

Photo montages create film-like vision of NW

Review by Elizabeth Brinton

Ron Finne's photographs are now showing at Fall Creek Bakery until July 31st. Finne is known as a gifted and innovative film maker. The switch to this modestly scaled still photography is paradoxically expansive in both intellectual and aesthetic terms.

In this cycle of works there is a clear simplicity in the subject matter. The artist's background in film, and the influence of Chinese concepts of pictorial space and depth, move this work far beyond its seeming stillness, and its two-dimensionality. With the tender portrayal of the Northwest landscape near his home, Finne has taken the notion of time-going-by and the transformational nature of film to create remarkable montages.

In *Cloud-Mountain*, the mountain becomes lighter than air and hard as a faceted diamond, the result of the montage technique, of the larger picture built from the smaller units. In many of the works the structure of Northwest light and air, of earth and mountain, is revealed from many sides, from many layers, and yet seems hidden and enticing beyond the surface of the photograph. Still photographs usually give us one surface, and one frame of time. Finne gives us, through the montage and the patient rendering of multiple images, a film-like vision, and the sense of time and depth in the stationary realm.

In *Daffodil and Stone Garden*, *Equinox 1986* tiny sections of petal, leaf, and flower are enlarged and presented almost as a film or

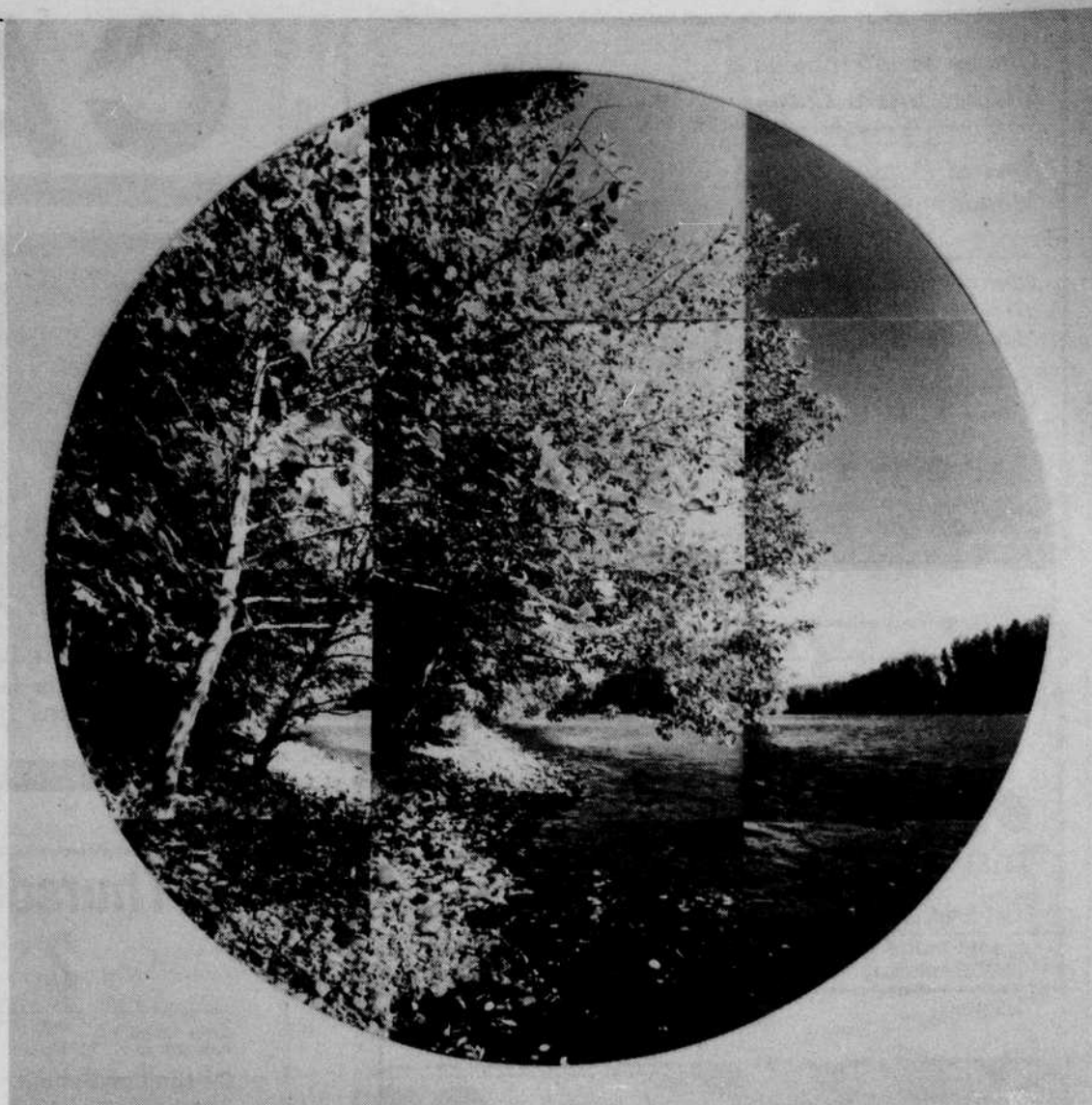
a strip of images—a little story of the emergence of delicate yellow life from grey wintery rock.

Several pieces are in a tondo, or round format. *First Snow, Early Winter 1985* and *High Water, 1985* are deceptively little landscapes which draw us in with the breadth of space portrayed, and with the clarity of detail beyond that which we could ordinarily see.

In some of the work Finne has used a Polaroid SX-70, and in others, the work is Cibachrome prints of the original montage. Others are constructions of the original photos. The work looks like a real mystery to the non-technical person, and it probably is not important for us to fully understand the techniques of Finne's art. But it is important that Finne, as an apparent master of his camera, is not seduced by himself or his own wonderful tricks. He is sweetly seduced by his own world, and he holds it up to us like a many faceted jewel.

Finne takes one scene and shoots it from differing levels, and angles, and at changing times of day. He has taken concepts from the Chinese, from the North Coast Indians, from the cubists, and from his own mysterious well of artistic knowledge, to create a montage not only of photographs, but of well founded ideas translated to art.

For the truly interested viewer, it would be smart to see this show at a quiet hour when the bakery is not too busy. Take some time to see this wonderful work, and to enjoy.



"He is sweetly seduced by his own world and holds it up to us like a many-faceted jewel"

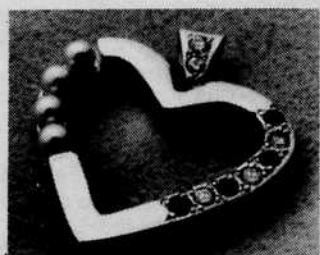
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