

Landscapes and Silence

Part I

Terry Billings
Gabriela García-Luna
Risa Horowitz
Zachari Logan
Sheila Spence

Curated by Wayne Baerwaldt
with 21C Curators and Tanya Abraham

A collateral exhibition of the 2016 Kochi-Muziris Biennale
December 11th, 2016 to March 29th, 2017

Kashi Art Gallery: Town House
Quiros Street,
Fort Kochi,
Kochi 682001
Kerala, India

Landscapes and Silence, Part I
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Landscapes and Silence

It is with the collaborative support of Edgar Pinto and exhibition co-curator Tanya Abraham of Kashi Art Gallery and The Art Outreach Society (TAOS) in Kochi, Kerala, that the exhibition *Landscapes and Silence* has been realized. Mixed media artworks by five Canadian artists are presented with those of their Indian counterparts to allow the artists and their audience to contemplate diverse concepts of silence in rapidly changing natural and rural landscapes. *Landscapes and Silence* features recent and new works by Canadian artists Terry Billings, Gabriela García-Luna, Risa Horowitz, Zachari Logan, and Sheila Spence.

For centuries artists have represented the idyllic peace and quiet of the countryside and, for the most part, their artistic output supported the moral, aesthetic, and spiritual values of a largely urban audience for art. Studies of the landscape and its traditional sense of quietude associated with co-dependent flora and fauna were widely recognized as portals to the sublime. Times have changed. The landscape becomes an elusive Other, and artists bring new forms of critique and hybrid media to represent landscapes and their changing values and meanings. *Landscapes and Silence* draws particular attention to evolving concepts of silence associated with ecological and environmental change—which is impacting natural landscapes and, to a great extent, felt most acutely by the observant people living and working in rural areas.

Most rural dwellers recognize their natural and human-made landscapes as fragile biospheres becoming more fragile. The health and the well-being of agrarians is in jeopardy in both India and Canada owing to the increased contact with agribusiness pesticides, herbicides, and other chemicals applied to increase yields from crops and animals. Examples of the resulting human and environmental fragility abound. Rates of cancer for rural inhabitants and forms of mental debilitation have increased exponentially. Disturbed migratory patterns of birds brought on by unusual seasonal changes in weather disrupt habitats and the traditional bird soundscape in the wild. Birds have virtually disappeared from some of their natural habitats. The human habitats of farmers and the social bonds of the traditional farmers have been altered as well. Large-scale agribusiness in Canada has gradually emptied the physical and social landscape of the next generation of farm dwellers. An eerie silence on the rural and natural landscape has displaced both a wide variety of song birds and the once vibrant social network of farm families.

Artists in *Landscapes and Silence* have a deep interest in developing inter-cultural relationships with fellow cultural producers and Indian audiences. While attempting to understand the complex socio-economic and political changes that impact a compromised natural and rural landscape, artists are responding first and foremost to the aesthetic qualities associated with these oft-times dramatic changes. In many ways the traditional depictions of idyllic calm associated with rural and natural landscapes are rapidly being replaced by an unnerving set of questions. How does one properly respond to complex absence in Nature? Do evolving forms of silence bind our interest to the wilderness, small town life or any other spatial context? Are there new dimensions to the concepts and realities of silence in rural areas and small towns that artists will depict very differently in Canada and India? Why do the resulting forms of representation matter? Artists in each country have devoted new bodies of work to solicit answers for these and many other paradigm changing questions. Each artist adds to a growing diversity of approaches to analyzing, debating, and re-imagining concepts of silence in Nature.

Mixed-media painting, collage, and photography continue to be leading media for addressing the landscape but of course artists have also opted to investigate the landscape beyond a limited range of media. Some work was completed on site in Kochi to better comprehend the complex questions that inform the project. With the assistance of TAOS (the Kochi-based The Art Outreach Society) we welcome the inclusion of Indian artists in adjacent exhibition spaces within the Town House. Together the artists have initiated an inter-cultural discussion which is only beginning to bring a range of experiences and perspectives to bear on the subject matter.

Wayne Baerwaldt



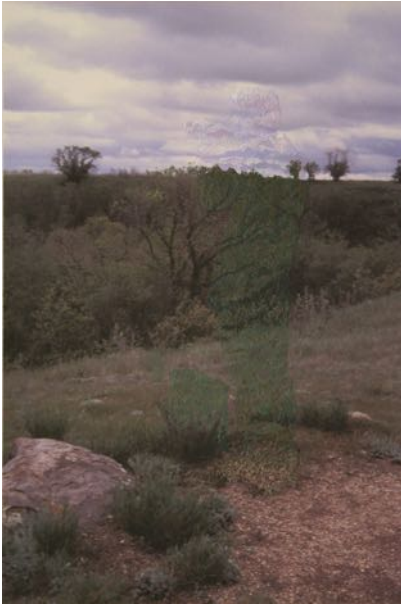
Terry Billings

Terry Billings is a Saskatoon-based artist whose recent projects include a sound-based residency working with the rural soundscapes in and around Rockglen, Saskatchewan. In her video, audio, mixed media, and installation work, she examines the relationship between nature and culture and the boundaries between public forms of understanding and subjective experience. In India Billings recorded new audio to layer with audio from Rockglen for her sound installation. She also exhibited a series of colour photographs selectively altered by painting. Billings writes of these *Adjusted Landscapes*: "This series of paintings arose from a video I made in 2006 called *Love Stories for Hermits* wherein I painted a figure out of a landscape as a stop action animation. The series examines memory and the presence of human influence in the landscape."

In her audio compositions, Billings works with audio recordings of individual creatures and biophonies, or entire living environments. The audio tracks are manipulated and layered to enhance the inherent intelligibility of the sound for human sensibilities. For *Landscapes and Silence* Billings presents a new work entitled *Dawn Chorus*. She provides a concise comment on *Dawn Chorus* as follows: "A dawn chorus occurs when birds sing at the start of a new day. This work places dawn recordings from Rockglen, Saskatchewan and Kochi in the entrance and stairwell of the Town House. As the visitor moves through the space, the sounds intermingle, creating ephemeral moments of contrast and connection."

See www.terrybillings.ca



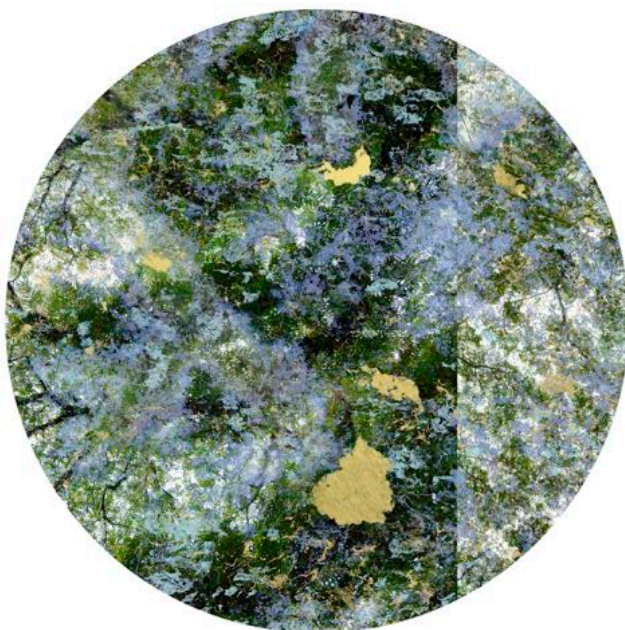


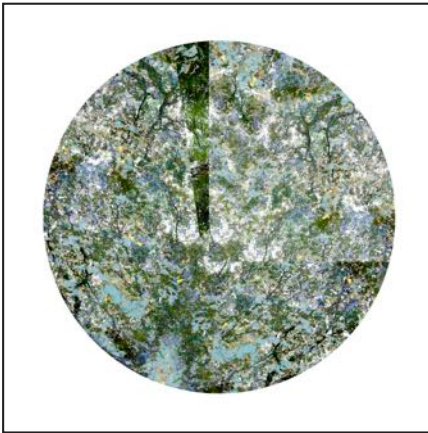
Gabriela García-Luna

Gabriela García-Luna is an artist based in Canada and Mexico who has extensively traveled to India since 2000. García-Luna photographically documents seen and “unseen” landscapes and works to index personal memory traces and bring ethereal qualities to her representation. Her new circular photographs, entitled *Ponds*, are assembled from photographic images collected in Kochi during a Kashi Artist Residency in October 2015.

García-Luna describes her new works as follows: “Images of rain trees, tropical vegetation of the Kochi region, and detailed images of flaked paint from the walls of colonial buildings are the elements I combine to form layered, semi-abstract images. They operate where the lines of two different realities meet. As in my previous work, I address objective reality—of form and objects—as a departure point for the study of the subjective/subtle reality. I see the work of art as a vehicle to transit between the two. I work in a hybrid figurative and abstract form of photography that I have been developing in recent years. It is a process in which abstract forms result from selection, subtraction, and transformation of elements of my original photographic images. In an intuitive way, I concentrate my attention on subtle information that carries a sense of the experiential rather than on the descriptive elements of the original photographs. I add other graphic elements to the images, such as abstract circular shapes surrounded by white space, which may suggest isolated universes, planets, microscopic views, or unfolding realities into which we may be immersed or transported.”

García-Luna's work is represented by SLATE Fine Art Gallery, Regina, Canada.
See www.gabrielagarcialuna.com





Risa Horowitz

Risa Horowitz is a Regina and Toronto-based conceptual artist whose works tend to address durational practices and the passage and representation of time. For *Landscapes and Silence* she has produced *Starfields and Fields*, presented in a grid of 15x15" and 15x30" photographs. Horowitz hand-built large-format pinhole cameras for this work, which combines two project streams she has explored over the past several years: landscape photographs, and images of the cosmos.

Horowitz writes: "Canadian landscape images carry the burden of ideologies of our hinterland, settlement, displacement, and intervention. Yet we collectively seek natural and peaceful experiences from the land, and fulfill such desires in part through artistic representations. Cosmic star fields carry with them real and imagined ideals of isolation, distance, and the (im)possibility of settlement. *Starfields and Fields* juxtaposes images both earthly and not, speaking to notions of silence and awe within the framework of the *Landscapes and Silence* exhibition."

While in Kochi, Horowitz built 4x5" and 8x10" pinhole cameras to create new fibre-based images in India, samples of which appear on pages 18 and 21 of this catalogue.

Risa Horowitz is represented by MKG127 Gallery in Toronto.
See www.risahorowitz.com





Zachari Logan

Regina-based Zachari Logan works mainly in drawing, ceramics, and installation practices.

Logan applies himself to the natural, if idealized experimental portraiture of wild plant life. His *Four Seasons* drawings in pastel for *Landscapes and Silence* comprise tightly juxtaposed plant species, both unusual and thought provoking hybrids, imaginatively formed and not necessarily biologically correct. Their sense of difference is camouflaged. By combining multiple sources from species common to the Saskatchewan (Canadian) prairie and its occasionally lush river banks, the plants represent a nostalgia for both a familiar place in Saskatchewan and an exotic other world that may well be located in India.

Logan writes: "Compositionally, these four circular drawings share similarities with narrative paintings from northern Renaissance Netherlandish artists. My four drawings depict the distinct seasons of Winter, Spring, Summer and Autumn. A meditation on the passing of time, a visualizing of the same patch of earth in Canada during different periods of the year, this composition suggests human presence in the form of quiet observation."

Logan's work has been exhibited widely, in group and solo exhibitions internationally.
See www.zachariloganart.com





Sheila Spence

Sheila Spence is a lens-based artist living in Winnipeg, Canada whose portraits have been exhibited across Canada and internationally, and are included in public collections in Canada and Europe. Spence's photographs investigate notions of portraiture, self-portraiture, community, and identity. Her portraits simultaneously render time present and time past: the subjects could just as easily have been plucked from the open range of mid-west Canada in 1885 as in 2016.

Her subjects for *Landscapes and Silence* were photographed 'in the field' by setting up a portable studio at the Wood Mountain Stampede in southern Saskatchewan near the Montana border, and in Strathmore, Alberta. The confident faces and posturing of both young and old, their choice of western wear and accessories, seem to transcend the here-and-now and allow our minds to wander freely in time. Spence writes: "There are real parallels between ranchers and artists. These are often seen as disparate communities. One is working the land and the other is largely representing the landscape in some manner, but I've found real affinities between ranchers and artists. The rodeo setting for my portraits in *Landscapes and Silence* is a field arena, the most intimate shared space where I'm able to access ranchers celebrating their landscape as working and living places."

See www.sheilaspence.ca





Wayne Baerwaldt and 21C Curators

Wayne Baerwaldt is an independent curator who has served as the Director/Curator, Exhibitions, Albert College of Art + Design, the Director of The Power Plant (Toronto) from 2002-05, and Director/Curator of Plug In Gallery (Winnipeg) from 1988-2000.

Baerwaldt has curated and co-curated numerous Canadian and International exhibitions including the Montreal Biennale 2007: *Crack the Sky*, Janet Cardiff & George Bures Miller: *The Paradise Institute* (with Jon Tupper for the Canadian Pavilion, 2001 Venice Biennale), Glenn Ligon: *Some Changes* (with Thelma Golden), Sheila Spence: *All About Starr*, John Noestheden & Shuvina Ashoona: *Earth & Sky*, Gabriela García-Luna, Blake Little: *Western Project*, Zachari Logan: *Fugitive Garden*, and other projects that trace performative elements in artmaking.

As a lead producer for 21C Curators, Baerwaldt has delivered a long list of conceptually ground-breaking contemporary art projects. Recent co-productions include exhibition catalogues: Iran Do Espírito Santo: *Wall Drawings*, Eleanor Bond: *Mountain of Shame*, and Jeffrey Gibson: *Call and Response*.

Baerwaldt has contributed articles and essays to Blackflash, Catalyst, POV, City Magazine, Art&Text, Border Crossings, Parkett, Art on Paper, TIME, Guia des Artes, Poliester, Art Paper, MoMA Sao Paulo, MASS MoCA (*Oh, Canada*) and C Magazine.

Television and art film production credits include: *The Eternal Network* for the W Network; deco dawson: *FILM-dzama*; Glenn Ligon: *Death of Tom*; and Adam Pendleton: *BAND* (co-produced with Noah Cowan); Shari Hatt: *Two Clowns Walk into an Art Gallery*, and Graeme Patterson: *Smithbilt*.



Tanya Abraham, co-curator

Tanya Abraham is the Director and Curator of Kashi Art Gallery, which has several locations in Fort Kochi, India. Established in 1997, Kashi Art Gallery facilitates discourses between art, artists, and audiences. Abraham directs the international artist residency program through Kashi Art Gallery, and has curated exhibitions including *Remainder*, *Talking with Walls*, *The Women's Project*, and *Artist: the Public Intellectual*, as well as the Indian component of *Landscapes and Silence*. Abraham also manages The Art Outreach Society (TAOS), a non-profit organization that uses art as a tool for personal and social change and provides a platform to show how creativity can transform lives and connect peoples from across the world to create positive change.

Abraham writes: "The intercultural exchange brought forth by *Landscapes and Silence* is important to commerce in India, building meaningful relationships and strong connections with Indian and Canadian cultural producers, curators, collectors, and educational institutions."

See www.kashiartgallery.com



Works Included in the Exhibition

Terry Billings - *Dawn Chorus*

Adjusted Landscape #1

Adjusted Landscape #3

Adjusted Landscape #4

2016, acrylic on Archival Digital Print/Paper
10x7"

Adjusted Landscape #5

Adjusted Landscape #6

Adjusted Landscape #7

Adjusted Landscape #8

Adjusted Landscape #9

2016, acrylic on Archival Digital Print/Paper
12x18"

Unadjusted Landscape #1

Unadjusted Landscape #2

2016, acrylic on Archival Digital Print/Paper
12x18"

Dawn Chorus, 2016

Two asynchronous stereo systems and audio
loops, duration and dimensions variable.



Gabriela García-Luna - *Ponds*

Karuva, Kaludini, Walden, Celestun, Caldwell

2016, 12x12"

photographic digital collage, mix media, archival pigment on rag, gold leaf.

Caldwell, Walden, Kaludini

2016, 24x30"

photographic digital collage, mix media, archival pigment on rag.



Risa Horowitz - *Starfields and Fields*

Gourd Leaves

Ceylon Regional Park, South Saskatchewan

South Saskatchewan Field

South Saskatchewan Star Field

Wascana Birch 02

German Mills Creek, Castleridge Drive

2016, 15x15" chromogenic prints from 8x10" pinhole camera direct positive.

Pineway Footbridge 01

Pineway Footbridge 02

Dryden Fog

South Saskatchewan View

Wascana Birch 01

Wascana Vista

2016, 15x15" chromogenic prints from 4x5" pinhole camera negative.

Garden Gourd

2016, 15x15" chromogenic print from 8x10" pinhole camera direct positive.

Star Field: Messier 7, Ptolemy Cluster, 2016

Star Field: Messier 6, Butterfly Cluster, 2016

Star Field: Messier 21, 2014

2016, 15x15" chromogenic prints from dSLR.

Don River, Cummer Bridge

2016, 15x15" chromogenic print from 4x5" field camera negative.

Flowering Gourd

Graffias 2014 and Antares 2016

2016, 15x30" chromogenic prints from dSLR.

German Mills Creek, Bronte Road

Between Big Muddy and Big Beaver, South Saskatchewan

2016, 15x15" chromogenic prints from 8x10" pinhole camera direct positive.



Zachari Logan - *Four Seasons*

Winter, Spring, Summer, Autumn
2016, graphite and pastel on paper
15x15" each



Sheila Spence - from the series *All About Starr*

Billy Ogle
Clint Wright
Danton Stover
Jared Parsonage
Larry Stover
Rhett Fitzpatrick
Starr Artz
Taylor Anderson

2010, archival pigment on photo rag.
16x20" each.





Image Credits

- Front Cover: *Thara's Garden*, 2016, image by Gabriela García-Luna
- Page 10: Zachari Logan. *Wreath, Insect*, 2016. Blue pencil on Mylar, 16 x 19".
- Page 8: Gabriela García-Luna. *Kaludini*, 2016, 12 x 12" photographic digital collage, mix media, archival pigment on rag, gold leaf.
- Pages 14 & 15: Landscapes and Silence Group with school tour and each other.
- Page 16: Terry Billings discusses and demonstrates *Dawn Chorus* for a school group tour (image courtesy of Risa Horowitz).
- Pages 17 & 20: Installations shots courtesy of Risa Horowitz.
- Page 18: Risa Horowitz. *Chinese Fishing Nets, Fort Kochi, India*, 2016. From 8x10" direct positive pinhole photographs.
- Page 21: Risa Horowitz. *Call to Prayer Loudspeaker Tower, Fort Kochi, India*, 2016. From 8x10" direct positive pinhole photograph.



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