

Al Neil CV

Exhibitions

Solo Exhibitions

- 1999 *New and Selected*, Atelier Gallery, Vancouver BC
- 1997 *Recent work*, Atelier Gallery, Vancouver BC
- 1995 *Recent Collage Works & Small drawings from 1981– 82*,
Atelier Gallery, Vancouver BC
- 1994 *Auto-Bio Portrait Series*, Atelire Gallery, Vancouver BC
- 1992 *Rene Daumal Portrait Series*, Atelier Gallery, Vancouver BC
- 1991 *Artaud: Portraits 1 – 12*, Atelier Gallery, Vancouver BC
- 1989 *Correspondence*, Atelier Gallery, Vancouver BC
Origins Celtic Series, Western Front Gallery, Vancouver BC
- 1987 Coburg Gallery, Vancouver BC
- 1986 Coburg Gallery, Vancouver BC
- 1985 Coburg Gallery, Vancouver BC
- 1983 *Codices*, Western Front Gallery, Vancouver BC
- 1972 *West Coast Lokas*, Vancouver Art Gallery, Vancouver BC

Group Exhibitions

- 2005 *Al Neil, Shane Ehman, Ray Johnson*, Blanket Gallery, Vancouver BC
- 1994 *Celebrating Al Neil's 70th birthday*, Vancouver Art Gallery, Vancouver BC
- 1993 *Vancouver Collects*, Vancouver Art Gallery, Vancouver BC
- 1993 *New Acquisitions*, Burnaby Art Gallery, Burnaby BC
- 1992 Inaugural Exhibition, Atelier Gallery, Vancouver BC
- 1991 *Celebration of Sound – The Art of Jazz*, Community Arts Council of Vancouver
- 1990 *Artropolis*, Vancouver BC (catalogue)
Processing Copies, Western Front, Vancouver BC
- 1989 *Rezoning*, a group exhibition of collages and assemblages (with Bill Bissett,
George Herms and Jess), Vancouver Art Gallery, Vancouver BC
The Alma Mater Society Art Collection: 1948–1988, Vancouver General Hospital
Foundation Gallery, Vancouver BC
- 1987 *From Sea to Shining Sea*, The Power Plant, Toronto ON
- 1986 *Making History: Recent Art of the Pacific West*, Vancouver Art Gallery,
Vancouver BC
- 1985 *Collage Works*, Atelier Gallery, Vancouver BC
- 1984 Coburg Gallery, Vancouver BC (with Carole Itter)
- 1983 *Vancouver Art and Artists 1931–83*, Vancouver Art Gallery, Vancouver BC
- 1973 *Canada Trajectoires '73*, Musee d'Art Moderne de a Ville de Paris, Paris France
- 1971 *The Collage Show*, Fine Arts Gallery, University of British Columbia,
Vancouver BC

Music

1933–40

Studied music with Glenn Nelson in Vancouver.

1946–49

After serving in the army during the WW11, resumed music studies with Glenn Nelson, Jan Couthard, Wilf Wylie and others, and listening to the recordings of Charlie Parker, Bud Powell, Dizzy Gillespie, et al.

Began playing in clubs in Vancouver in the late '40s with his own groups and as a sideman to other musicians.

1952–62

Composed and played music for a feature length National Film Board movie.

Did regular CBC Radio and TV shows as leader of bebop group.

Co-founded the Cellar Jazz Club (1956) and led its house band. Played in house rhythm section for visiting musicians such as Conte Condali, Carl Fontana, Bill Perkins, Sonny Redd, Art Pepper and others.

1958 The Al Neil Quartet and American poet Kenneth Patchen performed to a packed house in what Neil describes as "our one and only jazz poetry gig" at The Cellar. Neil toured for 10 days with Patchen.

1959 Recorded *Kenneth Patchen reads with JAZZ IN CANADA (1959)*, recently re-released by Locust Music.

1963 He was seen in performance at the Cellar with the saxophonist Glenn MacDonald and the bassist Don Thompson in the NFB's *In Search of Innocence*.

1965–72

After a two-year retreat, Neil began working with Gregg Simpson and Richard Anstey, searching out new expressions of jazz. Contact with Sam Perry, Gary Lee Nova, Dallas Selman and others resulted in the formation of Intermedia.

Started giving yearly concerts at the Vancouver Art Gallery as well as at Simon Fraser University and the University of British Columbia.

Began touring with Gregg Simpson and Marguerite Neil, giving concerts in Edmonton, Regina, Ottawa, Toronto, Kingston and Halifax over several seasons.

1965 Al Neil Trio formed with Gregg Simpson and Richard Anstey

1966 Al Neil Trio: concerts at the Sound Gallery and Motion Studio, Vancouver
Opened for Janis Joplin with Big Brother and the Holding Company and the Grateful Dead Vancouver School of Art; Trio and duo concerts at Simon Fraser University 1967, 1968, 1969

1967 Al Neil Trio, International House, University of British Columbia

1968 Duo concert with Gregg Simpson, *Intermedia Nights*, Vancouver Art Gallery, Vancouver BC

1969 Al Neil Trio Tour: Art Gallery of Ontario Hart House, University of Toronto; Norman MacKenzie Art Gallery, Regina; University of Edmonton

Al Neil Trio: *Electrical Connection*, *Intermedia Nights*, Victoria Art Gallery

1970 Al Neil Trio: *Intermedia Nights*, Victoria Art Gallery, Vancouver Art Gallery Dome Show

- 1972 Organized the Al Neil Jazz Probe with Gregg Simpson Richard Anstey, and Annie Seigel. Performed at the Vancouver Art Gallery in Vancouver and Open Space Gallery in Victoria, BC
- 1973 Performed at *Pacific Vibrations*, a group exhibition at the Vancouver Art Gallery, Vancouver BC
- 1975 Solo performance, *The Spiral*, Western Front, Vancouver BC
- 1976 Recorded *Retrospective: 1965–68* with the Al Neil Trio
- 1979 Gave piano workshops, The Music Gallery in Toronto,
Performed at Pumps in Vancouver and in Montreal.
Composed and performed “improvised” music for radio recordings of Brian Fawcett’s epic poem for four voices, *Tristram’s Book*.
- 1980–82
Toured Toronto, Montreal, Ottawa, Kingston and Peterborough.
- 1980 Recorded ‘*Ear It Live*, a solo LP produced by Music Gallery Editions
Performed at music festival, *Music From the New Wilderness*, Western Front, Vancouver BC
Performed with Bill Horvitz for *In Concert*, Western Front, Vancouver BC
- 1981 Solo performance, *New Works*, Western Front, Vancouver BC
Piano performance with poet Caroline Zonailo and percussionist Howard Bloomfield in a major work, “Journey to the Sybil,” at the Robson Square Theatre (Vancouver), The Optica Gallery (Montreal), and The Music Gallery (Toronto).
- 1985 Solo piano performance, Coburg Gallery, Vancouver BC.
- 1987 Performed with the Al Neil Trio at the du Maurier International Jazz Festival, Vancouver BC

Performance

- 1966 Multimedia performances at Neil’s Sound Gallery and Motion Studio
- 1968 Performed for the CBC at Intermedia
- 1968 Multimedia performance at the Vancouver Art Gallery
- 1969 Multimedia performance, Art Gallery of Ontario
- 1972 Performed at his solo show, *West Coast Lokas*, Vancouver Art Gallery
- 1973 Performed in Paris, France, at the Museum of Modern Art and went on tour from Vancouver to Amsterdam via Toronto.
Developed a programme of compositions and readings performed first at the Vancouver Art Gallery and then on tour
- 1975–79
Presented multi-disciplinary performances at Pumps, U.B.C. and Western Front in Vancouver.
- 1980–85
Annual performances at the Western Front, Vancouver BC
- 1984–87
Multimedia performances, Coburg Gallery, Vancouver BC
- 1984 Multimedia performance, Western Front, Vancouver BC

- 1985 Major multimedia collaborative performance with David Lee, bass; Howard Broomfield, percussion, Alex Varty, guitars; Martin Bartlett, synthesizer; and Carole Itter, rattles and slides.
- 1989 Multimedia performance, with Clive Reid and Lyle Ellis, Vancouver Art Gallery
- 1991 Performance at the opening of Carole Itter's *Where the Streets are Paved with Gold*, Vancouver Art Gallery, Vancouver BC
- 1992 Collaborative performance with Sheri-D Wilson, Alma Street Café, Vancouver BC

Writing/ Readings

Al Neil has published books, magazine articles, poetry and short stories. His innumerable and largely undocumented readings, improvised poetry performances and verbal expressions have influenced Vancouver's literary and multimedia landscape since the 1960s.

Publications

- Origins*. Western Front Publications, Vancouver (1989).
- Slammer*. Pulp Press, Vancouver (1980)
- Changes*, Nightwood Editions, Vancouver (1975)
- West Coast Lokas*. Vancouver Community Press, Vancouver (1972)
- Clonic or tonic spasm change Seamus' likeness into dark bovine form*.
Western Press, Vancouver (1968)

1956-63

improvised poetry readings at the Cellar, Vancouver BC

1970s Began publishing articles in the *Georgia Straight*; released two novels

1980-84

Prose readings at Octopus Books East, and CFRO radio in Vancouver and Calgary

1983 Poetry readings in a series produced by Elliot Lefko, Isabella Hotel, Toronto

1989 Reissue of *Changes*

Reading at R2B2, Vancouver BC

2003 Received Honorary Doctorate of Letters, Emily Carr Institute of Art and Design

Discography

- 2004 *Kenneth Patchen Reads With Jazz in Canada*, Locust Music (reissue)
- 2001 *Al Neil Trio: Retrospective (1965-1968)*, Blue Minor Records, (double CD)
- 1991 *Selections: 3 Decades*, Nightwood Editions (cassette)
- 1980 *Boot and Fog*, Music Gallery Editions
- 1980 *Ear It Live*, produced by Music Gallery Editions, Toronto
- 1976: *Retrospective: 1965-68*, Al Neil Trio, Lodestone Records, Vancouver, B.C (vinyl)

Tributes

The Al Neil Project: grunt gallery's fourth LIVE Biennial of Performance Art presented four evenings of interdisciplinary work by, and inspired by, Al Neil.

Venues and dates:

October 15th @ Western Front

October 21st @ Vancouver Public Library

November 10th @ Roundhouse Community Centre

November 25th @ Vancouver Art Gallery

Film:

Al Neil: A Portrait (David Rimmer 1979)

A Chronological Bibliography

Osborne, Stephen. "Evictions", *Geist*, issue 57 August 2008

Ricci, Quarin. JazzStreet Vancouver, Personal Interview with Gavin Walker. Vancouver, BC, November 1 2005

Metcalf, Eric. JazzStreet Vancouver, Personal Interview with Eric Metcalf. Vancouver, BC, July 16 2005

Smith, Bill. JazzStreet Vancouver, Personal Interview, Vancouver, BC. June 2004

"Al Neil Project" *Georgia Straight*, November 10 2005

MacIntyre, Jeff. "King of the Underground", *Globe & Mail*, October 11 2005

Turner, Michael, "The Al Neil Project" *brunt magazine*, September, 2005, issue 1

Smith, Bill. "Letters from friends #7: Al Neil", *Coda Magazine*; #307; Jan/Feb. 2003; 19

Laurence, Robin, "Strange Conductor—The Wild Life and Art of Al Neil" *Border Crossings*, Summer 1994

Varty, Alexander, "No Ghost, Al Neil Lives Past Doctor's Deadline" *Georgia Straight*, March 25, 1994

Davies, Gloria, Profile "Elder of the Avante-Garde" *Vancouver Sun*, March 27 1993

Laurence, Robin, Review "Subversion Fndly Recalled", *The Georgia Straight*, November 5 1992

Rosenberg, Ann, Review, *Vancouver Sun*, October 23, 1992

Sandiford, Judith, Interview "Al Neil Improvisor", *Work Seen*, Summer 1992

Rosenberg, Ann, Review, *Vancouver Sun*, October 5, 1991

Review, *Vancouver Sun*, June 29, 1991

Review, "Alchemy of Art" *Vancouver Sun*, April 18, 1991

Varty, Alex. *The Music of Al Neil*. Nightwood Editions 1990

Birnie-Danzker, Jo-Anne, Artopolis Review, *Vancouver Magazine*, October 1990

Watson, Scott, "Three Masks for Al Neil" *The Capilano Review*, Fall 1989, Series 211

Watson, Scott, "Fast Forward", *Canadian Art*, Fall 1989

Jeffries, Bill, Review "Origins – Celtic Series". *Parachute*, No. 57, 1989

Perry, Art, Review "Junk has its place in art", *Province*, November 3, 1989

Laurence, Robin, Review, "West coast Beats Create Anti-Establishment Art"

"Rezoning", Vancouver Art Gallery, *Georgia Straight*, December 8, 1989

Lacey, Liam, "At 65 Vancouver artist gets around to liking life", *The Globe and Mail* November 13 1989

Godley, Elizabeth. Review – Rezoning" *Vancouver Sun*, November 8 1989

Pollack, Jill, "Review – Rezoning", *The Vancouver Courier*, November 1 1989

Perry, Art. "Review – Art Blooms", *Province*, April 3 1989

Al Neil: Origins, Exhibition catalogue (Vancouver 1989)

Lacey, Liam. "At 65, Vancouver artist gets around to liking life", *Globe and Mail*, Nov 12 1989

Bentley-Mays, John. "An Encyclopedia of Fascination", *Globe and Mail*, Feb 6, 1987

Lee, David. "Al Neil", *Western Front*, Issue 13, 1985

Arden, Roy. "Music, Medicine and War – Al Neil's Collages", *Vanguard*, April 1985

Johnson, Eve. "Al Puts Life Into Collage", *Vancouver Sun*, September 8 1984

Andrews, Harke. "Stalking the underground warrior", *Vancouver Sun*, March 11 1983

Varty, Alex. "Al Neil: music at the centre", *Vancouver Free Press - Georgia Straight*, Feb 5–26 1982

Gasparini, Len. "At last, stories with universal appeal", *Vancouver Sun*, January 8 1982

Smith, Bill. "Oops - An introduction to an encore - Al Neil", *Coda Magazine*; #178; 1981; 14-17

Broomfield, Howard. "Interview with Al Neil", *Musicworks* 1979 issue 9

Simpson, Gregg, "Al Neil at U.B.C.", *Only Paper Today*, March 1978

Lowndes, Joan, "Baffling Image of Al Neil", *Vancouver Sun*, April 7 1972

Simmins, Richard, "Today's glitter, tomorrow's tarnished bits of vanity", *The Province*, March 28 1972

McGrath, Rick, Al Neil Interview, (www.rickmcgrath.com)

Smith, Bill. 'Sacred and Profane,' *Coda*, vol 9, Feb 1970

"Al Neil raps with Al Sorenson and Bob Cummings", *Vancouver Free Press*, 1-7 Jul 1970

Lemon, Sandy. "Al Neil: music and life". *Coda*, vol 7, Dec-Jan 1966-7

Collections

Vancouver Art Gallery
 Canada Council Art Bank
 Government of British Art Collection
 University of British Columbia Student Art Collection
 Burnaby Art Gallery
 First City Art Collection