

Mapping the Post-Colonial Landscape Project: A Critical Analysis

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ABSTRACT

Mapping the Post-Colonial Landscape Project: A Critical Analysis

Michael Frederick Rattray

This thesis examines how “The Post-Colonial Landscape Project” exhibition program contributed to a further understanding of the history of colonialism in Canada. Specifically, it critically engages and analyzes three exhibitions contained within the project: “The Post-Colonial Landscape: A Billboard Exhibition”; “Ruth Cuthand: Location/Dislocation”; and “Christos Dikeakos: Sites & Place Names: Vancouver/Saskatoon.” These exhibitions were selected because the works included maintained a visual and theoretical correlation to one another. Discourse analysis is deployed to discuss the theoretical frameworks used by the curators and critics of the exhibitions.

At issue in the thesis is the totalizing goal of the colonial project, which is intrinsically tied to European capitalism and seeks to reintegrate and translate all things to laws of profit. An economic order is supplanted over any and all kinds of differing conceptions of order, to translate all modes of production into an end-goal of naturalization and totalization. The colonial project, tied to capitalism, seeks to naturalize itself so that it appears not as a construction, but a natural function and logical extension of the operations of the earth. However, in the context of the exhibition project discussed, I argue the overlying structure engaged by the select exhibitions discussed is representative of an intervention through artistic practice and institutional activism that destabilizes the dominant order. This thesis thus intends to provide the first critical study on “The Post-Colonial Landscape Project” and elaborate on its significance for furthering assessments on the history of 1990s exhibition practices in Canada.

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Preface:

What is and was The Postcolonial Landscape Project?

“The Post-Colonial Landscape Project” was a multi-gallery program active between the years of 1993-1997. At the project’s inception in November of 1990 at the Mendel Art Gallery in Saskatoon, Saskatchewan, five curators and directors -- Bruce Grenville; Janice Acoose; Lee Ann Martin; Peter White; and Jean Fisher -- initiated and developed the dialogues that would contribute to the final product.¹

Initially conceived as a counter project to the quincentenary celebrations of “first-contact” (500 years of European contact with native peoples) pegged in 1992, the project’s initial mandate sought to have a group of artists engage Wanuskewin Heritage Park in Saskatchewan. The exhibition was scheduled to inaugurate the opening of the park in 1992, the same year as the quincentenary.² Originally titled the “Wanuskewin Project,” the curatorial committee focused on developing a list of local, national, and international artists who would create work to be exhibited, with the Park acting as the *subject* of the exhibitions.³ According to the exhibition proposal, there were a series of four institutional and three curatorial objectives set by the committee. The three curatorial objectives were: 1) to develop a large curatorial undertaking that comprised both native and non-native artists from the local to the international addressing issues that were relevant to all Canadians; 2) To explore what they termed to be alternative curatorial methodologies challenging the modernist adherence to the unified subject of display; and

¹Currently, Bruce Grenville is a senior curator at the Vancouver Art Gallery; Peter White is an independent scholar living in Montreal; Lee Ann Martin is Curator of Contemporary Canadian Aboriginal Art at the Museum of Civilization; and Janice Acoose is an independent scholar in Saskatoon.

² Bruce Grenville, “Place and Process: The Post-Colonial Landscape,” *The Post-Colonial Landscape*. (Edmonton: Edmonton Art Gallery: Saskatoon: Mendel Art Gallery, 1997) 1.

³ Ibid.

3) To critically address the subject of nineteenth century colonialism and twentieth-century post-colonialism in relation to historic and contemporary understandings. The institutional objectives were: 1) To exhibit the work of artists who were addressing in their work the issues the curatorial committee saw as important to the gallery visitor; 2) To address the historical precedents within the local community of Saskatoon through various narratives; 3) To document contemporary cultural activity that held a historical value; and 4) To contextualize the works exhibited within the program so as to add purpose to their purchase and collection by the Mendel Gallery.⁴

Initially, it was intended that artists would be invited to Wanuskewin Heritage Park in the fall of 1991 to conduct research on the area and examine sites pertaining to the active archaeological digs occurring at the time.⁵ After early curatorial meetings, the committee members determined the park would be too difficult to engage with at the level they wished.⁶ The focus then shifted to having the park become one of many subjects of engagement within an overarching framework that addressed a post-colonial landscape. The idea of use value, in a specifically land-related sense, became the curatorial focus of the project. Issues surrounding differing conceptions of the land, between European settler communities and native communities from early colonial contact times to contemporary understandings of the value of territory as

⁴ Bruce Grenville, *Exhibition Proposal for "The Wanuskewin Project,"* Canada Council Exhibition Proposal, 1992. (personal file)

⁵ The University of Saskatchewan is affiliated with the park and has an active archaeological research program at Wanuskewin.

⁶ Grenville, "Place and Process: The Post-Colonial Landscape," 2; Bruce Grenville, personal interview, January 18, 2008.

psychologically-defined, as well as economically, militarily and lawfully enforced, became the underlying premises that guided the organization of the exhibitions.⁷

The original idea of a large group exhibition became problematic for the curatorial committee as initial dialogue was pursued. A shared understanding of the modernist adherence to a unified subject, and the principles of self-referentiality inherent to that subject, moved the committee towards providing a series of exhibitions offering differing strategies of representation that spoke to the complexity of the problematic, informed by a post-colonial perspective. The curatorial committee felt a post-colonial perspective would bring forward differing conceptions of history and subject-based positions that offered alternative subject positions on how historical processes have been acted out and subdued by the dominant cultural apparatus. By dispersing the project into multiple exhibitions, the project became economically viable and allowed for adaptations to occur from within, with certain exhibitions that could not have been foreseen realized.⁸

The project was successful in getting national and municipal funding. The main funding body of the project was the Canada Council for the Arts. Other sponsoring organizations were: the City of Saskatoon; Saskatchewan Lotteries; the Saskatchewan Arts Board; the Muséum Assistance Program of the Department of Canadian Heritage; and later, when Grenville had transferred to the Edmonton Art Gallery; the Alberta Lottery Fund; the Art Associates of the Edmonton Art Gallery Society; and the City of Edmonton and the Edmonton Foundation.⁹

⁷ Ibid., 2.

⁸ Three exhibitions were planned from the outset. They were “The Post-Colonial Landscape: A Billboard exhibition” (1993), “Ruth Cuthand: Location/Dislocation” (1993) and “Domingo Cisneros: Sky Bones” (1994). All later developments, such as the six other exhibitions and catalogue, were executed as opportunities presented themselves.

⁹ Grenville et al., *The Post-Colonial Landscape*.

Upon its completion in 1997, “The Post-Colonial Landscape Project” resulted in a series of exhibitions, catalogues and collaborations that had involved the work of thirteen curators, five institutions, fifteen public and private funding sponsors, and fifty-four artists (see Appendix A). The project functioned from the local to the international, with both Canadian and international artists engaging the proposed curatorial thematic. The exhibition series culminated in a comprehensive catalogue titled, *The Post-Colonial Landscape*, published in 1997. It included all of the catalogues from the exhibitions plus newly-commissioned work for the expanded exhibition series catalogue. The layout and design of the original catalogues were bound by a stylistic similarity, designed with the express intent of a cumulative catalogue to be released at the project’s conclusion.¹⁰ The final product provided the binding agent of continuity for a multi-provincial series of touring exhibitions dealing with a topic that, according to Grenville, was a series of events and exhibitions contributing to the “advancement and understanding of contemporary visual art and its relationship to the issues of land, colonization and cultural identity within both a Canadian and an international context.”¹¹

The loose heading of the project, strategically designed against becoming too thematically underpinned, allowed for a series that spoke to the breadth and possibility of engagement a topic such as post-colonialism invoked. The cross-gallery initiative permitted local and regional communications between the centers of Edmonton and Saskatoon. The highlights of the project were experimental collaborations between curators and artists meant to engage a problem of display, specifically how to situate and exhibit a post-colonial understanding of territory beyond a homogenizing and generalized

¹⁰ Grenville, personal interview , January 18, 2008.

¹¹ Grenville, “Place and Process: The Post-Colonial Landscape,” 2.

showing of work. In this way, the presentation of nine exhibitions -- ten if you consider the catalogue publication to be an exhibition unto itself -- over four years addressing colonialism and postcolonialism, can be said to represent a difficult curatorial and artistic engagement, and one that appears to be unprecedented in Canadian art history.

Chapter Summaries and Thesis Problematic:

This thesis examines how “The Post-Colonial Landscape Project” contributed to a further understanding of the history of colonialism in Canada by critically engaging and analyzing three exhibitions contained within the project: “The Post-Colonial Landscape: A Billboard Exhibition”; “Ruth Cuthand: Location/Dislocation”; and “Christos Dikeakos: Sites & Place Names: Vancouver/Saskatoon.” Each of the chapters focuses on one of the exhibitions, emphasizing their visual and theoretical correlation to one another and deploying discourse analysis to discuss the theoretical frameworks used by curators and critics of the exhibitions.

Chapter One discusses “The Post-Colonial Landscape Project: A Billboard Exhibition,” specifically for its combination of four artists that connect the totality of the curatorial objective. Each artist engaged post-colonial descriptions of the twentieth-century landscape. The exhibition consisted of four billboards, exhibited in succession over month-long intervals during the summer of 1993. The chapter focuses on how the exhibition was later theorized by media theorist and artist, Erin Manning; histories and issues raised by the artists; and analyzes the relevance of Manning’s theoretical construct vis-à-vis the envisioned curatorial frame applied by exhibition curator Joyce Whitebear Reed.

Chapter Two examines the solo exhibition, “Ruth Cuthand: Location/Dislocation,” which took place at the Mendel Art Gallery in Saskatoon also in the summer of 1993. Curated by Grenville, the exhibition and catalogue essay applied a theoretical framework to Cuthand’s work drawing from an essay by French philosopher Gilles Deleuze (1925-1995) and psychoanalyst Félix Guattari (1930-1992) entitled

“Treatise on Nomadology: The War Machine,” in their book *A Thousand Plateaus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia*.¹² The chapter unpacks the concepts of the nomos and the logos in relation to nomadic and state-form conceptions of space as a way in which to understand Cuthand’s work. Following the contextualization of the concepts of the nomos and logos, a combination of critiques leveled against nomadology by cultural theorists Robert Young and Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak are explored. The chapter will provide an alternative reading of the exhibition drawing from the concepts of sovereignty and autobiography developed by artist and art historian Jolene Rickard and arts worker Victoria Henry. The objective is to situate the original theoretical framing informed by Deleuze and Guattari, what it served, and how it can be pushed further in light of historical analysis and differing strategies of representation articulated since the occurrence of the exhibition.

Chapter Three examines “Christos Dikeakos: Sites & Place Names: Vancouver/Saskatoon.” The exhibition, curated by Keith Wallace, was held at the Contemporary Art Gallery in 1992, and would be later brought within “The Post-Colonial Landscape Project” in 1994 by Grenville and exhibited at the Mendel Art Gallery. The chapter critically examines the discourse that emerged when the exhibition became a part of “The Post-Colonial Landscape Project.” Drawing from texts on photoconceptual photography, cultural appropriation and the notion of “matrixial space” (Judith Mastai), I propose a context-specific interpretation of Dikeakos’ works, and explore the differences between the concepts driving the locations and reception of the two exhibitions.

¹² Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia*, trans. Brian Massumi (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1987) 351-423. The text was originally published in French in 1980.

Documentation and scholarship concerning “The Post-Colonial Landscape Project” has been limited, although what is available has been telling.¹³ In the initial phases of my research, I observed that both Erin Manning and Bruce Grenville used concepts developed by Deleuze and Guattari to theorize two of the exhibitions selected for analysis in this study. The overbearing presence of theories derived from Deleuze and Guattari was solidified through further research; an article by art educator Judith Mastai (1945-2001) from 1996 applied a theoretical framing to Christos Dikeakos’ exhibition and work drawn from theory developed by artist and psychotherapist Bracha Lichtenberg-Ettinger, whose theories are drawn from and influenced by Deleuze and Guattari. What became evident in the limited documentation available concerning “The Post-Colonial Landscape Project” was that the curatorial essay or later publications on the three exhibitions selected for analysis here contained concepts by or derived from Deleuze and Guattari, and that the work discussed in these texts maintained a visual correlation to one another.

As a Canadian art historian of European ancestry, I found the pervasive presence of French post-structuralist theories in discussions on “The Post-colonial Landscape Project” demanded further inquiry. A main objective of this thesis has thus been to account for the presence of Deleuze and Guattari’s theories within a specifically post-colonial exhibition program. The thesis draws from post-colonial theory and methods of discourse analysis to derive an interpretive reading of Deleuze and Guattari’s concept of the abstract machine, defined as the *colonial abstract machine*. By incorporating the interpretive model of the colonial abstract machine, the thesis offers an analysis that

¹³ There are also inaccuracies in already published material, some of which are addressed in the following chapters where relevant.

closes off the open-ended system of Deleuze and Guattari's cultural theory of the abstract machine.

Deleuze and Guattari are two prolific French post-structural theorists who authored many books, but for the purposes of this thesis, two are examined in particular. The *Capitalism and Schizophrenia* series, consisting of *Anti-Oedipus* (1977) and *A Thousand Plateaus* (1987), offer ways in which to analyze a discourse of the colonial project. The appearance of Deleuze and Guattari's ideas in relation to specifically art historical analysis dealing with issues pertaining to expressly post-colonial interests notably occurs in *Out There: Marginalization and Contemporary Cultures* (1990).¹⁴ Deleuze and Guattari's 1974 essay, "What is a Minor Literature?" appears in the section titled, "Other Questions: Critical Contexts," framed between the text "The Straight Mind" by Monique Wittig and "The Other Question: Difference, Discrimination and the Discourse of Colonialism" by Homi K. Bhabha.¹⁵ In Russell Ferguson's introduction to *Out There*, he comments that the essay by Deleuze and Guattari argues that an invisibility of the dominant order in its own definitions leads to a reinvention of the self in relation to the other, arguing further that Deleuze and Guattari present a means to challenge the dominant order through language.¹⁶

The invocation of a minor literature begs the question, what constitutes a major literature? Simon O'Sullivan, in his 2006 publication *Art Encounters Deleuze and Guattari: Thought Beyond Representation*, argues that post-colonial art practices can be

¹⁴ Russell Ferguson, Martha Gever, Trinh T. Minh-ha and Cornel West, eds., *Out There: Marginalization and Contemporary Culture* (New York: MIT Press, 1990).

¹⁵ Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari, "What is a Minor Literature?," *Out There*, 59-70. Originally published in Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari, "What is a Minor Literature?," *Kafka: Towards a Minor Literature*, trans. Dana Polan (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1986).

¹⁶ Russell Ferguson, "Introduction: Invisible Center," *Out There: Marginalization and Contemporary Culture*, ed. Russell Ferguson, Martha Gever, Trinh T. Minh-ha and Cornel West (New York: MIT Press, 1990) 12-13.

seen as minor because of their stammering of the international language of modernism. A question that O'Sullivan raises is the relation of the minor to capitalism, because it can be argued that the minor can either operate towards capitalism's expansion, or move beyond the logic of capitalism entirely.¹⁷

The totalizing goal of the colonial project, which is intrinsically tied to European capitalism, is to reintegrate and translate all things to laws of profit. An economic order is supplanted over any and all kinds of differing conceptions of order, to translate all modes of production into an end-goal of naturalization and totalization. The colonial project, tied to capitalism, seeks to naturalize itself so that it appears not as construction, but a natural function and logical extension of the operations of the earth. For this reason, I argue that the minor must be seen in relation to the dominant order, or major, and together are representative of the system developed by Deleuze and Guattari called the abstract machine. The theoretical application of the abstract machine acts as an example of a dominant order, with which "The Post-Colonial Landscape Project" engages.

¹⁷ Simon O'Sullivan, *Art Encounters Deleuze and Guattari: Thought Beyond Representation* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2006) 72-73.

Introduction:

The Post-Colonial Landscape Project and the Colonial Abstract Machine

The invocation of the post-colonial in the Canadian context is subject to a series of slippages and convolutions. In one sense, Canada, as a settler nation-state and former colony of both Great Britain and France, occupies a precarious position in terms of how a post-colonial country, or nation-state, is defined. As such, Canada presents a unique and distinct opportunity to further understand and theorize what post-colonialism may entail. The way in which land entitlement and treaty negotiations continually redefine borders within the territory of Canada speaks to a consistent and in-process negotiation between the colonial project and a post-colonial negotiation between the colonized and the colonizers.¹⁸

The colonial project, in the Canadian context, is representative of a continued disavowal of the reality of Canada as being a nation founded on a colonial immigrant population defined as “founder nations.”¹⁹ Through the idea of European colonial founder nations, argued by philosopher Will Kymlicka, three specific groups define Canadian diversity: 1) Aboriginal; 2) European settler colonials; and 3) ethnocultural groups that are the subject of immigration policy.²⁰ The populations that encompassed early British and French immigrants represent the “founding” nations of Canada. Kymlicka further defines Canadian diversity as being subject to three specific “silos” that are represented by Aboriginal Peoples, French Canadians, and immigrant/ethnic groups that are the

¹⁸ Joyce Green and Ian Peach, “Beyond ‘Us and ‘Them’: Prescribing Postcolonial Politics and Policy in Saskatchewan,” *The Art of the State III: Belonging? Diversity, Recognition and Shared Citizenship in Canada*, ed. Keith Banting, Thomas J. Courchene and F. Leslie Seidle (Montreal: IRPP, 2007) 263-284.

¹⁹ Melanie C.T. Ash, “But Where Are You REALLY From? Reflections on Immigration, Multiculturalism, and Canadian Identity.”, *Racism, Eh? A Critical Inter-Disciplinary Anthology of Race and Racism in Canada*, ed. Camille A. Nelson and Charmaine A. Nelson (Toronto: Captus Press, 2004) 401.

²⁰ Will Kymlicka, “Ethnocultural Diversity in a Liberal State: Making Sense of the Canadian Model(s).” *The Art of the State III*, 40-42.

subject of engagement for Canadian politicians abiding by a liberal multicultural framework of ongoing federal policy.²¹

The history of Canada has caused certain theorists and academics to argue that, within Canada, the invocation of the post-colonial does not adequately address the consistent and demeaning role the state has played in its negotiations with certain immigrant communities and the First Nations within Canada.²² While this understanding is succinct and direct in its analysis, it does not accurately address the complexity of the colonial project, past and present, in respect to the long-standing First Nations and Métis communities that have fought, lobbied, and continue to work towards a sovereign cultural autonomy within what has been referred to as the layered palimpsest of federal laws and policies outlining the way in which those communities are seen within the greater whole.²³ Within the battles for recognition, the art gallery and exhibition space have become representative of useful sites of negotiation for the politics of belonging.²⁴

Contemporary art exhibition practices in Canada represent and exemplify a post-colonial *description*. Literary theorist Ania Loomba argues that a *description* defines a development that is not evaluative, but rather descriptive in the way in which it illustrates a process of disengagement from the initial colonial project.²⁵ For Canada, this

²¹ Ibid., 52-53.

²² For example, Judith Mastai, "The Post-Colonial Landscape," *BlackFlash*, (Summer 1996), 11; Helga Pakasaar, *Revisions* (Banff: Banff Centre for the Arts, 1992) 1; Lee Maracle, "The Postcolonial Imagination," *Fuse* 16 (Spring 1996) 13.

²³ Joyce Green, "Self-Determination, Citizenship and Federalism: Indigenous and Canadian Palimpsest," *Reconfiguring Aboriginal State-Relations*, ed. Michael Murphy (Kingston: Institute for Intergovernmental Relations, 2005) 329-352.

²⁴ Gerald McMaster, "Museums and the Native Voice," *Museums After Modernism: Strategies of Engagement*, ed. Griselda Pollock and Joyce Zemans (Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, 2007) 70-71.

²⁵ "The word 'postcolonial' is useful as a generalization to the extent that 'it refers to a *process* of disengagement from the whole colonial syndrome, which takes many forms and is probably inescapable for all those whose worlds have been marked by that set of phenomena: 'postcolonial' is a descriptive not an evaluative term." Ania Loomba, *Colonialism/Postcolonialism: The New Critical Idiom* (New York: Routledge, 2005) 21.

disengagement is most clearly exemplified by changes to immigration policy that signaled a move away from racially-discriminatory cultural assimilationist practices. In Canada, the adoption of race-neutral admission criteria in 1967 in combination with the 1971 adoption of a multicultural policy by the federal government signaled a changing perception in the development of Canadian policy towards immigrants.²⁶ The term post-colonial then is applicable because of the entrenched and institutionalized reality of colonialism in Canada becoming sacrosanct.

Contemporary art exhibitions such as “New Work by a New Generation” (Norman Mackenzie Art Gallery, 1982); “Horses Fly Too” (Norman Mackenzie Art Gallery, 1984); “Stardusters” (Thunder Bay Art Gallery, 1986); “Revisions” (Walter Phillips Gallery, 1988); “Edward Poitras: Offensive/Defensive” (Mendel Art Gallery, 1989); “Beyond History” (Vancouver Art Gallery, 1989); “Sharing the Circle” (Wanuskewin Heritage Park Gallery, 1992) “Indigena: Contemporary Native Perspectives” (Canadian Museum of Civilization, 1992); “Land Spirit Power” (National Gallery of Canada, 1992); “New Territories: 350/500 Years After” (Various Sites, Montréal, 1992) and “The Postcolonial Landscape Project” (Mendel Art Gallery, Edmonton Art Gallery, 1993-1997) are representative of a combination of art and politics that consistently deployed the public gallery space as a means to promote a larger awareness of the colonial project in Canada and internationally. The above is a small selection exemplifying the consistent critique applied to notions of Canadian identity and belonging throughout the 1980’s and 1990’s, and even into the present day.

²⁶ Kymlicka, “Ethnocultural Diversity in a Liberal State: Making Sense of the Canadian Model(s),” 43-44.

The histories presented through exhibition practices post-1982²⁷ within Canada consistently and relentlessly destabilized the dominant order through a post-colonial engagement with the colonial framework, originating from the British hierarchy established at confederation in 1867. To deny agents who function within the greater institutional operations of the state, if they can effect change, of being active and consistent contributors to a discourse of post-colonialism in Canada is to negate the importance of their contributions and solidify the value of the Canadian state in articulating diversity. This is not to insinuate that certain artists are post-colonial based on their ancestral origins while others are not. Not all post-coloniality can be defined by ethnicity, national identity or race-based constructs, but rather the contributions of the agent to a comprehensive and subject based critique of the absolute value of the colonial state.

The margin that Homi K. Bhabha calls the colonial margin, where the concept of the West reveals its ambivalent cultural status that enacts discriminatory power, produces a place of otherness that becomes fixed in the West as its antithesis.²⁸ This margin produces diverse theoretical texts that attempt to determine, while further undermining, the concept of otherness in relation to the dominant order. The representation of otherness requires questioning so that it can interrogate how the West becomes deployed in relation to its antithesis, the “East,” which is inherently constructed as a site of colonial fantasy. The construction of a race-based stereotypical discourse informs the way in which the government splits the creation and exegesis of its power. The institutionalization of

²⁷ 1982 is significant because it is the year of the Robert Houle exhibition “New Work by a New Generation.”

²⁸ Homi K. Bhabha, “The Other Question: Difference, Discrimination and the Discourse of Colonialism,” *Out There*, 71-72. The term “West” is used here as a homological grouping denoting Eurocentrism.

political and cultural stereotypes pertaining to populations and communities become translated into prejudicial and discriminatory conceptions, leading to a prison of encircled authoritarianism and justified rule.²⁹

For Ella Shohat, the post-colonial marks a contemporary state, situation, condition or epoch. Her understanding is drawn from Kwame Anthony Appiah's reading of the relationship between post-colonialism and post-modernity.³⁰ The danger to the critical edge of the term post-colonialism, is that it can become a blanket term applied to eliminate the differential applications of genocidal oppression enacted over global histories, reducing them to one history, a post history of colonialism universalized as the post-colonial.³¹ The project of deciphering the way in which locally specific negotiations between the history of the colonial process and the entrenched neo-colonial processes occurring in the latter stages of development, becomes the project of a post-colonial negotiation. Or as Stuart Hall has observed:

Postcolonial is not the end of colonization. It is after a certain kind of colonialism, after a certain moment of high imperialism and colonial occupation—in the wake of it, in the shadow of it, inflected by it—it is what it is because something else has happened before, but it is also something new.³²

In Canada, with reference to First Nations populations, the post-colonial acts as a descriptive term. It defines the way in which representation has shifted to being autonomously controlled vis-à-vis the prejudicial and discriminatory colonial fantasy enacted through institutional stereotypes and government policy.

²⁹ Bhabha. "The Other Question," 83-86.

³⁰ Kwame Anthony Appiah, "Is the Post- in Postmodernism the Post- in Postcolonial?," *Critical Inquiry* 17:2 (Winter 1991) 336-357.

³¹ Ella Shohat, "Notes on the 'Post-Colonial'," *Taboo Memories, Diasporic Voices* (London: Duke University Press, 2006) 237-238.

³² Quoted in Julie Drew and Stuart Hall, "Cultural Composition: Stuart Hall on Ethnicity and the Discursive Turn," *Race, Rhetoric, and the Postcolonial*, ed. Gary A. Olson and Lynn Worsham (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1999) 230.

With reference to “The Post-Colonial Landscape Project,” two landmark exhibitions can be seen as precedents informing the exhibition program: “Indigena: Contemporary Native Perspectives” (1992) and “Land Spirit Power: First Nations at the National Gallery of Canada” (1992), which were major institutional exhibitions that took on the theme of contemporary representation by artists of native ancestry. The exhibitions, organized by the Museum of Civilization and the National Gallery of Canada, respectively, were firsts for both institutions in terms of the level of autonomy and control granted to the artists, and the initiative to exhibit work about a contemporary engagement with the colonial history of Canada.

Art historian Ruth B. Phillips argues that “Indigena” and “Land Spirit Power” were sites of indigenous intervention into the standard narratives of Canadian history.³³ The exhibitions became sites of political activism where the artists examined land claims issues, sovereignty and social problems. Phillips argues the exhibitions differed in the way in which the artists approached voice and representation. “Indigena,” organized and curated by members of First Nations communities, was a direct response to quincentenary celebrations of ‘contact’, or ‘discovery’, and relied, according to Phillips, on a rhetoric of confrontation. In contrast, “Land Spirit Power,” organized by both native and non-native curators, was a pluralistic accommodation, utilizing strategies of humor and wit to offer an aesthetic seduction. Phillips regards both strategies as radical and saw the exhibitions as complimentary to one another, acting as illustrators of the way in which art acts as both sword and balm in contextualizing history.³⁴

³³ Ruth B. Phillips, “Show Times: De-celebrating the Canadian Nation, De-colonizing the Canadian Museum 1967-92,” *National Museums: Negotiating Histories Conference Proceedings*, ed. Darryl McIntyre and Kirsten Wehner (Canberra: National Museum of Australia, 2001) 110-112.

³⁴ Ibid.

Interdisciplinary scholar, Alfred Young Man summarized the position "The Post-Colonial Landscape Project" exemplifies. In the catalogue essay for "Indigena," he writes that a retelling of history from a Native perspective requires the unmasking of a profound and fallacious unconsciousness.³⁵ Through exhibitions that expose false images, a challenge to popular European ethnocentric notions of history is developed and critiqued.

Young Man quotes Cherokee artist Jimmie Durham:

The last frontier is not outer space... But a breaking down of our complicity in the colonialism of the American Indian and other fourth world Indigenous Peoples, to admit within and without ourselves no less than a duplicity in the invention of an alien western culture upon the false dichotomy of civilized vs. savage.³⁶

Young Man outlines that the presumed universality of Westernism (Eurocentrism) must be deconstructed and reconstructed within North America for the purpose of moving forward. Calling for a dialectical beginning, he explained that the way forward was through respectful and equal dialogue. For Young Man, the actions and art of 1992 were the beginnings of a new world that would be followed by change in "Western" cultural trends.³⁷

Robert Houle, artist and co-curator of "Land Spirit Power," also commented on the need to deconstruct Eurocentric ideologies. In addition to "Land Spirit Power," Houle also curated "New Work by a New Generation," a seminal exhibition in Canadian art history.³⁸ In the 1982 catalogue essay accompanying the "New Work by a New

³⁵ Alfred Young Man, "The Metaphysics of North American Indian Art," *Indigena: Contemporary Native Perspectives*, ed. Gerald McMaster and Lee-Ann Martin (Hull: Canadian Museum of Civilization, 1992) 83.

³⁶ *Ibid.*, 85.

³⁷ *Ibid.*, 94.

³⁸ As acknowledged in Diana Nemiroff, "Modernism, Nationalism, and Beyond," *Land, Spirit, Power* (Ottawa: National Gallery of Canada, 1992) 36; Richard Hill, "Neo-Native Art: New Approaches to Traditional Thinking," *Revisions*, ed. Helga Pakasaar (Banff: Banff Centre for the Arts, 1992) 48-49; Tom

Generation” exhibition, Houle indicated the artists contributing to the exhibition distinctly drew from aesthetic traditions derived from both North America and Western Europe.³⁹ What Houle referred to as a “new art” was representative of sophisticated styles and techniques that were innovative takes on tradition that included autobiographical reference points, negating a stereotypical pan-Indian identity construction bound to a colonially ethnographic and salvage paradigm past.⁴⁰ These were artists, according to Houle, that functioned within two cultures that were not always compatible. Within the operation between two cultures, one of the issues the participating artists dealt with was the way in which the dominant culture viewed them as fourth-world anthropological curiosities, insignificant to the history of art.⁴¹ Through an explication detailing the value and aesthetic properties of the works contained in the exhibition, Houle’s essay sought to attribute the participants to high-art lineages associated to abstract-expressionist action painters Jackson Pollock and Barnett Newman, and new-traditionalist painters Norval Morrisseau and Fritz Scholder. The deliberate association signaled a radical alignment between modern and tradition that, for Houle, was the catalyst for a new generation of artists who actively defined themselves within the cultural boundaries of colonized and colonizer.⁴²

“New Work by a New Generation” represented, as Houle would later argue in his 1991 article “Sovereignty over Subjecthood,” an important advancement in the

Hill, “Beyond History,” *Beyond History*, ed. Karen Duffek and Tom Hill (Vancouver: Vancouver Art Gallery, 1989) 12.

³⁹ Robert Houle, “The Emergence of a New Aesthetic Tradition,” *New Work by a New Generation*, ed. Carol Phillips and Robert Houle (Regina: Norman Mackenzie Art Gallery, 1982) 2.

⁴⁰ James Clifford, “On Other Peoples: Beyond the Salvage Paradigm,” *Discussions on Contemporary Culture*, ed. Hal Foster (New York: Dia Art Foundation, 1987) 121-122.

⁴¹ Houle, “The Emergence of a New Aesthetic Tradition,” 2.

⁴² Curtis Joseph Collins, “Sites of Aboriginal Difference: A Perspective on Installation Art in Canada,” PhD diss., McGill University 2002, 107-109.

deconstruction of Eurocentric hegemony.⁴³ The works, through the aptitude and commitment of the artists, combined aesthetics and social commentary. The history and contemporary understanding of colonization was interrogated through the broad curatorial thematic. The exhibition deconstructed and analyzed existing cultural barriers between the historical museum and contemporary art gallery.⁴⁴

In addition, Houle's essay from the *Land Spirit Power* catalogue, "The Spiritual Legacy of the Ancient Ones," argued that there were limitations to the then current obsession with the theoretical concept of postmodernism.⁴⁵ Houle, similarly to Young Man, quotes Jimmie Durham: "there is no Western culture, but a power structure that pretends to be Western culture,"⁴⁶ which can be paralleled and connected to Bhabha's notion of the colonial fantasy. In doing so, Houle questioned the relevance of the modernist/postmodernist dichotomy given the way it divorces the past from contemporary developments.

The questioning of the modernist/postmodernist dichotomy offers a way to understand how "The Post-Colonial Landscape Project" speaks to a dialogue of inclusion, as opposed to a dichotomy. A multitude of voices contributed to the overarching structure and offered a colonial/post-colonial dialogue. The works and exhibitions assumed the ability to destabilize and subvert dominant understandings of colonial history. Some of the artists addressed little known histories, while others addressed contemporary realities masked by the dominant cultural apparatus. Each of the artists within the exhibition

⁴³ Robert Houle, "Sovereignty over Subjecthood," *C Magazine* (Summer 1991) 31-32.

⁴⁴ Gerald McMaster, "Towards an Aboriginal Art History," *Native American Art in the 20th Century*, ed. W. Jackson Rushing III (New York: Routledge, 1999) 85-86; McMaster, "Museums and the Native Voice," 70-71.

⁴⁵ Robert Houle, "The Spiritual Legacy of the Ancient Ones," *Land, Spirit, Power*, 72.

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, 70.

exemplified the many different ways of providing a subject position in the contemporary cultural sphere.

Because the popular and status quo history of Canada begins with Spanish and Indigenous contact, the political role of the artists within the program was in large part to elucidate the stereotypes and imaginaries inherent to that historical construction.⁴⁷ But, far from being an imaginary history, the history presented was real, palatable, and for many, the effects of that history informed their work to a degree that it became impossible to divorce the theory from the practice.⁴⁸ “The Post-Colonial Landscape Project” thus represents a critical engagement grounded in political motivation, offering a continued dialogue which used the public gallery as a means to move away from a representation of reality, politics and society that would appear to be rhetorical or simple.⁴⁹

A key aspect was how artists Edward Poitras, Domingo Cisneros, Kay Walkingstick, Alex Janvier and Jane Ash Poitras, who had all exhibited in either “Indigena” or “Land Spirit Power” together were representative of almost one-third of the entire programming schedule of “The Post-Colonial Landscape Project.” What can be derived from this is that once the above artists were combined with non-native

⁴⁷ Marcia Crosby, “Constructing the Imaginary Indian,” *Vancouver Anthology: The Institutional Politics of Art*, ed. Stan Douglas (Vancouver: Talon Books, 1991) 267-294. Crosby’s essay covers the topic so thoroughly that it is best to cite the entirety of the essay as a referent and precedent. In addition, the idea of a 500-year anniversary of ‘discovery’ exemplifies the inherent systemic exclusions applied to historical construction.

⁴⁸ “This political struggle over aboriginal title to land is central to discussing the aspirations of the first nations artist.” Houle, “Sovereignty Over Subjecthood,” 30.

⁴⁹ “Presentational Political art remains problematic as soon as they [social practices] are represented as universal or even uniform, such representations become ahistorical and thus ideological. It is here that the rhetoricity or presentational political art is exposed for when art seeks most directly to engage the real, it most clearly entertains rhetorical figures. There can be no simple representation of reality, politics, society.” Hal Foster, “For a Concept of the Political in Contemporary Art,” *Recodings: Art, Spectacle, Cultural Politics* (Washington: Bay Press, 1985) 155.

participants in “The Post-Colonial Landscape Project,” the scope of the project broadened and continued the political activism associated with “Indigena” and “Land Spirit Power.” This can be seen as the project attempting to implement the dialogue called for by Young Man, while simultaneously bringing to attention the alien Western culture highlighted by Jimmie Durham, contributing to a further analysis and understanding of the concept of colonial fantasy as described by Bhabha.

However, working towards dialogue in this manner is problematic because the alien western culture that Durham cites is based on a potentially nefarious construction based on a colonial fantasy of the other and a misconstrued fabrication of the self.⁵⁰ In the case of Canada, the fabrication of the self is demonstrated by the way in which this country is defined by two specific founding peoples, or languages, specifically French and English.⁵¹ It is also evidenced in the landscapes of the Group of Seven, which have been defined as the “Art for a Nation,” and fundamentally linked to the idealization of Canada.⁵² The amnesiac landscape, which obscures the colonial process as a necessary evolutionary advancement, perpetuates the fabrication of the Canadian self as being one of European origins, who fill and make prosperous the empty landscape of a new world.

The foundation of the amnesiac landscape is traced to the origins of the colonial project over the entirety of the “Americas,” stemming from the year of 1492 (First

⁵⁰ Edward Said, *Orientalism* (New York: Vintage, 1978) 5-7. Following Said, what I mean by a misconstrued fabrication of the self is that, if the idea of difference through Orientalism was a Eurocentric construction of the other, it follows that the self is then also constructed.

⁵¹ Heather Devine, *The People Who Own Themselves: Aboriginal Ethnogenesis in a Canadian Family, 1660-1900* (Calgary: University of Calgary Press, 2004). Devine’s study follows the ethnogenesis of a Métis family through the territorial boundaries of the United States and Canada. The study offers a counter-argument to Kymlicka’s three silos of Canadian diversity, and deepens the complexity of community development in Canada pre and post confederation.

⁵² “The Group of Seven: Art for a Nation” was an exhibition organized by the National Gallery of Canada in 1996 that celebrated the artwork of the Group of Seven. Curated by Charles C. Hill, it marked the seventy-fifth anniversary of the group’s founding.

contact) and the homogenous naming of the indigenous peoples encountered as “Indian.” Through their naming, the colonial project was founded on translation, but it was a translation of names that were coined on a combination of appropriation, synthesis and fantasy, where the old world of established Eurocentric cultural norms was ciphered into the New World as a means to reminisce and correlate new to old. A hybrid progression within Canadian art is the combination of the dying race of the “Indian” and the new “indigenous Canadian race,” defined artistically through landscape painting. The early project of the Group of Seven, supported by the National Gallery of Canada, was to export an image of national unity in the arts that was entirely constructed out of the want of a national and exportable *indigenous* Canadian art identity.⁵³

“The Post-Colonial Landscape Project” was an initiative meant to emphasize the historical and continued presence of First Nations communities within Canada, as well as develop an understanding of how the colonial project continues throughout the world in the contemporary. Literary theorist, Michael Hardt, and philosopher, Antonio Negri have clearly and extensively developed an understanding of the end-goal of the colonial project in their collaborative effort, *Empire* (2001).

The overlying thesis of *Empire* is that a new form of global sovereignty is in development, composed of a series of national and supranational organizations bound to a common logic or order, the order of capital.⁵⁴ Derived from Eurocentric colonialism and effectuated by access to the powers of capital, the colonial project covered 84.6 percent

⁵³ Leslie Dawn, *National Visions, National Blindness: Canadian Art and Identities in the 1920's* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2006) 310-317.

⁵⁴ Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri, *Empire* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2001) xii.

of the globe by the 1930s.⁵⁵ Hardt and Negri argue that “European modernity is inseparable from capitalism,” a modernity that is defined by a self and other binary dualism.⁵⁶ They call the passage from a disciplinary society to a society of control the moment when capital becomes the social bios. It is a moment where marginalized resistance becomes centralized and open to networks, ultimately leading to a series of individual points “singularized in a thousand plateaus.”⁵⁷

Heavily indebted to the theories of Deleuze and Guattari, *Empire* argues that at the height of capitalist sovereignty, capital functions on a “plane of immanence.”⁵⁸ The plane of immanence does not rely on a transcendent centre of power, because it has become the only power. The plane of immanence is a concept developed out of Deleuze and Guattari’s *Capitalism and Schizophrenia* series. Brian Massumi, who translated *A Thousand Plateaus* into English in 1987, comments that the plane of immanence, or plane of consistency, is representative of an individual. Each individual is enveloped in others; this multilayered individual then becomes a “well defined super-individual or ‘molar’ formation.”⁵⁹ The plane of immanence or consistency represents a level of virtuality, but its *molarization* involves the creation of a “plane of transcendence” that attempts to become immanent, or abstract, but ultimately fails and becomes fascist.⁶⁰ The plane of immanence, or consistency, is representative of the major order that the minor engages with, creating new centers from peripheries and further deepening the complexity of the system.

⁵⁵ Arif Dirlik, “The Postcolonial Aura: Third World Criticism in the Age of Global Capitalism,” *Critical Inquiry* 20:2 (Winter 1994) 337; Loomba, *Colonialism/Postcolonialism*, 3.

⁵⁶ Hardt and Negri, *Empire*, 86.

⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, 25.

⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, 326.

⁵⁹ Brian Massumi, *A User’s Guide to Capitalism and Schizophrenia: Deviations from Deleuze and Guattari*, (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1992), 48.

⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, 67-68.

What Massumi calls the “fascist attractor” is a becoming-the-same (or becoming-major) where order is constrained to a oneness or singularity.⁶¹ The fascist paranoia of the major is contrasted with the anarchy-schizophrenia of the minor, or becoming-minor. The becoming-major and becoming-minor are two levels of a self/other system embedded in the writings of Deleuze and Guattari, which lead into the movement of the fascist-attractor becoming the capitalist-attractor, a symptom of late-capitalism personified by the liberal democratic nation-state of democracy. Once capitalism no longer requires a justification, it becomes the abstracted personification of a desire, and not an ideology. It is the moment where the plane of transcendence becomes the plane of immanence.⁶² What Massumi calls an abstract desire can be correlated to Deleuze and Guattari’s idea of an abstract machine, because it is the initial desiring machine that leads to the later overcoded abstract machine. Because colonialism and capitalism are intrinsic to one another, they are representative of a singular machine that branches out and captures everything.

Drawing from Massumi, Hardt and Negri, I argue that contained within the *Capitalism and Schizophrenia* series is a means to understand how the colonial project in Canada has superseded its colonial aspirations and become naturalized, or a universal mode of exchange embodied through capital. For the purpose of the thesis, this becoming is referred to as the “colonial abstract machine.” As suggested by Jakub Zdebik, the abstract machine defines the functions and matters of reality.⁶³ It is representative of an overlying structure containing a machinic assemblage understood as functioning with and

⁶¹ Ibid., 166-117.

⁶² Ibid., 116-131.

⁶³ Jakub Zdebik, “The Extraordinary Contraction: The Diagram in Deleuze and Guattari’s System,” PhD diss., London, Ontario, University of Western Ontario, 2007, 157-158.

within two poles.⁶⁴ The first is localized to strata, where distributions of territorialities, relative deterritorializations and reterritorializations occur. The second is localized to the plane of consistency, or immanence, which conjugates processes of deterritorialization into an absolute and is at its source a single stratum.⁶⁵ The absolute can be defined as the earth, but it can also be defined as an instance where the earth is manipulated into representing a body without organs, a body that is representative of the capitalist and colonial being.⁶⁶

The colonial abstract machine works by enveloping, or colonizing, all means of production until everything that was once outside of the capital model, is brought within it and naturalized, so that it appears to be a universal understanding of the earth.⁶⁷ The system then appears to be objective, allowing for changes to occur within, but never from outside. The absolutely deterritorialized earth, or naturalized capitalist socius or bios, represent the goal of the colonial project, embedded and contained within capitalism, to push through an understanding that a capital, state-form economy is the only mode of organization. It amounts to a naturalization of capitalism and colonialism as the singular means to perceive how the world, or a society, functions. Massumi comments that the abstract machine, or group subject, is foundationless; encompassing both the individual and society, but granting neither agency, the abstract machine is a fiction that exists as an illusion but acts like a fact, if not common sense.⁶⁸

⁶⁴ Deleuze and Guattari, *A Thousand Plateau*, 145.

⁶⁵ Ibid.

⁶⁶ Deleuze and Guattari, *Anti-Oedipus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia*, trans. Robert Hurley, Mark Seem and Helen R. Lane (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1977) 10.

⁶⁷ Deleuze and Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia*, 11; Jean-François Lyotard. "Energumen Capitalism," *Deleuze and Guattari: Critical Assessments of Leading Philosophers*, ed. Gary Genosko (New York: Routledge, 2001) 591-592.

⁶⁸ Brian Massumi, "Theories of the Group Subject: Through a Reading of Corneille's *Le Cid*," *Deleuze and Guattari: Critical Assessments of Leading Philosophers* (2001) 822.

Deleuze and Guattari outline an abstract machine is much more than language: it has the capacity of drawing a diagram of a plane of consistency.⁶⁹ An abstract machine cannot distinguish between *content* and *expression* (that is the role of the machinic assemblage), its function is to draw a plane of consistency that provides the break where stratification and destratification occur. This is opposed by the strata of the first pole of the machinic assemblage, which co-adapts content and expression and provides the workings of the system. The abstract machine is therefore free from the contents and expressions it distributes, or diagrams.

Massumi argues that content and expression are in a state of reciprocal presupposition -- the assumptive process, of which the difference between content and expression is functional, relative and reversible, is relatable to an encounter.⁷⁰ Within the encounter between content and expression, they are reversible, but the perspective is one where the subjective position is grouped between self and other, to which there is no escape once within the system. The machinic assemblage, encased by the abstract machine, is constitutive of a universal and totalizing theory. Massumi, as do Deleuze and Guattari, leaves this theoretical construction as an example of organic constructions which suggests that the system, developed, can escape capitalism. I argue however that the system is totalizing, colonizing, and ultimately seeks to fit the world into an overtly complex organization based on the assumption that Eurocentricized Westernism is equatable to universal ideals and morals.

⁶⁹ Deleuze and Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus*, 141; 70.

⁷⁰ Massumi. *A User's to Capitalism and Schizophrenia*, 12-14.

For Deleuze and Guattari, the purpose of an abstract machine is to “pilot” its internal functions.⁷¹ Thus applying this idea to the colonial model would be to say that the abstract machine and the plane of consistency it embodies are more than an organizational structure. As opposed to being historical, the colonial abstract machine becomes “prior to history”; it becomes the means by which history, culture, art, and cultural policy, become available.⁷² The abstract machine, defined through a capital/colonial model, is an overlying organizational structure that consistently maintains that which is within it without explicitly acknowledging its own manufactured naturalization, or absoluteness. Deleuze and Guattari add that an abstract machine can have a proper name and date that designate the matters and functions of its operation.⁷³ It is from this theoretical context that I propose, for the purposes of this thesis, that the abstract machine “The Post-Colonial Landscape Project” engages with can be called the colonial abstract machine, and the date of its inception rests in the year 1492, the year of “discovery” and “first contact”.

Before continuing, it is important to bring in the notion of “faciality.” The abstract machine, because it has an origin, will have a correlative face that is the body without organs, or its “faciality.” The more abstract the face becomes, the more overcoded and absolute its effect. The body without organs, or the plane of consistency, can then have a faciality that links it to its physical origins. The faciality of the abstract machine will not always resemble its product; it becomes illusive and abstracted from its source through the deepening complexity of the system. The role of the abstract machine is to pilot a line of flight along a plane of consistency that is a destratified manifestation of its original

⁷¹ Deleuze and Guattari, *A Thousand Plateau*, 142.

⁷² Ibid.

⁷³ Ibid., 142.

stratum, or source. Deleuze and Guattari argue that once the face becomes an absent faciality, it is removed from itself and becomes an absolute: a body without organs. This body without organs is symptomatic of the naturalization of a system that re-inscribes how the earth is seen. Deleuze and Guattari theorize:

We could say that it (the face) is an *absolute* deterritorialization: it is no longer relative because it removes the head from the stratum of the organism... and connects it to other strata, such as significance and subjectification. Now the face has a correlate of great importance: the landscape.⁷⁴

The piloting role of the abstract machine, drawing the plane of consistency, diagrams the world into a becoming of the landscape. According to Deleuze and Guattari, the face of the abstract machine is the face of the White European Male.⁷⁵ It is not a universal face, but not a singular face either; it is a face that has become the landscape through the colonial process. It can be the face of Jesus Christ, “god’s country,” applied over a territory that is deterritorialized and reterritorialized to fit its abstracted image. The pilot of the colonial abstract machine, seeking to manipulate the world into a capitalist body without organs, is that of the colonizer. The landscape, reminiscent of the face of the pilot, will then also be seen in the terms of its pilot, echoing the binary relations contained within the system. Once abstracted, the individuality of the face loses its markings. It becomes natural; it becomes the landscape, so that it is “not the individuality of the face that counts but the efficacy of the ciphering it makes possible.”⁷⁶ The cipher is the embedded code of the abstract machine; it pilots the plane of consistency’s line of flight, of which the machinic assemblage provides the contents and expressions that make up its structure.

⁷⁴ Ibid., 172.

⁷⁵ Ibid., 176; Massumi, *A User’s to Capitalism and Schizophrenia*, 1; 172-173.

⁷⁶ Ibid., 175.

To better define the terms of how this abstracted source functions within the nation-state of Canada, one only has to cite the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms from 1982:

Whereas Canada is founded upon principles that recognize the supremacy of God and the rule of law.⁷⁷

The “God” cited in the opening to the Charter is a monotheistic god stemming from the tradition of Christianity. Hardt and Negri comment that the invocation of “God” guarantees a preconstituted transcendental rule, which allows for a universal application of the rule of law.⁷⁸ Following the ratified 1982 Canadian Charter, the Multiculturalism Act of 1988 offers a contextualization of how cultural policy is distributed in Canada and how it can be understood in terms of contributing to developing new centers from peripheries while still retaining the abstracted source and relevance of its origin.

According to Joseph Jackson and René Lemieux, “cultural policy is the expression of a government’s willingness to adopt and implement a set of coherent principles, objectives and means to protect and foster its country’s cultural expression.”⁷⁹ They further argue that the “body and soul” of Canada is localized through culture, and this is where government policy that “promotes the arts and whose primary goal is cultural”⁸⁰ serves the public good by promoting cultural expressions that allow for an individual’s sense of belonging and identity to be heightened. What Jackson and Lemieux

⁷⁷ Government of Canada, *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms*, Department of Justice Canada, Ottawa, 1982.

⁷⁸ Hardt and Negri, *Empire*, 78.

⁷⁹ Joseph Jackson and René Lemieux, *The Arts and Canada’s Cultural Policy* (Ottawa: Library of Parliament, 2001) 1.

⁸⁰ *Ibid.*, 1, 2.

call “cultural sovereignty” promotes, through policy, issues that are incumbent to the nation’s sense of identity and cultural expression.⁸¹

The “politics of recognition,” to use philosopher Charles Taylor’s phrase, should result in a kind of “difference blindness” where a universal recognition of equal dignity is afforded through a multicultural program.⁸² Literary theorist Smaro Kamboureli comments that the product of Taylor’s politics of difference has resulted in an aporia, and consequentially because of it the center and margin are in a process of redefinition.⁸³ She argues that the Multicultural Act of 1988 affirms that a becoming of Canada is in process because of colonial and postcolonial history.⁸⁴ The question is whether or not the Multicultural Act and official cultural policy can detract and absolve the colonial state of its systemic and structural race-based privilege granted to the founder nations of Canada, namely British and French. Many critics have argued that it cannot in its current state.⁸⁵

If, for the purposes of this thesis, strata of the machinic assemblage are attributed to cultural policy and the public galleries and institutions “The Post-Colonial Landscape Project” engages with, it is possible to theorize how these exhibitions invoke and expose the universalizing goal of the colonial project. Because the project was a series of

⁸¹ Ibid., 3.

⁸² Charles Taylor, *Multiculturalism and ‘The Politics of Recognition’: An Essay* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1992) 37-38.

⁸³ Smaro Kamboureli, “The Technology of Ethnicity: Canadian Multiculturalism and the Language of the Law,” *Multicultural States: Rethinking Difference and Identity*, ed. David Bennett (New York: Routledge, 1998) 208.

⁸⁴ Ibid., 214.

⁸⁵ See, for example, Himani Bannerji, *The Dark Side of the Nation: Essays on Multiculturalism, Nationalism, and Gender* (Toronto: Canadian Scholars’ Press, 2000) 109-120; Scott McFarlane, “The Haunt of Race: Canada’s *Multiculturalism Act*, the Politics of Incorporation, and Writing Thru Race,” *Fuse* (18:3, Spring 1995) 20-24; Kamboureli. “The Technology of Ethnicity,”; Augie Fleras. “Racializing Culture/Multiculturalizing Race: Multicultural Racism in a Multicultural Canada,” *Racism, Eh? A Critical Inter-Disciplinary Anthology of Race and Racism in Canada*, ed. Camille A. Nelson and Charmaine A. Nelson (Toronto: Captus Press, 2004) 432-440; Anver Saloojee, “Social Cohesion and the Limits of Multiculturalism in Canada,” *Racism, Eh? A Critical Inter-Disciplinary Anthology of Race and Racism in Canada*, ed. Camille A. Nelson and Charmaine A. Nelson (Toronto: Captus Press, 2004) 416-424.

exhibitions publicly funded through Canadian cultural policy monies, the exhibitions helped to develop new centers from peripheries, ultimately enveloping the parts most suited to the colonial project and furthering the abstraction of the face of the landscape, contributing to the becoming suggested by Kamboureli.

Specifically in the Canadian context, the colonial abstract machine is a theoretical tool that aids in understanding how the state removes itself from issues raised by art, by sanctioning the public gallery as the means of dissent. As Joyce Green and Ian Peach argue, the fundamental steps towards building a post-colonial relationship between colonized and colonizer is made possible through the sharing of power and the returning of land and resources.⁸⁶ They argue the process demands a shift away from race-based privilege as the means to confronting and illuminating the imbedded hierarchies of colonial fantasy sustained within the political sphere of Canadian policy. The process is described by Deleuze and Guattari as confronting the White-European-Male abstracted as the face of the landscape.⁸⁷

Through an understanding of how the face of the landscape is abstracted, this thesis reverses the order of the system, and examines how the works and exhibitions reveal the colonial process. Rather than feeding a colonial fantasy, such as the use of the theory of Deleuze and Guattari ultimately does, the thesis offers a counter reading and contextualization of the works and exhibitions. What remains prevalent throughout in my analysis is a critical return to colonial fantasy, with the goal of providing an alternative way in which to understand the art presented.

⁸⁶ Green and Peach, "Beyond 'Us and 'Them'," 270-272.

⁸⁷ Deleuze and Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus*, 176-177, 188.

Chapter One:

The Postcolonial Landscape: A Billboard Exhibition.

This chapter focuses on “The Post-Colonial Landscape: A Billboard Exhibition.” The chapter examines how the exhibition enacted and elaborated on the curatorial objectives as set out by the committee, and how the works effectuate and expose a dialogue, elucidating and figuring where the absent colonial abstract machine functions. In later sections, published analyses are unpacked and critiqued, with new theoretical applications developed to further contextualize the issues raised by the exhibition.

“The Post-Colonial Landscape: A Billboard Exhibition” consisted of the work of four artists: Edward Poitras, Grant McConnell, Jamelie Hassan and Kay Walkingstick (figs. 1-4). Each artist created a standard size billboard of 427 x 1463 cm, which was exhibited at the corner of First Avenue North and Twenty-third Street East in Saskatoon, Saskatchewan. Each of the works were exhibited for month long periods between the dates of May 31 and September 20, 1993.

Joyce Whitebear-Reed, an independent curator and artist from the Whitebear First Nation, Saskatchewan, who in the previous year had been involved in curating the group exhibition “Sharing the Circle,” curated “A Billboard Exhibition,” “Sharing the Circle” occurred at the Wanuskewin Heritage Park Art Gallery in June 1992, and was the park and gallery’s inaugural exhibition. The curatorial premise was similar to that of “The Post-Colonial Landscape Project,” but in execution differed in its focus on First Nations subject positions regarding the history of colonization in Canada. The exhibition consisted of two-dimensional works and was theoretically-contained by the four

directions within the circle. The exhibition replaced “The Post-Colonial Landscape Project” as the inaugural exhibition for the park’s opening.

For “The Post-Colonial Landscape: A Billboard Exhibition,” Grenville acted as the project coordinator. The billboards were each equipped with an attached sideboard outlining the name of the artist, the sponsoring gallery, and the name and dates of the exhibition. According to Grenville, the idea for the billboard exhibition came about through his exposure to Jamelie Hassan’s billboard work *Because... there was and there wasn’t a city of Baghdad* (fig. 5), sponsored and originally exhibited by the artist-run center Artcite Inc. in Windsor, Ontario and displayed in Windsor, and later London, Ontario, during the summer of 1991.⁸⁸

The exhibition was funded through various public agencies, with most monies coming from the Canada Council. In addition, the exhibition was privately funded through Hook Outdoor Advertising, an advertising firm specializing in billboards with offices across Canada. The company donated the space of exhibition and provided the technical expertise of transferring the artists’ maquettes from their original to billboard size.⁸⁹ According to Whitebear-Reed’s curatorial essay, the billboards, placed into the urban landscape of the downtown business district of Saskatoon, represent a “strategic intervention.”⁹⁰

In accordance with the other exhibitions contained within “The Post-Colonial Landscape Project,” the curatorial premise of “A Billboard Exhibition” was to engage post-colonial issues of the late twentieth century. Issues ranging from the differences in

⁸⁸ Grenville, personal interview, January 18, 2008.

⁸⁹ Terry Fenton, “Foreword.” *The Post-Colonial Landscape: A Billboard Exhibition* (Saskatoon: Mendel Art Gallery, 1993) n.pag.

⁹⁰ Joyce Whitebear-Reed, *The Postcolonial Landscape: A Billboard Exhibition*, 3.

use of the land between pre-colonial native societies and the later European settlers, to the colonial annexation of the land and forced displacement that occurred during the nineteenth century, and the postcolonial reality of the land as being psychologically and territorially redefined in the twentieth century, were at the heart of the curatorial premise.⁹¹ The premise was given to the artists involved who then created work accordingly to their respective views on the problematics above.

With each billboard placed into the urban fabric of downtown Saskatoon, the larger billboard project encompassed what Erin Manning has termed a dialogical medium that incorporates viewers and art within the landscape.⁹² What she calls a “dialogical deterritorialization” – traced through a reading of Russian semiotician and philosopher Mikhail Bakhtin’s concepts of the chronotope and dialogy, combined with a reading of Deleuze and Guattari’s concept of deterritorialization -- effectuates instances where the contemporary landscape representation is exposed of its ethnocentricities.⁹³

According to Manning, the chronotope “highlights the dialogical movement between space and time inherent in all representations” and produces an understanding that “time and space are interdependent.”⁹⁴ The results of this relationship lead to the construction of “timed-places and placed-times,” which Manning relates to the landscapes of the Group of Seven and how their work acts as traces of the “places and representations where social, historical, and geographical conditions alert us to the

⁹¹ Fenton, “Forward.”

⁹² Erin Manning, “An Excess of Seeing: Territorial Imperatives in Canadian Landscape Art,” *Ephemeral Territories: Representing Nation, Home, and Identity in Canada* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2003) 20.

⁹³ *Ibid.*, 22.

⁹⁴ *Ibid.*, 13.

political implications of an encounter between history and geography.”⁹⁵ The landscape is a chronotopic event that “focuses on the effects of its representation in time and space.”⁹⁶ The chronotopic landscape is combined with dialogic, “understood as the constant between meanings” which instigates a “critical engagement with the *other* (my italics).”⁹⁷ The moment alterity is introduced to the chronotopic event renders “time and space problematic by raising the question of the constitution of the subject of discourse with respect to the world of others.”⁹⁸ Once combined with the concept of deterritorialization, the dialogical deterritorialization becomes a moment where the polyglossia of the social and political utterance instigates a collusion where “discourses collide and transform outside the vocabulary of state philosophy.”⁹⁹ For Manning, once the landscape representation is exposed, the billboards act as sites where a recombining and restructuring of the hierarchies of truth and sovereignty occur.¹⁰⁰

Charles Taylor’s theories of the public sphere further moves forward Manning’s assertion that “A Billboard Exhibition” operates outside state philosophy. Taylor refers to the public sphere as “the locus of a discussion of potentially engaging everyone, in which the society can come to a common mind about important matters.”¹⁰¹ It is a space that, similar to Manning’s assertion that the dialogical deterritorialization occurs outside the vocabulary of state philosophy, houses a discussion that is “self-consciously seen as being outside power.”¹⁰²

⁹⁵ Ibid.

⁹⁶ Ibid.

⁹⁷ Ibid.

⁹⁸ Ibid.

⁹⁹ Ibid., 16.

¹⁰⁰ Ibid., 13.

¹⁰¹ Charles Taylor, *Modern Social Imaginaries* (London: Duke University Press, 2004) 90.

¹⁰² Ibid., 91.

To further the above ideas, art historian Charlotte Townsend-Gault, theorizing about contemporary art practices by artists of native ancestry, argues that the ritual is a framing process of consistent and repeatable meanings within a society, or a social process that takes into account both the cultural assertion and the audience that is the recipient.¹⁰³ Drawing from Townsend-Gault's analysis, I argue the billboard is a site of ritual for the capitalist mentality of sanctioned consumption.

Advertisement, through an enactment of public display, situates the public observer as a public consumer. Through consumption, the individual is activated as an agent of choice. The choices of the agent are ciphered, filtered and manipulated by advertisements that deem what is, and what is not, socially acceptable and consumable. The billboard is a site of ritual for the consumer. It is a ritual that designates and frames an agent through an operation of the greater power structure.

The ritual billboard, functioning in the public sphere as an operation within the vocabulary of state philosophy that appears to be self-consciously outside power, is a stratum operating within the machinic assemblage of the colonial abstract machine. Because the machinic assemblage distributes content and expression, which the abstract machine diagrams without dictating, the billboard within the public sphere subversively masks itself as a neutral content distributor. The expressions of each billboard appear as a function without defined form. Together, the billboard, with its changing and manipulative expression, is a theoretical example of the location of Whitebear Reed's intervention. Through the double articulation of content and expression, the intervention within the public sphere of "A Billboard Exhibition" momentarily deterritorialized and

¹⁰³ Charlotte Townsend-Gault, "Ritualizing Ritual's Rituals," *Art Journal* 51:3 (Autumn 1992) 58.

reterritorialized a stratum of the machinic assemblage. The exhibition subverted the function of the billboard within the urban fabric and exposed its false neutrality, displaying its function as an applicator of acceptable modes of consumption that bind the market economy order, which ultimately guides the path of posterity and security. The question becomes, then, whose posterity and security?

Edward Poitras, a member of the Gordon First Nation, occupied the first billboard exhibition slot from May 31 through June 28, 1993 (fig. 1). The focus of the work, titled *1885*, was an amalgamated reference to the entirety of the Americas as a site of a post-colonial reality. The piece had a visual structure that denoted two embedded and correlative meanings. The first was a localized understanding of place to the history of Saskatoon and nearby Lebret, in the Qu'Appelle Valley, Saskatchewan. The second was an inter-continental understanding of the repercussions and effects of the colonial aftermath over the whole of the "Americas." The correlative meaning to the piece was that of the interconnected and interdependent reality of the global. Whitebear-Reed commented on the connection of colonial histories from the global to the local, where a shared history of colonization between the America's of north and south represented a "psychological territory."¹⁰⁴

As the focal point of the billboard, Poitras manipulated an archival photograph by Oliver B. Buell documenting the residents and faculty of the Lebret Residential School. Taken in 1885, the photograph's original title is "First Industrial School with Father Hugonnard and Indian Children in Foreground."¹⁰⁵ Pictured at the apex of the composition is Father Hugonnard, the first principal of the school. Abbé Ritchot initially

¹⁰⁴ Whitebear-Reed *The Postcolonial Landscape: A Billboard Exhibition*, 4.

¹⁰⁵ Oliver B. Buell, (1844-1910), "First Industrial School with Father Hugonnard and Indian Children in Foreground," Lebret, 1885. SK Archives #R-A448.

founded Lebret as a Catholic Mission in 1866; it was later named after the first postmaster of the community Father Louis Lebret. The Residential School was opened in 1884, through funds provided by the Federal Government.¹⁰⁶

The Residential School of Lebret, as well as the year of 1885, has a particular significance for Poitras. His parents met at the school and it was the subject of a later photographic work depicting the school's destruction in 1999, *Lebret Indian Residential School*. Poitras shares ancestry with Pierre Poitras, a member of the Assiniboine Legislative Assembly who seconded the motion to enact the Manitoba Act of 1870, as well as bore witness to the signing of Treaty Number Four in the Qu'Appelle Valley in 1874.¹⁰⁷ The year 1885 denotes not only the end of the Northern Revolution and the execution of Louis Riel but also the first anniversary of the Lebret Residential School, the year the photograph was taken. Poitras comments on the children in the photograph as being positioned in a way to suggest they understood that they were witnessing the execution of Louis Riel in Regina.¹⁰⁸

This information, as well as a re-exhibiting of the original *1885* billboard, was a part of Poitras' installation at the Mendel Art Gallery's "Qu'Appelle: A Tale of Two Valleys," which ran from June 14 through September 2, 2002. The installation also contained a later work of Poitras that further contextualizes *1885*, entitled *Jan 1st 2000 (Treaty Four Territory)* which encompassed a satellite image of North America. Overlaid on the image were the current geographical borders of the continent, except in the place of Alberta, Saskatchewan and Manitoba, an area, or the border where the territory signed

¹⁰⁶ David McLennan, "Lebret," *The Encyclopedia of Saskatchewan: A Living Legacy* (Regina: University of Regina Canadian Plains Research Center, 2005).

¹⁰⁷ Edward Poitras, "Pile of Rocks," *Qu'Appelle: Past, Present, Future* (Saskatoon: Mendel Art Gallery, 2002).

¹⁰⁸ *Ibid.*

off under Treaty Four should be, was represented. The image is thus reminiscent of 1885 through its use of topographical mapping techniques, denoted by the use of the cardinal points and the dotting of what appears to be a mapping mechanism.

The second meaning of the piece is associated with the invocation of the Amazon and the icon of the North and South American continents in the lower right hand corner of the image. The text at the top of the piece, which reads: "The Amazon is Burning," is a reference to the massive deforestation occurring in the Amazon for decades: deforestation levels in 1993 were estimated at 15, 410 square kilometers.¹⁰⁹ The upper text is followed by another narrative text: "while you play bingo." The question becomes one of direction, to whom is the text directed?

I argue the title refers to a function of capital and the free market that contains it. A function of the driving force of an economy is the short-term gain premise. It is the understanding that there is a magic hand within the market that will settle long-term inefficiencies while investors take care of themselves in the short term.¹¹⁰ Contained as a function of capitalism, bingo acts as a microcosm of the greater macro market. Small, short-term, investments are put down in the hope of a greater long-term gain through winning a large sum of money.

The game of bingo can also act as a site where an abstract machine is invoked. Within the game, a line of flight, or plain of consistency, is diagrammed in order to gain social status through the winning of capital. The magic hand of the macro market is correlated to the magic, or random, micro determinant of the bingo ball's random

¹⁰⁹ Instituto Nacional de Pesquisas Espaciais (INPE), "Inpe divulga resultado das areas desflorestadas na Amazonia entre 92 e 94," *INPE Noticias* (Brazil: Summer 1996).

¹¹⁰ Adam Smith, *An Inquiry Into the Nature and Causes of the Wealth of Nations*, ed. Edwin Cannan (New York: Modern Library, 1994) 456.

ordering. Those that play have an ability to succeed within a seemingly random game, but they are nonetheless contained by rules and boundaries that enclose their very function within the system. It is a system that diagrams borders such as north, south and central conceptions, or psychological territories, of the colonized Americas which have been re-defined, or reterritorialized, as a site of profit. The narrative title, “the Amazon is burning... while you play bingo,” also works to exemplify the pastimes, or deterrents, afforded to the population that take away from the reality of what occurs at the expense of a market economy.¹¹¹

Grant McConnell, an artist and professor of Art and Art History at St. Peter’s College, a subsidiary of the University of Saskatchewan in Muenster, Saskatchewan, occupied the second slot of the exhibition program. His piece, *Partly Cleared Partly Cultivated* (fig. 2) was exhibited from June 29 through July 26, 1993. As opposed to Poitras’ mixed media work employing archival material and overlaid text, McConnell’s piece was executed in oil paint. The piece dealt with the imaginary construction that had been placed overtop the history invoked by Poitras, and provided examples of the deterrents used to entice immigration and mask the history of colonization.

Whitebear-Reed comments that McConnell’s piece deals with notions of the construction of the landscape as an instance of the imaginary.¹¹² Visual culture, such as brochures and posters released by the government of Canada for immigration purposes, was the source material for McConnell. The grid-like construction of the work suggests a controlled act of community, not unlike how anthropologist Eva Mackey describes early Canadian Immigration Policy as “a site that articulates a potential contradiction between

¹¹¹ Colin S. Campbell, “Canadian Gambling Legislation: The Social Origins of Legalization,” PhD diss., Simon Fraser University, 1994, 146.

¹¹² Whitebear-Reed, *The Postcolonial Landscape: A Billboard Exhibition*, 6.

the material needs of nation-building and the attempt to create an ideal ‘imagined community’.”¹¹³ Through a reading of Benedict Anderson’s understanding that the nation-state should encompass geographical and cultural boundaries that are synonymous, Mackey elaborates on how immigration policy in Canada during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries favoured British and Northern European immigrants over others.¹¹⁴

McConnell’s piece is executed in such a way as to directly reference early Canadian immigration policy. It provides a diagram of the grid, or the imaginary, construction that sits behind and supports the concept of nation building. The piece presents a physical example of the abstract machine itself, where a representation of the colonial abstract machine is diagrammed to exemplify the manufactured landscape of the Canadian Northwest as “our land” and as “free land.”

The top left of the picture plane exposes the grid like construction. Throughout the pictorial composition are icons and symbols taken from travel brochures, government articles and posters that invoke the ideal of a Canada empty of past, but also seemingly without a future. It is representative of and reminiscent of the ideas put forth by Jimmie Durham that describes the illusion of Western culture.¹¹⁵ The history is negated in favor of a hypothetical community, one that can appear as a stasis, without future or past, and reflect the ahistorical referent of colonial history.

The icons contained within the image are reminiscent of a place that could be recognized as a touristic ideal of a Bakersfield or Fair Town, complete with horse racing

¹¹³ Eva Mackey, *The House of Difference: Cultural Politics and National Identity in Canada* (London: Routledge, 1999) 32.

¹¹⁴ Ibid.

¹¹⁵ Houle, “The Spiritual Legacy of the Ancient Ones,” 70.

and cannons. Only, through the haphazard and non-ordered placement of the icons and representations, the billboard exemplifies a place that has never existed. The piece both highlights and destabilizes the security of the constructed narrative of the colonial map, which, as cultural theorist Irit Rogoff comments, functions so as to “translate all the power relations and material and political realities and fantasmatic relations (of colonialism) into a benign language of geographical taxonomies.”¹¹⁶ I argue McConnell’s work exposes the benign language of cues. McConnell takes elements from the visual culture of government-circulated material, and turns them into representations that re-configure the landscape as an imaginary and benign construction.

The theme of mapping, in the sense of understanding history, was prevalent to the work of McConnell prior to his participation in this exhibition. In 1989, he had a solo exhibition dealing with similar issues of landscape and territory construction at the Mackenzie Art Gallery in Regina, titled “Grant McConnell: Memory in Place.” As well, “Tell-Tale: Reconstructed Narrative in Contemporary Canadian Art” at the Gordon Snelgrove Art Gallery, Saskatoon in 1991, and “Tales of Dominion” at the Mendel Art Gallery in 1992, also exemplify the artist’s interest in providing a visual cue to the way in which Canadian history, and the act of painting it, is and has been constructed.¹¹⁷

Partly Cleared, Partly Cultivated invokes notions of travel, leisure and immigration in Canada, all of which are constructions based on an ideal construct of Canada as a nation-state. Similar to a topographical style map denoting attractions, the painting, upon first glance, appears to look fluid, but upon approach, the painting’s fluid construction became exposed. The site of the grid-like construction, where even the sky

¹¹⁶ Irit Rogoff, “Mapping.” *Geography’s Visual Culture* (London: Routledge, 2000) 75.

¹¹⁷ Cindy Richmond, “Recalling the Thread of Life,” *Grant McConnell: Memory in Place* (Regina: Mackenzie Art Gallery, 1989) 1.

was manipulated into a pattern of complicity and seeming innocence, contributed to undermining the representation of the landscape.

Jamelie Hassan, an artist based in London, Ontario, active since the late nineteen-seventies, occupied the third exhibition slot from July 27 through August 2, 1993. Her billboard was titled *Linkage* (fig. 3). The work moved the curatorial thematic of the exhibition from the local, regional and intercontinental, to an international conception of the post-colonial condition. The image in *Linkage* is a personal photograph of Hassan's taken in 1979 of the Palm Forest in Southern Iraq.¹¹⁸ The text overlaid on the image references the tree of Adam, the first person created in the Abrahamaic tradition, as well quotations from a news report outlining that the coalition forces were firing depleted uranium ammunitions during the first Iraq conflict.¹¹⁹ Citing a story appearing in the London Ontario Free Press on March 27, 1993, by Dr. Eric Hoskins, the billboard represents an activist intervention. Hassan comments that the work was designed to provide a reminder of the massive environmental damage incurred to Iraq during the 1991 Operation Dessert Storm, a conflict in which Canada openly participated.¹²⁰ The figure of forty tons of nuclear waste fired turned out to be a conservative estimate, as the real number of tons fired into the region was reportedly closer to four hundred. The billboard was didactic, purposefully drawing attention to the environmental impact on the communities of Iraq and attending to the suspicious "Gulf War Syndrome" plaguing veterans of the conflict.¹²¹

¹¹⁸ Whitebear-Reed, *The Post-Colonial Landscape: A Billboard Exhibition*, 8.

¹¹⁹ Ibid.

¹²⁰ Jamelie Hassan, "The Evasive Text," *Obsession, Compulsion, Collection: On Objects, Display Culture, and Interpretation*, ed. Anthony Kiendl (Banff: Banff Center for the Arts, 2004) 222.

¹²¹ Christine Abdelkrim-Delanne, "Weapons of Self-Destruction," *Le Monde Diplomatique* (June 1998); Ramsey Clark *The Fire This Time, U.S. War Crimes in the Gulf* (New York: Thunder's Mouth Press,

While Hassan's piece invokes an international recognition of the effects of the oil boom, it also implicitly communicates a local significance. In the curatorial essay, Whitebear-Reed references an article in *Briarpatch* from 1993 that potentially connects the Saskatchewan Uranium industry corporation Cameco with supplying other countries with the raw materials to create depleted uranium ammunitions, or nuclear waste weapons.¹²² The piece also has a personal connection for Hassan, who attended the University of Mustansyria, in Baghdad, Iraq, for a portion of her education. Unlike Poitras and McConnell, there are no signs of habitation in the piece; the seemingly idyllic landscape is politicized through the use of text.

Linkage shares a politically activated focus with Hassan's earlier work, *Because... there was and there wasn't a city of Baghdad*, from 1991 (fig. 5). The billboards collectively represent an attempt by the artist to subvert, or in the words of cultural theorist Monika Kin Gagnon, "usurp" a traditional site of advertising and draw attention to the Middle East "as the new post-Cold War enemies of American Democracy."¹²³ In her discussion of Hassan's billboard, Gagnon comments on the title of the work as referring to the mediated representation of Baghdad, which occupies an imagined and fictive presence within an ideological construction based on media advertisement.¹²⁴ The billboard, in tandem with other works such as *Slave Letter*, underlines Hassan's work as a distinctive and alternative cultural language that questions political art forms such as

1994); Jim Trautman, "Lethal weapon: depleted uranium has been a well kept military secret for decades," *Briarpatch* 28 (7 Sept 1999) 15-19; Scott Peterson, "Depleted Uranium Haunts Kosovo and Iraq," *Middle East Report* (2000); Chelsea Jones. "Disposal problems for radioactive waste? Not anymore!" *Briarpatch*. 33.1 (February 2004) 12.

¹²² Whitebear-Reed, *The Post-Colonial Landscape: A Billboard Exhibition*, 8; Phillip Penna, "Cameco and its Weapons Connections," *Briarpatch* 22:4 (May, 1993) 19.

¹²³ Monika Kin Gagnon, "The Possibilities of Knowledge: Jamelie Hassan," *Other Conundrums: Race, Culture, and Canadian Art* (Vancouver: Arsenal Pulp Press, 2000) 158.

¹²⁴ *Ibid.*

political documentary.¹²⁵ In the instance of *Linkage*, rather than assuming that Hassan and the viewer are placed in what Gagnon has called fluctuating positions of knowledge that continually construct and reconstruct themselves without fixity or stability, I argue the piece is a forthright politically activated commentary designed to draw the viewers attention to the actions of the Cameco Corporation, which has its corporate office in downtown Saskatoon.¹²⁶

The specific difference between the two billboards is realized by the kind of photograph used to convey the message. *Linkage* is a natural landscape documentation of the Southern Palm Forrest of Iraq, and as opposed to the mosque pictured in *Because... there was and there wasn't a city of Baghdad*, the landscape is devoid of any human element. By further abstracting the presence of a human form to that of text, Hassan comments on an aspect of media representation stemming from the First Iraq War: the complete control of media access and representation by the American military apparatus, which according to Gagnon contributes to the realization of a mediatized simulation of Iraq.¹²⁷ By negating a visual representation that exemplifies the destruction and sickness garnered through military conflict, the piece brought attention to the near media black out that continues to today regarding the after-effects of depleted uranium use. Iraq is rendered as a fabricated and unknowable entity, illusively portrayed and identified. The location of the photograph, attainable by the text that defines it, illustrates how media translation effectuates how place is perceived. As well, by eliminating any trace of a

¹²⁵ Monika Kin Gagnon, "Al Fannanah 'I Rassamah: Jamelie Hassan," *Sightlines: Reading Contemporary Canadian Art*, ed. Jessica Bradley and Lesley Johnstone (Montreal: Artexes Editions, 1994) 404.

¹²⁶ *Ibid.*, 405.

¹²⁷ Gagnon, "The Possibilities of Knowledge: Jamelie Hassan," 158.

human element, Hassan comments on the way in which Iraq's society has been both exoticized and erased through media representation.

The above contributes to understanding Hassan's concern for multiple sites existing for the dissemination of her work. In a discussion re-printed in the catalogue for *Jamelie Hassan: Aldin's Gift*, between Hassan, Monika Kin Gagnon and Homi K. Bhabha, Hassan briefly discusses her billboard project for Artcote in reference to a comment concerning elitism within the art institution.¹²⁸ For Hassan, the display of a billboard in public is as equally important as an exhibition within an institution, but it is important to keep in mind that the public institution is "our" institution.¹²⁹ While an adversarial and oppositional relationship might be the case for some artists and curators in regards to the dominant order of the institution, it does not necessitate that the relationship should be abandoned.¹³⁰

The last billboard of the exhibition was by artist Kay Walkingstick, then a Professor of Art at Cornell University in New York State (since retired). The work, titled *Finding the Center* (fig. 4), was exhibited from August 24 through September 20, 1993. The piece deployed her familiar format of the diptych to imply the double articulation of her work. Walkingstick refers to herself as an earth painter rather than a landscape painter, and as opposed to the other works contained in "A Billboard Exhibition," the piece is the most abstracted in its aesthetic and represents an alternative understanding, or

¹²⁸ Jamelie Hassan, *Aldin's Gift* (Art Gallery of York University and Art Gallery of Windsor, 1996) 28.

¹²⁹ "At the same time, I do want to say that I think that when these works do move into major institutions, hopefully you might want to support these institutions are your institutions. They are public institutions, they are our institutions." Ibid.

¹³⁰ Ibid.

view, of the function of the landscape.¹³¹ The diptych also conveys the dual ancestry of Walkingstick, who is of Cherokee and European ancestry.

Walkingstick's aesthetic is developed from a personal understanding of the political.¹³² Her images represent a spiritual connection to the world she wishes to communicate through painting. The right portion of the billboard has a stylized landscape with text written in Cherokee reading, "love," while the left portion contains the English translation with four crosses surrounding it. Walkingstick comments that the right portions of her paintings, which generally contain symbols, are a stand-in for her body, or spirit.¹³³ Rendered in a colour that is reminiscent to "dried blood red and Pepto-Bismol pink," the piece represents a more internal reading of the curatorial premise.¹³⁴ The four crosses in the right hand portion of the diptych represent the four sacred directions.¹³⁵ These four directions share a correlation with the cardinal markers represented in Poitras' *1885*, but offer a different meaning as to the purpose of their use and value. In contrast to the cardinal markers, the four directions represent another way of understanding how the landscape can be mapped.

The use of the diptych problematizes a function of colonization through the use of text. On the half of the four crosses sits the English text, while on the half of the landscape Cherokee is overlaid, so within the pictorial construction a double articulation of deterritorialization and reterritorialization occurs. Through the compositional elements in the painting, neither English nor Cherokee is given preference. In addition, neither a

¹³¹ Kay Walkingstick, "Seeking the Spiritual," *Native American Art in the Twentieth Century*, ed. W. Jackson Rushing III (London: Routledge, 1999) 185.

¹³² Whitebear-Reed, *The Post-Colonial Landscape: A Billboard Exhibition*, 10.

¹³³ Kay Walkingstick, "Artist's Statement," *Kaywalkingstick.com*. (2007).

¹³⁴ Walkingstick, "Seeking the Spiritual," 185.

¹³⁵ Whitebear-Reed, *The Post-Colonial Landscape: A Billboard Exhibition*, 10.

preference to the landscape representation versus the representation of the four crosses is given. Because equal representation of a dual understanding of existence is integral to Walkingstick, she comments that while the works she creates can be read in any way, they are not about Native Americans or Native spirituality, but are more concerned with herself as an inhabitant of the earth. Walkingstick's worldview is nonetheless grounded in Cherokee, defined by the word "Eloheh," translated as the unification of art, life and culture.¹³⁶

Robert Houle has offered a different interpretation of the work of Walkingstick, and further contextualizes the way in which her work communicates a double meaning. Houle argues that Walkingstick's continued and consistent use of the landscape is relative to her Cherokee ancestry, involving the American Governments' forced relocation of the Cherokee Nation in 1838-1839 resulting in the deaths of four thousand of its citizens. Her use of landscape is also consistent with a matriarchal worldview that the ancestral Cherokee land is the centre of their universe.¹³⁷ The adoption of abstraction to suit her needs, according to Houle, adapts a vocabulary based in the New York School of abstraction that creates emblems reflective of a Native subjectivity.¹³⁸ He further interprets her work as defying renaissance perspective, adopting an individual perspective that turns "landscape to land, opening the site wherein the interpretation of land is a political statement."¹³⁹

To better understand how the curatorial methodology functioned for the exhibition, the narrative line developed by the billboards will now be explored. Because

¹³⁶ Walkingstick, "Seeking the Spiritual," 187.

¹³⁷ Robert Houle, "Kay Walkingstick," *Land Spirit Power*, 213.

¹³⁸ *Ibid.*

¹³⁹ Houle, "Sovereignty over Subjecthood," 32.

the focus of “The Post-Colonial Landscape Project” was to engage colonial to post-colonial understandings of the embedded histories contained by the landscape, the narrative line works in such a way so as to push forward nineteenth and twentieth century histories of colonialism. The reading will parallel how Whitebear-Reed curated the exhibition and examine how the order of the billboards’ exhibition aide in understanding the colonial abstract machine and its implication to further understanding the continuation of the colonial process.

By having the billboard exhibition open with the work of Edward Poitras, an example of the face of the landscape was represented. The person of Father Hugonnard, who sits atop the apex of composition, acts as a representation of the colonial process towards that of an abstraction. In the image, Hugonnard appears to look towards nothing except the landscape. He observes what will later become, within the theoretical model, the trace, or political and social utterance, of the landscape. The trace, argued by Manning as a dialogical deterritorialization that implicates the Group of Seven into her reading of “A Billboard Exhibition,” I argue is a referent to the historical precedents that led to the works display.

Coupled with the history of the Lebret community the archival photograph references and the use of the cardinal direction mapping points, the billboard, once within the urban setting, destabilized or usurped the space of advertisement. The usurping of space, following Gagnon’s understanding, drew attention to the neglected history of the residential school, a history not mentioned by Manning in her reading, and one that has only recently received an official apology from the Federal Government of Canada for

the abuses incurred to those who were subjected to the assimilationist practices enacted by it.¹⁴⁰

Grant McConnell's billboard further develops the problematic. By following Poitras, a historical line is narratively configured that references how the landscape's representation has shifted during and after the local areas colonization process. The concept of "free land," directly referring to Canadian immigration policy and the literal erasure of the history of its development, espouses the contradictions embedded within the concept once compared to Poitras' billboard. A correlation to pastimes and games can also be paralleled between the two works. The theme of gambling, an entrenched aspect of the market economy, is revisited through the representation of horse racing. The theme-based aesthetic of McConnell's work revolves around those pastimes encountered at the modern fair, a place that is entered and enjoyed through the playing of games once within a constructed environment. The theme-park, or fair, is one where the viewer is enticed to enter through advertisement, as if the natural landscape itself is not enough. The games within the space created by McConnell arguably are in service of the same ends sought through a game such as bingo. A social system is developed, based on an aspect of the market economy, which is negligent of its origins and potential functions within the greater system.

The constructed nature of the landscape is realized through the displacement of the *natural* or *realistic* pictorial reference points within the image. In narrative sequence, McConnell's billboard represents the constructed history that replaces the history represented in Poitras' billboard. It is an instance where, in theoretical terms, the line of

¹⁴⁰ David Akin, "Parliament's 'Special Moment'; Looking Back; Residential school apology united House: Layton," *National Post* (June 23, 2008) A4.

flight of the colonial abstract machine, which is a diagrammatic function that seeks to create a new type of reality, is rendered in such a way so that the grid of its own construction becomes visible.¹⁴¹ By creating an image that overlays a grid, I argue the image is a representational cue to the later stages of the colonial desiring machine, where the faciality referenced through the person of Father Hugonnard becomes an absolute deterritorialization. The abstraction is necessary so as to embed a dominant order that encompasses the plane of consistency, subsequently distributing a hierarchy of race-based stereotypes and colonial fantasies that validate the dominant in relation to its antithesis. The face becomes the landscape through colonialism, and once abstracted from its origins, has the ability to dictate things like immigration policy, potentially manufactured in its own image.

Jamelie Hassan's piece expands the problematic to become inclusive of international concerns, commenting on the interrelationship between nation-states in a global economy. The absent human presence in the billboard is accounted for by the citing of Adam's tree, and is quantified through the way in which the city of Saskatoon, and corporations such as Cameco, carelessly affects the population of Iraq. In terms of a face, or faciality of the colonial, being correlated to the landscape representation, the presence of Adam clearly signifies the European colonial. Adam, as the first person created by god in the religions of Judaism, Christianity and Islam, is associated with the person of Father Hugonnard. Through situating the landscape as a representation of the real, and textually defined invocation of the real, meaning human ideological presence,

¹⁴¹ "The diagrammatic or abstract machine does not function to represent, even something real, but rather constructs a real that is yet to come, a new type of reality." Deleuze and Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus*, 142.

the work develops a dialogue of absent effect. The effects of one place on another are hidden from view through media control.

By bringing into the urban fabric a hidden consequence of the local uranium industry, Hassan's billboard localized the First Iraq War and the complicity of the population to the conflict. The implication of the billboard in relation to a main thoroughfare of Saskatoon also speaks to a reality of the oil boom. Those that would have driven by the billboard, whether they made the connection or not, were confronted with their own complicity towards the consequences of a global economy defined by a violent military industrial complex reliant upon the same petroleum-based technology powering their vehicles. The interconnectedness of the global economy is tied to the colonial project, defined as the concept of "empire" by Hardt and Negri, which seeks to re-define the landscape as a means of production and technological progression.

Lastly, Kay Walkinstick's billboard represents an alternative and sovereign statement. Through the development of the curatorial narrative line, where Poitras invokes an early historical example of the colonial project, McConnell provides the idealized and benign rendition that replaces colonial history, and Hassan highlights military action as the sharp end of the colonial sword, the final word is a different understanding of how to view the landscape. Walkinstick's work is ultimately a statement of sovereignty, but it also represents a statement of equality between colonized and colonizers. *Finding the Centre* is, dependent on subjective opinion, either a way out of the colonial abstract machine via providing a world-view that is unaccounted for by stereotypes and fantasy, or is representative of the system developing a new centre from a periphery and contributing to a further abstraction of the correlative face of the landscape.

Given the use of Cherokee, I would argue on the side of optimism. The billboard promotes a matriarchal worldview defined by the word “love.” However impossible or idealistic it may seem to consider love as the means to finding the centre, it is, nonetheless, a distinct and positive alternative to profit.

Theoretically, by strategically intervening into the urban landscape and appropriating a stratum of the machinic assemblage of the colonial abstract machine, each billboard momentarily reveals traces of the past and present consequences of the contemporary economic order instituted over the landscape. The colonial abstract machine became displaced from its diagrammatic function and visualized as something that could be manipulated, and potentially changed. Also, through the dialogues of the billboards with one another, the fallacious construct of Western culture was heightened. The fixity of the billboard and space of advertisement as an operation of the dominant order became corroded, its specific function as a location of power exemplified.

The concept of fixity offers a definition of how Canada attempts to manufacture itself. Through immigration policies that sought out members of British, French and Northwestern Europeans over others, the location of the fixed construction of Canadian identity is realized. The fixed notion of identity, which cultural theorist Brenda Lafleur argues is tied to the northern landscape, is a symbol of nationalism that the Group of Seven strove and were subsequently conscripted to embody.¹⁴² During the 1920's, the concept of a heroic settler in the arts was theorized, embodied and promoted through the Group of Seven and supported by the National Gallery of Canada. The voice, structured to be original, represented a new Canadian spirit in the arts. Art historian Leslie Dawn

¹⁴² Brenda Lafleur, “Resting’ in History: Translating the Art of Jin-me Yoon,” *Generations and Geographies in the Visual Arts: Feminist Readings*, ed. Griselda Pollock (New York: Routledge, 1996) 220.

has commented that the new voice and spirit's purpose was to replace the indigenous presence in Canada, seeking to become a logical extension that was itself a new indigenous Canadian race.¹⁴³

Lafleur, through her analysis of the work of Vancouver based artist Jin-me Yoon, understands the landscape as having a gendered and specific European identity, especially in regards to the work of the Group of Seven. The narrative of the Group of Seven represents the national spirit that fixes Canadian identity.¹⁴⁴ The work of Yoon, as well as Poitras, McConnell, Hassan and Walkingstick engage and interrogate Canadian identity, exposing the constructed and fixed position of the visual identity of Canadian art.

For the public observer, the above most clearly defines how Manning sees the function of the dialogical deterritorialization. For Manning, "A Billboard Exhibition" reflects "the problematic ways in which the landscape is conceptualized in the work of artists such as the Group of Seven."¹⁴⁵ I argue, rather than viewing the billboards as a site where the vocabulary of state philosophy is absent, "A Billboard Exhibition" operates within state philosophy as it is funded through cultural policy monies. The exhibition is beyond a dialogical deterritorialization and represents strategic activism on the part of the participants. While it can be argued the exhibition, acting in the public sphere, critiques from the outside, the reading obscures how the exhibition represents the institutional activism occurring on the part of the artists and curators involved.

Henry A. Giroux's understanding of the border intellectual who functions in differing sites of cultural production is important in relation to "A Billboard Exhibition."

¹⁴³ Dawn, *National Vision, National Blindness*, 310.

¹⁴⁴ Lafleur, "Resting' in History: Translating the Art of Jin-me Yoon," 219.

¹⁴⁵ Manning, "An Excess of Seeing: Territorial Imperatives in Canadian Landscape Art," 21.

Giroux comments that the border intellectual is one who functions between the space of “high and popular culture; between the institution and the street; between the public and the private.”¹⁴⁶ In his reading, the border intellectual is one who does not abstract the conditions of cultural production. By doing so, the border intellectual promotes and encourages people to challenge the “critical traditions within the dominant culture that make such a critique possible and intelligible.”¹⁴⁷ The cultural worker is also implicated in Jolene Rickard’s conception of sovereignty as a site of indigenous knowledge dispersal, but it is conflated if sovereignty as an aesthetic is applied as a blanket term. Sovereignty is a specific strategy associated with artists of native ancestry who use elements of autobiography to locate a cultural solidarity among the colonized. In contrast, the border intellectual works from within the institution, exposing the state’s role in perpetuating racism and inequality.¹⁴⁸

“A Billboard Exhibition” was a site of cultural production where institutional activists, acting as border intellectuals, actively produced differing conceptions and understandings of the dominant order from within. As such, it is an example of a radical institutional practice that promoted multiple histories as opposed to a singular history. The exhibition is representative of both a public and an institutional dialogue that took on the challenge put forward by exhibitions such as “Indigena” and “Land Spirit Power.” Rather than associating the exhibition with the work of the Group of Seven, the

¹⁴⁶ Henry A. Giroux, “Borderline Artists, Cultural Workers, and the Crisis of Democracy,” *The Artist in Society: Rights, Roles, and Responsibilities*, Eds. Carol Becker and Ann Wiens (Chicago: New Art Examiner Press, 1995) 5.

¹⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, 9.

¹⁴⁸ Henry A. Giroux, *The Terror of Neoliberalism: Authoritarianism and the Eclipse of Democracy* (Aurora: Garamond Press, 2004) 77.

exhibition must be understood as a direct referent to politically motivated exhibition practices that utilize the public gallery as a site of art and activism.

Chapter Two:

Ruth Cuthand: Location/Dislocation:

This chapter examines Ruth Cuthand's solo exhibition, "Location/Dislocation," as a site of sovereignty and autobiography. Following the work of Jolene Rickard and Victoria Henry, the chapter discusses their work in relation to the colonial abstract machine.¹⁴⁹ The chapter will expand on and address how the exhibition was framed according to curator Bruce Grenville's curatorial essay, as well as an essay by Cuthand included in the catalogue. The framing mechanisms applied to Cuthand's work will be further extended through a more thorough analysis. Because there is a lack of published critical material regarding the exhibition, this chapter focuses primarily on Grenville's use in his essay of Deleuze and Guattari's concepts, such as the nomad and nomadology. In doing so, the chapter engages already existing material and provides further discussion regarding the issues Cuthand raises through her work.

For Victoria Henry, a former gallerist and now director of the Canada Council Art Bank, autobiography is a strategy employed by artists that foregrounds a narrative within their work that does not present an individual identity.¹⁵⁰ The strategy moves beyond a connotation of an identity politic, and becomes a "means of expressing a shared social and cultural community while at the same time recognizing the specificity within each community."¹⁵¹ Autobiography allows for the inclusion of self-government and land claims within the conceptual aesthetic of the works. The strategy can be combined with art historian Jolene Rickard's concept of sovereignty. Rickard argues that by the end of

¹⁴⁹ Jolene Rickard, "Indigenous and Iroquoian Art Knowledge as Knowledge: In The Shadow of the Eagle," PhD diss., University of New York at Buffalo, 1996, 208-209; Victoria Henry, "The Polemics of Autobiography in First Nations Art," MA Thesis, Ottawa: Carleton University, 1993, 5-7.

¹⁵⁰ Henry, "The Polemics of Autobiography in First Nations Art," 5.

¹⁵¹ Ibid., 6.

the twentieth century, sovereignty had taken on the connotation of a porous border where indigenous artists negotiated a cultural space defined by the colonial project.¹⁵² One of the cultural spaces that had been allotted for indigenous visibility is the art gallery and “the narrow margin of identity politics.”¹⁵³ According to Rickard, this is a margin where the official other of postmodern criticism reinforces stereotypical cultural assumptions. The art exhibition as a site of sovereignty establishes a political platform of engagement where the construction of an identity is invoked but negated in favor of an autobiographical display foregrounding itself in the celebration and fight for self-determination, and self-government.

From July 2 to August 30, 1993, Cuthand, a Little Pine First Nation band member of Plains Cree ancestry, had a multimedia installation exhibition curated by Grenville at the Mendel Gallery in Saskatoon titled “Location/Dislocation” (figs. 6-12). The installation consisted of four slides projected onto four walls with an alternating overlaid text, and four transposed wall drawings placed on either side of the projections with curtains surrounding each projected photo and text. The photographs were landscape style documentations taken from the area of Southern Saskatchewan and Northern Michigan. The images encompassed the Battle River, the home of Cuthand’s grandparents, the northern forest of Saskatchewan, the Sweet Grass Hills, the Blue Hill, and the local Band hall, office and graveyard from the Little Pine First Nation.

The text overlaid on the images reference personal laments written by Cuthand in regards to the problematic she proposes in her exhibition. Specifically, the installation interrogates notions of place and memory, and how to locate those sites within

¹⁵² Rickard, “Indigenous and Iroquoian Art Knowledge as Knowledge,” 208-209.

¹⁵³ *Ibid.*, 199.

government documentation that abstracts land entitlement to an issue of monetary compensation. A curtain done in the style of Victorian Bunting by Cuthand's sister Beth, and two wall drawings of Cuthand's daughter, Thirza, surrounds each projection.

Excerpts from the 1992 government document "Saskatchewan Treaty Land Entitlement Framework Agreement," were placed on either side of the wall drawings.¹⁵⁴ The Treaty Land Entitlement Framework Agreement (TLE) is a document that dictates how funds are to be dispersed for the purchase of new lands to compensate for Treaty 6 entitlements withheld from the Little Pine and Luckyman Bands in the late nineteenth century.¹⁵⁵

In the catalogue accompanying the exhibition, Cuthand includes a self-authored text explicating the purpose and problem explored through her installation. The text, "Little-Pine... I don't Live there but I Belong," is broken into sub-headings whose titles were the texts overlaid on the photographic images projected onto the walls of the gallery. The sub-headings -- "Little Pine Band member"; "...I don't live there but I belong"; "My grandfather lived there but not his children"; and "I locate myself from that place" -- are elaborated on in the catalogue publication.¹⁵⁶ The texts help develop the undercurrents of the installation that explore understandings of how space, memory and territory were located in the twentieth-century post-colonial state.

¹⁵⁴ *Saskatchewan Treaty Land Entitlement Framework Agreement*, Canada, 1992.

¹⁵⁵ Renée Dupuis et al., "Appendix A: Indians Claim Commission, Historical Background," *Lucky Man Cree Nation Treaty Land Entitlement Phase II Inquiry* (Indian Claims Commission: Canada, February 2008) 55-79; "ICC Finds Canada Has Outstanding Treaty Land Entitlement to the Lucky Man Cree Nation," *CCN Matthews Newswire* (Toronto: Apr 10, 2008); Doug Cuthand, "Settlers had a lot of help," *Leader Post* (Regina Sep 6, 2005). B.1.; Doug Cuthand, "Treaties take care of future generations," *Leader Post* (Regina: Oct 29, 2001) B.1. In addition, there is a noted difference between a Band and a First Nation. The Band is representative of a long-standing family and community grouping, while the First Nation is a political entity enacted to pursue lawful rhetoric concerning land entitlement.

¹⁵⁶ Ruth Cuthand, "Little Pine... I don't Live there but I belong," *Ruth Cuthand: Location/Dislocation*, ed. Bruce Grenville (Mendel Art Gallery: Saskatoon, 1993) 7-8.

Cuthand's previous work and education provide a means to contextualizing her work in "Location/Dislocation" and the problem she wished to address through the installation. Prior to "Location/Dislocation," Cuthand was an exhibiting artist in the "Sharing the Circle" exhibition at Wanuskewin Heritage Park. For the exhibition, she presented select works from her series of drawings titled *Misuse is Abuse* (figs. 13-14). The drawings were the artist's first experiments with drawing, and were premised on the school supplies she received from a local Indian Agent that had the title of the series printed on each of the given supplies. The series dealt with what Cuthand, through her artist statement, commented on as an instance where stereotypical relations between the "Indian" and "White Liberal" were explored. She argued the drawings represented the complex relationship between "good" Liberals and "good" Indians, where the concept of voice, speaking for as opposed to speaking with, was interrogated.¹⁵⁷

Prior to her installation and drawing works, Cuthand exhibited dresses and shirts that she created for her MFA at the University of Saskatchewan. Apart from her MFA, she received a BFA from the University of Saskatchewan in 1980. In addition to her participation in the "Sharing the Circle" exhibition, she had a solo exhibition in 1991 titled "Ruth Cuthand: The Traces of the Ghost Dance" at the Norman Mackenzie Art Gallery in Regina, Saskatchewan, exhibiting the work created during her MFA. What the above offers, in terms of contextualizing the work of Cuthand, is that her work is explicitly located within issues pertaining to cultural stereotypes, cultural reclamation, and sovereignty for indigenous modes of being within the community of greater Saskatchewan.

¹⁵⁷ Ruth Cuthand, "Artist's Statement," *Sharing the Circle* (Wanuskewin: Wanuskewin Heritage Park Gallery, 1992).

Following the thematic of her previous work, “Location/Dislocation” is an installation piece that dealt with the politics of belonging, specifically in regards to issues of territory, land entitlement and place-based understandings of locality between the reserve and the urban. The installation is representative of an instance described by Rickard when issues of sovereignty act as the primary cue to understanding the way in which the exhibition can play a mediating role within a community, such as Saskatoon. Rickard argues for an understanding of indigenous art production as that which is negotiated and activated through a political consciousness that speaks to the Native artist’s relationship with the history of Western art, and the institution it implies; in other words, as a site of Giroux’s borderline intellectual. Rickard further defines certain indigenous artists as cultural workers who mediate a “space/problem between Native Artists and Native ‘governments’ including traditional and colonial formations.”¹⁵⁸

While Cuthand’s installation represents a larger, politically activated understanding of territory, it is also concerned with a personal understanding of how the politics informing the installation are played out on the individual. Specifically, the artist addresses how she -who locates herself as “urban Indian and Little Pine Band Member”¹⁵⁹ - recognizes her own locality within the problem of being a Little Pine Band member who did not live within its confines but still belonged nonetheless.

The texts provided in the catalogue speak to the concept of belonging that Cuthand wished to address through her installation. Under the heading of “Little Pine Band Member,” she articulates that her experiences of visiting the Little Pine Reserve were times when she was exposed to the Cree language of her ancestry, a language she

¹⁵⁸ Rickard, *Indigenous and Iroquoian Art Knowledge as Knowledge*, 7.

¹⁵⁹ Cuthand, “Little Pine... I don’t Live there but I belong,” 7.

did not speak, but to which still belonged. This is followed by a series of questions addressing hypothetical outcomes of the Treaty Land Entitlement Agreement and an interrogation of what that process could entail. The second heading, "... I don't live there but I belong," addresses sites within the Little Pine Reserve pictured in the photographs projected onto the gallery walls. Cuthand comments that some of the places represented real and imagined spaces, where questions derived from the potential moving of the bands territory enacted queries regarding how the new lands could be used. The third heading, "My grandfather lived there but not his children," addresses how the artist saw her daughters negotiating their own presence as "Urban Indians" in relation to the Little Pine lands. This section outlines the way in which Cuthand represents her daughter in the wall drawings, which will be returned to, but for now can be regarded as a negotiation between real and imagined, or stereotypical, conceptions of the "urban Indian princess" and the "beautiful Indian maiden."¹⁶⁰ The last heading, "I locate myself from that Place," references John Diefenbaker, who "made Indians citizens in 1959," as well as the Queen of England, who, according to Cuthand's father, "Indians were under the protection of."¹⁶¹ The reference to the Queen of England is particularly important as well as the works exhibited, specifically the wall drawings and the accompanying excerpts from the Treaty Land Entitlement Agreement, to Cuthand's understanding of the post-colonial. It is an understanding that Cuthand refers to as an awakening, where at one moment she feels post-colonial, but then realizes she is not because she and the Queen are in the process of buying land.¹⁶²

¹⁶⁰ Ibid., 8.

¹⁶¹ Ibid.

¹⁶² Ibid.

In contrast to Cuthand's personal understanding of the effects of the location and dislocation she felt from the Little Pine Band, Grenville adopts a theoretical framework for the exhibition read through a selection of concepts from Deleuze and Guattari's essay, "1227: Treatise on Nomadology - The War Machine" in *A Thousand Plateaus*. In the curatorial essay that accompanies the catalogue, Grenville proposes that Cuthand's installation represents an instance where the *nomos*, the nomadic space, and the *logos*, the colonial state-form space, are invoked.¹⁶³

In Grenville's reading of nomadology, he quotes Deleuze and Guattari's understanding that the nomadic space is a heterogeneous space, a local but not delimited space that is both indefinite and non-communicating. The nomadic space is countered and enclosed by state-form space, a sedentary space that encloses and creates hierarchical organizations of segmentation. He links the understandings of space to the "history of colonization on the plains" and how they provide "new insights into the implications of Cuthand's work."¹⁶⁴ The impact of the colonial state and its state-form space are represented through the wall drawings of Cuthand's daughter, which is argued becomes a site where a conflicted relationship with the land is realized. The "hybrid subject bound by the logos of the postcolonial state and the nomos of traditional Indian identity" activates the conflict within the drawings.¹⁶⁵ The landscape photographs with overlaid text compliment the hybrid subject by becoming representative of the shifting and dissolving images that Cuthand navigates within a post-colonial landscape -- images and representations that are bound to the conflicting relationship between the *nomos* and the *logos*.

¹⁶³ Bruce Grenville, "Introduction." *Ruth Cuthand: Location/Dislocation*, 5.

¹⁶⁴ Ibid.

¹⁶⁵ Ibid., 6.

What is interesting about Grenville's use of Deleuze and Guattari's concepts in relation to the work of Cuthand is the way in which they function to remove an individualized identity from the installation and push forward a reading based within colonial terminology. The concept of the nomad, or nomadology, in Deleuze and Guattari's understanding, is a conflict between what they call the war machine, and the state-apparatus.¹⁶⁶ The treatise theorizes an understanding of the war machine developed through a series of axioms, problems and propositions that support two final and very important statements or conclusions.¹⁶⁷

The first conclusion is that, although nomads invented the war machine, the idea of the nomad itself is only that, an idea. According to Deleuze and Guattari: "It is the nomads, rather, who remain an abstraction, an Idea, something real and nonactual."¹⁶⁸ What can be inferred from this statement is the problem of the actuality of a nomadic, or nomos, existing beyond the idea, or idealization. Because the nomad is real but nonactual, it becomes a work of fiction, without fact or precedent to signal its own validity beyond Deleuze and Guattari's idealization of what nomadology might entail.

The second conclusion to consider is in relation to the state-apparatus. For Deleuze and Guattari: "The conditions that make the State or World war machine possible... constant capital and human variable capital, continually recreate unexpected possibilities for counterattack, unforeseen initiatives determining revolutionary, popular, minority, mutant machines."¹⁶⁹ So while there is a state-apparatus relevant to a colonial state, there is a secondary connotation placing the state within the war machine of the

¹⁶⁶ Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari, "1227: Treatise on Nomadology – The War Machine." *A Thousand Plateaus*, 351.

¹⁶⁷ See *ibid.*

¹⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, 420.

¹⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, 422.

nomos. The above begs the question, if a war machine, which is created by nomadology or nomadism, arises from the smooth heterogeneous space that is exterior and from another origin other than the state-apparatus, how can a state war machine possibly exist?

I argue they are one and the same, the theory of the nomos and the logos are not separate but in fact constitute a singular way of viewing the world. The two terms are representative of two ways of defining a Eurocentric understanding of colonization, or an operation of the colonial abstract machine. The nomadic space, or the smooth and heterogeneous space, is in contrast to the logos, a homogenous and striated space.¹⁷⁰ To better understand how the two spaces are in actuality the same space, two questions can be posed: 1) how can a smooth space not be homogenous? And, 2) how can a striated space be homogenous?

The answer to both of the questions is one of proximity. From a distance, a smooth space appears to be homogenous, but upon closer inspection, becomes striated. Likewise a striated space, containing a consistent and uniform composition, is also homogenous in its assemblage from a distance. It amounts to a problem of infinite regress once contained by the system. Herein lies the implication of the war machine, nomos, and logos to the abstract machine: they are the same system, and it is dependent on where one is situated in relation to the system that designates what aspect of its function is in clearest view.

The state-apparatus invents the nomad so as to maintain a constant flow of capital and continually re-create an enemy outside itself that validates the reason for the existence of a war machine and the *polis* that act as its internal applicator of force.¹⁷¹ The

¹⁷⁰ Ibid., 370-371.

¹⁷¹ Ibid., 386.

war machine is a function of the abstract machine; it is contained by it, and is activated through “the machinic assemblage that determines what is a technical element at a given moment, what is its usage, extension, comprehension... it is always the assemblage that constitutes the weapons system.”¹⁷²

Cultural theorist John Durham Peters defines the concept of nomadism as born metaphorical.¹⁷³ Acting as a favored tool of postmodernism, of which Deleuze and Guattari are expressly cited proponents, the nomad is an invented concept intended to theorize a defiance of settled, or state form, power.¹⁷⁴ It offers, for Peters, a dream of radical liberty, but it is a liberty that is ultimately metaphorical and theoretical. It does away with the idea of a fixed home or center, where the nomadic agent is “homeless and home-full at once.”¹⁷⁵ Tracing the nomad to its Greek, specifically Athenian origins, it is a word defined as feeding or pasturing, and is related to the *nomos*, or law. For the Athenians, the term was associated with a kind of cultural debasement, because without a polis to benefit from, a roving style of mobility somehow lacked a human fellowship. For Peters, nomadism is an act of denial, where the home is not referable to a homeland, but a way of being in the world where home is available everywhere, but this ability arouses disgust and disdain by the nation-state and its citizens.

Robert Young, in his essay “Colonialism and the Desiring Machine,” argues that the colonial desiring machine, the initial stratum of the abstract machine’s line of flight, deterritorializes a culture so as to reterritorialize everything within it to an abstract value

¹⁷² Ibid., 398-399.

¹⁷³ John Durham Peters, “Exile, Nomadism and Diaspora,” *Home, Exile, Homeland: Film, Media, and the Politics of Place*, ed. Hamid Naficy (New York: Routledge, 1998) 31.

¹⁷⁴ Ibid., 33.

¹⁷⁵ Ibid., 21.

of money, or capital.¹⁷⁶ Once the universal form of exchange is instituted, the reterritorialization inherent to the initial deterritorialization reconfigures the territory and cultural space of the colonized so as to re-inscribe it “according to the needs of the apparatus of the occupying power.”¹⁷⁷ Young argues the concept of nomadism is a form of indirect opposition to the state, and that, rather than occurring outside of the state, is rather “one brutal characteristic of capitalism itself.”¹⁷⁸ Young critiques Deleuze and Guattari by arguing that the concepts of deterritorialization and reterritorialization are too simplistic to account for how capitalism and its inherent colonial mechanism have functioned. He explicates that it is the layering of cultures in relation to the dominant colonial culture where a historical understanding is needed so as to better understand the process.¹⁷⁹ One of the functions of the machinic assemblage of the abstract machine is to layer strata, which encapsulate both culture and territory, in relation to the dominant stratum, or line of flight. The process is, theoretically, defined as an example of the weapons system of the assemblage, and is a pseudo violent act that enforces cultural layering in relation to the dominant.

While it can be proposed that Cuthand’s exhibition represents the conflict between a nomadic existence becoming controlled by the state-apparatus, this interpretation is contradictory and applies a metaphorical trope of postmodern radicality. I argue it is more useful to refer to the exhibition as a site where the colonial abstract machine is ruptured and refigured so as to underscore the inherent limitations in the forum of display in accounting for what is being displayed. The site of the exhibition,

¹⁷⁶ Robert Young, “Colonialism and the Desiring Machine,” *Colonial Desire: Hybridity in Theory, Culture and Race* (London: Routledge, 1995) 169.

¹⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, 170.

¹⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, 173.

¹⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, 174.

conceived by Cuthand as a site of sovereignty, is a site where the gaze of the spectator is interrogated and the space of exhibition shifts from a neutrally aesthetic space to that of a politically aestheticized space of autobiographical expression.¹⁸⁰

The personal, or autobiographical, expression of an indigenous artist who makes art in response to colonialism and contact is what Rickard refers to as the second distinct area of art making coming out of Native Communities.¹⁸¹ She argues this distinct area of production is a site of continuous renewal for indigenous knowledge. So, as opposed to theorizing Cuthand's exhibition through a lens of Eurocentric imaginaries, such as the entirely subject-position absent theory of the *nomos* and *logos*, the site understood in Rickard's terms becomes one where the art acts as an indicator of cultural sovereignty and knowledge renewal. The installation accounts for and recognizes the "forgotten history of the socially constructed westerner" while also creating a theoretically based practice that is not "primitive, marginal, other, post or neo colonial."¹⁸²

Cuthand's statement regarding the reality of a post-colonial state that is not what it claims to be, is important to revisit at this juncture. The spatial dynamics of the installation communicated to the observer implicit misrepresentations and assumptions concerning stereotypical cultural images. In addition, the installation also acts as a demonstration of sovereignty. A projected photograph of landscape with overlaid text denoting a psychological territorialization, or trace of memory, is framed by a curtain rendered in a style that directly refers to the reign of Queen Victoria, the presiding monarch during initial Treaty 6 negotiations that were the precedent for the Treaty Land

¹⁸⁰ Mieke Bal, "The Discourse of the Museum," *Thinking about Exhibitions*, eds. Reesa Greenberg, Bruce W. Ferguson and Sandy Nairne (New York: Routledge, 1996) 205.

¹⁸¹ Rickard, "Indigenous and Iroquoian Art Knowledge as Knowledge," 2.

¹⁸² *Ibid.*, 38.

Entitlement Agreement from 1992. Excerpts from the TLE document sit outside of the frame denoted by the curtains, the excerpts create a secondary frame that contain the initial frame, and further complicate the installation space (figs. 6-9). Lastly, the representation of Cuthand's daughter frames the entirety of the composition, and appears to act as the presenter of the material. The way in which the subject is represented with adjacent text also acts as an anthropological trope. As opposed to providing the definition of a culture, the subject is defined as a site of ongoing negotiation between the state and an identity construction. But the construction, as Cuthand reminds us in her essay, is entirely fictitious and meant to subvert "traditional", or stereotypical, representations of an indigenous subject.¹⁸³

In contrast, Grenville's text describes the drawing as acting as a site where the "hybrid subject bound by the logos of the post-colonial state and the nomos of traditional Indian identity"¹⁸⁴ are exemplified. As was stated earlier, the definition of nomos in its original Greek understanding can be translated to law. In comparison the logos, in its original Greek understanding, pertained to the perception of a divine reason, or a universal way to see the function of the world. To follow and re-iterate the above quotation while employing a more thorough understanding of the trace elements of the nomos and logos changes the sentence, and its semantic meaning, dramatically. If the hybrid subject is bound to the *universalizing* post-colonial state and the *law* of traditional Indian identity, then the hybrid subject is contained within an applied law that, if it is followed that the nomos and logos are a part of the same process and not outside of one another, is restricted by a dominant universal application. There is no conflict between

¹⁸³ Cuthand, "Little Pine... I don't Live there but I belong," 7.

¹⁸⁴ Grenville, "Introduction," 5.

the nomos and logos because they are one in the same system, a system with a universal law that seeks to apply itself to everything. Theoretically, they represent a function of the colonial abstract machine.

Cuthand describes the representation of her daughter as an “urban Indian princess.”¹⁸⁵ She is dressed in a kilt and jacket meant to be reminiscent of a “very British, very civilized” sensibility.¹⁸⁶ Sunglasses, a toy headband with a turkey feather, which signified the fraudulent and fake image of the colonized, complemented this sensibility but also conflated it.¹⁸⁷ The image has an aspect of urban pastiche to it that could be found within a youth culture magazine documenting the latest consumer trend. The image becomes another trope on the stereotypical representation of the indigenous woman, or what Grenville refers to as the signification of an ersatz Indian identity.¹⁸⁸ The applied connotation of the hybrid adds an interesting twist to the representation that requires further elaboration.

Cultural theorist Nicolas Papastergiadas, in his reading of Homi Bhabha’s concept of hybridity, defines hybridity as “both the process by which the discourse of colonial authority attempts to translate the identity of the Other within a singular category, but then fails and produces something else.”¹⁸⁹ From the tension between two cultures develops a *third space* that effectuates “forms of political change that go beyond antagonistic binarisms between the rulers and the ruled.”¹⁹⁰ The problem encountered through the theoretical application of the hybrid third space is that the binarism between

¹⁸⁵ Cuthand, “Little Pine... I don’t Live there but I belong,” 7.

¹⁸⁶ Ibid.

¹⁸⁷ Ibid.

¹⁸⁸ Grenville, “Introduction,” 5.

¹⁸⁹ Nicolas Papastergiadas, “Tracing Hybridity in Theory,” *Debating Hybridity*, ed. Pnina Werbner (London: Zed Press, 1996) 194.

¹⁹⁰ Ibid., 195.

the ruler and ruled is subverted through the fraudulent representation of the ersatz identity construction. If the subject represented is neither the traditional nomos of applied law, nor the post-colonial logos that universalizes, can there be a third space of hybridity?

If Rickard's understanding of the indigenous artist as borderline intellectual and cultural worker who creates art as an act of indigenous knowledge dispersal is negated, and in its place a theoretical frame applying a stereotypical ersatz identity in negotiation with the state is used, then the hybrid is a valid theoretical tool. But if there is an absence of identity, and if it follows that the identity construction inherent to the installation is based on a hybrid stereotype of indigenous identity, the application of hybridity does not adequately address the complexity of the exhibition.

The application of hybridity in the catalogue essay falls into one of the major critiques leveled at the concept by Papastergiadas. In his essay "Tracing Hybridity in Theory," Papastergiadas argues, quoting Gayatri Spivak, "the evocation of hybridity is 'so macrological that it cannot account for the micrological texture of power'."¹⁹¹ Spivak's seminal essay "Can the Subaltern Speak?," from which the above quotation is drawn, theorizes that those radical theorists and theories coming out of the West are motivated by a desire to conserve the West as the subject of itself.¹⁹² Spivak critiques the emphasis Michel Foucault and Gilles Deleuze place on two aspects of French Poststructuralist theory. The first is that "networks of power, desire and interest are so heterogeneous, that their reduction to a coherent narrative is counterproductive."¹⁹³ The second is that "intellectuals must attempt to disclose and know the discourse of society's

¹⁹¹ Ibid. However, Spivak was not critiquing the concept of hybridity per se; she was critiquing the theories of Michel Foucault, Deleuze and Guattari.

¹⁹² Gayatri Spivak, "Can the Subaltern Speak?," *Colonial Discourse and Post-Colonial Theory: A Reader*. eds. Patrick Williams and Laura Chrisman (New York: Columbia University Press, 1994) 66.

¹⁹³ Ibid.

Other.”¹⁹⁴ Spivak thus opines that a persistent critique is necessary, especially in regards to removing the universalizing tendency of the West as subject and replacing it with questioning the role of ideology implicit to the theoretical analysis of power. Following the quotation that references the micro and macro textures of power, Spivak writes: “To move toward such an accounting one must move towards theories of ideology – of subject formations that micrologically and often erratically operate the interests that congeal the macrologies,” and that those theories cannot overlook the category of representation.¹⁹⁵ She emphasizes that the concept of deterritorialization is a ferocious motif that forecloses a reading of the narratives of imperialism.¹⁹⁶ While this may be the case under certain circumstances, if the theory is grounded in its own ideology as being representative of and furthering the West as subject, an opportunity to reopen the foreclosed narratives of imperialism and colonialism is afforded.

Cuthand’s installation and essay combined with Grenville’s essay offer an instance where such an opportunity exists. The installation’s use of the colonizing text placed over top of the landscape offers a deterritorialization and complementary reterritorialization dependant on the subject position of the viewer. The concept of the institutional gaze refers to the relative reterritorialization that occurs through the disavowal of the reality of territorial representation and the history of colonization and forced occupation it engenders. The gallery functions as a site where a reterritorialization occurs that lessens the impact of the political implications of the installation. Through art, Cuthand institutes a political agenda that informs the spectator of the sovereign rights of the Little Pine Nation. The text contains a similarity to trace elements of a human

¹⁹⁴ Ibid.

¹⁹⁵ Ibid., 74.

¹⁹⁶ Ibid., 86.

occupation over the landscape, so that a faciality is implied, but it is a shifting faciality, one that is not relative to a direct correlation of the face of the colonizer to the landscape. It offers a moment where the language of the colonizer, which replaced the language of the colonized, is employed in a way that invokes the memory and continuation of the colonial project.¹⁹⁷ In addition, the TLE document, a colonial mapping mechanism that defines where territorial boundaries are set, and where they can be expanded, reduces the territory depicted to a contract, or legal framework, setting out the way in which territory is defined. From the legal framework, the landscape is deterritorialized and reterritorialized into issues of capital and economy, where all aspects of the use value of the land are defined. Lastly, the representation of the urban individual, who is subjugated by dominant stereotypes regardless of their presence within a neutral economy, suggests the shifting and fraudulent nature of the universalizing subject position of the colonial state-form, the West. Theoretically, because the abstract machine works in such a way so as to conceal its origins and naturalize the landscape into a product of itself, Cuthand's installation exposes the process of locating and dislocating oneself in relation to the colonizing theoretical frame. It results in a sovereign representation that locates and dislocates itself from a Western defined universal law at the same time.

Grenville's essay translates this complex operation into definable terms for the institutional gaze, specifically referring to a nomadic existence defined through Deleuze and Guattari; and, as such, a heroic, almost stoic application of an ersatz identity

¹⁹⁷ "By *racism* we do not mean a classification of human beings according to the color of their skin, but more basically, the classification of human beings according to a certain standard of 'humanity'." Walter D. Mignolo and Madina Tlostanova, "The Logic of Coloniality and the Limits of Postcoloniality," *The Post-Colonial and the Global*, ed. Revathi Krishnawamy and John C. Hawley (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2008) 111.

occurs.¹⁹⁸ The framing mechanism falls into the trap outlined by Crosby's concept of the Imaginary Indian but it also provides the means to recognize how dubious cultural translation can be, ultimately providing the footing for my analysis to occur. The discourse surrounding Cuthand's installation exemplified the process of attempting to theorize the effects of the colonial process, and the after-effects of the post-colonial process.

¹⁹⁸Historically, Western interest in aboriginal peoples has been self-interest, and this Eurocentric approach to natives – in all its forms - takes up a considerable amount of space within academic discourse." Crosby, "Construction of the Imaginary Indian," 267.

Chapter Three:

Christos Dikeakos: Sites & Place Names: Vancouver/Saskatoon

This chapter examines “Christos Dikeakos: Sites and Place Names: Vancouver /Saskatoon,” as an exhibition that shifts sites and contexts. For the exhibited work, artist Christos Dikeakos attempted to re-define how the landscape is seen by adding text that articulated differing use-values of land. The exhibition took place at a time when the appropriation of Native images and voice were under vigorous critique. The chapter elaborates on the discussion that ensued, assessing the ability of Dikeakos’ work to engage a post-colonial landscape. The chapter specifically focuses on elucidating how Dikeakos’ exhibition contributes to a greater understanding of the colonial abstract machine, and institutional appropriation in relation to “The Post-Colonial Landscape Project,” in general.

From April 29 through June 19, 1994, Dikeakos had a solo exhibition at the Mendel Gallery in Saskatoon. The exhibition consisted of a series of photographs taken from various sites in Vancouver, British Columbia and Saskatoon, Saskatchewan (figs. 16-20). The method and conceptual premise behind the exhibition was taken from an earlier exhibition of Dikeakos’ work shown at the Contemporary Art Gallery in Vancouver, from May 30 through July 4, 1992, titled “Sites & Place Names” and curated by Keith Wallace. This exhibition, which according to Wallace, was representative of a new direction in the artist’s work, was a specific attempt by Dikeakos to strategically place understandings of the cultural dialogue between the Federal and Provincial Governments and First Nations within a local understanding of landscape, namely, in

Vancouver. Dikeakos' goal was to intertwine both "native and non-native" histories through photographic representation.¹⁹⁹

The exhibition was presented as a counter to the 1992 celebrations of the 160th anniversary of the City of Vancouver, implicitly including Canada's 125th anniversary celebrations, as well as the quincentenary celebrations of "discovery". According to Wallace, the exhibition contextualized the "deep history" of Vancouver, which went further back than the date of its 1791 sighting by Narvaez of Spain. Arguing that European history dominates the perception of Vancouver by its greater population, Wallace suggests that an overlapping of histories has occurred between the European population and the First Nations of the Musquem and Squamish, the latter of which had, up until the 1920's, been residing on the Island of Stanley Park. This historical schism and dichotomy was central to the photographs Dikeakos exhibited.²⁰⁰

The exhibition focused on a method of documentation that sought to move beyond photoconceptual landscape photography, specifically in the tradition of the Vancouver School, by explicitly re-featuring the presence of First Nations. Each photographic work consists of two parts: the photograph and a piece of glass placed overtop of the photograph (figs. 16-20). Each piece of glass has text sandblasted onto it that names the sometimes-ambiguous site pictured. The photos are printed up to mural size, and were shot with a one hundred and sixty degree wide-angle lens, creating a panoramic effect.

Upon seeing the exhibition in Vancouver, Grenville decided Dikeakos' exhibition would be a good fit within the curatorial premise of "The Post-Colonial Landscape

¹⁹⁹ Christos Dikeakos, "Artist's Statement," *Christos Dikeakos: Sites & Place Names* (Contemporary Art Gallery: Vancouver, 1992) 17.

²⁰⁰ Keith Wallace, "Sites & Places," *Christos Dikeakos: Sites & Place Names*, 5-8.

Project,” and began a dialogue about bringing the exhibition under the project banner and exhibited at the Mendel Gallery in Saskatoon.²⁰¹ The Mendel Gallery exhibition was considerably smaller than the original at the Contemporary Art Gallery, with only six commissioned works as opposed to the seventeen commissioned for the CAG. While there was no overlap in terms of what was exhibited, it is difficult to discern which pieces were created for which exhibition because of the homogeneity of their application. The stylistic continuity of the works remained through both exhibitions, even though the sites of the exhibitions, and the cultural content, changed.

The Saskatoon edition of “Sites & Place Names” saw Dikeakos traveling to Wanuskewin Heritage Park to document it. Dikeakos was one of the few artists to follow the initial curatorial mandate as set out by “The Post-Colonial Landscape Project” committee, which was to have the artists within the exhibition engage with the history of the park itself. The photos from Wanuskewin Park were complemented by photographs taken from a residential street in Saskatoon, a residential street in Vancouver, as well as other sites pertaining to the refurbishing and expansion of the downtown core of Vancouver. The pairing of the urban landscapes of Vancouver and Saskatoon mimicked the way in which the cities were similarly constructed.

In the original exhibition’s curatorial essay, Wallace argues the shift in Dikeakos’ work holds similarities with some of his earlier work.²⁰² Specifically, the early works were ones that shifted perceptions of the city from a cohesive image to that of politicized matrix recognizing the social and economic implications of modernity.²⁰³ These earlier works were described by curator Scott Watson as representing a “defeatured landscape,”

²⁰¹ Grenville, personal interview, January 18, 2008.

²⁰² Wallace, “Sites & Place Names,” 8.

²⁰³ Ibid.

which engages the urban space of Vancouver as a site of typology and abstraction; the “defeatured landscape” represents a kind of aesthetic indifference, seeking an almost cookie cutter understanding of capitalist space, where the landscape is constantly in a state of flux and never the same under similar circumstance.²⁰⁴ In the same text, Watson argues that Jeff Wall’s *Landscape Manual* (1969-70) acts as a precedent-setting work for the defeatured landscape.²⁰⁵ Wall’s work consists of snapshots taken of the area of West Vancouver combined with text entries commenting on the process. The final work was a black and white photocopied book of fifty pages with a printing number of four hundred, mimicking a scientific manual.²⁰⁶ The work documents, theorizes and surveys a generic suburban locality through scanning.²⁰⁷ The series of snapshots, shot from or near the car that moved Wall from place to place, is a source for the work of Dikeakos that Wallace cites in his curatorial essay. For example, Dikeakos’ 1970 work, *Instant Photo Gratification*, a car-photo work consists of the artist driving to different localities in East Vancouver, documenting an “image of Vancouver which is as precisely anonymous and mundane as any other industrialized landscape.”²⁰⁸ Dikeakos wanted, in a similar vein to Wall, an anonymous and mundane method of urban landscape documentation, which theoretically could be regarded as being from anywhere within urban landscapes the world over.²⁰⁹ The defeatured landscape is one where the landscape becomes “as abstract and generic as capital” because modernism and capitalism both contain abstract and

²⁰⁴ Scott Watson, “The Defeatured Landscape,” *Vancouver Anthology: The Institutional Politics of Art* (Vancouver: Talonbooks, 1991) 256.

²⁰⁵ *Ibid.*, 258.

²⁰⁶ Sharla Sava, “Cinematic Photography, Theatricality, Spectacle: the Art of Jeff Wall,” PhD. diss., Simon Fraser University, 2005, 23.

²⁰⁷ *Ibid.*, 37.

²⁰⁸ Christos Dikeakos; quoted through Watson, “The Defeatured Landscape,” 258; 265.

²⁰⁹ Watson, “The Defeatured Landscape,” 258.

universalizing characteristics.²¹⁰ Within the defeated landscape, everything becomes, essentially, capable of being depicted in a similar fashion as a symptomatic condition of capital.

The “Sites & Place Names” series, of which there has been multiple exhibitions, has turned into a method of engagement drawn from the defeated landscape that consists of examining the history of the sites depicted by naming functions within each photograph. The sites examined in the series are: Vancouver and Saskatoon, Canada, as well as Athens, Greece. The development of what Dikeakos has termed a “universal application” for dealing with landscape combines the artistic technique deployed in the “Sites & Place Names” series, originating from the defeated landscape discussed by Watson, and Dikeakos’ personal experiences of travel.²¹¹ In 1987, Dikeakos embarked on a trip to his native home of Greece.²¹² It was there that he re-discovered his own history embedded in the landscape, and from this re-discovery began to examine how the use of the land and its history had been supplanted through the colonial process in Canada, specifically his home city of Vancouver.

For the Saskatoon exhibition, Dikeakos’ “universal applicator” that names and relates past and present use values of the land was contrasted with didactic panel texts. The panel texts consisted of excerpts from conversations between Dikeakos and Native elders discussing what some of the histories of the places depicted were. In the text panels, the Native histories were contrasted with colonial histories, offering examples of

²¹⁰ Ibid. 257-8.

²¹¹ Christos Dikeakos, “Some Background Notes for Sites & Place Names: Vancouver/Saskatoon,” *Christos Dikeakos: Sites & Place Names: Vancouver/Saskatoon*, ed. Bruce Grenville (Saskatoon: Mendel Art Gallery: 1994) 8.

²¹² Judith Mastai, “A Dialogue of Place and Time: Interview with Christos Dikeakos,” *C Magazine* (May-Aug, 1997) 16.

the contradictory understandings of history that can be attached to landscape.²¹³ The works thus represent a practice based on photo-conceptualism and the defeated landscape, combined with Dikeakos' political motivation to contribute to questions surrounding First Nations sovereignty in Canada. The works are representative of a subject-based post-colonial process of re-establishing the history embedded in the use value of the landscape.

The following section turns to the question of institutional appropriation, and how it relates to the overlying structure of "The Post-Colonial Landscape Project." Dikeakos' exhibition took place during a time when issues of cultural appropriation of Native iconography and voice were the subject of much debate in Canada. For example, the summer 1993 issue of the Toronto art magazine *Fuse* was entirely dedicated to the appropriation of culture. The catalyst came in the form of the 1988 exhibition, "The Spirit Sings: Artistic Traditions of Canada's First Peoples," which the Glenbow Museum in Calgary organized and toured for the Winter Olympics, which focused the debate on the appropriation of First Nation's voices and cultural expression.

"The Spirit Sings," a massive museological undertaking, was the premiere cultural attraction coinciding with the 1988 Calgary Olympics. It drew heavy criticism for its partnership with major financial sponsor, Shell Oil, which was in process of supporting museological recognition of First Nations Art, but at the same time, doing little to quell land claims negotiations with the Lubicon Lake Cree. Shell Oil provided the largest corporate sponsorship sum in the Glenbow Museum's history at 1.2 million dollars.²¹⁴ The donation led to the corporation being granted exclusive sponsorship rights.

²¹³ Dikeakos, "Some Background Notes for Sites & Place Names," 8.

²¹⁴ "Glenbow lands Imperial largesse," *Calgary Herald* (Calgary Feb 9, 2006) D.1.

Through a consultation process between the six principal curators of the exhibition and varying international private and public lenders, a five-year program brought together over six hundred historical and culturally-sensitive materials to be displayed as the flagship exhibition celebrating Canada during the Olympics in Calgary.²¹⁵ A record 120,000 visitors attended the exhibition, while an unprecedented 7,000 filled out commentary cards.²¹⁶ The exhibition was marked by protests and boycotts initiated by the Lubicon Lake Cree, who had been lobbying for many years to have their ancestral lands recognized as a sovereign First Nation.²¹⁷

From the debate that resulted surrounding the exhibition, the Task Force on Museums and First Peoples, in which curatorial committee member Lee Ann Martin participated, was enacted. The task force worked for nearly four years and presented their findings at an international conference at Carleton University in February of 1992.²¹⁸ In addition, the Advisory Committee to the Canada Council for Racial Equality in the Arts was active between the years of 1990-1991. The study's results were presented to the Canada Council in 1992. While the recommendations from the Task Force were not specifically focused in their entirety on the issue of cultural appropriation, in response, the Canada Council's Advisory Committee did put forth one specific recommendation regarding appropriation: "that the Canada Council develop guidelines which are sensitive to the complex issues surrounding cultural appropriation including differing needs of communities, the need for written permission in certain instances, the need to maintain

²¹⁵ Julia D. Harrison, "The Spirit Sings and the Future of Anthropology," *Anthropology Today* 4:6 (1988) 6.

²¹⁶ Christopher Hume, "Spirit is an inspirational exhibit but setting doesn't have a prayer," *Toronto Star* (July 2, 1988) F.8.

²¹⁷ Roy MacGregor, "Indians Urge Calgary Games Boycott," *The Ottawa Citizen* (April 3, 1986) A.1; Jim Robb, "European Support Growing for Alberta Cree Land Suit," *The Ottawa Citizen* (June 19, 1986). A.18

²¹⁸ Stephanie Bolton, "An Analysis on the Task Force on Museums and First Peoples: The Changing Representations of Aboriginal Histories in Museums," MA thesis, Concordia University, 2004, 18-26.

respect for cultural tradition, the importance of training/background for artists working in cultural traditions other than their own..."²¹⁹ What began as two committee's tackling difficult questions regarding systemic exclusion and institutional appropriation in Canada was reduced in the popular media to questions of artistic freedom and censorship, effectively silencing any challenge to systemic inequality and the role of the institution in perpetuating inequality.²²⁰

Richard Fung, artist and arts writer, a member of the Advisory Committee, offered commentary on how the issue of appropriation was framed in popular media publications in an article from 1992.²²¹ Fung comments that the issue of appropriation, as it was framed in popular media, was reduced to a dualism, or binary. The "us and them" dualism within media representation consistently eluded the purpose and point of the two studies, which was to begin to work towards a more complicit and equal relationship between the museum and First Nations, as well as address issues of systemic inequality within the Canada Council. As Fung wrote, during the time of the Committee, there were no non-white members on the board of the Canada Council, nor non-white members within the Council itself. The two facts were conspicuously absent from any debate

²¹⁹ "Whereas cultural appropriation is an area of sensitivity in many arts communities, we recommend that the Canada Council develop guidelines which are sensitive to the complex issues surrounding cultural appropriation including differing needs of communities, the need for written permission in certain instances, the need to maintain respect for cultural tradition, the importance of training/background for artists working in cultural traditions other than their own. This policy will be consistent throughout sections and evident in application as well as jury procedures." *Recommendations of the Advisory Committee to the Canada Council for Racial Equality in the Arts and the Response of the Canada Council* (Ottawa: Canada Council, 1992) 6; see also: Kelly Cusinato, "The Voice Appropriation Controversy in the Context of Canadian Cultural Practices," MA thesis, University of Windsor, 1995; Pamela Krueger, "Counterfeit Cultures: Cultural Appropriation, Art by Native Artists and Canadian Galleries," MA thesis, Laurentian University, 1998. These two MA theses cover the topic comprehensively and provide the necessary context to understanding the complexity of the cultural appropriation debate, which is beyond the scope of this study.

²²⁰ Alberto Manguel, "Frightening Attack on the Imagination," *The Globe and Mail* (March 28, 1992) D.7; Stephen Godfrey, "Canada Council Asks Whose Voice is it Anyway?," *The Globe and Mail* (March 21, 1992) C.1; Joyce Zemans, "Council's Policy 'Remains the Same'," *The Globe and Mail* (April 4, 1992) D.7

²²¹ Richard Fung, "Working Through Cultural Appropriation," *Fuse* (Summer, 1993) 16-24.

enacted within major Canadian news periodicals. Regarding the problem of appropriation, Fung argued that in order for the reports to function in a way that was not systemically racist or exclusionary, they had to redress historically established inequities without marketing superficial difference for profit, or control.²²² Arguing that the debate had centered on arguments put forth by fiction writers, the exclusions within the debate left visual arts absent from the appropriation dialogue. To effectuate a resistance and resolution to the problem of systemic exclusion, Fung articulated that the issue was a need for a “leveling of the playing field.”²²³

As Carol Tator, Frances Henry and Winston Mattis have argued in their discussion on the reception of the 1993 *Writing Thru Race* conference held in Vancouver, the issue of appropriation aroused the attention of the popular media because it directed awareness towards issues of identity, difference and racism. By framing appropriation into terms situating a Eurocentric Canada as the object of study, a destabilization occurred where the systemic racialization inherent to the construction of Canada became the object. The actions of the early nineties threatened the core of “Canadian identity,” understood as, for those agents who fit within its parameters, a universal identity with the capability of absorbing anyone, or anything, without recognizing the means and history to which the idea of artistic freedom and license had become available.²²⁴

Filmmaker and cultural theorist Loretta Todd’s 1990 article, “Notes on Appropriation,” poses a key question: why would artists knowingly appropriate Native culture within their practices and theory when appropriation is an agent of colonialism

²²² Ibid., 18.

²²³ Ibid.

²²⁴ Carol Tator, Frances Henry, Winston Mattis, *Challenging Racism in the Arts* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1998) 94-99.

and patriarchy?²²⁵ For Todd, whether appropriation is used as a means to champion a cause is irrelevant, the end result will still encompass a paternalistic attitude based within traces of colonialism if proper channels of communication are not abided by. It is an issue that amounts to different understandings of the use value of the land, culture and cultural expressions, and the way in which they are employed. Todd argues that in the appropriation of expression and images, “the issue begins with origins and who has the right to name whom.”²²⁶ In naming and possession, difference becomes a symbol, or fetish. Todd writes that, in fetishization, objectification is the end result, where style, fashions and commodities take the place of the initial appropriation of territory and autonomy. Through appropriation, Todd explains that the artist becomes complicit with government neglect in satisfying issues of sovereignty and cultural autonomy, ultimately sending a “message that there is no Aboriginal Title, that the dominance of colonialism and post-colonialism rules.”²²⁷

Richard Hill’s 1992 article on appropriation, a directed commentary to the responses of Andy Fabo and the Fastwürms to an article by Joan Cardinal-Schubert, titled “In the Red” from 1989, addresses the issue of native images and culture, specifically the use of appropriation in the work of the Fastwürms, Andy Fabo and Liz Major.²²⁸ Some issues raised by Hill are of importance in regards to Dikeakos’ process and the work exhibited in the “Sites & Place Names: Vancouver/Saskatoon” exhibition. Hill’s essay is expressly concerned with the way in which artists who appropriate Native iconography and stories dominate discourse, and become centralized in institutional understandings of

²²⁵ Loretta Todd, “Notes on Appropriation,” *Sightlines*, 414.

²²⁶ *Ibid.* 415.

²²⁷ *Ibid.* 417.

²²⁸ Richard Hill, “One Part Per Million: White Appropriation and Native Voices,” *Fuse* (Winter 1992) 12; Joan Cardinal Schubert, “In the Red,” *Fuse* (Fall 1989) 20-28.

Native culture, elaborating that by not acknowledging the inherent systemic racism within Canada, equal and meaningful dialogue is impossible.²²⁹

This discussion of appropriation in the local context can be contrasted with Douglas Crimp's views in his essay, "Appropriating Appropriation," in which he writes that appropriating encompasses almost every aspect of culture, from "fashion and entertainment industries to the most committed critical activities of artists."²³⁰ Because of the ubiquity of appropriation since the shift in modernism to postmodernism is exemplified by appropriation, Crimp argues that it becomes an operation of culture that does not specifically reflect upon culture itself. Notably, his essay is in specific reference to the appropriation of photography in the museum as a form of museum art that foregrounds the function of appropriation as an institutional force that requires the discourse of the museum. I argue the work of Dikeakos falls into the discourse of the museum in Crimp's sense, except that the work deepens the complexity of the problem to localize the "deep" history of Canada in particular.²³¹ In this way, attention is widened for the purposes of this study to concerns regarding ideas of systemic exclusion and the freedom to appropriate within hierarchical boundaries specific to those defined by a top-down, layered palimpsest of Canadian multiculturalism.

An understanding of the way in which appropriation is understood in Canada in tandem with the discourse of the museum, is to argue that the appropriation of culture implies a "specific temporal position and form of historical narration," to draw from

²²⁹ Ibid., 13-14.

²³⁰ Douglas Crimp, "Appropriating Appropriation," *On the Museums Ruins* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1993) 126-127.

²³¹ Writing on American artists and architects such as Frank Gehry, Michael Graves, Sherrie Levine and Robert Mapplethorpe, Crimp's essay does not address appropriation as understood by Canadian critics and theorists.

anthropologist James Clifford.²³² The values of gathering, classifying, for Clifford, rest in distinctly European notions of order. In terms of the appropriation of other cultures into Western theoretical discourses, he argues that a resistance of the systems of defined-authenticity applied to other cultures is paramount. The way in which culture and art are extended to “non-Western cultures,” for Clifford, are at worst imposed, and at best translated.²³³

The following section examines the implications of the above discussions on appropriation for the organization of the catalogues that accompanied Dikeakos’ exhibitions. Each catalogue is broken into two sections. The first section of both catalogues contained curatorial essays by Wallace and Grenville. Grenville’s essay gives a brief description of the problem he encountered bringing in an already completed exhibition through a series of questions. The first is a question regarding locally developed methods and their ability to be transferred from one site to another. This is followed by a series of questions on the delineation of local knowledges within differing communities. Grenville questions whether there are relevant comparisons between the pre-colonial and colonial histories of Saskatoon and Vancouver, and whether photo-based, or photoconceptual art, has the ability to redefine social history.²³⁴

Wallace’s essay is concerned with issues of context, specifically the situating of Dikeakos’ new work in relation to old, as well as defining the target audience for the exhibition. Wallace saw Dikeakos as contributing to counter celebrations of “contact,” which provided the reasoning to bring the exhibition under “The Post-Colonial

²³² James Clifford, “On Collecting Art and Culture,” *Out There*, 153.

²³³ *Ibid.*, 155. As a personal lament, I would like to add here the troubling question: where Indigenous cultural productions in Canada lay if not the West? The strange anomaly of binarism mapping cultural production between an east and west axis leaves the native inhabitants of the continent consistently absent.

²³⁴ Grenville, “Introduction,” *Christos Dikeakos: Sites & Place Names: Vancouver/Saskatoon*, 3.

Landscape Project,” as it was initially conceived to counter the same celebrations. In his concluding paragraphs, Wallace attributes Dikeakos’ friendship with artists Robert Davidson and Joe David as having been the initial precursor for Dikeakos’ trip to Athens to re-discover his own history.²³⁵ As if this authentication was important to the exhibition’s target audiences, Wallace concludes:

The gaps and overlaps of histories are by no means resolved; one is left to rethink the hulk of a city inhabited by an increasing population with roots in all parts of the globe and to negotiate our roles as citizens with a First Nations population who are well aware of what these histories mean.²³⁶

This passage effectively captures the motivation of the Dikeakos exhibition, which was expressly concerned with providing a re-featured landscape directed towards the Vancouver art community in which the trace of the defeatured landscape found in photoconceptualism is its most well-known aesthetic. A Native/non-native binary was the purpose of the exhibition, but it was a binary where one side was well aware of the history presented in the works, while the other potentially was not. The curatorial essay outlines and personifies the way in which a dialogue was instituted through Wallace, Dikeakos and the CAG to negotiate the shared history of Vancouver, pre- and post-colonialism through a well-known and specifically local art practice. In fact, both curatorial essays contain examples where the curators expressly mention the participation of First Nations in the dialogue leading up to the exhibitions.²³⁷

The second section of the catalogues consist of an artist statement and altered letter that Dikeakos wrote and sent to the band councils of the Musquem and Squamish

²³⁵ Wallace, “Sites & Place Names,” 9.

²³⁶ Ibid., 13

²³⁷ For example, Grenville’s closing paragraph in his curatorial essay mentions the participation of Stan Cuthand, a Plains Cree elder and relative of Ruth Cuthand.

Nations. The text outlines why Dikeakos chose to do what he did, acting as a documentation of the process undertaken by the artist to conduct research from an ethical standpoint.²³⁸ Dikeakos comments that the new works provide a method of inquiry into colonialism, “intended to give non-Native people an awareness of First Nations’ historical and current negotiations with various levels of government,” serving a didactic function.²³⁹ He further argues that while his method is representative of a universal application, it is not meant to tell Native histories.

In contrast, Judith Mastai’s 1996 article, “The Post-Colonial Landscape,” one of the few articles from the period that addresses the exhibitions in the program, argues seemingly against Dikeakos’ artist statement and Wallace’s curatorial essay. Mastai writes that the photos from the “Sites & Place Names” series, rather than constructing a Native/other identity binary, invoke a “matrixial space.”²⁴⁰ Using the matrixial space, traced through the theories of artist and theorist Bracha Lichtenberg-Ettinger, Mastai argues the photos are representative of a shared consciousness where insiders and outsiders exist within the same stratum.²⁴¹ The borders between the two, insiders and outsiders, become thresholds where what is lost and what is still available are intertwined. According to Lichtenberg-Ettinger, the matrixial space, defined as being recognizant of the cosmos, or a universal, acts as an encounter that is an “aesthetical and ethical compassionate environment.”²⁴² It is a space where wounds are transcribed as traces within the other, and those others then process the traces of the traumatic event,

²³⁸ On ethical standpoint, see Karen Potts and Leslie Brown, “Becoming an Anti-Oppressive Researcher,” *Research as Resistance: Critical, Indigenous, and Anti-Oppressive Approaches*, ed. Leslie Brown and Susan Strega (Toronto: Scholar’s Press, 2005) 261-262.

²³⁹ Dikeakos, “Some Background Notes for Sites & Place Names,” 8.

²⁴⁰ Judith Mastai, “The Post-Colonial Landscape,” *BlackFlash* (Summer, 1996) 13.

²⁴¹ *Ibid.*

²⁴² Bracha Lichtenberg-Ettinger, “Matrixial Trans-Subjectivity,” *Theory, Culture and Society* (May 2006) 220.

creating another event where responsibility and knowledge of the other are acknowledged without domination.²⁴³ Mastai argues the addition of the sandblasted glass with text echoing the “voice” of Native Elders, hovering within the landscape, act as traces of the land’s historical use value and accentuate First Nation Lands Claims, and are not to be regarded as an appropriation of the Native voice.²⁴⁴ But why did Mastai expressly state that Dikeakos was not appropriating a Native Voice?

An interesting aspect of the work of Dikeakos in the “Sites & Place Names: Vancouver/Saskatoon” is the way in which he followed the guidelines recommended by the Committee on Racial Equality, a recommendation that has remained unheeded by the Canada Council. In the appropriation of Native voice, which is what Dikeakos did in using the written texts of the Musquem and Plains Cree in the work, he went into the communities he documented and paid attention to difference, sought written permission where needed, and respected and highlighted the difference in communities represented through his artist statement. In the execution of his work, Dikeakos was respectful. For

²⁴³ Ibid., 221.

²⁴⁴ Ibid. While it is either entirely coincidental that Mastai published this article in the Saskatoon based publication *BlackFlash* with the same name as “The Post-Colonial Landscape Project,” the brief article does not actually discuss the project proper, nor its curatorial premise. However, it would seem Mastai was aware of the project, given that she quotes Lee-Ann Martin writing on Domingo Cisneros -- “the post-colonial artist is ‘walking in two worlds,’ as Domingo Cisneros has put it” – which appeared in the catalogue for the “Sky Bones” exhibition presented as part of “The Post-Colonial Landscape Project” six months prior to the Dikeakos exhibition. The *Sky Bones* catalogue in fact includes a foreword by Mendel Gallery director Terry Fenton in which he clearly mentions “The Post-Colonial Landscape Project”: “*Domingo Cisneros: Sky Bones* is the third in a series of exhibitions and special events organized by the Mendel Art Gallery... the series, entitled *The Post-Colonial Landscape*, explores the representation of the land and its uses within the 18th- and 19th-century colonial state and 20th-century post-colonial state. The artists in these exhibitions are united by their interests in a history of colonization and the cultural identity that colonization has engendered.” What is problematic for the purposes of this study is the specific naming of Cisneros as a “post-colonial artist” since neither this, nor reference to any of the other artists in “The Post-Colonial Landscape Project” as “postcolonial artists” appears in any of the project’s exhibition catalogues. Mastai, “The Post-Colonial Landscape,” 11; Lee-Ann Martin, *Domingo Cisneros: Skybones* (Saskatoon: Mendel Art Gallery, 1993) 5; Fenton, “Foreword.”

the Saskatoon show, he was in contact with Stan Cuthand, who aided in the translation of panels and provided a local perspective to understanding the landscape.²⁴⁵

Where the work of Dikeakos can fall into criticism is in his use of the notion of “universal application.” The premise that the method to the work could be applied anywhere is complicit with a universal ideal which is problematic when it comes to the ways in which local knowledges are delineated through text and landscape (figs. 16-20). Mastai referred to this as the shared consciousness of the insider and outsider, where the assumption is that a coexistence within space that transcribes traces within the one and the other, can lead to an understanding of what has been lost and what still remains. Thus the issue of appropriation in the context of Dikeakos’ exhibition lies in the assumed ability to translate culturally-specific landscapes within a homogenized framework of application. The implication of the one and the other, or the insider and the outsider, are lost through the homogenization of compositional elements within the works that reduce the colonial histories of Vancouver and Saskatoon to a post history of colonialism universalized as the post-colonial.

The inherent problem to the works as defined by Dikeakos is that they do not acknowledge a human presence beyond a functional description of the landscape. They bring forward Arif Dirlik’s criticism that the post-colonial erases the differences in the way in which colonialism functioned over differing territories.²⁴⁶ Through the universal application (in Dikeakos’ sense), where use value of land is defined through language, the history of the colonization process is suggested, but not addressed. The works, through their homogenous application, act as instances where the actions and

²⁴⁵ Grenville, “Introduction,” 3.

²⁴⁶ Arif Dirlik, “The End of Colonialism? The Colonial Modern in the Making of Global Modernity,” *Boundary 2* (Spring 2005) 2.

subjectivities of the colonized are rendered as a one-sided construction of the colonial modern world.

Following Marcia Crosby, artworks act as a postmodern self-criticism when they become more about the artist who creates them than about First Nations People, or interests, that the work claims to represent.²⁴⁷ Implicated within this is the concept of the colonized-Indian as landscape, where an absent colonized presence is offered as an instance of an imaginary pan-Indian construction. In regards to Dikeakos' work, the question then becomes whether or not his statement of intent and the curatorial framework are enough to draw away from the compositional elements that put forth an absent First Nations presence, specifically a presence that is localized to the history of colonialism through a kind of cultural translation that names functions of the landscape, without addressing the history behind the removal of those functions. It is representative of what Loretta Todd would argue to be an instance where the artist "does not value or respect cultural difference but seeks to own difference and with this ownership to increase ones worth."²⁴⁸ In other words, Dikeakos' work, if one were to follow Todd's formulation, would be more about Dikeakos as a saleable artist than about issues of sovereignty, cultural autonomy and land claims.

In contrast, one could take Mastai's use of the matrixial space as counter to this line of argument, were it not for the fact that the former has complications of its own to do with its theoretical origins. A practicing psychoanalyst, Lichtenberg-Ettinger's concept of the matrixial borderspace is drawn from psychoanalysis. Given the historical origins of psychoanalysis, namely Sigmund Freud, and its implications for colonialism

²⁴⁷ Crosby, "Constructing the Imaginary Indian," 271.

²⁴⁸ Todd, "Notes on Appropriation," 414.

and evolutionary theory, the incorporation of Lichtenberg-Ettinger's idea in Mastai's article can be seen as an attempt to bring the work of Dikeakos within the framework of a psychoanalytic reading, which inadvertently would be to disregard the cultural specificity and autonomy of the communities represented, contributing to a furthered homogenization beyond an already suspect universal application. It is an instance where one universal replaces another.

To conclude, the significance of the inclusion of "Sites & Place Names" in "The Post-Colonial Landscape Project" is the way in which it offered a context for discussions on how artists, such as Dikeakos, go about localizing themselves within the history of Canadian colonialism. The exhibition came to represent the artist's commitment to conducting research from an ethical standpoint, but it was also a cue to understanding an operation of the colonial abstract machine. In the case of the work contained in the exhibition, the universal application homogenized difference between localities and contributed to a diagramming of the landscape through text. Implicitly within the texts used, there is a propensity towards a reductionist view that puts forward a taxonomy and classification of the landscape that negates any representation of settlement, or community. When the exhibition is theorized as a stand-alone, it falls prey to criticism, but when it is combined with the larger project, it becomes a subject-based commentary that further contextualizes the complexity of what a post-colonial landscape might entail in Canada, and the limitations of attempts to defeature place in the face of an all-seeing method of engagement.

Conclusion:

This thesis has focused on three exhibitions from “The Post-Colonial Landscape Project,” and discussed how they bring forward consideration of a colonial abstract machine.²⁴⁹ What is important to recognize, in terms of Canadian art historical analysis, is that “The Post-Colonial Landscape Project” is one of the few exhibition programs occurring in Canada during the 1990s that offered a sustained and consistent contribution to a discourse of post-coloniality in art and what it entails for understanding its relevance in Canada. Without implying that Canada, as a settler nation-state, represents a post-colonial nation, this study suggests that during the 1990s, as well the decade before, negotiations between artists, cultural workers, and the greater institutions shifted from colonial prescriptions to post-colonial descriptions and negotiations.

The introduction to the thesis argued for an understanding that a part of this process, engaging in a post-colonial description, involves the public gallery as a forum of engagement for voices and representations of dissent. Because the public gallery, or specifically, the Mendel Art Gallery, is a cultural policy funded institution, it is ultimately contributing to the becoming of Canada at a regional level. Where the issue of cultural policy contributing to a becoming is tenuous is found in the way in which the art exhibited in the exhibitions examined in the preceding chapters are critical of the contemporary cultural sphere. If they can be generally characterized, none of the works examined in this thesis are celebratory of the Canadian situation. Each exhibition and work, in their own way, provide a reading of the history of colonialism and Canada which speaks to the negligence on the part of the government and greater population with

²⁴⁹ Due to the scope of this study, only a selection of “The Post-Colonial Landscape Project” has been theorized and analyzed, but it should not be concluded that this has accurately reflected the scope and depth of the project. A further and more in-depth study is forthcoming to address the other exhibitions.

events that have transpired and continue in the colonial and neo-colonial process, that more and more are aligned with Hardt and Negri's critique of "empire."

In theoretical terms, the exhibitions engage the molar aspect of Canada. The molar is the Eurocentric imaginary of Canadian visual identity, argued as the plane of consistency of the colonial abstract machine. The correlation of the face and the landscape, which in art historical terms is defined by the prominence and institutional worth of the Group of Seven in Canada, represents the function of erasure in the colonial process. Given the operations of the major, or molar, the invocation of a becoming-minor forces a negotiation with the former that Canadian artists, and Canadian art history, must engage with if they are to engage the minor. The implication of the system, or machine, is that it limits the ability to confront and discuss differing readings and understandings of art, based on a necessity to engage institutionally validated points of reference as if they are the determinants to which acknowledgement must occur. It is exemplified by a continued and consistent return to Eurocentric imaginaries of validity that inherently define the layered worth of cultural and race-based stereotypes deployed by the overlying structure. Hardt and Negri argue that it is a differential racism, or imperial racism, that "integrates others with its order and then orchestrates those differences in a system of control."²⁵⁰

The system of control is evidenced by federally- and provincially-designated cultural policy monies being provided to public institutions, which are bound to federal documents like the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms* and the *Multicultural Act*. The way in which "The Post-Colonial Landscape Project" engaged with the above is by

²⁵⁰ Hardt and Negri, *Empire*, 195.

having the artists who exhibited work contribute to a loosely-defined framework of post-coloniality, allowing for a wide-ranging interrogation. Rather than a singular, one off exhibition that could be easily theorized and defined, the exhibitions provided a pluralist ordering of voice that did not privilege one voice over another.

Of course, within this premise, deviances and proliferations abound, limitations expose themselves, and the difficulty with defining contemporary art practices in general are exemplified. This is an important aspect to consider in attempting to contain the dialogues that these exhibitions provoke. “The Post-Colonial Landscape Project” has limited accurate and directly-related material pertaining to what the project entailed. For example, both Erin Manning and Judith Mastai’s documentation offer readings of only certain artworks within the program, while a catalogue review by Gerta Moray in *BlackFlash* offers a straightforward but short explication of the project.²⁵¹ This thesis is intended to provide a more thorough, in-depth analysis, while at the same time provide comprehensive documentation of an important project not previously critically written about at length.

The consistent presence of theories drawn from or written by Deleuze and Guattari within the limited writings on “The Post-Colonial Landscape Project” spoke to the way in which, in the theorization of art within the project, a Eurocentric conception of translation continued to hold prevalence. However, by working through these theories, this thesis has attempted to raise serious questions in regards to Eurocentric universalism and the way in which a continued reliance on high-theory does not adequately address the complexity of the art and the questions the art provokes. While it can be argued that

²⁵¹ Gerta Moray, “Exiles and Others,” *BlackFlash* 16:2 (1999) 12-14.

detritorialization and reterritorialization of territory translates the landscape into defined parameters of capital, the theory becomes cyclic and limited once individual agency and differing modes of being are confronted. I have argued this has been exemplified by Ruth Cuthand's exhibition in the way in which it defies theoretical classification systems. In addition, Christos Dikeakos' exhibition provides an example of the failure of universal applications to accurately account for local complexities and history. Lastly, "A Billboard Project" sustained and developed a dialogue that exemplifies the way in which specificity and attention to detail must be abided by to better understand how the local and the global inter-relate, and how they can be exhibited in the public sphere.

To conclude, the analyses in this thesis has shown that "A Billboard Exhibition," "Ruth Cuthand: Location/Dislocation" and "Christos Dikeakos: Sites & Place Names: Vancouver/Saskatoon" represent a range of varied points of view on understandings of the post-colonial landscape in Canada. As they had not yet been grouped into a whole beyond the catalogue publication, this thesis offers a dialogue and documentation that, it is hoped, will allow for further discussion and research to occur. The strength of the exhibitions, and indeed the "The Post-Colonial Landscape Project" as a whole, is in their combined ability to offer a multitude of opinions and views on the topic, hence making a significant contribution to art historical research into 1990s exhibition practices in Canada.

Figures:



Figure 1.
Edward Poitras. *1885. 1993.*



Figure 2.
Grant McConnell. *Partly Cleared Partly Cultivated*. 1993.



Figure 3.
Jamelie Hassan. *Linkage*. 1993.



Figure 4.
Kay Walkingstick. *Finding the Center*. 1993.

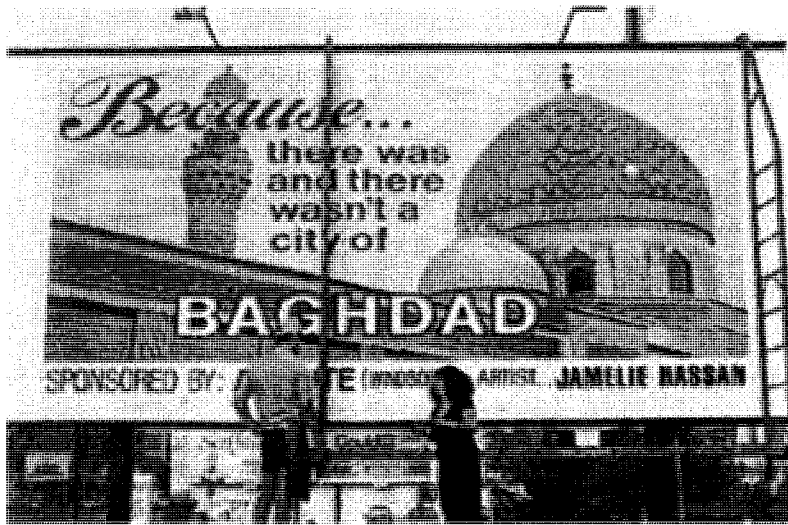


Figure 5.
Jamelie Hassan. *Because... there was and there wasn't a city of Baghdad*. 1991.



Figure 6:
Ruth Cuthand. *Location/Dislocation*. 1993.



Figure 7.
Ruth Cuthand. *Location/Dislocation*. 1993.



Figure 8.
Ruth Cuthand. *Location/Dislocation*. 1993.



Figure 9.
Ruth Cuthand. *Location/Dislocation*. 1993.



Figure 10.
Ruth Cuthand. *My Grandfather's House, Little Pine, 1993.*



Figure 11.
Ruth Cuthand. *Battle River, Little Pine, 1993.*



Figure 12.
Ruth Cuthand. *Forest Northern Saskatchewan, 1993.*

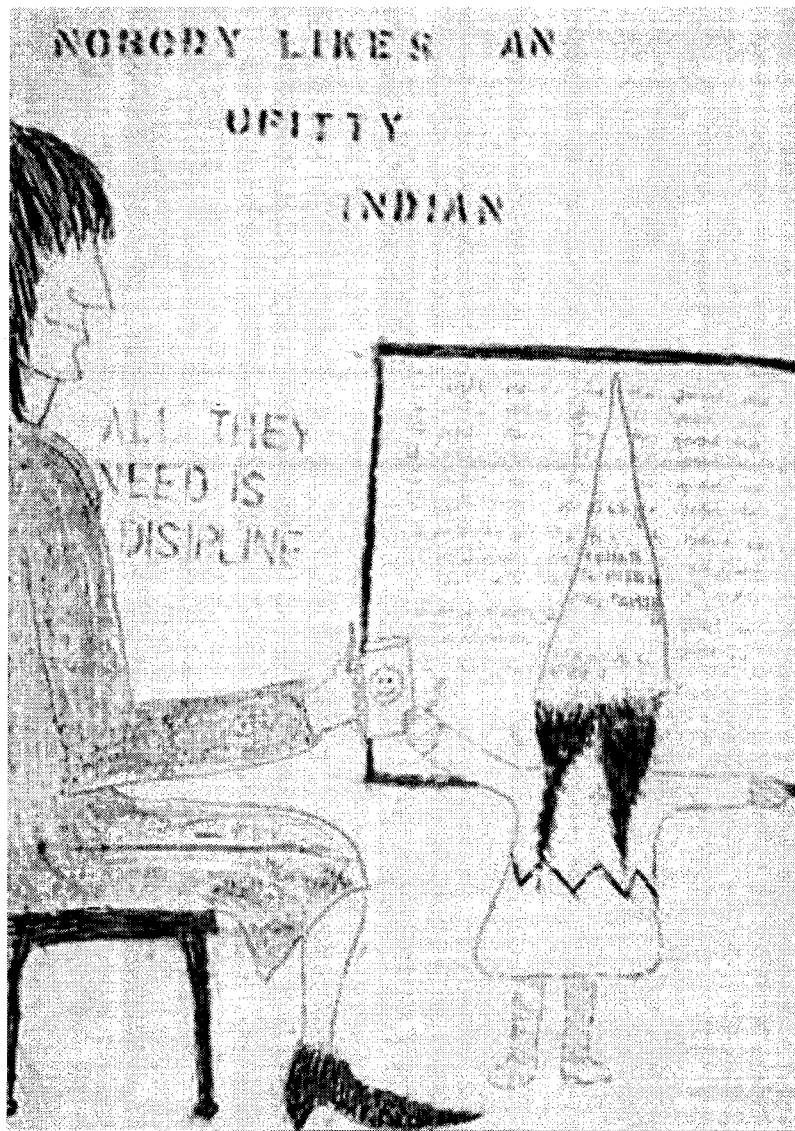


Figure 13.
Ruth Cuthand. *January Thaw, Edge of Town*. 1990.

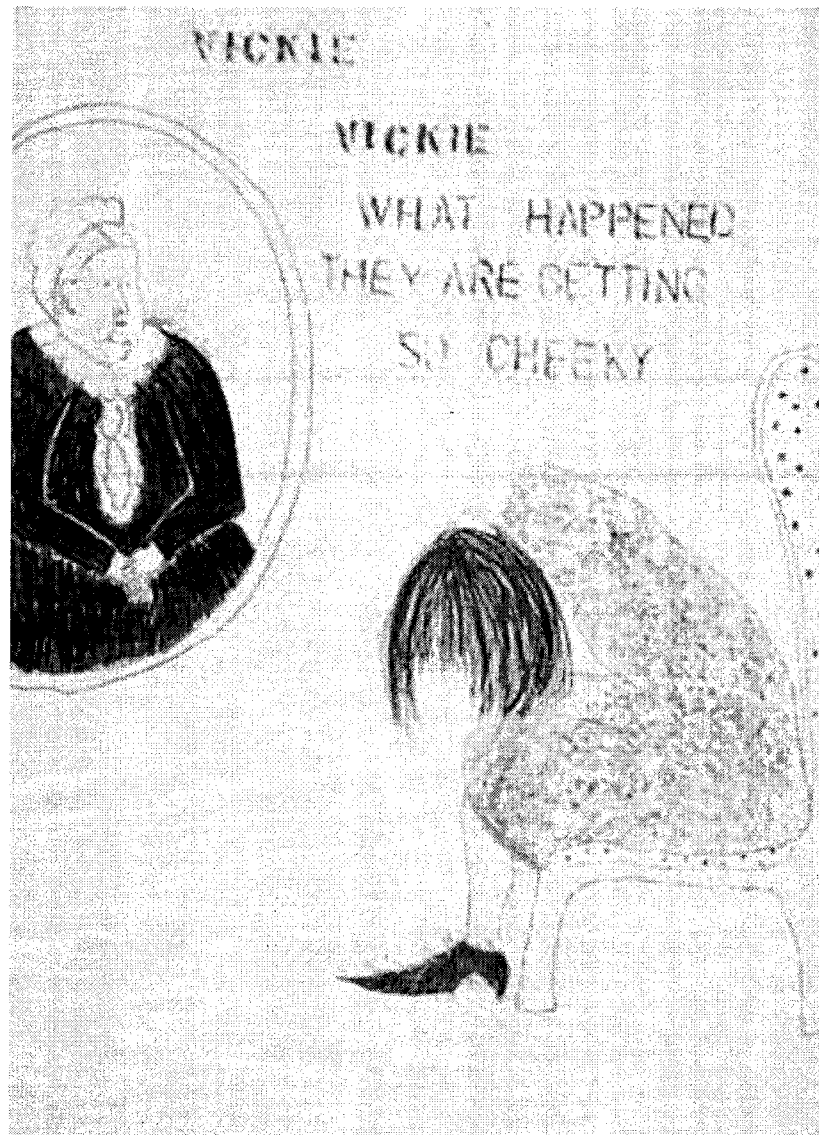


Figure 14.
Ruth Cuthand. *Thunder Head: Pink Clouds over a Lake*. 1990.



Figure 15.
Christos Dikeakos. *Wanuskewin Park – Mike Vitowski's Farm – Saskatoon – Saskatchewan*. 1993.

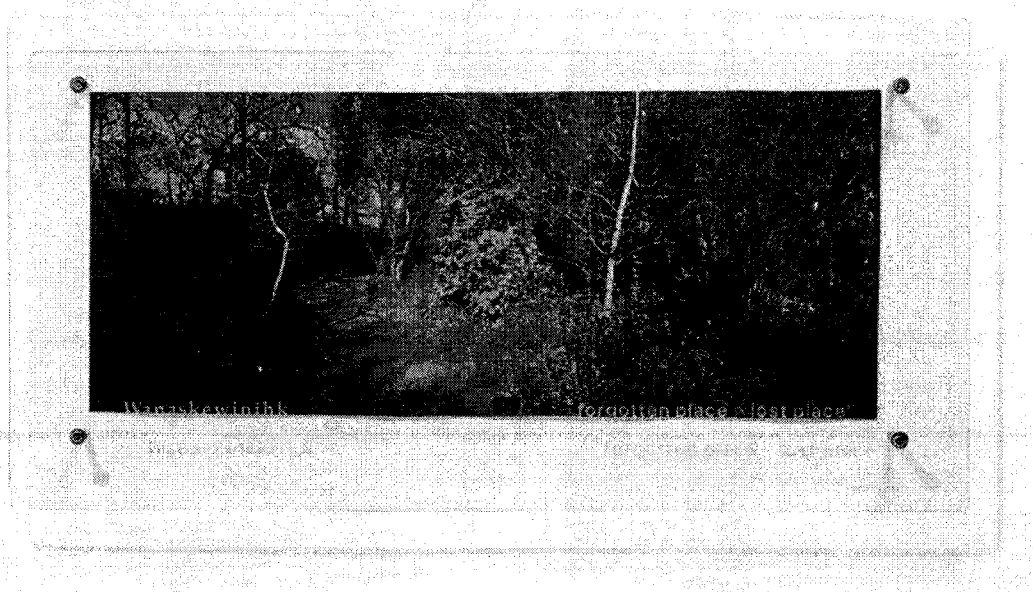


Figure 16.
Christos Dikeakos. *Forgotten Place/Lost Place – Wanuskewin Park*. 1993.



Figure 17.
Christos Dikeakos. *925 Avenue M South - Saskatoon*. 1993.



Figure 18.
Christos Dikeakos. 279 East 39th Avenue - Vancouver. 1993.



Figure 19.
Christos Dikeakos. *Skwácháy's – hole in bottom - Vancouver. 1993.*

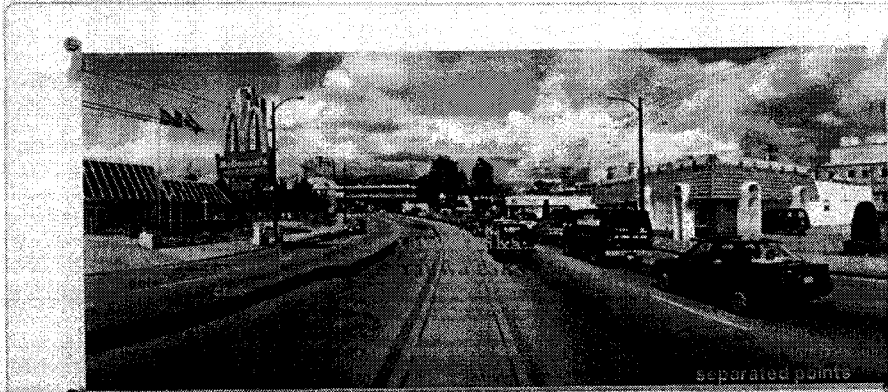


Figure 20.
Christos Dikeakos. *xáywáe⁷sk*s – *separated points* – Vancouver. 1993.

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Appendix:

Exhibition List and Timeline for the Postcolonial Landscape Project:

The Postcolonial Landscape: A Billboard Exhibition

Mendel Art Gallery, Saskatoon: May 31-September 20, 1993

Curator: Joyce Whitebear Reed

Artists and Exhibited Works:

Edward Poitras, *1885*. (May 31-June 28, 1993)

Grant McConnell, *Partly Cleared, Partly Cultivated*. (June 29-July 26, 1993)

Jamelie Hassan, *Linkage*. (July 27-August 23, 1993)

Kay Walkingstick, *Finding the Center*. (August 24-September 20, 1993)

Ruth Cuthand: Location/Dislocation

Mendel Art Gallery, Saskatoon: July 2-August 30, 1993

Curator: Bruce Grenville

Exhibited Works:

Site-specific installation featuring projected photographs with overlaid text, curtains, drawings and text.

Domingo Cisneros: Sky Bones

Mendel Art Gallery, Saskatoon: September 10-October 24, 1993

Curator: Lee-Ann Martin

Exhibited Works:

Sky Bones, 1993

Ululations, 1990

West One, 1991

Hochelaga, je me souviens, 1992

Christos Dikeakos: Sites and Place Names: Vancouver/Saskatoon

Mendel Art Gallery, Saskatoon: April 29-June 19, 1994

Curators: Bruce Grenville and Keith Wallace

Exhibited Works:

Wanuskewin Park • Mike Vitkowski's Farm • Saskatchewan, 1993

Forgotten Place/Lost Place • Wanuskewin Park, 1993

925 Avenue M South • Saskatoon, 1993

279 East 39th Avenue • Vancouver, 1993

Skwácháy's • hole in bottom • Vancouver, 1993

xáywáesks • separated point • Vancouver, 1993

Alex Janvier: Negotiating the Landscape

Mendel Art Gallery, Saskatoon: September 9-October 24, 1994

Curator: Lee-Ann Martin

Exhibited Works:

Sun Shines, Grass Grows, River Flows, 1972.

Wounded Knee Boy, 1973.

Eagle Insect, 1974.

The True West, 1975.

Colony of Alberta, 1980.

BNA Act, 1984.

Lubicon, 1988.

Precontact Super Nature, 1988.

Supernatural Series: Who then Made All This, 1989.

...here are your instructions: Aboriginal Film and Video

Wanuskewin Heritage Park, Saskatoon: October 13 and 27, November 10 and 24, 1994

Curator: Marjorie Beaucage

Exhibited Works: (all video)

Barb Cranmer. *Legends and Villages*, 1987.

Willie Dunn. *The Ballad of Crowfoot*, 1968.

Marjorie Beaucage and Doug Cuthand. *Our Living Treasures*, 1994.

Rhonda Migwans and Wilma Groenen. *A Sacred Trust*, 1987.

Zacharias Kunuk. *Nunaqpa*, 1991.

Deborah Etienne. *Footsteps of the Ancestors*, 1991.

Cleo Reece. *Keepers of the Land*, 1994.

Bortnick Films. *Northwest Rebellion: 1885, 1977*.

Maria Campbell. *Joseph's Justice*, 1992.

Alanis Obomsawin. *Incident at Restigouche*, 1984.

Temagami: A Living Title to the Land, 1992. From the series "My Partners, My people.)

Annie Frazier Henry. *Words of Wisdom*, 1992.

Zachary Longboy. *From Another Time Comes One... (Into a new time becomes a brother)*, 1990.

Native Vision Productions. *Dreamcatcher*, 1993.

Mike MacDonald. *Seven Sisters*, 1989.

Tanya Rusnak: O Emigratsii (on emigration)

The Edmonton Art Gallery: November 9, 1995-January 7, 1996.

The Mendel Art Gallery: March 1-April 28, 1996.

Curator: Bruce Grenville

Exhibited Works:

Site Specific Installation using mixed media materials.

Willie Doherty: The Only Good One is a Dead One

The Edmonton Art Gallery: January 13-February 25, 1996.

The Mendel Art Gallery: March 1-April 28, 1996

Art Gallery of Ontario: February 13-May 11, 1997.

Curator: Jean Fisher

Exhibited Works:

The Only Good One is a Dead One, 1993.

The Destabilized Landscape: Postcolonial Space and Unreal Estate

The Edmonton Art Gallery: January 13-February 25, 1996

Mendel Art Gallery: March 1-April 28, 1996

Curator(s): Lisa Steele and Kim Tomczak

Exhibited Works: (all video except Vera Frenkel)

Cat Cayuga. *A Nation is...*, 1994.

Arnait Ikkajurtigiit. *Quilliq and Starvation*, 1992.

Julian Samuel. *City of the Dead and The World Exhibitions*, 1995.

Akram Zaatari. *Home*, 1994.

Sarah Minter. *Nadie es Inocente (No One is Innocent)*, 1987.

Elias Jimenez. *11 Piñata Girasol*, 1992.

Dalibor Martinis. *I Love You! (Montazstroj)*, 1995.

Breda Beban and Hrvoje Horvatic. *For Tara*, 1991.

Gary Kibbins. *Mead Lake*, 1992.

Woody Vasulka. *The Art of Memory*, 1987.

Stuart Marshall. *Desire*, 1989.

Robert Morin. *Yes Sir! Madame...*, 1994.

Vera Frenkel. *Body Missing*, 1995. (website)

Nora Naranjo-Morse. *What Was Taken... And What We Sell*, 1994.