



OVERBURDEN

Geology, Extraction
and Metamorphosis in
a Chaotic Age

OVERBURDEN: Geology, Extraction, and Metamorphosis in a Chaotic Age

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ASINNAJAQ
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KEITH LANGERGRABER
SARAH NANCE
TARA NICHOLSON
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Co-curated by Genevieve Robertson + Maggie Shirley
Co-presented by Oxygen Art Centre + Kootenay Gallery of Art

DATES
Oxygen Art Centre: 1 June–10 July 2021
Kootenay Gallery of Art: 18 June–21 August 2021

SYMPOSIUM
19 + 20 June 2021 (online at overburden.ca)

ABOUT

The **Kootenay Gallery of Art** is a principal gallery for the visual arts within the West Kootenay region of British Columbia. Located in Castlegar, the Gallery is committed to include, through exhibitions and programming a diversity of artists and art forms that enrich, challenge and educate the audience.

Based in Nelson BC, **Oxygen Art Centre** is a rural artist-run centre that provides space and programming for artists and the public to engage in the creation, study, exhibition, and performance of contemporary art. Founded in 2002, Oxygen is an integral and long-standing cultural hub for artists of all disciplines. Oxygen's annual programming includes an Exhibition & Residency program and Education program, as well as events, presentations, readings, and workshops.

COVER: *points of rupture* (alaska glacial event 1999), Sarah Nance, Letterpress print of knitting pattern coded using cryoseismic data, edition of 15, 46 x 46 cm. 2020



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We acknowledge with gratitude that our galleries are located on the unceded traditional territory of the sn̓ɣay̓ckstx Sinixt Arrow Lakes and Yaqaḅ Nukij Lower Kootenay Band peoples in Nelson and the unceded traditional territory of the sn̓ɣay̓ckstx Sinixt Arrow Lakes in Castlegar. We would like to thank the Sinixt, Yaqaḅ Nukiy, Ktunaxa, and the many diverse Indigenous and Métis people who live here for the opportunity to live, work and host cultural experiences within this beautiful watershed.

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We especially thank all our members, donors, board members, and volunteers, and all of the artists who participated in this exhibition.



Installation view, *Overburden: Geology, Extraction & Metamorphosis in a Chaotic Age* (1 June–10 July, 2021), Oxygen Art Centre



Rock Piece (Ahuriri Edition), Asinnajaq, 4 minute digital video, 2015.
Installation view, *Overburden: Geology, Extraction & Metamorphosis in a Chaotic Age* (1 June–10 July, 2021), Oxygen Art Centre



Installation view, *Overburden: Geology, Extraction & Metamorphosis in a Chaotic Age* (18 June–21 August, 2021), Kootenay Gallery of Art, East Gallery, Front Pod



Installation view, *Overburden: Geology, Extraction & Metamorphosis in a Chaotic Age* (18 June–21 August, 2021), Kootenay Gallery of Art, East Gallery, Back Pod



Installation view, *Overburden: Geology, Extraction & Metamorphosis in a Chaotic Age* (18 June–21 August, 2021), Kootenay Gallery of Art, West Gallery



Nelson Batholith, Carol Wallace, Ink and thread on silk organza and video projection of photomicrographs, 2020. Installation view, *Overburden: Geology, Extraction & Metamorphosis in a Chaotic Age* (18 June–21 August, 2021), Kootenay Gallery of Art, West Gallery

Curatorial Statement

by Genevieve Robertson and Maggie Shirley

Overburden is the topsoil and vegetation that is removed before mining takes place. It also references our earth's current condition and the psychological burden that many people experience in the face of climate and other ecological changes. *Overburden* brings together a group of artists whose shared concerns address geology and its relationship to shifting climate patterns and resource extraction, in both a regional and global context. Artists respond to mining histories in the Kootenay area, arctic ice melt that is uncovering paleontological data, mining reclamation practices, and glacial seismic events. While some artists bear witness to harmful extraction practices and an ever more unstable world, others seek to find caring, embodied and imaginative ways to come into relationship with the geologic material under our feet and interwoven into our everyday lives.

Through these artistic inquiries, the artists included in *Overburden* both disrupt and mimic methods of scientific research, and explore embodied, performative and material responses. In collecting these works together in these chaotic times, viewers may reflect on questions such as: What are the ways in which the earth is pushing back, disintegrating and metamorphosing in response to our actions? What role might artists play in articulating our anthropocentric paradigm and how can we begin to shift our thinking to one in which interdependence and care are central?

CURATOR BIOGRAPHIES

Genevieve Robertson is an interdisciplinary artist with a background in environmental studies, working between place-based, collaborative, and contemplative material processes. Her practice explores elemental, geologic and more-than-human worlds, reckoning with the schism between primordial time and the current moment of frenzied petro-capitalism, climate change and crumbling ecologies. Her practice is informed by a personal and intergenerational history of resource labour in remote forestry camps all over British Columbia. Robertson's professional work also involves art writing and curation, with a specific interest in rural and regional arts culture and interdisciplinary practice.

Robertson holds a BFA from NSCAD University (Halifax) and an MFA from Emily Carr University (Vancouver), has attended artist residencies and presented her work widely, most recently at the Burnaby Art Gallery, the Morris and Helen Belkin Gallery, The Grand Forks Art Gallery, and the Works on Water Triennial. Her work has been published with the Centre for Alterity Studies, The Capilano Review, The Society for the Diffusion of Useful Knowledge, and was featured in the recent compilations Outdoor School, Fire Season and Ecocene. Genevieve is of British and French ancestry and currently lives on the traditional and unceded territory of the sn̓ɫay̓ckstx Sinixt Arrow Lakes and Yaqaṇ Nukij Lower Kootenay Band peoples.

Maggie Shirley is a poly-media artist and curator. Her art work is based on thematic research into the human body, environment and technology, primarily taking the form of installation and socially-engaging projects. Her work has been exhibited in Ireland, Canada and Spain. She graduated with an MFA from UBC Interdisciplinary Graduate Studies (UBC) in 2013. In 2007 Shirley was honoured to act as an Invigilator for the Irish Pavilion at the Venice Biennale (2007). Following her undergraduate degree, she returned to Canada and worked at the Banff New Media Institute (The Banff Centre).

Maggie Shirley is grateful to live in unceded sn̓ɫay̓ckstx (Sinixt) territory, (West Kootenays) where she works as Curator at the Kootenay Gallery of Art in Castlegar, BC. Shirley has curated a number of solo and group exhibitions including Building the World We Want and The Hidden Hero Project.

To Resist, Reimagine and Mourn (Epilogue)

by Genevieve Robertson

Overburden:

1. to load with too great a burden; overload (v)
2. an excessive burden or load (n)
3. in geology, the waste rock and soil that lies above an ore or mineral body (n) ¹

Overburden is displaced during surface mining to access valuable materials beneath it. The word enacts the value systems of those who coined it: it is a mass intended to be removed; not a habitat, an ecosystem, a spiritual site, or a homeland. This is how co-curator Maggie Shirley and I conceived of the term when titling the exhibition. Over the two and a half years since its inception, however, the meaning has become more multivalent and the embedded metaphor more poignant: we are living in a profoundly overwhelming time.

Identifying foremost as an artist working through process, my approach to curation focused upon how this exhibition might consider the polyvalent ideas related to geology and mining, rather than beginning with a fully realized concept. In early 2018, Maggie and I noticed a recurrence of artists reckoning with a schism between a planetary temporal scale, where measurements occur in billions of years, in tension with a free-market capital scale, where measurements occur in commodities and dollars. The curatorial process thus developed to concern geologic and meteorological forces through deep time, as well as the impacts of a rapidly changing climate due to ongoing settler-colonial capitalist projects, and the continued regimes of supremacy and consumption that drive them.

Much has changed globally since the inception of *Overburden*: we are in the midst of a pandemic that has so far killed over 3.87 million people and laid bare global health care and labour inequities; the Black Lives Matter movement exploded in response to ongoing and systemic violence against racialized people, igniting, among many things, a cultural reckoning with white supremacy among white North Americans;

¹ Collins Dictionary and definition of *Overburden*

and the Extinction Rebellion and youth-led Sunrise movement have reshaped climate action as an organized and sustained global presence.

With growing urgency to act on issues of climate change and violent realities of colonialism, Canada continues to fail to respond adequately to the 2016 Paris Climate Accord and the Truth and Reconciliation Commission. This is in part due to an unwillingness to transition away from an oil dependent economy, consequently inciting organized #landback movements along the proposed Trans Mountain Pipeline in Secwépemc and Coast Salish Territory and in Camp Unist'ot'en on Wet'suwet'en Territory, among many others. Concurrently, the effects of climate change have become more tangible and alarming in the global north: 2018 and 2020 saw record breaking, apocalyptic forest fire seasons, while arctic ice-melt re-shapes northern continental waters and shrinks coast lines.

Throughout this curatorial process the word *overburden* has resonated on global and individual scales as societies reckon with physically and psychologically overwhelming events, and unfathomable losses. When is the burden too much? For many creative individuals, a state of shock numbs a clear sense of how to respond appropriately¹²—how do we integrate rapidly shifting national and global contexts into our work and too, how do we view artwork through the lens of a changed world? Art theorist Natalie Loveless's proposition comes to mind: how might we mobilize research-creation as a site of resistance and remaking in an era of geopolitical uncertainty?

By mimicking methodologies from scientific fields or working within the convergences between arts and humanities, some artists exhibiting in *Overburden* destabilize or demystify their subject matter, producing new forms of knowledge that call into question the commodification of geologic materials while attending to the above questions. Informed by her background in archeology, Gabriela Escobar Ari bears witness to a history of extraction and military dictatorship in the Huayna Potosí region of La Paz, Bolivia, through photographs of massacre sites where miner strikes were suppressed, and where contaminated water systems are lurid orange with heavy metals. Also working primarily in photography, Tara Nicholson travels to arctic research stations to expose the frontiers of climate research and to explore its uncanny connection to tourism, such as theme parks in arctic Russia allowing visitors to 'hunt' for mammoth tusks uncovered by melting permafrost. Carol Wallace's experience as a geologist working in the Kootenays is the impetus for her exploration into photomicrographic sections of regional rock formations. This allows viewers to see into

the molecular structure of the granitic rocks that built the first civic buildings in mining towns throughout the region. Keith Langergraber, drawing on traditions of modeling used by industrial land developers, creates maquettes of regional mining structures heaving and belching smoke, off-kilter and emergent as they either sink into the ground or propagate themselves across acrid landscapes. Randy Lee Cutler, with an academic background in the humanities, disrupts taxonomic methods of display by expanding crystal and mineral ontologies to include accounts of violent mining practices, as well as their common uses in metaphysics, warfare, technology, and healing.

Loveless argues that this era is not “the end of the world *writ large* but the end of the world as we know it under petrocultural colonial capitalism and anthropocentric humanism” (99). Whether this bears true is yet to be determined, but some artists in *Overburden* seek to find methods of enacting this paradigm shift by coming into embodied, imaginative, and reparative relationships with the environment—and the land itself—in the face of ecological collapse. Asinnajaq responds to a sense of physiological burden by being buried under the weight of a pile of rocks and slowly heaving herself free. This gesture is captured in a looping video that sees her repetitively buried and freed, caught in a cycle with the weight of the earth. Jim Holyoak and Darren Fleet co-create a comic strip following two trilobites living in the Cambrian period as they philosophise about climate change, collapsing temporal eras and engaging in humorous rhetoric as a means of mollifying climate anxiety. Tsēmā Igharas works on her Tāltān Territory in the face of destructive mining practices to re-envision mining *reclamation* as a process the land itself knows how to do best. Sarah Nance translates place-specific effects of climate change, such as rising sea levels and glacial quakes, into intricately imagined textile and performative pieces she conceives of as ‘shrouds’ that mourn the sites she works in relation to. Patti Bailey q̄r̄iq̄w̄ir̄ix̄n, weaver and environmental planner for the Colville Confederated Tribes, creates weavings made with organic material from her sn̄ṣaȳčkstx̄ (Sinixt) Territory, which resonates in the upper Columbia Basin, as Sinixt tribal land rights have just been recognized in Canada after a painful 65 years of alleged Sinixt ‘extinction’ by the federal government.

Whether this era marks the beginning of the end of petro-cultural capitalism or the beginning of the end of a livable world, or both, it is a time of overwhelming reconfiguration. Theorist Donna Haraway calls for those “who are capable of new practices of imagination, resistance, revolt, repair, mourning and living and dying well” (51). Through varied approaches, the artists in *Overburden* answer this call to action.

REFERENCES

Haraway, Donna J. *Staying with the Trouble*. Duke University Press, 2016.

Loveless, Natalie. *How to Make Art at the End of the World: A Manifesto for Research-Creation*. Duke University Press: 2019.

GABRIELA ESCOBAR ARI

What We Left Behind

Landscape Archaeology studies how landscapes change and evolve; it focuses on the way humans have not just adapted but also impacted landscapes through time. This project proposes that the manner human beings adapt to and interact with landscapes over the course of their existence creates a sort of biography of the landscape and the people occupying them. We all leave behind a record not just of our activities but also of our attitudes and values.

Gabriela Escobar Ari's intention with this project, produced in the Huayna Potosí region of La Paz, Bolivia is to tell the story of a landscape, considering this landscape as a living element. Creating photographic works that chronicle how the main raw materials from this area were extracted, and by using geological and archaeological history as support for this biography, the artist demonstrates that landscapes are not just the environment we inhabit but are what determine our customs and lifestyle, and the setting in which our actions and attitudes are indelibly recorded.

"The highly industrialized world is racing ahead and stumbling over the future...[this is]... the result of the work of people throughout the world, although in practice it may benefit few. The developed world produces only for those who can consume—approximately one-fifth of all people. The remaining four-fifths, who could theoretically benefit from surplus production, have no way of becoming consumers. The destiny of men and women is to create a new world, to reveal a new life, to remember that there exists a frontier for everything except dreams. In this way, they adapt, resist, believe, and survive."

— Sebastião Salgado

Gabriela Escobar Ari is a Bolivian-Canadian photographer based in Fernie, BC. Her background in Archaeology and Social Studies influences her work and her interest in human consciousness. Ari's Latin-American heritage motivates some of her personal projects, which reflect concepts like gender, identity, regional culture and history. Gabriela Escobar Ari is passionate about film photography, vintage alternative photographic methods, and conservation and restoration of old photographic materials. She worked as one of the lead photographers of the archaeological collection of the Ethnography National Museum in Bolivia (MUSEF). Since moving to Canada, Ari completed the Photography Program at SAIT (Calgary) and works as a freelance photographer. Her work has been published in academic journals, documentaries, and travel magazines in Canada, France, United States and Bolivia.

gabbiescobar.com



Sealed Dam, Gabriela Escobar Ari, Aerial photograph, archival pigment print, 24" x 14", 2019

ASINNAJAQ

Rock Piece (Ahuriri Edition)

Rock Piece (Ahuriri Edition) is a performance video influenced by the Fluxus movement of the 1960's and 70's. It was made in Aotearoa during a residency in Nūhaka, and the performance took place in Napier. My Brother Naluturuk piled the stones on top of me, and Mattias Graham filmed it. The work is composed of a score and a recorded performance. The score goes as follows:

Rock Piece
Feel the weight of the world; free yourself.
(*Asinnajaq, 2015*)

As a score, it is an open invitation for anyone and everyone to interpret. Any way one thinks about the meaning of the words and actions is correct. Let me offer one way of thinking with the work. In *Rock Piece (Ahuriri Edition)* the score is activated with my body and many grapefruit-sized rocks. The first part of the score is centered around naming and feeling burdens. The weight of the stones as they pile on your body are an opportunity. Make that which is intangible solid by the weight of the rocks. Breathe deeply in and out from under the weight of the rocks. Name the weight. Through breath the compression of your body is revealed. Let yourself feel it.

I refuse to let the weight keep me down. Pushing myself up from the stones slowly and carefully. As I rise from underneath the weight of the stones, the stones fall and slide away. It takes effort from the body and mind to get out from under the pressure of the stones, but as they fall, my body feels light and I am free.

However the stones slide back on top of me and I find myself buried again. I must accept that I'm in a cycle.

Asinnajaq is the daughter of Carol Rowan and Jobie Weetaluktuk. She is from Inukjuak, Nunavik and lives in Tiohtià:ke. Asinnajaq's work includes filmmaking, writing and curating. She co-created Tilliraniit, a three day festival celebrating Inuit art and artists. Asinnajaq wrote and directed *Three Thousand* (2017) a short sci-fi documentary, and co-curated Isuma's exhibition in the 'Canadian' pavilion at the 58th Venice Biennale. Asinnajaq's work has been exhibited in art galleries and film festivals around the world, and was 1 of 25 2020 Sobey Award winners.

asinnajaq.com



Rock Piece (Ahuriri Edition), Asinnajaq, Video still from a 4 minute digital video, 2015 Video: Mattias Graham



Cedar Bark Gathering Bucket (mxitp)

This is a berry gathering basket made in the forest where the western red cedar grow. The bark is carefully pulled from a young cedar during the Spring when the sap is running. This basket is utilized by the Interior Salish people. Basket stitching and rim is sewn with cedar bark strips.

Photo: Diane Beals

RANDY LEE CUTLER

Rock Album and Mineralogues

The two works in this exhibition, *Rock Album* and *Mineralogues* explore the presence of minerals in our daily environments and their profound but often unacknowledged effect on our experiences. *Mineralogues* offers an elemental typology that takes up the scientific grid as a point of departure. It traces the prolix potential of collapsing scientific, industrial, philosophical, spiritual and informal knowledge practices alongside images from the public domain into new mineralogical arrangements. The fictive inventory draws on real data to generate an archaeological dig across diverse geographies and histories and in the process, renders visible new architectures of time and matter. Working with four distinct and non-hierarchical categories (the songs of science, supernatural oracles, natural philosophy and the underworld), this data mining is stratified for the purposes of condensation, displacement and transformation. Ultimately, these borrowed images and the stories they uncover are adapted towards new crystallizations, allowing for an emergent legibility of a world beyond words where matter matters. *Rock Album*, commissioned by the Biennale of Sydney NIRIN 2020 includes 12 tracks that rework some of the *Mineralogues* texts into a sound work accompanied by ambient sounds and textures. It also explores ideas of Deep Time, minerals mined in Canada and a poetic encounter with these specimens. Both artworks represent a geological dig across a physical-metaphorical spectrum connecting and rupturing familiar meanings and assumptions. This faceted approach encourages science-fictional encounters from the past, present and future to better contemplate our human interactions with these earthly deposits.

Randy Lee Cutler is an interdisciplinary artist whose practice weaves together themes of collaboration, ecology, materiality, science and fiction. Taking the form of walks, performance, collage, printed matter, installation, video, audio and creative writing, she has produced numerous hybrid projects that engage with conversation and research. Exhibitions and performances include the Biennale of Sydney NIRIN 2020, Belkin Art Gallery, Vancouver Art Gallery, 7a*11d International Performance Art Festival and Visualeyez Festival of Performance Art, among others. She has published *An Elemental Typology* an artist book exploring the cultural configurations of minerals in philosophy, mining, science and spirituality as well as an ebook *Open Wide: An Abecedarium for the Great Digestive System* (2014) available on itunes. Her current research, a SSHRC Insight-funded project called *Leaning out of Windows: Art and Physics Collaborations through Aesthetic Transformations* (leaningoutofwindows.org), explores how artists and scientists work together to develop a shared understanding of knowledge and how it is translated across their disciplinary communities. Randy is a professor at Emily Carr University in the Faculty of Art on the unceded Coast Salish territories also known as Vancouver, Canada.

randyleecutler.com



BURNING VISION

In 1789 uranium, a silvery-white metal named after the newly discovered planet Uranus was identified in the mineral pitchblende. For 150 years, it was used as a colouring agent in pottery and glass. Fast forward to WWII when the Canadian Eldorado Gold Mining Company, located near the eastern shore of Great Bear Lake, extracted uranium-bearing ore in order to supply the U.S. military with the uranium needed to produce the nuclear bombs that devastated Hiroshima and Nagasaki. Great Bear Lake is located on Sahtu Dene territory in the northern boreal and Arctic region. In the late nineteenth century, a Dene seer had a vision of men going into the ground and walking out with something that would rain fire down on other people. In the 1940s Dene miners were told that they were digging for a substance to cure cancer. By the 1960s, the miners who had hauled bags of the stone out of the ground began to die of lung cancer and other lung diseases. Pre WWI, female factory workers in the United States also contracted radiation poisoning from painting watch dials with self-luminous paint containing radium (the radium compound is found in uranium) when they wetted their paint brushes with their mouths to keep them sharp. Marie Clements writes about this little-known history in her play *Burning Vision*, 2003.

Excerpt from *Mineralogues*, Randy Lee Cutler, Digital print, 40"x 90", 2018

JIM HOLYOAK & DARREN FLEET

Trilobites Above the Fog

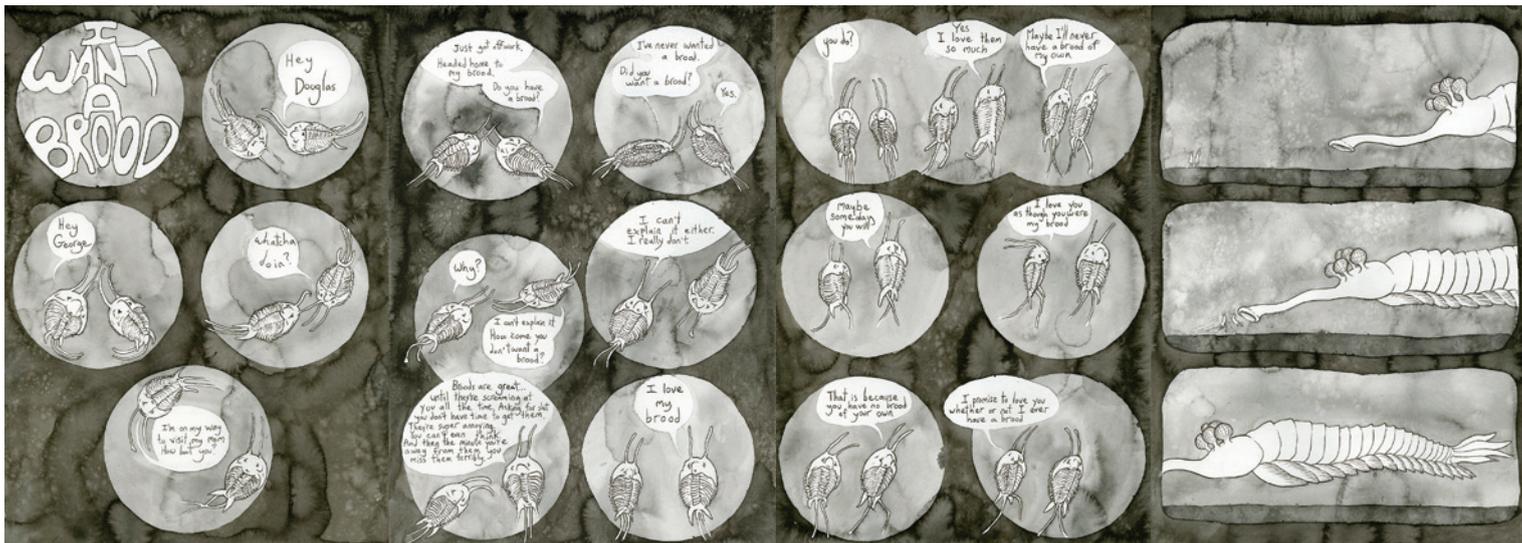
Together, Jim Holyoak and Darren Fleet have produced a collection of notations, conversations, plein-air sketches and prose-poetry. Their work, *Trilobites Above the Fog*, combines this collection with comics of Cambrian life forms conversing about extraction, extinction and climate change. All of these artworks are based on mountain treks that Darren and Jim took together in the summer of 2019, into Kokanee Glacier Provincial Park, and the Walcott Quarry and Mount Stephen Trilobite Beds at the Burgess Shale, a UNESCO World Heritage Site. Through a theorization of contemporary extraction practices as actions of extinction, Jim and Darren travel back through deep and spiraling time to connect the Cambrian explosion (the greatest expansion of life on earth, taking place 541 million years ago) to the Anthropogenic implosion (the great contemporary extinguishing of the biosphere). Their work explores the parallel meanings between historical mass extinctions and contemporary logics of domination. What can the Cambrian Period teach us about the future? How do we challenge the catastrophic systems of provision that also give our lives meaning? An important component of this journey from the Cambrian to the Anthropocene is a realization of—and engagement with—the affective qualities of overburden as a force of physical, temporal and psychological distress. As such, *Trilobites Above the Fog* tasks the audience with considering the emotional weight of petromodernity's most salient contradictions.

Darren Fleet and Jim Holyoak both grew up in Aldergrove, BC. Since high school, they have been companions in wandering and creative writing. For over 20 years, they have maintained a practice of writing together, that they call '856ing,' (the name based upon the regional telephone code of their former suburban lives). For 8 minutes and 56 seconds, or for one hour, beginning at 8:56 pm, they sit together in silence, generating free-associative writing, which they share afterwards.

Darren Fleet's creative, journalistic and scholarly work has been featured in numerous publications and forums including Vice, Public, Frontiers in Communication, Journalists for Human Rights, UTNE Reader, and at the Istanbul Biennial of Art. He is interested in the ways that fossil fuels mediate and define our relationships with the non-human world, and with one another.

Jim Holyoak's discipline consists of book arts, ink-painting and room-sized drawing installations. He received a BFA from the University of Victoria, an MFA from Concordia University, and studied ink painting in Yangshuo, China. Though the content of his work ranges from the biological to the phantasmagorical, there is a persistent interest in human empathy for other species, and in the challenge of fathoming deep time. Jim has exhibited his work, contributed to publications, and attended artist residencies internationally.

monstersforreal.com



I Want a Brood, Written by Darren Fleet and Jim Holyoak, Drawn by Jim Holyoak, Ink and lamp black on paper, 23" x 16.5", 2021

TŞĚMĀ IGHARAS

Tāltān for Reclamation

I asked my language team—what is a word I can use for reclamation?

Reclamation, thinking about returning the land to a “natural” state after development; or in Indigenous practice, using a material to its full potential, even the parts that could be thrown away (tailings, parts of an animal, etc.). The Tāltān word that was given to me is “esghanānā,” which translates to, “give it back to me” in English. I imagined the land calling to industrial sites of trauma, saying “ESGHANĀNĀ!”

The first iteration of *Tāltān for Reclamation* was made in 2016 as a spray painted stencil onto paper made with scrapings from tanning a moose hide. The second version, I imagined as a larger stencil marking mine sites in Tahltan territory. But after visiting my territory, which had been devastated by forest fires the previous year, and after seeing how the once dead land was healing itself, I knew I was instead meant to mark this time of rebirth and reclamation. When I sprayed a large rock, the ash was a buffer for part of the word and will eventually cause the paint to wash from the rock. Over time all that will be left is “ES” the pronoun for me, or in this case, the LAND, the most important character in the work, and the true model for reclamation

Tşēmā is an interdisciplinary artist and member of the Tahltan Nation. She uses Potlatch methodology to create conceptual artwork and teachings influenced by her mentorship in Northwest Coast Formline Design at K’saan (2005/06), her studies in visual culture, and time in the mountains. She has a Bachelor’s degree from Emily Carr University of Art and Design (2011) and graduated from the Interdisciplinary Master’s in Art, Media and Design program at OCADU with her thesis work, LANDMINE which connected materials to mine sites and bodies to the land. Tşēmā won the 2018 Emily Award for outstanding ECUAD alumni; was 1 of 25 2020 Sobey Award winners; and has exhibited and performed her work in various venues in Canada and internationally in Sweden, Mexico, USA and Chile.

tsema.ca



Tāhtān for Reclamation 2, from *T4R2* series, Tšēmā Igharus,
Photographic documentation of a performance in Tāhtān Territory,
2019. Photo: Erin Siddel



Tāhtān for Reclamation 2, Tšēmā Igharus. 5' 1" x 4' 5" metres. Performance documentation
video projection, caribou hide, spray paint, c-clamps, 2x4 lumber. 2019

KEITH LANGERGRABER

Dissonance Studies

Keith Langergraber applies research-based methodologies to the architecture of mining, to reflect issues around resource extraction, regional ecologies and histories, speculative futures, and climate change. Langergraber's series of drawings depict abandoned mining buildings from the Kootenay region, focusing mainly on a concentrator at Retallack, as well as ghost town ruins from the regions of Nelson, New Denver and Kaslo. The artist conceives of these representations of abandoned mining structures as personifications of climate change. They are echoes of form emerging from stasis, depicting the ruined remnants of a once burgeoning but destructive resource industry.

These drawings combine a familiar sense of the local with a sense of strangeness. Through material handling they mimic the chaotic characteristic of climate change which pulls further into itself, reminding us through abnormal weather events that we are moving forward on an inexorable cascading wave. The artist's intention is to create a subtle range of harmonics through both architectural and vibrating lines, evoking the near past butted up against an alarmingly unpredictable future.

Also included in the installation are sculptures consisting of kit-bashed and 3D printed elements, and other assembled structures. They are joined together into scaled down versions of hulking abandoned architecture. They form three complex pieces that establish an uneasy relationship with the framed drawings. These work's fabrication reveals ruptures in scale, reminiscent of natural history models but are asymmetrical and baroque in the level of obsessive detail. With this coexistence of spectre and form within an installation, Langergraber's aim is to 'tune' cognition towards mining structures, nested in the 'noise' of frenetic lines. The installation comprises ephemeral signposts from the past, pointing to greater calamities on the horizon.

Keith Langergraber received his BFA from the University of Victoria and his MFA from the University of British Columbia. He has shown his work extensively in solo and group exhibitions in galleries in Canada, the United States, and Asia since 1995, most recently at the Southern Alberta Art Gallery, Burrard Art Foundation and the Burnaby Art gallery. He has received many grants and awards for his work including a Sobey Award nomination, and has given numerous lectures and presentations on his artistic research. In 2005 he was selected to represent Emily Carr at the Canadian Art Colleges Collaborative Banff Residency, Media and Visual Arts, Banff, Alberta. Langergraber researches specific sites to explore social, cultural, and political change. His research and art allows an understanding of the shifts that have taken place at that location over time. Keith Langergraber is a lecturer at Emily Carr University of Art and Design. Keith Langergraber thanks the British Columbia Arts Council for their generous support.

keithlangergraber.com



Dissonance Studies, Keith Langergraber, Kit bashed models, 3D printing, spray foam, wood, crystals and acrylic paint, Dimensions Variable, 2021

SARAH NANCE

shroud for an ancient sea

Subsurface meteor craters, fossilized coral reefs, exhumed mountain ranges. These “archived” landscapes are often observable only through fossil records, artifacts, or recorded data. Yet they are inextricably layered within contemporary landscapes, creating entangled strata of geologic and human histories. In my series *shroud for an ancient sea*, I locate these resonances between geologic processes and human experience. The site-responsive shrouds vary from expansive textiles to experimental vocal performances, acting as momentary surface layers that point to complex records of deep time within the geo-anthropoc landscape. *Marseille tidal gauge aria* is a vocal shroud composed from tide level data collected over the past 130 years from a tidal gauge in the bay of Marseille, France. I converted each yearly average tide level into a note within my vocal range and set the resulting atonal composition to a poem from Rasu-Yong Tugen’s *Songs from the Black Moon*. I perform the piece operatically, drawing on the genre’s propensity for magnified human emotion; the rising sea levels in the bay can be heard in the increasingly higher pitches of the aria. *Beartooth star ii* is a modular quilt whose colors are extractions of summer wildflowers, granite, and lichen on the Beartooth Pass in Montana. The eight diamond segments are pieced together from mylar, a material associated with both space exploration and temperature regulation. In *points of rupture*, I translated cryoseismic events into knitting patterns through a process that resembles coding. Cryoseisms, or ice quakes, occur in glaciers due to calving events or pooling meltwater. Like melting glaciers, knitting has an intimate relationship with dissolution in its ever-present threat of unraveling into formlessness. The letterpress prints in *points of rupture* push the structure of knitting to a point of failure, reveling in the form’s inability to contain a seismic event.

Sarah Nance is an interdisciplinary artist based in installation and fiber. She works within the chasm between geologic processes and human experience, locating their entanglements in order to explore a layered perception of place. Nance is currently Assistant Professor of Interdisciplinary Art at SMU in Dallas, TX. She previously held professorships in Fibres & Material Practices at Concordia University (Montréal, QC) and Virginia Commonwealth University (Richmond, VA). Recent exhibitions include Galerie Octave Cowbell in Metz, France; The Factory in Djúpavík, Iceland; Galerie FOFA in Montréal, QC; 1708 Gallery in Richmond, VA; Antenna in New Orleans, LA; TRUCK Contemporary Art in Calgary, AB; Blue Star Contemporary Art Museum in San Antonio, TX; Kathrin Cawein Gallery in Forest Grove, OR; and the Pensacola Museum of Art in Pensacola, FL. Past awards include the La Soupée Project Grant (Galerie Diagonale), and the Fountainhead Fellowship (VCU). Nance has participated in artist residencies in Reykjavík and Skagaströnd, Iceland; much of her research continues to be based in Iceland and coastal regions of Canada and the US.

sarahnance.com



marseille tidal gauge aria, Sarah Nance, Tidal gauge data from Marseille, FR (1884–2014) sonified and performed by the artist, Bonneville Salt Flats, 2019



Detail, *beartooth star ii*, Sarah Nance. 7' 4" dia. Quilted mylar. 2021

CAROL WALLACE

Nelson Batholith

Photomicrographs of local bedrock are projected through three layers of silk organza creating a three-dimensional geologic map. Each layer of stitched and ink painted organza references the land as illustrated on a map, such as water courses, topographic lines, and the rock distribution of the Nelson Batholith. The imagery projected over the cartographic veils invites the viewer to see what is hidden within a rock; a beautiful diversity of colour, pattern and form that remains unchanged regardless of careless human interactions.

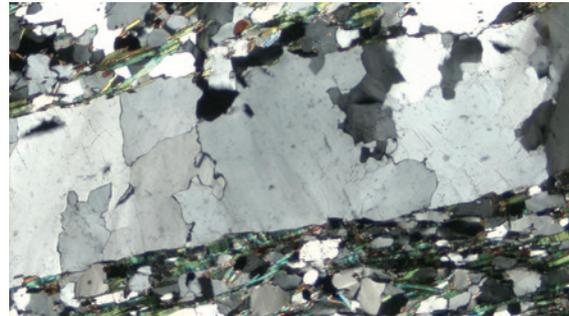
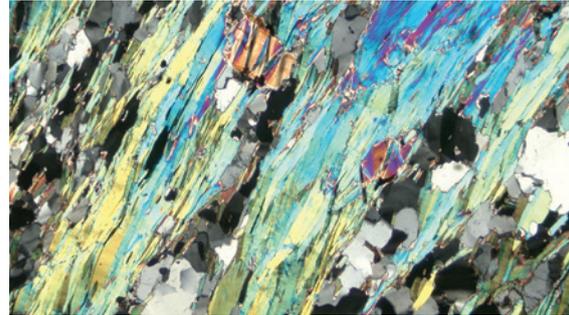
The Nelson Batholith is the granitic rock that forms the core of the Kokanee, Nelson and Bonnington Ranges of the Selkirk Mountains. It is the rock that has been used to construct foundations, buildings, and walls in this area over the last hundred and fifty years. Photomicrographs were taken of thin sections (0.03 mm thick rock sample mounted on a glass plate) as viewed under a petrographic microscope. At the microscopic scale, one sees an interlocking mosaic of crystals, born under extreme pressure and temperature at 10-15 km deep, 170 million years ago. It is a glimpse of a melted continent and ocean floor; a result of two converging tectonic plates, one subsiding beneath the other. This dynamic geologic setting is the catalysing force behind mountain building in the Canadian Cordillera and continues today along the coast of British Columbia.

Carol Wallace's current work explores ideas and imagery informed by her former work as a geologist. Her art training started as a summer field geology student in 1988. Field notes were filled with drawn landscapes from ridgetops in the mountains of Northern BC, the Yukon and Ellesmere Island in the Canadian Arctic. In the office, back when maps were made by hand, Carol continued her drawing training creating and finalizing geologic maps, later published by various government agencies. After earning her geology degree at the University of Calgary, Carol settled in Nelson, BC starting a consulting company providing services in geomorphology in the Columbia Basin. Drawing and map-making continued in this work, until 2014, when she decided it was time to work full time in her studio as a visual artist.

carolwallaceart.com



Nelson Batholith detail, Carol Wallace, Ink and thread on silk organza and video projection of photomicrographs, 2020. Photo: David Gluns



Nelson Batholith, Photomicrograph research collected by Carol Wallace, 2020. Courtesy of Dr. Derek Thorkelson (photomicrograph photographer), Department of Earth Sciences, Simon Fraser University and Dr J.H. Sevigny

TARA NICHOLSON

Pleistocene Park

Over the past decade, Nicholson has produced a large-scale body of landscape studies depicting escalating changes within the Anthropocene, primarily through the medium of photography. Bridging the gap between disaster art and scientific study, Nicholson interprets impacted landscapes, movements of change and contemporary forms of land-based resistance, aligned together to provoke discussion and action surrounding climate change. Examining rewilding, resurrection biology and extinction studies, while witnessing connected waves of Indigenous and settler-allied actions, she is exploring the role of art within activism and how the interpretation of climate research can affect its outcome.

Nicholson documents climatology outposts in Canada, Greenland and Russia, while questioning collective ideals of the Arctic and working to demystify climate research. In 2021, she will be returning to Arctic Russia to photograph at the world's largest rewilding site, Pleistocene Park, the Mammoth Institute and Melnikov Permafrost Institute to highlight projects at the edge of climate knowledge. Together, these places continue to spark sci-fi storylines while occupying a grey area between intervention and invention to illustrate intricate climate action landscapes amongst the bizarre and uncanny.

Tara Nicholson has travelled throughout the Arctic to document climatology, exploring the often blurred edges between science fiction and science. Nicholson has exhibited internationally, most recently at the Art Gallery of Greater Victoria, Modern Fuel Artist-run Centre and the Burnaby Art Gallery. She has attended residencies including the climate-centered, 'Earthed' at the Banff Centre for the Arts (2018), the Künstlerhaus Dortmund, Germany (2013) and the Empire of Dirt, BC (2021). Nicholson teaches at the University of Victoria and holds degrees from Ryerson University (BFA), University of British Columbia (Post Dip) and Concordia University (MFA). She has received ongoing funding from Canada Council for the Arts and the BC Arts Council to produce site-specific works examining links between activism and climatology. In 2020, she embarked on her PhD at UBC Okanagan to produce a body of exploratory landscape studies linking escalating changes within the Anthropocene.

taranicholson.com



Permafrost Tunnel, Tara Nicholson, Melnikov Permafrost Institute, Yakutsk, Russia, editioned archival pigment print, 45" x 38", 2019



Tusks, Tara Nicholson, Raku and pit fired porcelain, Dimensions variable; 100 pieces, 2021



Dome, Tara Nicholson, Cyanotypes and wooden dowels, 5' 1" x 6' 7", 2021



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