

The **Vancouver Women's Bookstore** opened in the summer of 1973. We've been told it set up shop in an old Victorian house somewhere on Richards Street. Rent was cheap—cheap enough that the Bookstore's owners could afford to make donations to local women's centres and other projects they cared about. We heard they lent Ferron (do you know her?) a grand to help her record her first album. From the street you could see the store's bookshelves, then behind that, up a couple of steps, was a raised area where there was a desk and a few couches. There was coffee and a small library. The walls back there were covered in posters, mostly from a women's collective in Chicago. We've been told that the shelves were stained by the same volunteers who would keep the place running for the next twenty-some years. Three break-ins, a firebombing, and two relocations later, the Bookstore closed in 1996. We haven't seen pictures but we imagine the shelves were a nice colour.

While doing some archival research this June, Alexandra dug up the Vancouver Women's Bookstore's inaugural 1973 catalogue. We examined the document as if it were excavated amber. More than just a record of its inventory, the warmly typewritten pages captured the spirit of a community formed during a critical period of intellectual production by and for women. The Bookstore was a setting where individual experience could be elaborated, made material, through social life. The books provided a common language; the shelves, a common space for conversation—between generations, continents. So consider this an invitation to its restaging. *Rereading Room* presents a collection of books, documents, and periodicals selected from the titles offered by the Bookstore in its nascent years. Come by, read, maybe talk over coffee; we have a lot to catch up on.

above text: Vincent Tao
previous, a-c: Alexandra Bischoff

Rereading Room: The Vancouver Women's Bookstore

November 10, 2016 – January 14, 2017

Thursday, November 10, 7-10pm

Rereading Room launch

Discussion with founding member Jeannine Mitchell, followed by reception

Friday, November 18, 7-9pm

Hogan's Alley (1993)

Screening with Cornelia Wyngaarden

Sunday, November 20, 7-9pm

LIT LIT LIT LIT

Anahita Jamali Rad, Kyla Jamieson, Danielle LaFrance, and Emma Metcalf Hurst

Tuesday, November 22, 7-9pm

Reading from a 1980s issue of *Fireweed* and dialogue

Unfastened Collective hosts Rhea Tregebov

Saturday, November 26, 2-4pm

Sex Work 101 -- Understanding Sex Worker Politics

Education seminar with Vancouver's Pace Society

REREADING ROOM

a.

As we touch, we age each other.

(Books have faces and bodies and skin.)

And a book can outlive us all, whether

as a static snare or

an alchemic Magnum opus or

as the cause for all causality.

I like to reread.

They always speak to me differently, though

they say the same things.

One could read and reread the same

for every day of their lives,

and still find new voices in the void.

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Sat 12-5pm

b.

A writing prof once told me that to read and write was to enter into a conversation.

He said that when we listen and quote and connect, we're making the acquaintance of our peers, dead or alive.

It's a pretty good party. I've been watching from the corner of the kitchen where I have the clearest view of the bedroom, to see how guests throw their coats on top of one another, forming one big pile. Soft.

And shaking hands is nice and all, and introducing myself is important when I feel I have something to say, but surveying the group can be wholly rewarding. It was my turn to add to the guest list, so I'm a bit shy, playing host to such notable figures.

Maybe I'll refill the punch bowl and remain in awe of the scene.

It's not enough to know their names; I want to observe their smirk and furrow or gleam. They might have to repeat themselves, a crescendo turned fortissimo, but revelry is always loud and most often lasts longer than originally planned.

c.

I wrote something about being a "woman", but it sounded sort of preachy. I decided I couldn't use it in a press release, which is pretty unfortunate because it's probably something that needs to be said.