to form tiny areas of interest which create a whole canvas of activity. By appreciating these simple actions, we get to know what forms the character of our environment. We often focus our gaze on some imagined goal and fail to see the richness of experience lying at their feet.[3]

The Yukon Harrison discovered not only captured his sensibility, but it is an imaginative landscape that many others have found irresistible. Consequently, the artist's paintings are eagerly sought by art collectors and his public success has grown through solo exhibitions in Whitehorse, Vancouver, Montreal, Toronto and other Canadian cities during the past fifteen years.[4] The demand for his paintings has often outstripped his production and eager buyers were recently reported to be lining up twenty-four hours prior to a commercial gallery sale of his newest work.[5]

Harrison's paintings are found in many public, corporate and private collections and his artistic achievement would suffice for many as a life's work.[6] He is distinguished, too, however, for many other significant achievements. Ever the teacher, he has a fine record for his pedagogy and is outspoken about the significance of creative education. He has written that an "art curriculum be framed in such a manner as to leave the teacher with as much local initiative as possible." Coupled with the aim "to strengthen and develop the creative and imaginative potential of the individual," Harrison is arguing for a most sensible approach to art education in our schools which is long overdue.[7]

Besides being an artist and teacher, Harrison is a published author and poet. His books include *Children of the Yukon*, 1977; *The Last Horizon*, 1980; a warm and revealing book that is an accomplished composite of his prose, poetry and paintings; and *A Northern Alphabet*, 1982 which is used in primary grade schools across

northern Canada. Most recently he has had his illustrations of R. W. Service's *The Cremation of Sam McGee* published.

Harrison's artistic success and growing stature as an articulate spokesman for the Yukon has been entrenched through film and video. He was the subject of an NFB film entitled *Harrison's Yukon* and he has appeared on Global TV's *The Canadians*; a 115 segment entitled "Ted's Ways"; CBC's *Gzowski and Co.* and CBC North. The BBC recently completed an hour-long video documentary on the artist for their audience. There are many visual artists who, like Harrison, achieve their creative potential only through the "right" combination of personal experience and locale. Van Gogh (1853-1890), for instance, made many false starts in his artistic development and it was not until his move to the south of France in 1888 that his genius was fully unleashed. Similarly, Gauguin's escape in 1891 to the elemental joys and peace of Tahiti resulted in magnificent, compelling depictions characterized by simplified forms, abstraction of design and brilliant colours. For both Van Gogh and Gauguin the "right" locale coupled with unique life experiences provided the catalyst for creative expression of a highly individual order. Both artists are now indelibly identified with their particular settings. When we look at the art of Ted Harrison much the same kind of process and identification can be seen. It was to explore this that I called Harrison shortly after his recent investiture into the Order of Canada:[8]

NT: Ted, many western artists in this century seem to have hit their creative stride only after finding the right environment. You yourself travelled half the world before finding the Yukon and artistic success.

TH: Well, throughout life, I had been looking for a place that was just over the next hill, where the grass was greener. I tried Malaya, New Zealand and India. When, finally, I came to the Yukon, I instinctively knew I had found the place which suited me and which I had been looking for. I felt quite a thrill when I gazed upon the village of Carcross, amidst the mountains and lakes. I realized it was a place of quietude, far from the "madding crowd and ignoble strife" and I knew I would really enjoy living there.

NT: In spite of the vast cultural and geographic differences between Wingate, the village of your childhood, and Carcross, there must, too, have been some fundamental resonance or correspondence.

TH: Yes. I was brought up in a mining community which sought to unify itself in that you could walk into most houses in the village and be welcome. Children were looked after even though there was a lot of poverty and the harshness of the Depression was countered by the warm friendliness of the people. I grew up in a very warm, trustful, comforting environment, although our fathers' work was harsh, with death facing them often. There were many funerals, but people worked together and, at the drop of a hat, everyone would help their neighbours.

When I looked out on a morning in my first winter in Carcross, I could see the people in their parkas, and the children and ravens and dogs all running around quite freely. It was this feeling of freedom and trust which took me back to my own childhood. In the Yukon, you find the communities are few and far between so people are isolated in little cases and this makes them closer together. There are all the vices and joys, of course, and everyone knows your business but you never have to go far to get help.

NT: There still prevails a notion that the North is a very cold and forbidding place, an ice-clad empty, wilderness. Those artists who have painted the Yukon or Northwest Territories have reaffirmed the myth. However, your art is about an alive, richly colourful North not normally perceived by the Canadian public.

TH: When I first arrived, I felt very attuned to the landscape and after I started painting, I found out about the Group of Seven. I looked at their work and found that they had captured the North in their painting but in almost every case, they had missed out on humanity. They had very few figures in their paintings. I felt that the North was just as much people and animals as it is the lakes and mountains. I saw and felt this so I endeavoured to put the people in relationship to their environment.

NT: Besides seeing your new home with fresh eyes, free of local prejudice or the fetters of tradition, your insights must have been anchored in your own artistic legacy and training.

TH: I think so. Artists in northern England tend to stress the humanity side of things in their paintings. Lowry, for example, captured the slums of Manchester with the people in relation to their industrial environment. One of my great friends, Norman Cornish, another painter from Durham, painted quite bleak mining scenes showing the miners going to work.

In my case, I found that the local people had a particular character in their poses and their looks... the long, flowing black hair of the Native ladies, you know, and the distinctive attitude they took when they walked about. I soon began to look at groups of people very closely and found in them a very inspiring situation.

NT: Since those early days of finding your artistic inspiration, your paintings have evolved to a highly distinctive and personal statement.

TH: I realized early on that I couldn't translate the Yukon into a painterly place until I sort of simplified the images and painted more or less from memory. I wanted to be imaginative and capture the spirit of the place. At first I wasn't too interested in the colours but later the colours started to dominate and, of course, over the years the colours have become more and more important. I reached a stage where, like cloisonné, I used black lines to intensify the colour. When I couldn't go any further with that, I started using coloured outlines and large areas of spatial colours. My skies became more and more abstract but the buildings and people have remained as a sort of visual reality.

NT: You have described something of the stylistic evolution of your painting. Can you tell me about your working methods?

TH: Yeah, well, my working methods are a result of very close observation of certain characters and the landscape. I look at something a few minutes and then try to draw it from memory as I memorize the object. I have developed a photographic memory so I hardly need a camera or a sketch book. I look at a scene and it gets into my head. Now, before I do a painting, I usually spend a week or so thinking about different possibilities. I think about them and then when I am in bed at night, usually they flash on the inward eye. I think of a scene and compose it and I get the feeling of what the painting is going to be like and sometimes I can hardly wait for morning to come so I can start the painting.

When I get the canvas, which I prime very well because I like to work on a nice white background, I then dip the brush in the paint. I make a very light solution of paint, say, purple or blue. I draw my idea directly onto the canvas with the brush as I have seen it in my mind's eye and once I have done that, I pick a part of the painting to colour. I put a colour down and I work outward from that colour, relating other colours to that one and giving contrasts and

variously toying around with the colours and seeing what I can do. Sometimes I can be quite bold and teeter on the edge of catastrophe by way of discord of colour. I rarely get a discord but when I finish a painting and I do have a discord, I repaint the part so that it is more in keeping with the rest of the colours. I rarely have to do this because my best paintings I paint as if I am in a hypnotic trance. I am painting as if my mind has gone right into the painting. In fact, my wife has been known to have to shout a few times that dinner is ready. I am so into the painting that the rest of the world has just disappeared.

NT: Since the early 1970s, you have enjoyed growing public approval and interest in your paintings. Unlike artists such as Vermeer or Eakins who were not understood for decades, centuries in Vermeer's case, your work is broadly popular and accessible in your time.

TH: I once heard that a gallery curator said, "Oh, Harrison's work is so simple that even children can understand it." I took it as a great compliment even though it was meant as a criticism. I never get angry about or discomfited by criticism because I know I am true to what I feel. I know my work has a broad appeal and there are those who think that if the public likes something, if it sells well, there must be something wrong with it. For heaven's sake, Hogarth sold well and had a broad appeal, as did Picasso. So that's not the criterion.

NT: What is?

TH: The broader public approval of my paintings came with the development of my use of colour and the simplifying of the shapes I saw around me. I think it was the relationship of the people to the buildings and landscape which captured the public's imagination. They related to the sort of simple, pure shapes and I think I created a fantasy world in which people could put themselves. Like *Alice Through the Looking Glass*. They could go "into" the picture and weave stories. I obviously leave a lot to the personal imagination of the viewer and although there are abstract qualities in my work, there are elements of reality that all people can relate to.

NT: You referred to a quality of going "into" the picture. This was certainly the case with your magnificent painting for the Yukon Pavilion at Expo '86.

TH: The architect for the Pavilion had seen some of my work and he asked me to design a façade so that it looked like you were walking into a painting . . . as I said, like Alice walking through the looking glass. You walked into the painting; it was three-dimensional. I designed it with the clouds and the mountains to go with the airplane overhead and the paddle wheeler and the little railway train. I wanted it to look sort of exciting and jolly, like a circus in a way, inviting people in, drawing them in like a vortex. The architect had the idea of the golden mirrors at the side which would catch the evening light and that of the sun when it was sinking and, also, at night, they put lights behind which blinked on and off . . . so it looked like the Northern Lights and it made it visually exciting altogether. It's a great shame they had to destroy it.

NT: It is indeed. Ted, at sixty years of age there are no signs of your letting up. I know you just finished some large works for the Government Building in Whitehorse and the Stratford Theatre Company and you are working on some for a Vancouver firm and the town of Inuvik. Do you have a sense of where your artistic career may take you in the coming years?

TH: I sometimes think about it but only fleetingly. I live from day-to-day and my philosophy is never look too far ahead. I enjoy each day as it comes and keep them as full as possible. It's a philosophy I developed after nearly being killed years ago in the war. It made me realize how transitory life is and you just can't look too far ahead. Any changes in my painting will come of their own volition. I didn't set out to design the style I needed; it came on its own. One could say the style took hold of me, not me taking hold of the style. I threw all of my academic knowledge out of my head and started off as though I had never had an art lesson in my life. Having thrown the baby out with the bathwater, I brought the baby back gradually. As a consequence, my style has a very strong foundation. I feel that my style is a very personal one and I truly treasure it. Any changes that come naturally can only enhance the quality of my painting.

NT: Speaking of changes, you must have seen a great many of them in the North over the past twenty years.

TH: Well, yes, but there is still a great quality of life up here and I don't think we will be inundated by people because there aren't many jobs. The air is still clean and fresh and you can drink the

water from the lakes without filtering it. In five minutes I can be into a wood and you wouldn't think there was a built-up place for miles around. You can be alone with your thoughts, in quietude.

NT: Ted, through your writing, teaching, and most importantly, your painting, you have dispelled so many of the old clichés and myths which southern Canada holds about the North. Are there any that remain?

TH: There is a feeling in the South, strangely enough, that anything from the North cannot be either academic or sophisticated. The North is just full of wild people who chew tobacco and shoot moose. There is some of that, of course, and yet, there can be as much sophistication up here as anywhere else.

NT: Your paintings are an eloquent testimony to that, Ted, as are your candid comments. Thank you for your thoughtful answers, and congratulations on your Order of Canada award.

TH: Thank you.

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As Harrison admits, in the past twenty years he has matured in his artistic and spiritual "Shangri-la," the Yukon Territory. His untiring quest for inspiration of a huge and magnificent sort has been rewarded and the popular success of his paintings is testimony to the authenticity of his visual expression. Harrison has developed a distinctiveness of style to interpret his time and place that is at once broadly accessible and yet subtle and sophisticated. This rare combination led one observer and friend of the artist to characterize Harrison's style as "studied naïveté."[9] It is an apt description which bears some general explanation before closely examining the particularities of the artist's paintings.

Naïve art is characterized by its spontaneity, freshness and charm. The naïve or innocent artist is unencumbered by the history of art and the constraints of an academic training. Artists like Grandma Moses (1860-1961), Henri Rousseau (1844-1910), and W. N. Stewart (1888-?) are good examples of naïve artists who achieved varying degrees of critical acclaim for their painting.[10] Their depictions of the real and imagined are immediate and filled with delight and surprise. The naïve or innocent artist creates

art through a mind uncluttered with advice, rules, strictures and conventions. The results are often joyful, sometimes foreboding, but always compelling reflections of an "unfiltered" consciousness.

On the other hand, the professional, highly-trained artist is at a distinct disadvantage by comparison. In an effort to achieve the much-valued qualities of "immediacy" and "authenticity of vision" the self-conscious, schooled artist must somehow break through the constraints of training to find an artistic style and vocabulary that permits satisfactory self-expression which is meaningful to others. Clearly, no academically-trained artist can ever be a naïve artist in the narrow sense of the term, but many do find highly personal visual vocabularies which, to some degree, emulate the truly naïve or innocent artist.

Thus, the aptness of the term "studied naïveté" in describing Ted Harrison's paintings. In his essay "Transformation of a Style," Harrison writes:

> It must be understood that I had been trained as an academic painter in the old tradition, drawing from the casts of ancient Greek sculptures ... repeating intricate exercises in linear perspective, mathematically precise and accurate to a fraction of an inch.[11]

This kind of training, while arguably very important in the fostering of basic skills necessary for the craft of drawing and painting, often hinders the creative spirit of the would-be artist questing for personal expression. Indeed, Harrison's initial attempts at capturing the autumnal splendour of the Yukon landscape met with self-avowed defeat. His academic training and experience of the gentle, cultivated English countryside obstructed his efforts when confronted with the scale and grandeur of Canada's North.[12] However, out of that early defeat came a resolve and process that has resulted in Harrison's personal, richly satisfying depictions of the land he so obviously loves: depictions identifiable as his by the shapes, line and colour.

Harrison has described as important, the "process of simplification, the cutting away of all that seemed superfluous to the main theme; that of creating a personal style which would enable me to interpret my new surroundings, not only with feeling and sensitivity, but with enjoyment."[13] His success is clearly evident. In his paintings, we find that his shapes have been reduced to the barest essentials and they strike us as simple and unequivocal. Buildings are articulated through a basic vocabulary of walls, roof, windows,

doors and ubiquitous chimneys. People are anonymous, bulky masses of colorful, northern clothing depicted at work or play or simply hurrying along in the brisk winds. His skies and landscapes are interpreted through large, simplified shapes of swirling cloud and jagged rock.

These simplified shapes are primarily described by bold, black outlines. The artist's exposure to Maori art in New Zealand is the source for this distinctive quality of swirling, curvilinear and flowing form.[14] During his two years of teaching with the New Zealand natives, he carefully studied the forms of Maori design and had occasion to explore them in his own work upon his return to England. This interest in line was more fully exploited in Harrison's early paintings shortly after arriving in Carcross and it has now been developed to the point where his paintings are readily identifiable by his characteristic shapes and line.

But it is his distinctive use of colour which most viewers comment upon. Harrison paints his shapes and forms with the direct application of single colours which are matte and pure. Eschewing gradation or shading for bright, arbitrary colours, he creates wonderful blue houses with red roofs, orange parkas, green skirts and magenta kamiks. Although his choices of colour for his buildings and people may be arbitrary, his colouration of the sky and landscape is richly expressive of what he actually sees in his North. He writes:

> Autumn in the Yukon is a particularly beautiful time. The golden leaves of the aspen trees contrast sharply with the deep greens and blacks of the ever-present spruce. Flaming reds of unimaginable brilliance combine with all the other tints to form seas of colour that reach up to the mountains. It lasts for about three weeks of absolute brilliance before the forest floor is carpeted with the tiny golden leaves and the iridescence dies slowly, heralding the approach of winter.[15]

Others, too, have commented on this intensity and variety of colour found in the North. One popular writer, for example, dispels the notion that there are but shades of snowy white in the Yukon:

> Colour? I have counted nine distinct shades of green, blue and purple in the waters of Kluane Lake. In the fall, the Yukon Valley is an incredible sight — a great ocean of oranges and yellows, rolling off to the frost blue of the horizon, contrasting with the splashes of wine-coloured buckbrush on the treeless domes of the foothills. In the hot summers, acres of pink fireweed and yellow arnica dance before the eye; blue lupins line the roadways; the red berries of kinnikinnick glitter with the twin flower and shooting star on the forest floor.[16]

This is the rich, yet subtly-modulated landscape — a landscape dominated by its skies — that Harrison so vividly captures with his distinctive vocabulary of shape, line and colour. He does so in a manner that is disarming and, on the surface at least, in a manner reminiscent of naïve art.

Yet as suggested above, closer analysis of the artist's method reveals rather more subtle and sophisticated features, aspects which require one to call it a "studied" naïveté.

In this regard, we may rightly look to the art of Cézanne (1839-1906) for better insight into the art of Harrison. One of the artists who has most profoundly influenced our century's most important painters,[17] Cézanne left his followers a legacy which may be summed up as his simplification of form and his notion that colour is itself the direct exponent of form. For Cézanne, all of nature could be depicted through elemental, simplified forms and his investigations into colour confirmed for him the notion that colour was form. These aspects are precisely what we see in Ted Harrison's paintings, although obviously in his own distinctive manner.

There are other fruitful comparisons with Cézanne. Cézanne was deeply immersed in and greatly preoccupied with his own visual perceptions.[18] He spent a long time just looking at his subject matter, considering its salient detail in an effort to ascertain its "essence." Harrison does likewise. As noted earlier, before he paints, Harrison does a good deal of looking at the natural world. In long, observant meditations on-site, the artist commits an emotional image to his mind's eye. Only small sketches are made and they serve only as referents back in the studio.

After a period of considering alternatives and ascertaining what are the essetnials, he is ready. A starting point is chosen from which the picture's structure is carefully developed. The inner coherence of the painting emerges as it is executed. As the artist has said, "I draw my idea directly onto the canvas."[19] With an obviously confident sense of direction, Harrison creates a visually meaningful picture out of the colours, forms and spatial relationships he paints with his brushes. It is this process — that creates paintings which blend abstraction and reality — which Harrison shares with Cézanne.

Harrison's paintings are abstractions in the sense that in them he codifies the shapes and colours he encounters in the world about him. Reducing objects to their most simplified forms allows the artist to convey the immensity of the northern landscape, share his emotional response to that immensity, and thus allude to less evident realities beyond the appearance of things.[20] Consequently, his paintings are cheerful reflections of his own seemingly limitless optimism and good humour. One finds sees in them what is obvious in his philosophy: a humanity in harmony with the environment. Capturing the "character, mystique and spirit" of the Yukon, he opens us all to the riches of experience and locale that are so missing in our daily lives.

There are other artists whose paintings may be seen in the same or similar vein.[21] It is particularly in the work and example of William Kurelek (1927-1977) that we find some instructive parallels.[22] For example, Kurelek's work was and is immensely popular with the general public. At the same time, the critics and academics dismissed him for his popularity and it has only been in the ten years since his death that his genius has been fully recognized.

The fact that Harrison's art, like Kurelek's, is so readily accessible is no reason to denigrate its importance. Initial critical response to Harrison's paintings in the early 1970s was mixed and suspicious.[23] As already mentioned, Harrison himself enjoys recounting how one critic was overheard commenting that even a child could understand these paintings which were obvious and simple. We have, however, come a long way in the past couple of decades and the early questions about Harrison and his place in contemporary Canadian art now appear to have been more the result of innate, national insecurity rather than sound critical assessment. The latter tells us that Harrison is a solid, professional Canadian artist whose insightful glimpses, filled with candour and love, introduce us to a landscape whose ultimate value is found in its untrammelled aspect.

Of course, only time will fully reveal Ted Harrison's place in the ongoing story of Canadian art-making in the twentieth century. It is clear already, however, that his work is authentic and meaningful. His paintings elicit great joy and they remind us of an integral aspect of what it is to be Canadian, that is, to live in the "North." It is ironic that it has taken a coalminer's son from County Durham to do this.

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NOTES

[1] Ted Harrison, *The Last Horizon*, Toronto: Merritt, 1980, p. 21.

[2] Harrison, p. 22.

[3] *Ibid.*, p. 26.

[4] Mr. and Mrs. D. McLean were instrumental in convincing Harrison that his paintings were commercially viable and thus started his exhibition career in Vancouver in the early 1970s.

[5] Newspaper accounts from 1983 and 1986 reported that eager collectors lined up for first choice of Harrison's newest paintings, some of which sell for as much as $25,000.

[6] Among others, the Alberta Government, Readers Digest, Firestone, Amax Corp., Canada Packers, Esso Resources, Principal Group, Alberta House (London), Interprovincial Pipeline, Trigg Woolett Olson, Canadian Air, Joe Clark and Mr. P. Brodiman have collected the artist's work.

[7] Ted Harrison, "Speaking Out on Creative Education," *Arts West*, March, 1981, p. 12.

[8] July 10, 1987. A transcript of the hour-long interview is on file in the research library at the Art Gallery of Greater Victoria.

[9] Aron Senkpiel of the Yukon College suggested this term to me.

[10] Naive or innocent art has enjoyed a growing popularity in recent years, partly, it is suggested, because of its contrast with mainstream, contemporary artistic concerns. Be that as it may, there is no question that artists like Grandma Moses, who enjoyed widespread acclaim in her final years, and Rousseau, regarded as the quintessential naïve artists, provided us with authentic visual expressions of a compelling kind. There are Canadian counterparts, of whom W. N. Stewart is an example. See A. Jarvis, *Folk Painters of the Canadian West*.

[11] Harrison, 1980, p. 24.

[12] *Ibid.*, p. 25.

[13] *Ibid.*, p. 25.

[14] *Ibid.*, p. 72.

[15] *Ibid.*, p. 41.

[16] *Ibid.*, p. 15.

[17] For a good, balanced view of the wealth of critical writing about Cézanne see J. Wechsler, ed., *Cézanne in Perspective*.

[18] See K. Badt., *The Art of Cézanne*, London, 1965, p. 28 for the discussion about Cézanne's preoccupation with "looking."

[19] E. Eggertson, "They're Lining Up to Buy Yukoner's Art" in *Times-Colonist*, March 8, 1986.

[20] Professor M. Ames of the University of British Columbia recently commented that a primary task of our artists is to render meaningful things which are too big to readily comprehend. Harrison is aware of this dimension in his art and is eloquent about it in his poetry. For the entire poem and others see *The Last Horizon*.

[21] L. Fracchetti paints realist depictions of life in the North and has been quoted as saying "the arctic is not a frozen wasteland . . . it has a life and beauty like no other place I know." See D. J. Hawke's, Profile on L. Fracchetti in *Art Impressions*, Winter 1987, p. 16. Others include Roy Henry Vickers. He paints scenes of the west coast of British Columbia that, in some instances, are satisfying blends of myth and reality. His work is characterized by a bold use of colour similar to Harrison's. Qiliqti Jaw is an Inuit artist from Cape Dorset and her paintings, too, are rendered in bright, bold colours. They have been desribed as "fantasy-like, loose realism" infused with her "cultural spiritual awakening." See the exhibition catalogue of her recent works at the Gallery of Arctic in Victoria, B.C.

[22] For an astute assessment of Kurelek and his work, see J. Murray, *Kurelek's Vision of Canada*, 1982. Kurelek, like Harrison, was an academically-trained artist with an extensive knowledge of art history. He nonetheless sought a style that brings to mind the work of naïve artists and other vernacular forms.

[23] See K. Kritzwiser, "A Critic's Comment," *Arts West*, November/December, 1980, p. 13.

Reviews

Education, Research, Information Systems and the North, ed. by W. Peter Adams. Association of Canadian Universities for Northern Studies, 1987. 362 pp. ISBN 0-921421-00-1.

A Yukon Perspective by John Casey

This substantial volume is a collection of the major addresses, seminar papers and workshop notes of ACUNS's annual meeting held in Yellowknife in April 1986. ACUNS's decision to hold the meeting in Yellowknife was based on the Association's desire to allow Northerners to express their views on what the universities are doing and what they should be doing in the North. Also, the Yellowknife venue ensured that northerners would have an opportunity to become more aware of ACUNS's work in the North and its motives for undertaking that work.

While both objectives have been met with some success — at least with respect to the conference's coverage of education, research and information systems in the NWT — the coverage of Yukon developments in these areas is less than adequate. While this is understandable — the meetings were held in Yellowknife — it is unfortunate in that some of the truly exciting developments in northern education and research over the last decade have occurred west of the Mackenzie River.

What are some of the developments which are either overlooked or barely touched upon? The creation of Yukon College is noted but little or nothing is said about its development of an extensive network of community campuses and its use of mobile training units. Also, given the extensive coverage of teacher education programmes elsewhere in the North, some mention of the Yukon Teacher Education Programme, which in its short life (1978-82) not only trained many teachers for Yukon's rural schools but provided the territory with a coherent foundation for what has become the Canadian North's first autonomous two-year university transfer