

# MASTER OF LIGHT

Remembering Bruce Rowles



with

Déjà-vu transports me back to the epic winter of 1999 when I spent hours with Bruce Rowles in his attic examining a freshly-developed slide sequence of me dropping a massive cliff on Blackcomb Mountain. No computers or Internet, just a magnifying glass on slide film.

This was back when I had just won the first stop of the 1999 Freeskiing World Tour, but something else was on my heart and mind. I was guided to honour the passing of my great grandmother with a rose ceremony on Blackcomb. As I completed this important act of love to celebrate her soul, I noticed a beautiful sunlit hanging shelf. I was magnetized to this cliff, which I have since always referred to as, “Nanny.”

The cliff whispered to me, but to get on top of it I had to lay down a two-by-eight board across an eight-foot chasm. That’s when I called Bruce to capture the moment.

I walked the plank in order to access the take off. I stood on top, feeling exposed, yet safe, like an eagle in its nest. Looking south to the hanging snowfield where Bruce was perched, I smiled. It felt sweet to my heart to know my brother Bruce was in his element, working the light through both his camera lens and his heart. In fact, I felt safer knowing

Bruce had me in his sight. Not only an incredible artist, Bruce was also trustworthy, kind and attuned to the sacred. He knew this was not just a cliff drop, but an offering to my ancestors.

From my perch, I acknowledged all things above and below, and gave thanks to the spirits and the elements of the four directions: north, east, south and west. With a deep breath, I dropped in...

Skiing away from Nanny, I hit a 70-foot air just below, then Bruce and I headed back up to continue shooting as the sunset turned the white mountain canvas into gold. Before descending to the valley floor, Bruce told me that my spirit reminded him of his late friend Trevor Petersen, one of my ski heroes, and handed me one of Trevor’s poles—a gift I humbly received.

Back then, the pole represented listening to the call and the voice; and having the courage to follow that leading that comes from a place deeper than one’s own mind. I’ve been skiing with the pole more frequently over the last five years. It’s become a staff of wisdom that represents not only listening to the call but doing the work to discern the meaning of the message before acting on it.

*Looking at this photo transports me right back to this day, to Nanny, and to my brother Bruce Rowles, a true master of light.*

*A true friend to all in mountains, Bruce Rowles succumbed to cancer in March of 2022. His spirit and artistic contribution to the Coast Mountain and Canadian ski communities will be forever cherished and greatly missed. 🏔️ —Jeff Holden*

