

Gallery

Media Coverage:

FIRST SON: Portraits by C.D. Hoy

PRESENTATION HOUSE GALLERY

September 4 – October 17, 1999

The Vancouver Sun – MIX

Excerpt from the book by Faith Moosang – Special to the Sun.

6 photos reproduced, 3 pages

September 4, 1999

The Vancouver Sun

Fall preview by Michael Scott

September 7, 1999

The Georgia Straight

Fall preview by Robin Laurence – photo reproduced

September 9, 1999

Arts Alive, North Shore Arts Commission Magazine

Article by Faith Moosang with photograph

July/August 1999

The National Post

AVENUE: listing with 5 photos reproduced.

The North Shore News

Interview of Faith Moosang and Ann Lore by Layne Christiansen

Photo reproduced

September 10, 1999

The Vancouver Sun

Interview of Anne Lore and Lona Joe by Pete McMartin

Page 3 column with photo reproduced

Thursday, October 14th, 1999

Kanada Kurier – German Language newspaper

Review by Sylvia Reinthal

Two C.D. Hoy photos reproduced and a photo of Faith Moosang & Karen Love

October 7th, 1999

The Ubyyssey (UBC Campus newspaper)

Review of exhibition by Aisha Jamal

September 14, 1999

RICE PAPER

Contemporary Pacific Rim Asian Canadian Literary Arts. Vol. 5, No. 3, 1999

Excerpt from the book by Faith Moosang.

Cover photograph, 13 photographs reproduced with the article.

Vancouver Shinpo – Japanese Canadian Newspaper

Review by Etsuko Kato

Two photographs reproduced

September 23, 1999

World Journal, Chinese Language newspaper

Interview with Faith Moosang by Andrew Chang

Photograph of Faith in the gallery reproduced

October 4th, 1999

INFLUX – Emily Carr Institute of Art & Design newspaper

Review by Leslie Grant: *Photography & Representation, Portraiture and the Photographs of C.D. Hoy*
3 photographs reproduced.

November 1999 issue

B.C. BOOKWORLD

Book review, *Profoundly Silent*

Five photographs reproduced.

Winter Issue , November, 1999

Pending - Asian Art News – review by Paula Gustafson

Pending - The Cariboo – Chilcotan Tourism Guide

Pending - Blackflash Magazine, Saskatoon

Review by Paula Gustafson

Television

C.B.C. Television – The News

Interview with Faith Moosang with Dale Drury

Aired: Thursday, Sept. 9th, 6:30 pm.

Pacifique Courants – French CBC TV

Interview with Faith Moosang by Mark Carpentier

Aired: September 26th,

Rogers TV – North Vancouver

Broadcast: Thursday, September 16th,

8:30am, 12:30pm, 6:30pm, 10:30 pm

Interview with Karen Love

VTV - *The Vicky Gabereau Show*

Interview with Faith Moosang

Aired: Wednesday, October 13th, 1999. (11:00)

Taped

VTV – *The Morning Show*
Interview with Faith Moosang.
Tuesday, October 19th, 7 am.

BRAVO TV

Interview with Faith Moosang, Brian Lam, Karen Love by Terry David Mulligan
Taped during the *Swallowing Clouds* book launch & reading, October 14th, 1999.

RADIO

C.B.C. Radio - *MORNINGSIDE*

Interview with Faith Moosang by Rick Cuff
Aired: Monday, Sept. 6th.

C.B.C. Radio – *The Arts Report*

Interview with Faith Moosang by David Grierson
Aired: Sept. 11th.

Vancouver Coop Radio (CFRO 102.7 fm)

Interview with Faith Moosang by Mordecai Greenberg
October 2nd, 1999

C.B.C. Radio – *Richardson's Round-up*

Interview with Faith Moosang by Bill Richardson
October 5th, 1999



BOOKS • ENTERTAINMENT • WEST COAST CULTURE SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 4, 1999



4 What **Lonely Planet** sees in Vancouver • **6** Why theatre is harmed
by the **Fringe Festival** • **10** How to raise the perfect
young man • **14** **Baaba Maal** casts his
African spell • Plus the **refugees** who run 7-11 •



Sacred vs. secular • And C.D. Hoy's remarkable portraits of **turn-of-the-century B.C.**



About this man and boy, little is known other than the date on the calendar behind them: May, 1912.

TAKING NOTE OF
a priceless record

C.D. Hoy's lens

Face to face with turn-of-the century Quesnel.

FAITH MOOSANG
SPECIAL TO THE SUN

Chow Dong Hoy lived in the Central Interior of British Columbia from 1905 until his death in 1973. He learned how to take photographs in Barkerville in 1909, and then became Quesnel's first professional photographer when he moved there in 1911. As a small-town photographer, Hoy took over 1,500 portraits of people who lived in and around Quesnel. His archive is a document of the native, Chinese and Caucasian peoples of the Cariboo at the beginning of the 20th century. Hoy took approximately equal numbers of pictures of these groups, which suggests that they were all equally comfortable beneath the levelling gaze of his camera.

After Hoy passed away in 1973, his negatives remained in his son's basement for 15 years, when they passed with the death of the son to Hoy's daughter-in-law, Gerri Hoy, who mentioned them to Leah Hubensky, an employee of Barkerville Historic Town. Hubensky recognized the importance of the Hoy collection and helped to arrange its transfer to the public archives at Barkerville Historic Town in 1990. Over the next six years, the images were archived and nominal research into them began.

In the spring of 1996, I had just graduated from Emily Carr Institute of Art and Design where I had spent three years studying photography. I was back treeplanting in the Central Interior when the midsummer break came at the end of June, and I decided to visit a friend in Wells, which is right next door to Barkerville. Within a few days I had found the Barkerville archive and met the curator, Bill Quackenbush, who, after a long talk about historical photography, turned my attention to the Hoy photographs. It was then I first laid eyes on a whole

new world, so beautifully rendered and so profoundly silent. I had not known of these people. I could not hear them. Their silence, which was a characteristic of their invisibility to me (until that moment) is what drew me into them. Not long after that day, I knew that I wanted to learn who these people were, what their names were. Then I might be able to hear them.

And now, three years later, these hundreds of faces, many of whom are now named, still maintain their silence but are no longer mute. Over that time I have carried these 1,500 photographs throughout the province, meeting with people who had some family connection to Quesnel in the 1910s and 1920s. At least 120 people have gone over them looking for ancestors and old friends. Indeed, I gained many friends during this time and lost two of them: Jim Webster and Rosie Gasoff, who embraced me warmly upon my arrival onto their doorsteps.

When I first saw Hoy's photographs I was struck by the ethnic diversity of his sitters, who were equally divided among native, Chinese and Caucasian. I was surprised by the number of native and Caucasian people who had come to have their portraits of remembrance taken by this Chinese man. When I was 10 years old I was adopted by the man I call my father. He had grown up in Jamaica as the son of a Chinese man and a mother of mixed ancestry and, furthering the cultural mix, eventually married my mother, a Caucasian woman from Newfoundland. I grew up in this multicultural family with strong ties to both Newfoundland and the Caribbean islands and often heard ill-mannered remarks, often from complete strangers,



Kong Shing Sing, a Quesnel blacksmith.

Books



READING AHEAD

By Denise Ryan

"At the age of seven I lost both parents when my father murdered my mother. Both wrote poetry," reads the epigraph to the slim volume of poems entitled *New Power* (Broken Jaw), by **Christine Lowther**. The verse that follows is as candid and bloody as those first words. Chris Lowther is the youngest daughter of Pat Lowther, a Vancouver poet, who, says author **George McWhirter**, "let the air and the wind from all of the Americas," in to her poems and, as a writer who dealt with political geographies and the human condition, "had a major influence on our consciousness." Pat Lowther's career was cut short when she was murdered in 1975 by her husband Roy. (Roy, a much less successful poet, later died in prison.) Pat Lowther's death has been called Canada's "greatest literary tragedy," but for Chris and her family, it was personal. And so is the book. These are brave and crazy poems, bristling with voice and awkward humanity, raw from telling too much: "Forgive me now, before you start reading," she writes. Chris, who spoke to me by phone from her floathouse in God's Pocket, near Tofino, isn't looking for comparisons to her mother, whom, she says, had a rare and special gift. With these poems, she is simply a daughter, trying to write her way back to a woman she never really knew. After the murder, Chris and her sister, "barbarous children carrying lice and impossible behaviours," were bounced between foster homes, and separated from the literary community that mourned and remembered their mother. But a 1995 memorial reading of Pat Lowther's work inspired Chris to send out a form letter to her mother's old friends, asking for their memories. After that, she says, "I had bulging files, where before I had nothing ... and the poems started coming." Chris hopes that *New Power*, (available at Black Sheep Books), will be read by others who, like her, have survived childhood trauma. Her next book, she promises with a gentle laugh, will be "much lighter."



READINGS

SUNDAY: **Dan Farrell** reads at the Kootenay School of Writing, 103-400 Smith, 8 p.m., \$3/\$5

MONDAY: **Jeffrey MacDaniel** joins the Vancouver Poetry Slam at Cafe Deux Soleil, 2096 Commercial, 9 p.m., \$5. Telepoetics at the Beach, with **Carmen Rodriguez**, **Susan Mullen**, and others, West Spanish Banks Beach, 7 p.m., free.

TUESDAY: Tales of Ordinary Madness, spoken word and poetry readings at Bukowski's, 1447 Commercial Drive, 9:30 p.m., free.

FRIDAY: **Khaliqa Maggie Graham** and **Bud Osborn** read at Black Sheep Books, 2742 West Fourth, 8 p.m., free.

BESTSELLERS

NATIONAL FICTION

- Black Notice** - Patricia Cornwell (1). Chief Medical Examiner Kay Scarpetta embarks on another bizarre murder case.
- Pilgrim** - Timothy Findley (2). Carl Jung takes on a man who says he cannot die, even when he tries.
- Hannibal** - Thomas Harris (3). The further exploits of Dr. Hannibal (The Cannibal) Lecter.
- The Outlandish Companion** - Diana Gabaldon (4). A guide to Gaelic terms, genealogical facts and characters in the author's Outlander series.
- The Mother of Pearl** - Melinda Haynes (5). Black-white relations in the Deep South in the 1950s.
- Lost Girls** - Andrew Pyper (-). Creepy tale of a criminal lawyer investigating a sinister double murder in a small town.
- Death du Jour** - Kathy Reichs (7). Another mystery about forensic anthropologist Temperance Brennan by the author of *Deja Dead*.
- White Oleander** - Janet Fitch (8). The struggles of the teenage daughter of an uncompromising mother.
- East of the Mountains** - David Guterson (9). Journey of self-discovery in the American West.
- The Girl's Guide to Hunting and Fishing** - Melissa Bank (10). Quirky stories about the passage from teen to career woman.



NATIONAL NON-FICTION

- Shadow** - Bob Woodward (1). The Watergate scandal's effects on Richard Nixon and his successors.
- Name-Dropping** - John Kenneth Galbraith (2). Memoir by the famous economist.
- Bella Tuscany** - Frances Mayes (3). Sequel to *Under the Tuscan Sun*, on setting up house in Italy.
- Encore Provence** - Peter Mayle (4). The Mayles renew their acquaintance with the land they love.
- The Other Side and Back** - Sylvia Browne (5). A psychic's take on angels, ghosts and the world after death.
- The Eatons** - Rod McQueen (-). Published last year, the book chronicles the rise and plummet of an icon Canadian family.
- For the Time Being** - Annie Dillard (7). The nature writer traces her connections to the eclectic life of paleontologist Teilhard de Chardin.
- The Professor and the Madman** - Simon Winchester (-). Dr. W.C. Minor contributed 10,000 definitions for the Oxford English Dictionary — while he was an inmate in an asylum for the criminally insane.
- The Lexus and the Olive Tree** - Thomas Friedman (9). The *New York Times* foreign affairs columnist on how the world works.
- The Corrosion of Character** - Richard Sennett (10). A sociologist explores the disorienting effects of the new capitalism.



Numbers in brackets refer to last week's ranking.
Compiled by Maclean's magazine.

SEE HOY, E12



Early Quesnel locals: Jerry Boyd, Captain Marc Mack, John Lazzarin, Chief Michel, unknown Chinese man, Moffat Harris and Chief Morris Molize. As with most of Hoy's surviving photos, more detailed information about the subjects and dates is not known.



A native man with two babies stares confidently into Hoy's lens.

As a small-town photographer, Hoy took over 1,500 portraits of people who lived in and around Quesnel. His archive is a document of the native, Chinese and Caucasian peoples of the Cariboo at the beginning of the 20th century.

HOY from Eli

about my parents' obvious cultural differences. So I have had a long-time interest in the coming together of cultures in Canada. Hoy's portraits brought this forward and compelled me to find out more about him, his photography, and the people in his pictures.

Early British Columbia photographs of native and Chinese subjects presented straightforwardly as the subject of their own story (not the photographer's story) are exceedingly rare; in fact, prior to seeing Hoy's photographs, I had never run across images of this sort. Hoy's photographs made me think of the numerous photographs of railway building crews in Western Canada in which the Chinese workers, if they were pictured at all, were always at the periphery of the photographer's gaze and were often the only men left unnamed in the caption. And they made me think of the photograph of the Last Spike (perhaps the best-known photograph in Canada): how did the labourers, Chinese or Caucasian, feel when the top-hatted industrialist took centre stage in Canada's visual history as the person who drove in the last spike? What of the third spike, the ten-thousandth spike? What was the name of the man on the extreme rear left of the picture? What was his day like prior to the memorializing of this one moment?

The original inhabitants of the Cariboo are the naïve people of the Southern Athapaskan group, the Carrier and Tsilhqot'in people. At the time of Hoy's portraits, many were living on reservations that the Indian Reserve Commission had established between 1876 and 1914. The Carrier people lived on or near reservations established at Nazko, Kluskus, Ulkatcho and Quesnel. The Tsilhqot'in, who lived further south and west, were established on reservations at Anaham, Redstone, Toosey, Stone, Alexis Creek, Alexandria and Nemah Valley. None of the native people in Hoy's portraits have yet been identified as Secwepemc people, although their presence was strongly felt in this area. They too had been turned from seminomadism to sedentary agriculturalism with the establishment of their reservations at Sugar Cane (Williams Lake), Alkali Lake, Ca-



Photographer C.D. Hoy (right) with his brother-in-law Lim Bing, who was murdered in China for his political beliefs. Hoy died in the Cariboo in 1973.

noe Creek, Dog Creek and Soda Creek.

The Chinese and Caucasian people in these photographs were settlers who moved into the area attracted by rumours of gold in the Fraser river. Both groups were initially miners from the California gold rush who made the arduous journey through the mountains of Montana up into the Cariboo Plateau in the 1850s and 1860s. When the gold strikes continued to make a few of these people wealthy, other Caucasians from Canada (now Ontario and Quebec) and Europe, and Chinese from Guangdong province in south China, came to stake their claims and develop secondary industries.

As I worked on this project, I came to understand the small-town photographer to be infinitely more impor-

tant to the general public than urban photographers of the artistic and advertising fields. Hoy's work has much in common with Felix Nadar, August Sander and Irving Penn, for example, photographers who have made important contributions to the art of portraiture — but they made their portraits for entirely different purposes which were worlds away from this small-town professional photographer.

In the last 30 years the history of photography has begun to embrace the work of people who made portraits for a living. Good examples are Mike Disfarmer, Frank Matsura and Richard Throssel, professional photographers who were working from within the communities that they were documenting. Those who sat before their cameras were the same people who passed by their doors on a day-to-day basis. Like Hoy, Richard Throssel, who was part Cree, and Frank Matsura, who was Japanese, were also photographers from marginalized communities. Closer to home, I happened to meet Willie Meldrum, a Tsilhqot'in man whose uncle, Thrift Meldrum, was a professional photographer who took hundreds of now lost images of the Tsilhqot'in and Caucasian people who lived in and around Meldrum Creek, west of Williams Lake.

The importance of a photographic record that comes from within a community should not be underestimated. Native and Chinese people, especially, have often been the subject of the ethnographers and the travelling photographers, to whom they were exotic archetypes of the Mysterious Orient or the Savage West. Hoy's photographs return the individuals in them to their own world: the photographs themselves were part of that world.

Faith Moosang is a photographic artist and historian who lives in Vancouver. This piece is excerpted from *First Son: Portraits by C.D. Hoy, Presentation House Gallery/Arsenal Pulp Press, 170 pp., \$27.95.*



Little is known of this woman other than her name, Blanche Curtis.

Photographic gold depicts early B.C.

■ *First Son: Portraits by C.D. Hoy*, at the Presentation House Gallery to Oct. 17

Layne Christensen

News Reporter
layne@nsnews.com

FAITH Moosang was working as a tree planter in the Central Interior when she mined gold at Barkerville Historic Town.

A graduate of Emily Carr Institute of Art and Design with an interest in historical photography, Moosang was chatting with the curator of the town's archives when conversation turned to a little-known collection of

photos that way when she was their custodian.

The third eldest of Hoy's 12 children, Lore said her father had all but given up professional photography by the year she was born, 1921. Hoy ran the general store in Quesnel and, later, the Lode Theatre in Wells as well as the town's light and power company.

Passed from sibling to sibling after her father's death in 1973, the large-format negatives were for a time stuffed in an old suitcase, which Lore kept beneath her bed before giving them to a brother 10 years ago when she left Quesnel for North Vancouver. When her brother died, Lore and her surviving siblings debated what to do with the collection.

"They thought, 'Nobody wants really to do anything with it, we just might as well chuck it,'" she recalls. The negatives were eventually donated to Barkerville's public archives, which is where Moosang found them in 1995.

Moosang, now 33, secured funding to research the book, speaking to more than 120 Barkerville area residents in order to put names to the faces in Hoy's portraits and hear their stories.

"Here were portraits of families, people, friends and lovers. ... It's really a very humanizing record," says Moosang, of the more than 1,500 images she sifted through, editing her selections to 81 for the exhibition and 96 for a book.

Lore, who is looking forward to viewing the show, said Moosang's research into her father's photographs has brought new appreciation for her father's talent.

"I figure in those days he was a genius," says Lore, who recalls her father telling her of an early foray into professional photography that accompanied stints as a watch repairman and barber. "I remember him saying 'It turned out pretty good so I put 'photography' on my shingle.'"

This Saturday, 2 p.m. at Presentation House Gallery, Moosang will discuss Hoy's portraits and his life. The public talk will be followed by a reception and book launch.

GALLERIES

photographs by early area resident C.D. Hoy.

Hoy was a Chinese immigrant who worked variously as a farm hand, fur trader, surveyor and cook before taking up photography to supplement his wages.

Following her 1995 discovery of the photos, Moosang has compiled a book *First Son: Portraits by C.D. Hoy*, due out this weekend. The book is a co-publication of Arsenal Pulp Press and Presentation House Gallery, which is currently hosting a show of Hoy's photos.

On first viewing Hoy's skilful portraits, Moosang says: "I was immediately shivering. Some photographs just speak right to your heart and these ones did."

They were "absolutely breathtakingly beautiful," says Moosang. But more importantly, she knew right away that Hoy's portraits of First Nations people, Chinese immigrants and European settlers in small-town B.C. formed an important historical and cultural document, depicting a multi-racial community frozen in time.

Ann Lore didn't exactly see her father's



photo C.D. Hoy/courtesy Barkerville Historic Town

FIRST Son is a collection of 81 photographs including the untitled image, circa 1910 (above), that depict the multicultural reality of B.C.'s early rural communities.

Personality secret to grocer's artistry

Anne Lore is 78 and Lona Joe is 73, and to avoid confusion they identify themselves as Daughter Number Three and Daughter Number Six.

They are sisters from a family that numbered 10 girls and two boys, and all of them were born in the Cariboo. Their mother, who came from China in 1909, was named Lau See, and their father, about whom this column is writ, was named Chow Dong Hoy. The world, however, knew him as "C.D." — a man who for the last 60 years of his life ran a grocery store in Quesnel. He died in 1973.

Anne and Lona both live in the Lower Mainland now, and for the past few weeks they have been spending their free time at Presentation House Gallery in North Vancouver. There, with hundreds of gallery-goers, they look at pictures on a wall and rediscover something that they are only now, in this late stage in their lives, beginning to fully understand: their father.

The show the gallery has mounted is called *First Son: Portraits of C. D. Hoy*, a powerful collection of some 96 portraits taken by Hoy between 1909 and 1913, when he made a living as town photographer in Barkerville and later in Quesnel. In that span, the self-taught Hoy took some 1,600 portraits of whites, Chinese and Carrier Indians living in the Cariboo, and it should be said that the pictures are masterpieces — revealing, masterfully composed, and without the sombre historical formality of, say, an Edward Curtis. Hoy's portraits are human. They are as fresh as the day they were taken. Hoy would have never thought of himself as this — he was too busy trying to make a living — but he was an artist of the first rank.

Of this, his children knew nothing. Hoy's career in photography preceded their arrival, and he never mentioned it to them. They had always known him as a grocer.

"When he got the camera," Lona said, "we don't know. Whether he purchased it new or second-hand, we don't know.

Pete McMartin

When it came to people, his children say, C.D. Hoy was 'colour-blind,' and his pictures reflect that sense of respect.



SELF-PORTRAIT: Photographer C.D. Hoy's collection of some 96 portraits, taken between 1909 and 1913, is on show at the Presentation House Gallery in North Vancouver. A grocer most of his life, his pictures are powerful images of the day.

He was a very practical man, and a very private man about his own life, and he didn't ever tell us he had taken pictures.

"And these pictures," Anne said, "when we saw them we were astounded."

The negatives had been stored in a suitcase for years, put there by him when he gave up photography. At the time of Hoy's death, they languished in his son's basement for 15 years. When the son died, his wife ca-

sually made mention of the negatives' existence to an employee of the Barkerville Historic Town. They were eventually transferred there and archived. Faith Moosang, a Vancouver photographic artist and historian, saw the photos and, struck by their artistry, resolved to bring them to the public's attention. The result was the gallery show, which runs until Sunday.

It was a revelation to Anne and Lona. At the show's opening, attended by about 300 people, the two petite women were surrounded by people wanting to ask questions about their father. They were not always questions they could answer. Their own portrait they paint of their father is of a small man of intense intelligence, who made friends easily and commanded the respect of people who knew him.

"He had a very magnetic personality," Lona said, "and people who met him for the first time would say it was like they had known him all their lives."

That personality may have been the secret to his artistry. None of his subjects look guarded. Their faces betray their thoughts to the camera, whether they're nattily dressed Chinese bachelors, hardscrabble white miners or Carrier cowboys wearing big round Stetsons. Hoy instills them all with dignity.

And it is that that gives the photos, and the show, their power. Hoy's eye does not discriminate. His subjects are not stereotypes, but individuals. To look at the collection is to see a time and place when the three founding races of modern B.C. — the natives, the Chinese and the whites — existed together. Hoy himself talked to his daughters several times of how many kindnesses he had experienced from whites and natives. And so his photos are not only a view of a past, but of a possible future.

"When it came to people," Lona said fervently, sure of at least this about him, "my father was colour-blind."

Pete McMartin can be reached at pmcm@pacpress.southam.ca or at 605-2905.

PROFOUNDLY SILENT

The man who would become Quesnel's first professional photographer, **Chow Dong Hoy**, was born in the village of Sui Soon Lee, Hoi Ping district, Guangdong province, on August 16, 1883. As a first-born son, Hoy was forced to leave his village to find work to help support his family at age 12.

He worked in an opium den for room and board until age 15. During his three-year apprenticeship in a cotton and silk factory, 400 miles from home, he earned himself two dollars per year plus room and board. Then his father borrowed \$300 to send him to Canada on the Empress of China in 1902.

As described in **Faith Moosang's** *First Son: Portraits* by C.D. Hoy (Arsenal \$27.95), Hoy paid the required head tax of \$100 and entered the province without any relatives or job prospects. With his \$5 per month earnings as a houseboy, he hired someone to teach him English for \$5 per month.

Hoy borrowed \$20 and set off for the Cariboo in 1903. He worked as a dishwasher in Quesnel, then as a Hudson's Bay camp cook in Fort St. James. Learning some of the Central Carrier dialect, he started his own trading company, then worked as an axeman and surveyor for the Grand Trunk Pacific Railway.

Hoy walked from Fort George to Quesnel in 1906, then arrived in Barkerville in the spring of 1909. It is not known how Hoy acquired a camera, taught himself photography and opened a part-time photography studio—but that's where his career as B.C.'s third Chinese-born photographer began.

In Barkerville Hoy also worked as a miner and a barber and he repaired watches. "Most watches," he wrote in his family memoir, "95% are not broke, just dirty. I fill basin with coal oil, lay watches down—shake, shake, shake. Soon watches tick, tick, tick. By morning all ticking away. Drain coal oil from watches and charge \$2 each. Any watch not ticking, not repairable."

By 1910 Hoy had saved the \$2,000 he needed to return to China and marry Lim Foon Hai, chosen by his mother. She would not be able to join him in the Cariboo until 1917, however, until Hoy could save enough money for her travel and head tax.

Returning to Quesnel in 1911, Hoy began to supplement his income by taking approximately 1,500 portraits of Native, Chinese and Caucasian locals until 1920. He took approximately equal numbers of pictures of these three groups, mainly working out of his drygoods store.

After Hoy died in 1973, his negatives were kept in his son's basement for 15 years. Upon his death, his daughter-in-law mentioned them to Leah Hubensky. They were later transferred to the public archives in Barkerville in 1990.

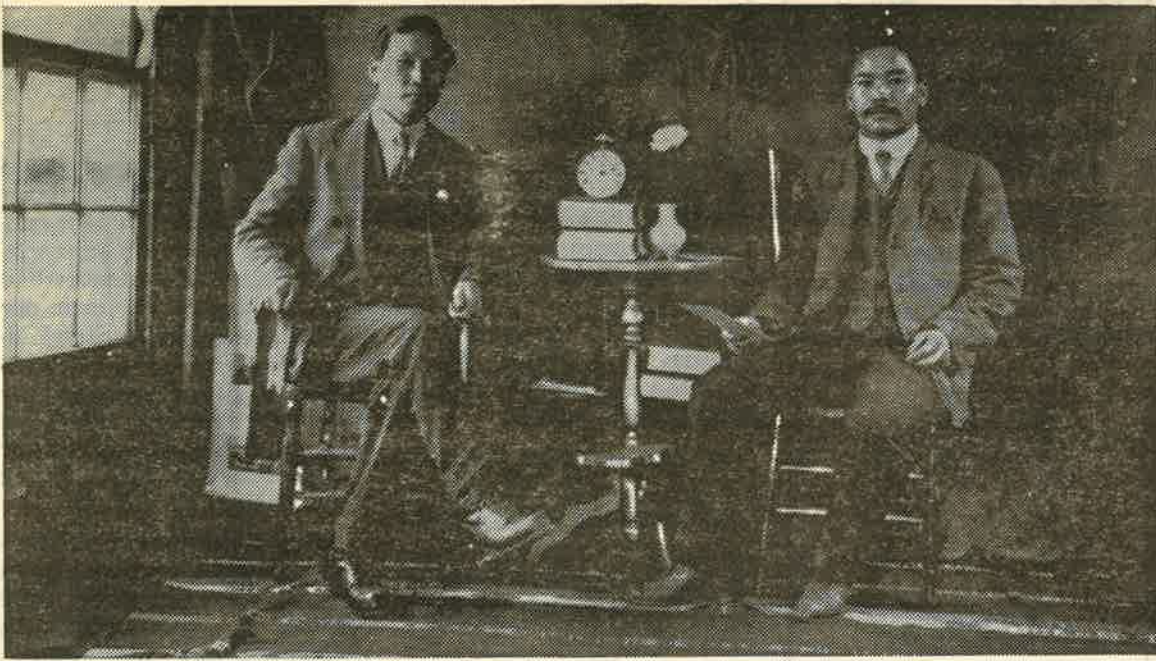
Taking a break from treeplanting in 1996, Faith Moosang, a recent graduate of Emily Carr Institute of Art and Design, visited a friend in Wells and met the Barkerville curator, Bill Quackenbush, who turned her attention to the Hoy photos. "It was then I first laid eyes on a whole new world," says Moosang, "so beautifully rendered and so profoundly silent. I had not known these people. I could not hear them. Their silence, which is characteristic of their invisibility to me (until that moment), is what drew me into them."

After three years of research, Moosang curated the new Hoy exhibit at Presentation House in North Vancouver. *First Son: Portraits* by C.D. Hoy was published simultaneously, with an introduction by **Paul Yee**.

1-55152-071-0

Returning to Quesnel in 1911, Hoy began to supplement his income by taking approximately 1,500 portraits of Native, Chinese and Caucasian locals until 1920.





C.D. Hoy (rechts) zusammen mit seinem Schwager Lim Bing, um 1910. Lim Bing soll später seiner politischen Meinung wegen in China ermordet worden sein.

Fotos: Presentation House Gallery

Historische Fotoausstellung in North Vancouver

VANCOUVER – „First Son – Portraits by C.D. Hoy“ ist weit mehr als nur eine Fotoausstellung. Zum einen ist sie ein Stück kanadische Geschichte zur Zeit des Goldrausches in British Columbias Norden, gleichzeitig vermittelt sie einen Einblick in die vielschichtigen Einwandererschicksale um die Jahrhundertwende und nicht zuletzt ist sie ein

Stück Zeitgeschichte, ein lebendiges Abenteuer der Gegenwart, oder „wie die Ausstellung zustande kam“.

Es war im Sommer 1996: Faith Moosang, eine angehende Fotografin mit eben abgeschlossenem Studium am Emily Carr Institute of Arts and Design in Vancouver, hatte sich – wie so viele Studenten – zum „tree planting“ im

Norden British Columbias gemeldet.

Anschließend wollte sie Freunde in der Nähe von Barkerville besuchen und über das Leben und Arbeiten einer Fotografin aus der Gegend recherchieren, von der sie während ihres Studiums gehört hatte. Doch es kam alles anders, denn wohin Faith Moosang sich mit ihrem Anliegen wandte, war stets die nächste Frage „Have you heard of C.D. Hoy“?

Es war Bill Quackenbush, Kurator und Archivar des interessanten Archivs der einstigen Goldgräberstadt Barkerville – heute als „Barkerville Historic Town“ unter Denkmalschutz stehend –, der die wißbegierige, aufgeschlossene junge Studentin aus Vancouver in langen Gesprächen über historische Fotografie mit C.D. Hoy bekannt machte. Er stellte die Weichen und wurde, direkt oder indirekt, Mentor für Faith Moosang und ihre bevorstehende Arbeit.

Die bestand darin, 1.500 Negative und Porträt-Aufnahmen – meistens unidentifiziert – zu sortieren, die C.D. Hoy um 1910 von den verschiedensten Siedlern der Gegend gemacht hatte, darunter chinesische und europäische Einwanderer, aber auch First Nation-Stämme.

Fasziniert von dem umfangreichen Fotoarchiv war der jungen Studentin sofort klar, daß sich hier ein Stück kanadische Geschichte vor ihr ausbreitete, die darauf wartete, entdeckt und verbreitet zu werden.

In mühevoller Arbeit machte sich Faith Moosang in einem alten Minibus auf die Suche nach Überlebenden, die die Personen auf Hoys Fotos identifizieren konnten oder gar selbst Modell gestanden hatten.

„Oft erfuhr ich die interessantesten Geschichten, während sich Oldtimer an meinem klapperigen Auto hilfsbereit zu schaffen machten, das drei Jahre lang mein Zuhause,



Mathilda Joe, Ehefrau des Häuptlings von Alexandria, einer First Nation-Siedlung nahe Barkerville. Sie war die stärkste Frau der Umgebung und als eine der besten Jägerinnen bekannt, die mit ihrer Beute die ganze Siedlung versorgte.

Büro und Verkehrsmittel war“, berichtet sie lachend während der Ausstellungseröffnung in North Vancouver, zu der viele ihrer neuen Freunde aus dem nördlichen British Columbia (darunter auch Mitglieder der Familie Hoy) angereist waren.

Aus der Fülle der Fotos wurden 81 Motive für die Porträt-Ausstellung zusammengestellt, die noch bis zum 17. Oktober in der Presentation House Gallery, 333 Chesterfield Avenue, in North Vancouver, zu sehen ist. Zur Ausstellung ist ein detaillierter Katalog mit aufschlußreichem Text von Faith Moosang und weiteren Fotos von C.D. Hoy erschienen, der für \$27.95 erhältlich ist.

Wer war C.D. Hoy?

Chow Dong Hoy stammte aus der Provinz Guangdong in China und war gerade 17 Jahre alt, als ihn seine Familie 1902 nach Kanada schickte. Als ältester Sohn sollte er im wohlhabenden, fernen Land die in ärmlichen Verhältnissen zurückgelassene Familie in China finanziell unterstützen.

Nach einem kurzen Aufenthalt in Vancouvers Chinatown machte sich Hoy auf den Weg ins Cariboo-Gebiet im Norden British Columbias, wo es an Arbeit nicht mangeln sollte und wo der Goldrausch begonnen hatte.

Sein erstes Ziel war Quesnel, und er fand genügend Arbeit, als Tellerwäscher, Koch, Bergarbeiter, bevor ihn die Hudson's Bay Company für zwei Jahre als Koch auf ihren Handelsvorposten nach Fort St. James schickte.

Hier lernte der aufgeschlossene, intelligente Hoy nicht nur Englisch, sondern auch die verschiedensten Mundarten der First Nation-Indianer.

Und, sein ganzes Leben lang führte er ein Tagebuch, wovon wir heute profitieren.

Seine eigentliche Arbeit als Porträt-Fotograf begann erst, als er nach Quesnel zurückkehrte und später in Barkerville, wohin er 1912 übersiedelte. Die Porträts, die Hoy von seinen Mitmenschen machte, verkaufte er ihnen als Postkarten, damit sie sie an Familie und Freunde ins ferne China oder Europa schicken konnten. Seine Fotostudien machte er nebenbei, um seine Familie zu unterstützen, während er außerdem ein „General Store“, eine Uhrenreparatur und ein Hotel betrieb.

Als C.D. Hoy 1973 im Alter von 88 Jahren in Barkerville starb, hinterließ er seinen 12 erwachsenen Kindern einen großen Koffer voll mit 1.500 großformatigen Negativen, der von einem zum anderen ging und unter dem Bett oder in Schränken aufbewahrt wurde, weil keiner damit etwas anzufangen wußte.

Dennoch hatten die Hoy-Kinder – Gott sei Dank – nicht das Herz, dieses Stück lebendige Vergangenheit ihres Vaters zu vernichten, und so gelang die Porträt-Sammlung 1990 als Schenkung in das Archiv von Barkerville und in die gute Obhut von Kurator Bill Quackenbush.

Und dorthin werden die stummen Bilder als lebendige Zeitzeugen nach der Ausstellung in der Presentation House Gallery und einer anschließenden Wanderausstellung zurückkehren. Dann werden sie allerdings nicht mit den übrigen 1.500 Negativen im Archiv vor sich hin schlummern, sondern in einem passenden Rahmen als Porträt-Fotosammlung von C.D. Hoy jedem interessierten Besucher von Barkerville zugänglich sein.

Sylvia Reinthal



Karen Love (links), Kuratorin der Presentation House Gallery, mit Gastkuratorin und Autorin Faith Moosang während der Eröffnung der zeitgeschichtlichen Fotoausstellung „First Son – Portraits by C.D. Hoy“, auf der gleichzeitig ihr Buch vorgestellt wurde.

Kurier-Foto: S. Reinthal

Season of Sex, the City, and Worlds in Between

Fall's banquet of visual arts explores consumerism, ancestral origins, the urban environment, and sensuality

BY ROBIN LAURENCE

Assigning an overarching theme to the coming visual-arts season is a bit like fishing in deep, dark waters. In your attempts to make millennial generalizations, you might reel in a flashing, leaping, gorgeous silver creature. It might



be tender and tasty, too. But you also might drag up a rusted piece of garbage from the muddy bottom. And whether that muddy bottom constitutes the Zeitgeist or your own unconscious, well, it's difficult to say.

Since I've been fishing with a net rather than a line, I've hauled in a half-dozen wriggling themes, the biggest and most wriggly of them being Sex and the City. At least, that's how I've identified it. Whether they're working through photography, performance, painting, video, or mixed-media installation, whether their careers are local, national, or international in scope, the artists exhibiting or performing in the Lower Mainland this coming fall and winter seem to be compelled by the nature of our urban environment and the conditions of our sexual existence. Not surprising, really, in the last year of this most urbanized and sexualized of centuries—and millennia. Other themes emerging—or re-emerging—from the murky deep include consumerism, voyeurism, ancestral origins, teen bedrooms, and the contested space of the art gallery.

The season is already under way at the Charles H. Scott Gallery, with Toronto artist Kim Adams's Street Works. On until October 10, the exhibition consists of three mixed-media, interactive sculptures, which are stored in the gallery at night and sited in different spots on Granville Island during the day. "Kim is using the gallery as a garage," says curator and director Greg Bellerby. "The pieces are on trailers or wheels and are portable...like Gypsy art." Also on display in the gallery are models and drawings related to these projects.

Bellerby says that Adams uses humour and everyday objects to address issues of "consumerism, desire, and commodity capitalism." Adams's positioning of the sculptures—on the streets of urban centres—is in keeping with a recent spate of exhibitions at the Scott Gallery, all dealing with our contemporary urban condition. As for our contemporary sexual condition, a group show titled *Sexy Girl* (at the Scott Gallery October 20 to November 28) threatens to blow the lid off representations of women by women (and one cross-dressing guy). The show's curator, Cate Rimmer, says she was interested in the ways in which younger artists are challenging the proscriptions of older feminists in their examination of sexuality and gender. "There's a certain amount of bravado, a pushing [of] the envelope in terms of political correctness," she says. Rimmer talks about the "girlie" images in the show, a species of representation that would have been anathema to feminist critics a decade ago. "The thing about these women [artists] is that they're very much informed



The eclectic photographs of Man Ray muse Lee Miller (above in *Self Portrait*, 1932), will be at Presentation House Gallery in early 2000.

by earlier feminism," says Rimmer. Sounds like Madonna wrestles Griselda Pollock to the ground—and makes her wear a bustier. Eight local artists ranging across nearly as many mediums will participate.

At the Contemporary Art Gallery, an exhibition of works by the controversial Japanese photographer Nobuyoshi Araki opens at 8 p.m. on Friday (September 10) and runs through October 16. CAG curator Keith Wallace has chosen to show some 1,200 images from four separate series of Araki's work: his confrontational photos of erotic subjects and the urban environment are contrasted, Wallace says, with his luscious close-ups of flowers and his cheery portraits of the residents

of his Tokyo neighbourhood. Something of a cult figure in Japan, Araki has been likened to American photographer Nan Goldin. "He plays with the dividing line between art and obscenity, fact and fiction," says Wallace. The viewer often cannot tell if Araki's images are "constructed images or actual documents".

Following Araki, Vancouver artist Judy Radul will create a stage-set installation at the CAG (October 23 to November 6), in which she, her viewers, and other collaborators may improvise periodic performances. Next on the lineup, Daniel Congdon will exhibit metal sculptures whose shapes are based on projected and refracted beams of light (November 13 to Decem-

ber 18). The urban environment will be featured again in the new year, in an exhibition of paintings by Winnipeg artist Eleanor Bond (January 8 to February 20). Wallace says that Bond's new works specifically address Vancouver as a site and follow her practice of "looking at areas of the city and creating new, imaginative, Utopian possibilities for their redevelopment".

In another manifestation of urbanism and utopian redevelopment, the Or Gallery recently moved from its besieged location in the 100 block West Hastings to spiffy new quarters at 400 Smithe. Inaugurating its fall-winter season is *Getting the Corners*, a group show of some dozen, up-and-coming British artists (September 15 to October 23). Guest curated by London-based Matthew Higgs and making use of a "stealthy" aspect of the gallery space (yes, its corners), *Getting* is the first in what Or director Reid Shier hopes will be a series of shows of international origin. (He's been working with curators in Caracas, Los Angeles, and Tokyo.) Seems like an ambitious program for an artist-run centre, but Shier says it's possible to put together an internationally based exhibition on a modest budget. "All you had to do was ask," he says, alluding to the granting process. "And lo and behold, it's happened."

Lo and behold, another international project is happening out of an artist-run centre. Live at the End of the Century is an expansive performance festival, organized by Brice Canyon at the **grunt gallery** and taking place at the grunt and 10 other galleries and venues throughout the city. It runs from October 1 to November 6 and fea-

SEE PAGE 48

Season of Sex

FROM PAGE 46

tures dozens of artists from around the world and down the block. Some galleries will sponsor exhibitions associated with performance art or artists; some will present video documentation and some will host lectures on the subject. (The essays from the lecture series will be collected in book form following the festival.)

Artist-curator Canyon says that grunt staff were searching for a way to mark the millennium when he came up with the idea of the festival. Given the city and the gallery's long association with performance, a project celebrating this underground phenomenon "seemed like the right thing to do". It's been 20 years since the last such festival in Vancouver and, Canyon observes, interest in the art form is growing. A new generation of performance artists is emerging from our local art schools, he says, and books are more widely available on the subject. A new audience is emerging, too, "looking for something more stimulating than a movie".

That stimulation could take place in your mind or in some other sensitive part of your body. From nudity to cross-dressing, and from fetishism to censorship, sexuality will be well-explored through the festival. Among the more daring sexplorers is New Zealand punk artist Satina Saturina, who will take viewers on an "autoerotic journey through orgasm"—or so the festival brochure promises—in *Sector X*, at the ANZA Club on October 7. Also on the performance program are works dealing with First Nations spirituality, public versus private space, cults and psychoanalysis, and the nature of performance art itself. The series kicks off with a Performance Art Cabaret at the Vogue Theatre on October 1. Information brochures will be available at participating

galleries and elsewhere throughout the city by mid-September.

In association with *Live at the End of the Century*, the Vancouver Art Gallery will present an exhibition of works by internationally acclaimed American artist Ann Hamilton (October 16 to January 23, 2000). Hamilton's subtle, sensual, and cerebral practice weaves together many media and disciplines, including installation and performance. Her exhibition at the VAG, says senior curator Bruce Grenville, will include book projects, photographs, and "residues" of earlier artworks. "These are objects that are produced 'in process'," he explains, "because so much of her work is process-based and performative in nature".

The VAG will also be developing exhibitions from its permanent collection through the coming season. "We looked at all kinds of end-of-the-millennium possibilities," says Grenville, "and one of the things we decided to do was to focus on the collection." This old focus is realized by new lenses, however, in *Out of This Century* (October 23 to February 27, 2000). Six local celebrities, none from the visual arts, have been invited to choose and interpret artworks from the VAG's collection. "So often, the collection is interpreted solely through the eyes of the curators," Grenville says. "This way, we're able to bring [the process] back to the community, to bring out a whole different set of works and, in some instances, to show them in very different ways." Novelist Doug Coupland, playwright Tom Cone, landscape architect Cornelia Oberlander, radio host David Wisdom, and filmmakers Mina Shum and Loretta Todd are the guest curators.

Some of the most potentially exciting exhibitions this season are the historical ones, which promise to bring overlooked or forgotten artists to light, or to revise, reinterpret, or re-evaluate the careers and contributions of those already



The work of Barkerville photographer C.D. Hoy, including the untitled photo above, is showing at Presentation House Gallery until October 17.

established and acclaimed. Among such historical recoveries is *First Son: Portraits by C. D. Hoy at Presentation House Gallery* until October 17. Hoy, who immigrated to Canada from China in 1902, worked variously as a gold miner, fur trader, and railroad surveyor before establishing a successful photography studio in Barkerville in the B.C. Interior. "He produced a huge body of photographs—portraits of people living in the Ques-

nel area," says Presentation House director Karen Love.

Self-taught, Hoy undoubtedly had a great eye; he also had a feel for his era and the peoples of his adopted homeland. His clientele was drawn from three distinct cultural groups, Love explains: Chinese, European, and First Nations. Hoy's negatives, in the collection of the Barkerville Historic Town, have been painstakingly researched by guest curator Faith Moosang, who has also writ-

ten a book on the subject, copublished by Presentation House and Arsenal Pulp Press. (A book launch and curator's talk will take place at Presentation House at 2 p.m. this Saturday [September 11].)

Ancestral histories, religious and economic persecutions, the migrations of peoples, and the shaping of nature by culture, all are enfolded into Marion Penner Bancroft's new body of landscape photographs, *By Land and Sea: Prospect and Refuge*, at Presentation House Gallery November 6 to December 19. Politics and family, sex and the city, war and wealth and deprivation, all figure in the travelling exhibition, *The Legendary Lee Miller*. As beautiful as she was talented, Miller (1907-1977) was artist and muse, image maker and model, sexual rebel and partner of American surrealist Man Ray and, later, British surrealist Roland Penrose. Her beauty and sexuality, however, fade in juxtaposition with her eclectic photographic career, beginning with her invention (along with Man Ray) of the solarization process and her spirited explorations of surrealism, and running through her stints as a fashion photographer and celebrity portraitist and her service as a combat photojournalist in Europe during the Second World War. Organized by the Lee Miller Archive in the United Kingdom and spanning the years 1929 to 1964, this exhibition is, Love believes, the first solo show of Miller's work in Canada. It runs from January 8 to February 20, 2000.

It's curious looking at Lee Miller's *Nude Bent Forward*, taken in Paris circa 1931, and then looking at a similarly posed nude from Nobuyoshi Araki's recent series, *Tokyo: A City Heading for Death*. Half a world and more than half a century separate these two works, and yet they bear many formal likenesses. Cities fall and sensibilities shift, but the artist's fascination with sex and the human body? It's older than the millennium. ■

Rice Pa-pər

First Son The Extra- ordinary Photographs of C.D. Hoy

**Through the
Arctic Portal**
Gary Gee on
the New Nunavut

**The Literature of
Survival:**
Pramoedya
Ananta Toer

**Zhang Yimou
and the
Future of
Chinese Cinema**

Also:
Charlie Cho,
Keira Loughran
& Lee Pui Ming



Taker of Likenesses

From the foreword of *First Son: Portraits of C.D. Hoy*

■ Faith Moosang

Chow Dong Hoy was born on August 16, 1883, in the village of Sui Soon Lee, Hoi Ping district, Guandong province. In the closing months of 1902, his father borrowed the \$300 necessary for the journey and arranged for his son's passage to Canada aboard the *Empress of China*. Asked for his full name at the immigration office, the son of Chow Doh Dick presented himself as Chow Dong Hoy. Cultural misunderstanding prevailed, and his registered name became Chow Dong of the Hoy family. Like everyone else on board, he paid a \$100 head tax before entry into Canada. (Instituted by the government of British Columbia in 1884, the tax rose steadily through the years from \$50 to an eventual \$500 under the Exclusion Act of 1923).

When he arrived in Barkerville in the early spring of 1909, he made it known that he was available for work in the mines, but the gold bearing ground in Barkerville, 4,200 feet above sea level, was frozen solid well into April and May. It was at this time that Hoy set out to augment his wages by becoming, among other things, a professional photographer. How he acquired the camera, where he set up his studio and how he learned to take photographs are all unknown today. Simply put, one day he was a variously employed miner, and the next he was a photographer.

Although Hoy began taking portraits in the town of Barkerville, most of his photographs were taken while he lived in Quesnel, where he set up camera and darkroom on the premises of the C.D. Hoy and Company Dry Goods Store. Hoy's significance as a Chinese photographer goes beyond the fact that he was possibly only the third Chinese photographer to work in British Columbia. He was also the first town photographer in Quesnel, and the only one there at the time. As Edna Mitchell, a 98-year-old Quesnel pioneer, said to me, "He was our photographer and everyone went to him."

Hoy's photographs present a unique record of the coming together of cultures in the Cariboo, and at the same time provide evidence of cultures in

transition. They are in fact the largest extant and publicly accessible record of Interior Native people in the whole of British Columbia. The same is true of his photographs of Chinese miners, shopkeepers, farmers and teamsters, whose continuing viability in Canada was cut short by imposition of the Exclusion Act, which banned immigration from China from 1923 until 1947. If it were not for Hoy and his camera, these people would have been excluded from the photographic record, and would be largely invisible to our cultural memory.

Just before Hoy died in 1973, he told his children who had gathered around his hospital bed that they should save their tears. He'd had a good life and had done everything that he ever wanted to do and felt that he was ready to join their mother, who had died nine years before. The legacy of their father is not lost on the family. He had arrived penniless and alone in a strange land. He mastered the economy, culture and language of this place, becoming a highly successful and well-liked businessman in a community of Native, Chinese and Caucasian people who embraced him and his growing family. He did all of this by applying himself to the work at hand and recreating himself as watch repairman, miner, barber, photographer, fur trader, cattle buyer, gold seller and store owner. Although he left China to escape his father's piecemeal approach to making a living, it was his early exposure to this kind of employment that ensured his success in Canada. Perhaps the one great regret of Hoy's life was that his father died before he saw what his first-born son was able to achieve in the New World.

Text and photographs reprinted with permission from First Son: Portraits of C.D. Hoy, forthcoming from Arsenal Pulp Press September 1999. Paperback, 170 pages including 96 duotone photographs, \$27.95

Faith Moosang is a photographic artist and historian who lives and works in Vancouver. She has shown her photographic and film work in Canada and the US.



All photos Courtesy Barkerville Historic Town

[P1924]



P1971



P1522



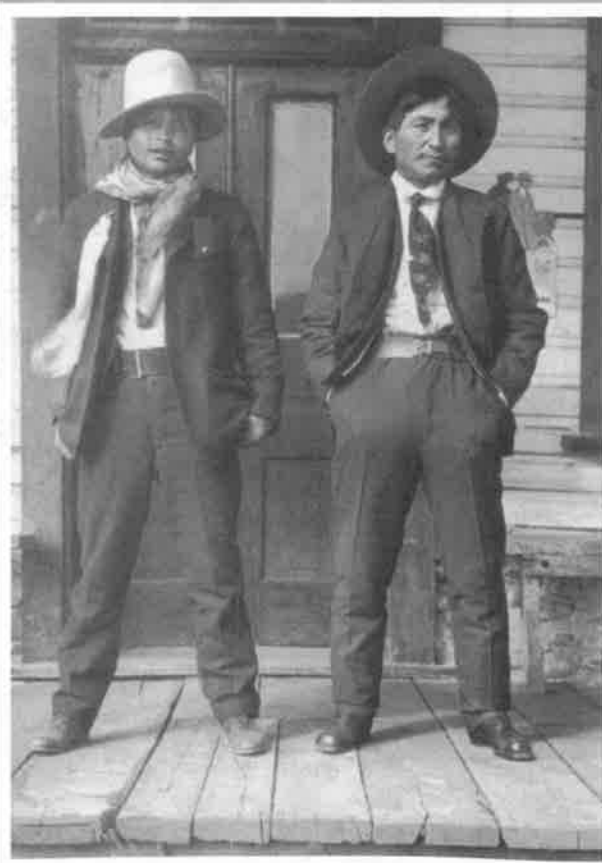
P1534
(l-r) Chester Boyd, unknown, unknown



P1887
(l-r) Jerry Floyd, Captain Marc Mack, John Lazzarini, Chief Michel, unknown, Majat Harris, Chief Morris



P1660



P1670
William Gappage and Little Joe Paul



P1929
Kong Silep Silep



P2020
Lim Bing and C.D. Hoy



P1995
Istapkin Alexander



P1975



P3803
The Irwin Family (l-r) Mrs. Emma Irwin, Mr. Draper Irwin holding Verena, Mabel



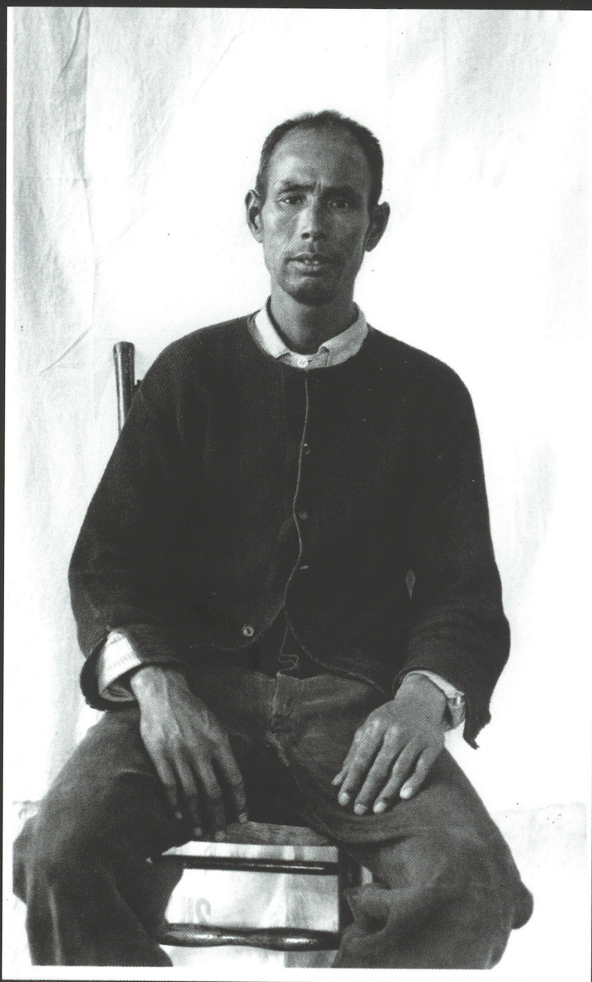
C.D. Hoy, 1910s (P2064)

All photographs courtesy of the
Barkerville Historic Town

FIRST S O N

Portraits by C. D. Hoy
review Paula Gustafson

Presentation House Gallery
4 September - 17 October 1999



Untitled b/w photo, 1910s (P1701)



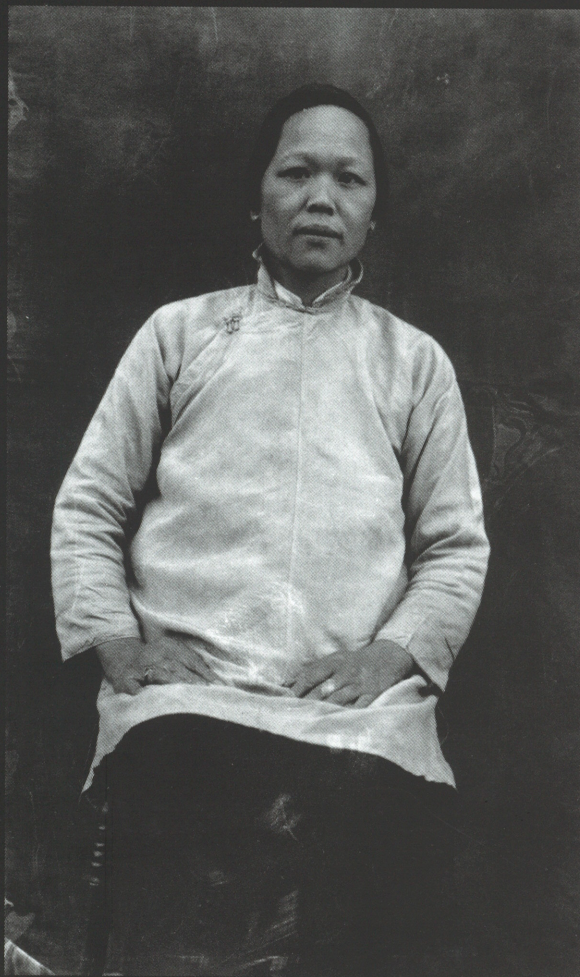
Moffat Harris (Nazko), 1910s (P1671)

In 1909, at about the same time Edward S. Curtis was photographing the ‘disappearing Noble Savages’ on Canada’s West Coast, Chinese immigrant Chow Dong Hoy acquired a Kodak Model A folding camera and began taking photographs of Barkerville’s gold miners. Over the next decade Hoy made more than 1,500 individual and group portraits of the miners, farmers, and ranchers who came to his general store in Quesnel, as well as the Tsilhqot’in and Carrier people who lived on nearby reserves. Preserved on fragile glass plates and nitrate negatives, this legacy is now the largest photographic archive of the Native, Chinese, and Caucasian people who lived in British Columbia’s Cariboo region during the first quarter of this century.

Why Hoy set himself up as a portrait photographer remains a mystery. As a 17-year-old he had left Guangdong province and sailed to Vancouver, hoping to make his fortune and alleviate his family’s poverty. In the years following his arrival in 1905, the enterprising young man found employment

variously as a houseboy, dishwasher, cook, fur-trader, railroad surveyor, and watch repairer. He learned to read and write English and, during a two-year stint working for the Hudson’s Bay Company in Fort St. James, he also acquired a working knowledge of the Carrier language.

Unlike Curtis, who was intent on creating romanticized photographs, and in contrast to Franz Boas and other anthropologists who were photographing and measuring Native ‘specimens’ for scientific study, Hoy did not have an agenda. He simply obliged customers who wanted to have their photographs taken. Initially, Hoy’s sitters were other Chinese miners who wanted a picture of themselves to send back to their families in China. Pasted on to postcard stock, these straightforward images adhered to the canons of Chinese photographic portraiture. The sitter faces the camera. Posture is formal and upright. Hands are spread out on the sitter’s knees or otherwise positioned to show each finger distinctly.



Mrs. Kong Sue Hoy, 1910s (P2052)



Untitled b/w photo, 1910s (P1563)

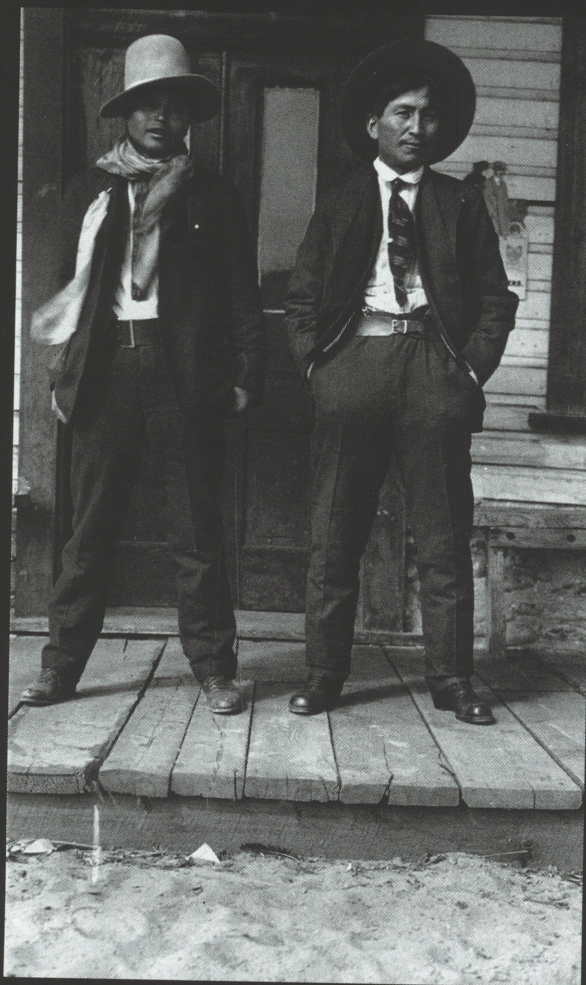
The unnamed man in photograph P1701 is typical of these earliest portraits—an unadorned rendering of a hard-working miner. Interestingly, the camera's focus appears to be on the strongly veined, knobby-knuckled hands which form a triangulation with the sitter's face. The prominence of the photographic plane on which the hands rest lends a compositional dignity to this portrait of an otherwise unimposing figure.

Faith Moosang, who spent three years researching the Hoy photo-archive, suggests that despite his formal approach to portraiture, Hoy's subjects appear relaxed, calmly confident, and, in many instances, convivial; as if the sitters just happened to drop by for a friendly chat. She writes that Hoy's images "have the feeling of being quickly constructed. He does not clear out the debris in the foreground or in the margins of his makeshift settings. Nor does he hide the fact that his genteel 'interior' Chinese backdrops were often set up outdoors, between the log wall of his store and the

woodpile. Often the peripheries of his photographs tell more about life in a frontier town than the subjects themselves."

Hoy's portrait of Chief William Charleyboy and his wife, Elainie Charleyboy (P1583), shows the couple seated on wooden chairs against a plain canvas backdrop. Judging by the fragments of bark and leaves on the ground, the site was outdoors, near a woodpile. Unable to afford the cost of magnesium powder to illuminate his subjects, Hoy took advantage of long exposure times and a wide f-stop setting on his camera. In this double portrait, the dour expression of the stylishly-dressed couple could be indicative of their temperament. More likely, their stoic appearance was simply the consequence of holding a pose for long moments.

More animation—and a Wild, Wild West dandyism—is portrayed in the photographs of Moffat Harris (P1671) and William Tappage and Little Joe Paul (P1670) standing on the plank sidewalk in front of Hoy's general store.



William Tappage & Little Joe Paul, 1910s (P1670)



Chief William Charleyboy & his wife Elaine Charleyboy, 1910s (P1583)

In the latter portrait, the lengthy exposure time is apparent in the blurred outlines of the wind-whipped silk scarves.

The ‘genteel’ Chinese backdrops Moosang refers to are evident in a series of portraits probably taken between May and July, 1912. Here, floral fabric has been pinned to the wall. The same cloth also serves as a covering for a side table bearing books, a clock, and a fir tree growing in a ceramic pot. Among this series is a self-portrait of Hoy (P2064), then aged 29, and a portrait of an unnamed young man (P1563) apparently taken a month later.

Each of the props in Hoy’s photographs was chosen for its significance or symbolism. Specifically, the chrysanthemum flowers printed on the fabric referenced Chinese motifs for longevity or the overcoming of adversity and hardship. The clock—and the wholesale grocer’s calendar prominently displayed on the wall—denoted the passage of time and, according to Moosang, “the ability of the camera to fix the person depicted in a specific

moment.” As in Western portraiture, the tablecloth, books, and potted plant implied a cultured, literate atmosphere. Most telling, Hoy’s own portrait shows him seated casually, legs crossed, absorbed in reading a book—about photography!

Two years before this subtly boastful portrait was made, Hoy had returned to China and married a lovely young woman. His haunting portrait of Kong Sue Hoy (P2052) would have been taken some time after her arrival in Canada in 1917. Together they raised 12 children, “single-handedly creating a significant increase in the Chinese population of Quesnel,” Moosang quips. (Although there were reportedly 3,000 Chinese miners in Barkerville during the 1860s Gold Rush, by 1913 Barkerville was a ghost town and Quesnel’s population consisted of 521 white people and 43 Chinese.)

As one of the few non-white photographers of his time, Hoy’s photo-

graphic archive provides a unique insight into the demographics of British Columbia's central Interior region. In addition to recording the faces of the people he knew as neighbours, his photographs illucidate the small details of their lives—from frayed cuffs to well-polished boots. More importantly, however, Hoy's photographs bear testament to a remarkable incidence of colour-blindness in the Cariboo region.

While Asians and Indians were targets of racism elsewhere in British Columbia, in the Quesnel area there were simply too few people to ghetto-ize any one group. Moosang notes that her research disclosed overwhelming accord between Cariboo residents. As one Quesnel old-timer told her, "people didn't dislike others because they were different, only if someone had a reputation as being bad." In fact, it is impossible to discern from Hoy's photographs any instance where an individual has been privileged. All of his subjects—rich or poor—received an equal measure of respect.

The simple honesty of Hoy's portraits of Native people stands in sharp contrast to the sentimentalised 'exotic other' photographs Curtis published between 1907 and 1930. As Moosang points out, "The frank, open look on the people's faces in Hoy's portraits, and the lack of romanticism in the setting and light effects, reveal the difference between being photographed for someone else's story and being photographed for your own. None of Hoy's Native people are positioned as degraded Indians, Noble Savages or good Christian converts. They are friends, families, lovers, and individuals."

In her search for a more factual historical parallel than Curtis, Moosang turned to the archival photographs taken by two of British Columbia's best known ethnographers; James Teit, who worked for Boas, and Harlan I. Smith who did research for the Canadian Geological Survey. Despite their familiarity with their subjects, her review of Teit's and Smith's imagery revealed much of the same bias as Curtis. They too wanted their subjects to 'look Indian,' which, in most

instances, meant dressing up in war-bonnet regalia.

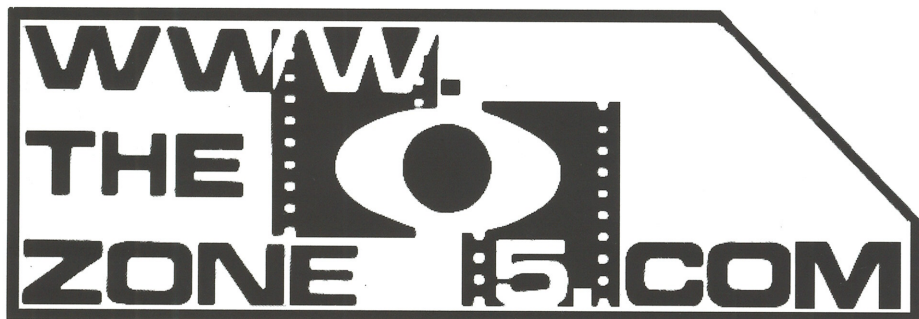
I can confirm Moosang's findings, since one of Teit's photographs held pride of place on my desk during my years of research on Salish weaving. It was a 1915 portrait of Tekivit-lex, an adolescent girl, costumed in a Salish blanket and wearing fir boughs draped on her head. The blanket wrapped around the girl's slight body had already been tagged for museum acquisition. The photo was a poignant reminder of the objectification of females and the devaluation and loss of traditional women's arts.

In her research, Moosang discovered that, in fact, Teit and Smith had travelled through but spent very little time in the central Cariboo region. Concluding her comprehensive essay about Hoy's contribution to the historical record, Moosang writes that his photographs of the Carrier and Tsilhqot'in people "take on added importance when we realise that they are in fact the largest extant and publicly accessible record of Interior Native people in the whole of British Columbia. The same is true of his photographs of Chinese miners, shopkeepers, farmers and freight-carriers, whose continuing viability in Canada was cut short by imposition of the Exclusion Act, which banned immigration from China from 1923 until 1947. If it were not for Hoy and his camera, these people would have been excluded from the photographic record, and would be largely invisible to our cultural memory."



First Son: Portraits by C. D. Hoy, which includes 96 duotone photographs, an indepth essay by photographic artist and historian Faith Moosang, and a foreward by author Paul Yee, is available for \$27.95 from Arsenal Pulp Press, 103-1014 Homer Street, Vancouver, BC, V6B 2W9: www.arsenalpulp.com. ISBN 1-55152-071-0.

The exhibition *First Son: Portraits by C. D. Hoy* will travel to the Seattle Art Museum in the summer of 2000.



First Son: Portraits of Early British Columbians

The first son of a Chinese family is often burdened with the responsibility of ensuring the well-being of family members. In China at the beginning of this century, there were a number of factors that collided to make this time-honoured duty difficult, if not impossible, to fulfill. As such, first sons emigrated by the thousands to various foreign shores in an attempt to support extended families and self. Chow Dong Hoy was one such person who immigrated to the western shores of Canada in 1902 and will be the focus of a major exhibition and book early this September. Organized by Presentation

House Gallery, the show will include 80 luscious black-and-white photographic portraits by Hoy. A book launch will be held on Saturday, September 11, when, as curator and author of the book, I will give a public talk about the man and his life.

Chow Dong Hoy worked himself away from the coast by 1905. In the winter of 1909, after a season of limited success with mining in Barkerville, Hoy took up a camera and began to take portraits of other Chinese immigrants in the vicinity. He printed these onto postcards and sold them back to the sitters so that they might send their likenesses home to

loved ones as a reassuring gesture of survival and possible success.

When Hoy moved to nearby Quesnel in 1913, his clientele grew to include the Native and Caucasian people in that area. By approximately 1925, Hoy had created a visual record of over 1,400 images, which documented the multicultural milieu of the people in Cariboo, British Columbia.

The exhibition, *First Son: Portraits by C. D. Hoy*, will represent a cross-section of his work, which also includes a number of self-portraits, and will highlight the unique position Hoy occupies in our continuing exploration of Canadian photography and the history of this province. Hoy, working at a time when the majority of image makers were Caucasian, has provided an alternative visual record of people who were often sidelined, exoticized, or ignored by this Caucasian majority. Hoy's vision is one of the vibrant and changing Chinese and Native communities in the interior of BC.

At the close of the exhibition tour, all of the photographs will be donated to the Barkerville Historic Town Archive collection. Presentation House Gallery and Arsenal Pulp Press are collaborating on the book about the work of Hoy, which, in addition to including my lengthy essay, will include an introduction by Paul Eye and approximately 100 extraordinary portraits by the photographer.

First Son: Portraits by C.D. Hoy is on view September 4 to October 17. Opening reception, book launch, and curator's talk is on Saturday, September 11, 2 pm. For more information call Presentation House Gallery at 986-1351.

Faith Moosang is a photographic artist and historian. For the last several years she has been doing intensive research in the field of historical photography in Western Canada and on the family photo album.

C.D. Hoy, untitled b&w photograph, c. 1910s-1920s

Courtesy C.D. Hoy Estate and the Barkerville Historic Town

