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## Reason Over Passion/La Raison Avant la Passion

### Joyce Wieland

1969, 4-channel video installation, color, 83 min., without dialogue, English.

Kontakt: <http://www.cfmdc.org>

*Reason Over Passion* is structured around four distinct sections, with a loosely constructed preface that introduces the motifs Wieland employs consistently throughout the film: strobing images of the Canadian flag; long shots of passing landscapes; and the lyrics to "O Canada," didactically presented as overlaid text. Followed by a silent take of the artist's face reflected in a mirror, singing the opening lines to "O Canada," the origins of the title of the film are presented: a quote from Trudeau, in which he stated "About reason over passion, that is the theme of all of my writings." While she did not have a particular film in mind when shooting the three portions of footage, when she later edited the film she described the structure as beginning on the East Coast and moving west, with her summer footage picturing the East Coast and Quebec, the Trudeau footage standing in for Ontario as the political and bureaucratic bastion of the country, and lastly the winter footage shot from the train covering the prairies onwards. However, once the film reaches the West Coast, British Columbia is only referred to by the flash of a postcard of a steamer ship on the Pacific Ocean at the closing of the film.

Anne Low

**Joyce Wieland** (1931–1998) is regarded as Canada's foremost woman artist. She produced an acclaimed body of work in a great variety of media, from drawing and painting to quilts and film. She gained a unique respect for incorporating strong personal statements in her work about issues of feminism, nationalism and ecology. Her retrospective at the Art Gallery of Ontario was the first-ever afforded a living Canadian woman artist. In the early 1960s she moved to New York, where she gained recognition as an experimental filmmaker. She returned to Canada in 1971. Her collages, three-dimensional assemblages, and particularly her quilts were imbued with concerns for the environment, the Vietnam war, her love for Canada, and the status and place of women in society, and sent forth a bold feminist statement.

#### Filme

Filme 1963: *Larry's Recent Behaviour* (17 min.). 1964: *Patriotism* (4 min.). *Peggy's Blue Skylight* (12 min.). 1965: *Barbara's Blindness* (16 min.). *Patriotism Part II* (4 min.). *Water Sark* (14 min.). 1967: *1933* (4 min.). *Cat Food* (14 min.). *Handtinting* (6 min.). *Sailboat* (3 min.). 1968: *Rat Life and Diet in North America* (18 min.). 1969: *Dripping Water* (11 min.). *Reason Over Passion/La Raison Avant la Passion* (Forum Expanded, 84 min.). 1972: *Pierre Vallières* (33 min.). 1973: *Solidarity* (11 min.). 1976: *The Far Shore* (105 min.). 1984: *A and B in Ontario* (15 min.). 1986: *Birds at Sunrise* (10 min.)