

# ***When I told you to shoot the sky, I had something else in mind...***

**21 November 2014 - 17 January 2015**

**Sarah Ciurysek**

**Owen Kydd**

**Nicolás Lamas**

**Tyler Los-Jones**

**Dominique Rey**

**Curator: Natasha Peterson**

*When I told you to shoot the sky, I had something else in mind...* upends expectations of landscape photography. The presented work utilizes the materiality of the medium and its attendant technologies in new and porous ways. Drawing on fragments of traditional photography, these works incorporate visible traces of the past through the creation of sculptural, three-dimensional objects and assemblages, rendering them barely identifiable, ontologically speaking, as a photograph. In direct and indirect ways, artists Sarah Ciurysek, Owen Kydd, Nicolás Lamas, Tyler Los-Jones, and Dominique Rey participate in the destabilization of contemporary photography.

However, the discussion of the destabilized position of photography is not isolated to a contemporary context. Photo-theorist Geoffrey Batchen wrote about the medium having been destabilized from its inception. With regards to historical analogue printing techniques and processes such as tintypes and other early photographic printing practices, "we are already talking about a strangely hybrid piece of work then - part photograph, part painting, part etching, part sculpture." (1) *When I told you to shoot the sky, I had something else in mind...* looks at these forms of hybridity that produce, as a result, something other than a photograph. Though this selection of work does not rely on the photographic apparatus as a necessary tool in the production of landscape photography, they are still positioned within an existing history of photographic production. The exhibition moves from a direct relationship with photo-materiality and landscape to a posturing towards these modes of artistic production.

Tyler Los-Jones photographs the mountain vistas of Banff National Park as a site of departure for his series *We saw the reflected, inverted image of our own age* (2014). These same mountainous landscapes are photographed an unimaginable number of times as tourists flood the National Park to take in the sublime view. Los-Jones although reliant on these popular sights, disorients viewing expectations by re-presenting these two-dimensional photographs by folding, bending and re-shaping, thus collapsing the perfection of the mountainous landscape and transforming them into traces of the original scene.

Nicolás Lamas' practice often plays with tensions between knowing and perception of everyday objects and their intended use. *Folded spaces* (2013) can be traced along a similar genealogy of simulacra in photography as that of Los-Jones' work. However, the mountain vistas of *We saw the reflected, inverted image of our time* could never be realized on the projection screens-turned-sculpture of Lamas' *Folded spaces*. The projection screens he reshapes and photographs are originally intended to have images projected onto them and thus have been re-imagined as manipulated organic sculptural forms. These photographs of transformed screens conjure the family slideshow backdrop, a place for personal narrative, where the landscape is re-proportioned from the initial viewfinder image to the slide to the projected space.

Sarah Ciurysek creates surface tension and then brings us below with three individual photographic prints which, when assembled accordingly, create *Landscape* (2011). Once seen in their triptych form, the panels coalesce as a sculptural installation and manifest as a monolithic structure. The panels lay furled on the floor of the exhibition space, drawing the gaze down as an invitation to imagine the spaces below the surface. Ciurysek simultaneously provides both the material and representational object for that very rumination; the infinite depth and fragility of organic material that make up the stable structure underneath. This material instability further gestures towards the genre's definition as it continues to unfurl with no stable definition as of yet.

In the digital age, artists such as Dominique Rey are working with the material in new ways, perhaps so as not to over-contribute in an image-saturated time. Rey's *Untitled #2 (Photo Assemblage)* (2014), shows that the artist's interest is not in continually participating in the production of two-dimensional photographs but rather from discarded photographic material these abstract sculptural forms take shape. The photograph-cum-assemblage presents a re-use of the materials which is performed through a cyclical nature: production, refuse, material, assemblage, sculpture. With the act of tourism as a necessary plot in the narrative of landscape, *Untitled #2 (Photo Assemblage)* call to mind the Inuit sculptural form of the inukshuk. Parallels can be drawn between the process of creating inukshuk and that of the photo assemblages, through a multitude of found rocks/discarded chromogenic prints in various shapes/trimmings of previous work on the artists studio floor to create a sculptural whole, the inukshuk/photo assemblage. The inukshuk is a way-finding tool for northern travelers, and as such might be understood as a means from which the artist transitioned from one series to the next.

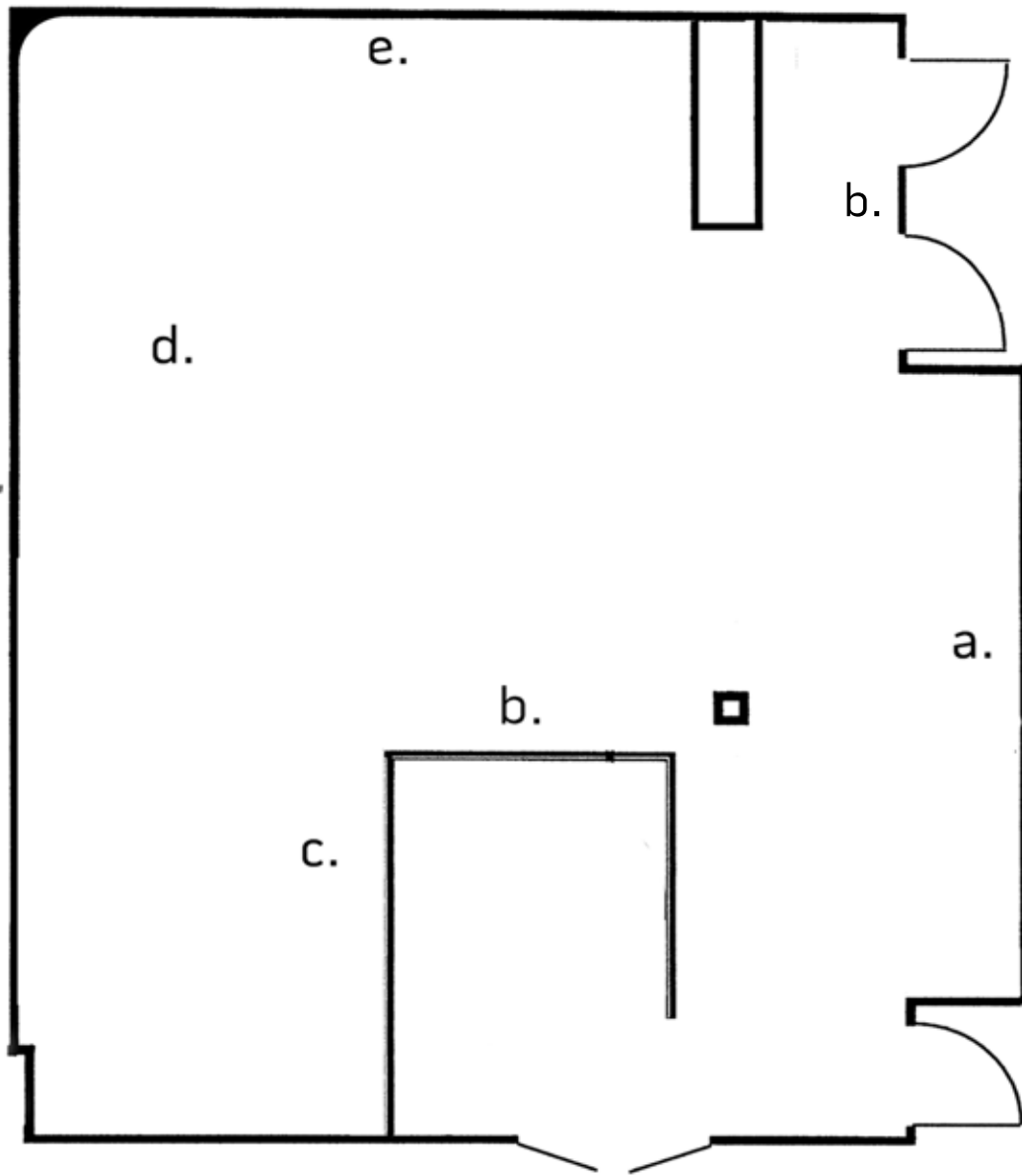
Owen Kydd's *20 Degree View, Los Angeles* (2014) and *Warner Studio Framing Floor* (2012) are slow moving video works. "Durational photographs", as the artist refers to them, are possibly the trompe l'oeil of the twenty first century. The reference to photography is all in the subtlety, and the viewing experience becomes hypnotic. There are brief moments of rupture in these videos, in which the perception breaks and questioning and naming inserts itself – What am I looking at? Is this a video? Is this a photograph? And that is where an appropriation of the trompe d-oeuil imparts a form of framing. With this series, if you miss the moment of movement, you miss the fact that these works aren't really photographs. Though Kydd's work might seem as though it fits more so into the trope of cinema, its photographic qualities are present as they are shot in the traditional photographic style of a camera on a fixed tripod. However, it is neither one nor the other in its entirety. In this way, Kydd's work occupies the interstitial spaces of distinctions in medium.

Although, the specificity of the genre of landscape photography is questioned, the plurality of practices within the medium is presented. This is done so to allow for spaces for new definitions punctuated by the materiality, which acts as the familiar in the ever-shifting possibilities of contemporary photography.

Natasha Peterson

(1) Geoffrey Batchen, *Each Wild Idea: Writing Photography History* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2001), 61.





a. Sarah Ciurysek  
*Landscape*  
 toner photographs printed on Tyvek  
 9' x 8', separated in 3 panels  
 2011

b. Tyler Los-Jones  
*We saw the reflected, inverted image of our own age # 8, 9, 14* (left to right)  
 framed inkjet print on archival paper  
 dimensions variable  
 2014  
 Collection of the TD Bank Group

Tyler Los-Jones  
*These elements*  
 open edition  
 11" x 17"  
 2014

c. Owen Kydd  
*20 degree view, Los Angeles*  
 video  
 2014

Owen Kydd  
*Warner Studio Framing Floor*  
 video  
 2012

d. Dominique Rey  
*Untitled #2 (Photo Assemblage)*  
 photo-based collage, chromogenic prints mounted to acrylic,  
 116" x 87"  
 2014

e. Nicolás Lamas  
*Folded spaces*  
 inkjet prints on cotton paper  
 10.5" x 15.75"  
 2013

## BIOGRAPHIES

**Sarah Ciurysek** | Sarah Ciurysek is a Canadian artist who uses photography, video, audio, and installation to examine our relationship to the ground. Her artwork typically consists of large-scale colour photographs of soil, grass, fields, and floors; these works reference graves, death, life, nourishment, history, archeology, and rural sensibilities and concerns. Installation is used to disrupt and refresh the viewer's experience of the ground: a wall of soil towers over head, vinyl photographs on the gallery floor are walked upon. Sarah Ciurysek (BFA 2003 Emily Carr; MFA 2007 Concordia University) has exhibited across Canada, in the UK and South Africa. She has participated in national and international residencies and has received grants from the Canada Council and the Alberta Foundation for the Arts. Sarah currently teaches at the University of Manitoba.

**Owen Kydd** | Owen Kydd (born in 1975, Canada) lives and works in Los Angeles and Vancouver. He holds a joint degree in Fine Art and Literature from Simon Fraser University and a Masters in Visual Arts from UCLA. Works by Kydd have recently been exhibited at the International Centre for Photography (New York) and at the Daegu Photo Biennale (Korea). Kydd is represented by Monte Clark Gallery (Vancouver) and Nicelle Beauchene Gallery (New York).

**Nicolas Lamas** | Nicolas Lamas' work derives from his interest and mistrust in constructed perceptions, which he considers to belong to a "natural order" and constantly influence our notions of truth through systematized knowledge. His research focuses on examining the models associated with scientific research and the constant pursuit of order, measure, and control of the laws that govern the perceptible world. Since 2004 he has participated in several group exhibitions such as: Lima Photo (2011), Nord Art (2011) in Büdelsdorf, Germany, Passport for an Artist Award (2010), Fifteen Years in the Gallery at Lucía de la Puente (2010), and Visions of Contemporary Art at Lucía de la Puente (2008).

**Tyler Los Jones** | Based in Calgary AB, Los-Jones' projects have been exhibited in the United States, the UK and throughout Canada. Solo exhibitions include: *How the air hides the sky*, a site specific installation in the project space of the Esker Foundation and *We saw the reflected inverted image of our own age*, at the Eric Harvey Theatre at the Banff Centre until June 1st 2014. This past July, Tyler was the first artist to participate in the Rozsa Foundations Arts Pilot Project at Telus Spark, the New Science Centre in Calgary. Alongside his artistic practice Tyler has been engaged in various collaborative projects in Calgary including Local Library, a multidisciplinary workshop and all-ages music venue which operated in downtown Calgary from 2009 - 2011.

**Dominique Rey** | Dominique Rey immerses herself in the world she is using as material, whether that means living with exotic dancers in South Carolina for her series *Selling Venus/Vénus au miroir*, or working on *Les Filles de la Croix*, a seven year project on a disappearing order of nuns that has taken her to Brazil, Argentina, and France. Her fascination with the representation of the other, the marginal figure, plunges inward in her newest work to explore the unconscious other within. Dominique Rey is a multidisciplinary artist whose work has been exhibited across Canada and in the United States, Germany, and Slovakia. Her solo exhibitions include the Southern Alberta Art Gallery, Plug In ICA, Centre Clark, Michael Gibson Gallery, Alternator Gallery, Gallery TPW, and Truck Gallery. Awards and grants include the Canada Council for the Arts, the Manitoba Arts Council, the Winnipeg Arts Council, the Elizabeth Greenshields Foundation, and La Fondation Ricard. Her work has been reviewed in the *Globe & Mail*, *Border Crossings*, *Frieze*, *Canadian Art*, *Flare*, and the *Winnipeg Free Press*, among others. She holds an MFA in Photography from Bard College (NY) and an MFA in New Media from the Transart Institute (Berlin). Her work is in the collections of the National Gallery of Canada, Winnipeg Art Gallery, Province of Manitoba, Wedge Collection, and international private collections. Dominique Rey was named Winnipeg's Visual Arts Ambassador for the 2010 Cultural Capital of Canada.

**Natasha Peterson** | Natasha Peterson is an MFA Candidate in Criticism and Curatorial Practice at OCAD University in Toronto, Ontario and holds a Bachelor of Arts (Honours) in Art History from the University of Winnipeg. In 2013, Natasha was mentee in MAWA's (Mentoring Artists for Women's Art) foundation mentorship program as well as participated in a residency at the Banff Centre for the Arts. She is currently working on her thesis which examines the presence of authorless, vernacular photographs in contemporary curatorial practice. Peterson has worked with a number of public and private art institutions in Winnipeg and Toronto, such as the Art Gallery of Ontario, PLATFORM, Plug In ICA, and Scrap Metal Gallery.