Club life

Photographer explores ‘All the Clubs from Holyrood to Brigus’

By John Williams

rofessional photographer Scott Walden approaches his work with a camera eye and a photographic mind. Academically trained, his accomplished pieces have been included in Profit Photo and Machinic magazine. Walden is also a writer, and often combines imagery and text. He spends about half his time in Newfoundland, where he is particularly engaged with post-Confederation industry and economics.

This exhibition is organized into series, the subject geometrically arranged and casually closely identifiable. ‘All The Clubs From Holyrood to Brigus’ are of clubs — definitely clubs — not ersatz English pubs or fern bars but community-based communal gathering spots done up with a minimal but characteristic decor. Outside, they are shrouded in white clapboard or vinyl siding. The windows are the small slider ones, or non-existent. Inside, barbacker notices are thumbtacked to bulletin boards, and Armitage paper boys peek old black-and-white photos of veterans and warships to their cork sheets.

Sometimes, the walls are wall-papered, and sometimes half-painted that institutional pink that coloured every hallway of every Catholic school in Newfoundland during the 1970s and 1980s. These 24 pieces are all modern colour photographs, but they have a Polaroid sensibility in their frankness and familiarity, their Polaroid quality resounding, are in essence fundamentally documents, witnesses to a particular time and place with its aesthetics, fashions, rituals, sunglasses, sneakers and the odd skeet.

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