

## Public Skating at the Olympic Oval

After 3 years away, I'm back on the rink. Right now you are too young to appreciate the irony of me forgetting everything I ever knew how to do on skates. Yes, I lost all my body once possessed of soaring among schoolchildren turning and turning in the untiring gyre of a truly Canadian O. Ms. Harrison Rouleau, for the parts of you from Britain and France, to which we are supposed to bow in literature and speech, this ice is the perishing of the world.

But where knees are bent on a frozen lake to give power to the moving figure, this ice teaches, this ice is the birth of play. Here are my hands; you reach up, grab them and run the only way you know: legs working the carpet like foot pumps, torso at the skater's angle of falling, head first into the breach. You are getting ready for this abandon, this disproportion, and I, learning not to think of my body again and just go and go, I remember.

RICHARD HARRISON