

ROADS NORTH



new works by
Tim Schouten

April 29-June 3, 2000
Piano Nobile Gallery
Centennial Concert Hall
555 Main Street, Winnipeg MB

Manitoba Department of Highways' Winter Road system served twenty-one isolated communities in the north this past winter. There are no permanent roads into these villages, they are accessible only by air or water when the Ice Roads, built through bush, over muskeg, lakes and rivers, are closed. The first language in most of these northern villages is Cree, Ojibwe, Dene, Oji-Cree or Chipewyan. Not all homes in these villages have running water. In summertime four liters of milk can cost eleven dollars.

When the Winter Roads open, usually by late January, community members are able to travel more freely and goods can be shipped in at more reasonable costs. Last winter the roads were open an average of 30 days. Some roads further north were able to stay open slightly longer.

Artist Tim Schouten lives and works outside Winnipeg near Anola, Manitoba. He has been interested in the implications of these northern roads for a number of years. Why are there not all weather roads into these communities? Do people in the north even want all weather roads? This winter, for the first time, Schouten traveled a section of the road on a trip to the community of Bloodvein, late in the season - in fact the road had been officially closed for several weeks. This was a dangerous and exciting adventure for the artist, but travel on these Winter Roads is just a part of daily life for the people who live in communities in the north.

Roads North comprises eleven paintings and a unique bookwork completed this year. The images in the works in the exhibition were gathered by the artist in and around communities on the east and west sides of Lake Winnipeg over the last few years.

The artist gratefully acknowledges support of the Manitoba Arts Council & the City of Winnipeg Arts Advisory Council.

The exhibition is open for Concert Hall patrons during performances. During regular hours when the stage is dark, tours can be arranged through the artist (866-3554 or schouten@mb.sympatico.ca), the Gallery Curator, Arnold Ross (489-2850) or the Concert Hall office (957-4314).