

For Immediate Release: August 2, 2023

***View from the Edge of the World* at the Art Gallery of Regina Isn't Your Grandma's Landscape Art**

A new exhibition at the Art Gallery of Regina, August 18 - October 22, re-thinks preconceptions of landscape and art, dispelling stereotypes of the Prairie experience with artworks ranging from plaster casts to board games.



image: *Sad Moon Rising* (detail of installation *Where will the frogs sing?*), Vera Saltzman and Sue Bland, mixed media installation, 2023.

Regina, SK:

When you imagine landscape art, do you picture board games, kitchen table conversations and plaster casts? These are some ways artists have reinvented the landscape genre in the Art Gallery of Regina's upcoming exhibition, *View from the Edge of the World*, curated by Sandee Moore. Running from August

18 to October 22, *View from the Edge of the World* features artworks by Vera Saltzman & Sue Bland (Qu'appelle Valley), SpekWork Studio (Regina/Bayport, NS), Catherine Joa (Denare Beach), Mike Keepness (Qu'appelle Valley), Gladys Wozny Siemens (Rush Lake, SK), Golboo Amani (Toronto) that dispel stereotypes about the Prairie experience and art.

In the not-so-distant past, landscape paintings were crafted as symbols of national identity used to unify a population. A witty play on Saskatchewan's provincial license plate slogan, Land of Living Skies, SpekWork Studio's *GAN of Living Skies* is a solar-powered machine that generates fake sunsets. Their playful skewering of a provincial point of pride contains deeper questions about place-based identity in the digital age and our notions of natural versus artificial.

Saskatchewan is often envisioned as a flat horizontal plane devoid of geological landforms and people, a notion strongly countered by Catherine Joa's towering, vertical paintings. Joa renders her everyday vistas — sublimely jagged outcrops of rock tagged with graffiti and Boreal forests bisected by a ribbon of highway the artist travels daily — without romanticism. Rather than considering pavement and graffiti as defacing the majesty of the nature around her, Joa proposes that we can't separate people and their actions from the landscape.

Using the language of European landscape painting, Mike Keepness, now deceased, reveals the unseen cultural and spiritual history of the land in his *en plein air* paintings painted outdoors in an intimate communion with these spots. Keepness's practice creates an aesthetic framework for non-Indigenous people to find value in sites that lack traditional picturesque appeal but are alive with spiritual significance for his people. Like Joa, Keepness acknowledges the presence of humans to frame a landscape; however, instead of showing human actions on the land, Keepness' viewpoint suggests that he is painting from

within the land, making explicit an Indigenous worldview that first people are a part of the land.

"As immigrants, settlers or Indigenous individuals, we need images of this place to understand, respect, and treasure this land," states Curator Moore. Alluding to the exhibition title, she continues, "The Saskatchewan landscape is not flat and featureless, dropping into nothingness at the horizon; instead, it is full of lives, stories, overlooked beauty and miraculous transformation wrought by humans, animals, weather and time."

Gladys Wozny Siemens and collaborators Sue Bland and Vera Saltzman also present work that values our landscape's unnoticed, underappreciated and disappearing elements.

Wozny-Siemens casts dry riverbed soil *in situ*, capturing the distinctive network of cracks crisscrossing the parched mud along with animal tracks, bits of dried grass and even tire marks. The artist relinquishes sole authorship of her plaster works, memorializing the marks created by animals and weather alongside words or shapes she has impressed into the dirt.

Saltzman and Bland's installation *Where Will the Frogs Sing?* is a homey collection of altered photographs, artifacts, performance documentation, painting, zines, blog posts and even a hand-painted rug that consider disappearing remnants of wildland. Central to their presentation in the gallery is a kitchen table that serves as a locus for discussions of our relationships to the land through tradition, loss and the food system. Noting the pervasive image of Saskatchewan as a singular cultivated field, they say, "We imagine the land[scape] was always like this."

When we think of land, and our relationships to land, the settlement of Canada by Europeans is not far from those thoughts. Golboo Amani's artwork, *Unsettling Settlers: Intervention*, is a reinvented experience of the

popular board game Settlers of Catan that proposes dialogue, negotiation, and collaboration in lieu of the commercial game's narrative of conquest.

Sponsored by Culture Days and SaskCulture, all ages are invited to reinvent their thinking about landscape and how they value the land and art. See www.artgalleryofregina.ca for a calendar of free events supporting the exhibition, including board game nights, sound art performances, 'zine making, and conversations with the artists. These interactive experiences are made possible with the collaboration of many local organizations and business supporters, including Comic Readers Downtown, Common Weal Community Arts, the University of Regina's Department of Visual Arts, holophon audio arts, exhibition sponsor TD Canada Trust, and reception sponsor Casino Regina.

Experience *View from the Edge of the World* until October 22, 2023; admission to the Art Gallery of Regina (2420 Elphinstone Street) is always free.

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Contact Moore to arrange interviews with the artists in English.

Please note that this email contains a link to a GoogleDrive folder of images that may be reproduced.

Links:

[Reproducible images](#) (link disabled; contact Moore for access to images)

[Artists' bios](#) (click link for PDF)

Website:

<https://www.artgalleryofregina.ca/upcoming-exhibition>

For Calendar Listings

Exhibition title: *View from the Edge of the World*

Artists: Catherine Joa, Gladys Wozny Siemens, Golboo Amani, Mike Keepness, SpekWork Studio, Vera Saltzman & Sue Bland

Curator: Sandee Moore

Dates: August 18 - October 22, 2023

Reception: Thursday, October 5, 7 PM

See www.artgalleryofregina.ca for a calendar of events supporting the exhibition, including board game nights, sound art performances, 'zine making, and intimate conversations with the artists.





images (from top left, clockwise): *Unsettling Settlers: Intervention*, Golboo Amani, intervention pack and artist multiple, 2017. (Photo by Manolo Lugo); *Desiccation II*, Gladys Wozny Siemens, direct plaster cast on wood armature/frame, 30 x 20 x 2.5 inches, 2015. (Photo: G Wozny Siemens); *Buffalo Canvas*, Sue Bland, linoprint on canvas, 54 x 35.75", 2022-23. (Photo: Vera Saltzman); *Don't Forget to Smile YA JACKFISH*, Catherine Joa, acrylic on wood, 36 x 84, 2023. (Photo: Catherine Joa); *GAN of Living Skies*, SpekWork Studio, digital image (screen capture), 2020-23. (Photo: SpekWork Studio).

AGR

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Located on Treaty 4, the traditional territory of the Cree, Saulteaux, Nakota, Lakota and Dakota peoples, and the homeland of the Métis people, the Art Gallery of Regina (AGR) promotes the development and appreciation of contemporary art, primarily created by Saskatchewan artists.

AGR provides opportunities for Regina's citizens and visitors to engage with contemporary art through its free exhibitions and artist's talks, critical writing and educational programming.

The Art Gallery of Regina is an autonomous, independent public art gallery with non-profit and charitable status. We are a tenant in the Neil Balkwill Civic Arts Centre located within the vibrant Cathedral Village neighbourhood in Regina, Saskatchewan, Canada.

The Art Gallery of Regina is delighted to recognize TD Asset Management as the Official Exhibition Sponsor of *View from the Edge of the World*. Events supporting the exhibition are sponsored by SaskCulture funded by Sask Lotteries.



The Art Gallery of Regina gratefully acknowledges the support of its core funders, project funders, partners and sponsors:

