

THIS IS NOT A LANDSCAPE.
(THIS IS A WAY OF SEEING)
INTERCOURSE WITH THE LANDSCAPE.

R.G.SHAW.
HONOURS RESEARCH DOCUMENT.
BACHELOR OF MEDIA ARTS / PAINTING.
WAIKATO INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY.
HAMILTON. NEW ZEALAND.
2011.

Abstract: This paper will investigate notions of identity and place in landscape painting. Positing the landscape as a dialectical construct I will apply interpretative strategies to question the idea that a Nationalist identity and singular inherent truth lays in-wait to be discovered within the land. Investigating landscape representation in painting and genre conventions I seek to expose and challenge an hierarchy of such convention. Is there a core truth of identity inherent in the land or is identity fragmented and layered upon an inert geography? The paper explores capitalism as a framing device for landscape as a coercive presence on the framing of land, place and identity. Using Jacques Derrida's concept of erasure (sous rature), the presence of the absent is allowed access to the 'text', questioning the univocity of meaning. This questioning exemplifying the multi-coded discourse of a dialectically constructed landscape and identity. The final section adventures into personal inscription and graffiti as a way of being-in-place. An action of negating sociogeographical exclusion whilst inscribing our own emotions and identity in place? Through intertextual theory and multi-authoring the frameworks of singular perception are challenged and propose a symbiotic participatory nomadic hybrid identity of people and place.

Key words: Landscape. Painting. Genre. Graffiti. Collage. New Zealand. Identity. Capitalism. Myriorama. Erasure. Emotion. Affect. Uncanny. Haunting.

Additional Information: R.G.Shaw's Honours Practice Lead Research Paintings, details and contextual imagery viewable at:

www.this-is-not-a-landscape.blogspot.com

Is there an identity and truth of inherent meaning amongst the bushy valleys and mountain peaks, awaiting to be roused and woken, discovered?

Is the land anything more than shaped geology of ascent and descent of rock and stone, river and tree, in arbitrary compositions and placement? If there is anything to found us amongst the land, it would be a place for our own imaginings, a location to invent, not discover, the self in its imagined location. “To invent is to create a new thing, and, contradictorily, to discover is to find-or uncover- something that is already there.” (Pound.2009.p.xix). I would like to draw a distinction here also between the terms 'land' and 'landscape'. Tim Ingold in his essay on 'Temporality and the Landscape' describes,

It [landscape] is not 'land', it is not 'nature', and it is not 'space'.....You can ask of land, as of weight, how much there is, but not of what it is like. But where land is thus quantitative and homogeneous the landscape is qualitative and heterogeneous. (Ingold. 09. p60).

This distinction will inform my argument that landscape painting (any painting for that matter) will invite the viewer into a dialectical terrain. A dialectical dependency between the image and its articulation. William Burroughs elaborates, “What is word?-Maya-Maya-Illusion-Rub out the word and the image track goes with it-[...] Image is trapped in word.” Burroughs cited in (Sobieszek. 1996.p34) This codependency of image and script quoted by Burroughs informs not only how we look, but what we see. How we locate and identify. Being conscious of language and the role it plays in place, sails us over the sea-bed and fore-shore to a dialectical land. This quote from Francis Pound elaborates on the use of language to inform our sense of place, in this place, nature.

And if that eighteenth-and nineteenth-century language has been lost or debased, as landscape has largely been lost to serious art in our time, the concepts that language embodies still shape – if in an attenuated form – our own looking at nature today. (Pound 83. p 28).

This quote by Pound points to the influence that language has upon what we view. A view de-scribed and in-scribed with language. A language land, a textual geography. That language is learnt signifies it's plurality. A language-land posits a geography not singular or mono-linguistic, but intertextual. Julie Kristeva first coined the term intertextuality. Intertextuality is how the meaning of a text does not reside in the text but in the interaction of the reader with the text and the action of interpretative opportunities invoked in the reading of the text.

“...intertextuality must not be seen as an accumulation of influences and textual sources, but is concerned with the complex transformation and assimilation of various texts.” (Simmons. 2002. p52). This 'transformation and assimilation of various texts', offers us an ever-shifting, restless landscape upon which to gaze, interact and re-voice. An hybrid place continually written and spoken into view, nourishing our ideas of identity and place with its fecund promiscuity of signification.

But I am getting ahead of myself here, or should I say jumping the fence.

A FRAME OF MIND. The arena in which I work, which I will write these words from and simultaneously to, is the descriptive, expressive (and potentially oppressive) device of 'land-scape' painting. A technique of seeing and telling ourselves and the other of where we are, where 'they' are, and where you, me and they could be.

In Western painting the landscape up until the 15th century acted as a locating device for the depicted subjects. The painted landscape never appeared without the presence/colonisation of human, mythological or historical interaction. Over time the protagonists left the frame. The landscape developed an autonomy, opening with fertile potential for the insertion/colonisation of the spectator. A portrayed silent and uncontested landscape as 'place' for the spectator to locate themselves. A representation upon which is acted out the narrative of their idea(ology)s. A land within a frame, an optical grid of imported references thrown over the New (Zea)Land. A land framed, claimed and colonised in the same instant and process.

The landscape in painting and visual representation has always 'acted' as what I term a locational resonator, 'sounding' an identifiable present or absent location of self. Francis Pound quotes about the act of claiming and locating in Sir William

Fox's landscape imagery, “ Fox's 'capturing' of landscape in sketches, and triumphal return with it to the city, is but the beginning of that act of possession, and shaping the land to European convenience, which he later continued as farmer and commissioner.” (Pound.83.p44) This resonates an idea of location and identity for Fox, in this case also an act of possession, of locating, claiming and capitalising.

Cheryll Sotheran quoted in Pound, exposes a colonising capitalist interpretation of the land in Fox's early paintings, “ ...landscapes of Fox emphasise not so much unspoilt primeval nature, but potential productivity.” (Pound.1983.p44). Pound elaborates on the capturing, gridding/subdividing and possession of the land through interpretive image-frames in Fox's work/attitude,

[the] places they depict (the paintings) were first subdivided and ordered, and their pre-civilised nature first civilised with European art history. Fox's 'capturing' of the landscape in sketches, and triumphal return with it to the city , is but the beginning of the act of possession and shaping of the land to European convenience, which he later continued as farmer and commissioner. (Pound.1983.p44).

This gridded net(work) that captures the landscape with perception illuminates as well as obscures other ways of seeing. Such gridding, framing, perceiving allows an hierarchy of perception to assert itself. Assertion of 'truth' that represses and excludes any alternatives by non-inclusion through its interpretative frame. A dominating system that over-throws familiar and distant lands as well as cultures as it attempts to capture assimilate, demystify, familiarise and colonise. Here is Marianne from Jane Austins 'Sense and Sensibility' expressing the confinement of her feelings when measured against a dominating discourse (which she terms jargon) that is held to express a 'true' way of seeing and interpreting.

"It is very true," said Marianne, "that admiration of landscape scenery is become a mere jargon. Every body pretends to feel and tries to describe with the taste and

elegance of him¹ who first defined what picturesque beauty was. I detest jargon of every kind, and sometimes I have kept my feelings to myself, because I could find no language to describe them in but what was worn and hackneyed out of all sense and meaning."
(Austen.1994.p94).

The 'keeping of ones feelings to ones self ' has a repressive, passifying and deactivating effect on the spectator, which presents them with a dualistic ultimatum; accept the dominating 'truth' or remain in silence in fear of risking judgement, alienation and potential persecution. This proclamation of 'truth' orders and quantifies, measures (time and space), labels, promotes and denies. Using Jacques Derrida's concept of differance, where meaning is established through reference to what it is not, where a sign refers to what is absent, hierarchical titling and framing presents a paradox. Rosiland Krauss quotes from Jane Austin's '*Northanger Abbey*',

What begins to dawn on Catherine is that her countrified notions of the natural- "that a clear blue sky" is for instance "proof of a fine day" - are entirely false and that the natural, which is to say, the landscape, is about to be constructed for her by her more highly educated companions.
(Krauss. 86. p162).

The context and genre that the image is presented within also is a framing device. A window onto the world, is a classic metaphor for representational painting.² This would suggest that the painting surface is the glass pane and the painted image is the view through that glass, a styles 'true' representation. As Francis pound reveals. "...a style-less way of painting is impossible, that metaphorical glass is always full of paint, and any attempt to make it transparent quickly becomes a style itself".(Pound. 1983.p12). What painting represents is not the

¹ 'Him' refers to William Gilpin, a reverend who defined the picturesque in his, *Three Essays: On Picturesque Beauty; On Picturesque Travel; and on Sketching Landscape: to which is Added a Poem, On Landscape Painting* was published in London, 1792.

² Windows never-the-less are barriers between spaces. Under this metaphor the images upon the back wall of Plato's cave could be mistaken for windows onto the world.

whole of the world. It is a stylised image on top, over and between the spectator and the world. A simulacra of what the world could present. One of many simulacra. A glimpse if nothing else of part of the possible terrains of the world we can imagine. A painted potential, a painted promotion. Pound elaborates further on the imposition of style,

All the styles of landscape, in New Zealand and elsewhere-the Sublime, the Picturesque, the Ideal, the Topographical, or more lately, the Impressionist, the Cubist, the Expressionist, the Hard edge realist, the New image- they all stain the window, they all impose their shapes and colours on what little (if anything) can be seen of the world through that glass. (Pound. 83. p12).

The style or genre of the painting has certain parameters for the painting to be presented and received. We look at the painting and its surface system of signs, not through it. No painting can exist outside of a genre or style, which provide the spectator with a context of possible meaning, as Pound states here. “The genre's frames are the boundaries of the 'possibilities of meaning' of the pictures painted within them. Their frames are the presuppositions, held as much by the spectator as by the painter of painting.” (Pound. 1983. p14). Pound goes on to elaborate on the metaphor of genre functioning as a key to deciphering meaning within the work and offering up a code of expectations to guide us through the work. “...for every landscape painting is a coded system of signs, and every genre is a key to help us decode it”. (Pound.1983.p14). Recognising the genre will allow for the appropriate consumption of the work and of the landscape. A way of reconstructing the landscape in the coded genre. Nature, Pound thinks, could have no visual experience outside these codes of seeing. The image and its framework locating the landscape and the spectator. The image as a locational resonator.

Pound elaborates on how the importation of genre frameworks influenced the attitudes that the colonisers developed to these islands of New Zealand. How these frames visualised, transformed and obscured the environment and other cultures through 'legitimised' ways of seeing. Today such framing conventions are still prevalent as the tourist travels to sight scenes that gratify a sense of the

picturesque. Pound again, “...picturesque taste accounts for all the tourists in new Zealand today. They are looking to see nature as pictures”. (Pound.1983.p26)

The locational properties of the image are always in operation. An image may or may not present a desired terrain for the spectator to project themselves upon. Though the viewer may resist entering the frame, the image has already entered the viewer and willingly or not, located them in relationship to it. Locating the spectator in a subjective terrain of satisfaction, dissatisfaction, indifference or denial. The promised land or the denied land? Both, as Jacques Derrida would postulate about the promise, “whose concept is linked to the to-come...to the experience of a promise engaged, that is already an endless promise”. Derrida (as cited in Pound, 2009. p24.). This endless deferral of the promises' signified, challenges any notion of a stable inherent promised 'truth', imagined or searched for. In this context the promise simultaneously questions what it proposes to promise. To use Derrida's term *sous rature*, the promise places itself under erasure, both present and absent in the instance. Such temporal and spatial plurality is central to place and identity within this project and argument. This plurality denies an inherent dominating 'truth' and articulates the spectator to their own liberation of expression.

Charles Harrison on interpretation of painting that doesn't pursue 'true' meaning, or essential being, independent of language, thought or history. Harrison is sighting in this example Kazimir Maliviche's painting 'Black Square'. An 80cm x 80cm black canvas square painted in 1929. Harrison postulates on how we represent such a painting to ourselves as meaningful.

In fact, there is no one authentic face of the Black Square...There is only another interpretation in the endless competition of interpretations. The Black square the spectator is interested in is one that serves his or her own imaginative or other ends. To interpret the painting is not to fathom its 'true' meaning and effects, nor to explain its production. It is to set beside it another artefact, another 'text'. (Harrison.1993.p218.)

This setting beside of another text, an interpretive parallel, that stems from and co-joins the painting and its spectator amidst their location, time and place transports the painting to the present, animating and invigorating the 'text', and informing the spectator about their experience amidst present time. Interpretive approaches to painting free the spectator from being subjected to a pre-ordained truth or orthodoxy, allowing them with the aid of the painting, to interact freely with their own position in time, space and discourse. Harrison continues, “ [the] test of critical interpretation is not whether it truthfully recounts the effects of art, but whether it is itself productive of effects and ideas which serve to destabilise an existing critical decorum or orthodoxy.” (Harrison.1993.p.218)

Such a destabilising interpretation, is required to allow inclusion into a preordained text. Deconstructive reading of a text elaborates on any monological reductive interpretation. A deconstructive reading...

[is] an attempt to show how conspicuously foregrounded statements in a text are systematically related to discordant signifying elements that a text has thrown into its shadows or margins: it is an attempt to recover what is lost and to analyse what happens when a text is read solely in function of intentionality, meaningfulness and representativity. (Simmons.2002.p.54)

If deconstruction is always already at work in a text, and we take a painting to be a text then any monological 'truthful' reading of a painting is denied. The painting becomes an allegory of its own reading. Any promoted singular 'truth' in the landscape image is questioned with endless alternatives, singularity becoming fragmented interpretive parts, jostling juxtapositions, dialogues and re-compositions. The search for a Nationalist singularity of identity inherent in the land and the image representation of land, is but a contributing fragment to debate identity.

The landscape's singularity is thus not something which a bit of topography does or does not possess; it is rather a function of the images it figures forth at any moment in time and the way these pictures register in the imagination.

That the landscape is not static but constantly recomposing
itself into different, separate, or singular pictures.
(Krauss.1986. p.164).

Rosalind Krauss elaborating on singularity and the spectator with regards to the
1801 Supplement to Johnsons Dictionary definition of the picturesque,
(remarkable for singularity). This statement posits that singularity is a “function
of the beholder.” (Krauss. 86.p164) and that the array of singular moments
(are) of his perception. This is the process of acknowledging an active viewer
happily amidst a plurality of meaning.

To imagine the self requires a location, a location that is synonymous with
identification. A place to identify with, presenting us with an idea of where we are
and where we are not, of our presence and absence. A reference point of and for
self in time and place. The active identifier, and the act of identifying. Such
looking, (re)searching for identity and place is illustrated in McCahon's painting
'*The Listener*' of 1947. The image is of the rear and slightly side view of a male
head which gazes (we presume) at an abstracted minimal landscape. Looking, we
presume, but also as the title posits, listening.



THE LISTENER (HEAD) 1947.

C. McCAHON.

Looking and listening for what in this silent³ and remote land? Looking for place
to identify self with, and to 'carry' us, the audience, vicariously via his absent yet
presumed gaze to this new land. *The Listener*,

asks us, as viewers, perpetually to repeat the experience of

³ Silence being an 19th century attribute to the NZ landscape. A sublime rhetoric.

the originating 'Head' as we conjoin our gaze with its. For two gazes-his and ours unite in the landscapes depths...and share with it the very act of inventing/discovering the New Zealand to come. (Pound.2009.p.8)

The search for a Nationalist identity in NZ in the early 20th century required a re-interpretation of location. The 'old' attitudes, genres and frameworks needed to be revised and 'painted over'. Broken, stripped and reduced like the land. Being had to start becoming again. A new identity had to be grown out of a re-contextualised location. The search for this new location became the focus for the poets and painters over these decades. Searching for inherent Nationalist meaning and identity within the land. Learning to voice in the silence. Land and its depiction was chosen as the bearer for the re-contextualisation of place and identity, it located a positioning of difference and otherness for the avant-garde/diasporic offspring to 'ground' their conscious differing from previous generations upon. Such a redefinition of location needed to transcend the defines of city and represent the larger and inclusive place of dwelling. The land. The landscape being the most obvious visual means of depicting these attempts. Within a few years the landscape (primarily through Colin McCahon) would be reduced to an abstraction, a groundless confrontational unspecific modernist space challenging the viewer to rethink their position and location. "To interpret the painting is not to fathom its 'true' meaning and effects, nor to explain its production. It is to set beside it another artefact, another 'text'." (Harrison.1993.p218.) This challenge, questions any assumption of identity and place or destination of arrival. The stripping back doesn't reveal an inherent 'truth', it defers such promise and remains an enigmatic motivation. A Lacanian lack propositioning active desire. A becoming to, not a being there. "It is a flight, it seems, that must be perpetually renewed; a flight after an elusive goal..." (Pound. 2009. p.22)

CONTESTABLE AND DEFERED LOCATIONS.....DO YOU SEE WHAT I SEE.....?

Darwin chased god and the grandeur of his presence away from 19th century nature and landscape. The economy and capitalism took his place.

The sublime rugged grandeur and expanse of mystical nature that inspired and dwarfed the 19th century spectator appears now as a de-mystified fragment of an

ubiquitous capitalised and consumable perception. A new landscape to fulfil the grounding and locating of the new spectator, promoting the protagonist beyond self realisation and acceptance of their time and place. Beyond the subjects' social and economic space. A new landscape of diversity and possibility. A landscape to rival the production of space that myth, and legend granted. An ancestral location for the dis-located. A culture for the culture robbed. A simulacra of ourselves, hope and dreams. Territory for those without a territory. A terrain of motion. A free land beyond the claimed present that no longer fulfils. A self promotional location promising all of the above.

A 'new' Sublime; 'Democratic Capitalism', mapped and presented as the New Land. Delivered to your mail box and T.V. set day and night. The land of empowerment and plenty, of self realisation. A place where you will be realised. A place to rest and to stand. A place where you can save. A land where all have enough to be generous. Is this the promised land that McCahons' *The Listener*, looked for?



“WHAT DO YOU SAY, WHERE DO YOU THINK, WHAT DO YOU DO?”

R.G.Shaw 2011.

Capitalism, promises all this and more, a land where the imagination can flourish and run wild. Run free. “Imagine what we could do.” Capitalism, the enslaving carrot of the promised land. A promise to transcend the present promoting a new identity which it inherently holds for us all. A new Nationalist genre of identity? The Sublime, described here, “Terror, obscurity, pain, superior power, privation,

vacuity, darkness, solitude, silence, vastness, magnificence, infinity, suddenness, terrifying, loudness-". (Pound.1983.p19), 'speaks' such pervasive language and emotions of horror inspiring awe, amplifying 19th century man's insignificance in the vast face of nature. Today these adjectives are heard listed nightly on current affair programmes and television news broadcasts. Sublime capitalism locates the spectator. It be-littles as well as inspires awe. Petrus an der Velden quoted by Pound describes this feeling of insignificance as he steamed from New Zealand to Australia, "...he wrote, 'All the time I was wondering at the grandeur and power of nature, and how small the steamer and the people comparatively are-' perfect expressions of the sublime emotion" (Pound.1983.p21). How small and insignificant the news and economy make people feel these days. The promised freedom/salvation that the capitalised land represents is the only land for many to work toward. For millions it is now the only option. This ubiquitous new land that heavily self promotes, colonises the imagination of the viewer, and therefore, as I have been arguing above, colonises, claims and reforms the locating landscape. The multi-coded effect of this colonising process simultaneously advertises the purchasable 'freedom' of the new and better, whilst promoting a sense of lack, confinement and inadequacy of the place of the present. This simulacrum of effect seducing with an imagined location of freedom. (Capitalism, the Saviour? McCahon's 'Promised Land'?)

In my studio practice I have been using the context of landscape painting as an ambient bearer of meaning. Not a core of inherent meaning within the land or image, but a terrain of layers and fragments of multi-authored meaning. This posits that land is founded for meaning and identity to move across, lay upon, contest, expose and conceal in their hybrid positionings. Land as ambient space, an abstraction for meaning to be ascribed and inscribed. Substituting the word 'page' in the following quote for 'landscape', illustrates the active participation in the production of meaning through re-scripting the triggering text.

The original page itself is an ambient territory that allows the meaning of the text to take effect. When those liminal spaces(both between and betwixt, in which the rules of page format, design, style, and typography are abandoned) are altered by the presence of doodles, the formerly blank,

surplus, and soft spaces of the page offer messages coterminous with the text, often allowing readers to speak haphazardly and consciously, with and against the triggering text. The bleached whiteness can become a crowded milieu in the hands of a reader re-scripting the ambient territory. (Ensminger. 2010.p2).

If we substitute landscape for page in the previous quote we have an inscribed and interactive landscape. A merging of texts and a resistance to previous power discourse. This interactive merging of texts, theoretically and visually has been a motivator of my visual research into place and identity. The visualisation of this merging, hybridising of texts, eg collage, montage, graffiti, signify in their occurrence a liminality, a place where social boundaries and discourses of meaning are blurred. A challenge to the power discourse by the active spectator as participant. Has any power discourse ever been immune from a transgressive impulse? Katherine Wright quoting M.Taussig on domination and manageableness. “Taussig asks, “has the sacred ever been free of a transgressive impulse?” For Taussig, desecration is an act that is immanent in the object itself, “defacement...lies within the phenomenon to be defaced” (Wright.2010)

Another way of reading 'defacement' is the act of asserting the right to be *in-place*. An act of active participation in the dominant discourse. Wilson and David describe, “Inscriptions are not simply writings in place, but the actions of people who write themselves into the landscape” and thus are “an assertion of a right to be in-place....a resistance to sociogeographical exclusion.” (Wilson & David. 2002. p42). As well as resisting, such an act merges these texts/horizons. Each statement puts itself and the other 'under erasure', presenting and eradicating in the one moment. If the image of the landscape posits a locational resonator as I have previously argued, then the inscription of text over this image elaborates on the potential reading(s) of the 'silent' image. The font, the media, the vernacular, the cultural tongue all dialogue with the image and audience.



“A RIVER RUNS THROUGH IT – Contestable Lands, Debatable Identities.”

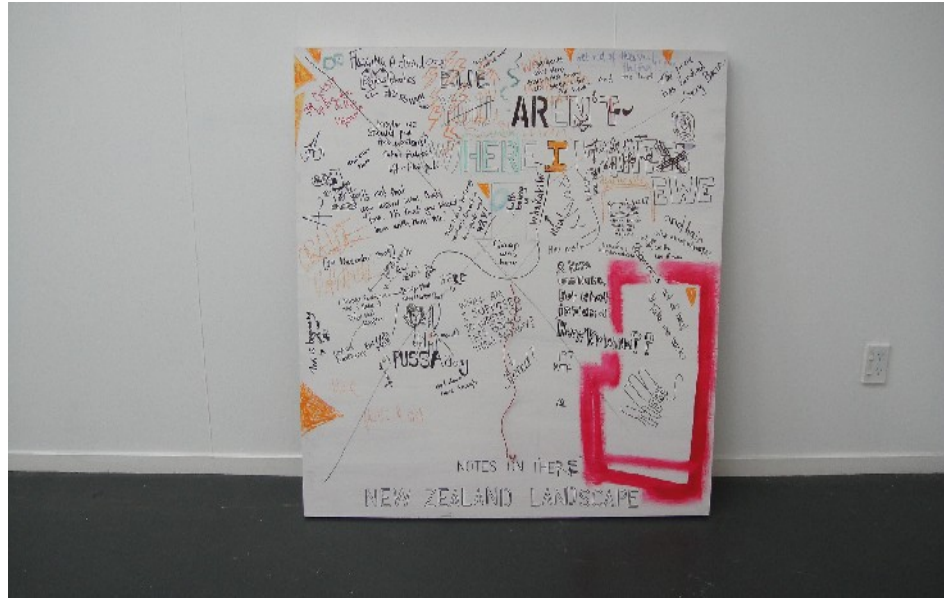
R.G.Shaw. 2011.

In my works these actions of inscription, become a metaphor for the ability to partake in the production of meaning not only in the presented works, but in the dialogue of place and identity that we are always already with in.

The text of the author can conflate with the text of the reader in an uneasy dance of meaning: the page becomes an interface revealing a landscape of signs and symbols with multiple intelligences-one manufactured and condoned, the other vernacular and unsanctioned. A fixed end or beginning between the two no longer exists. (Ensminger. 2010.p2).

Such a negation of a fixed end or beginning insembrates a liberating interpretation into any prejudicing device that an inherent truth or orthodox system may assert. The 'Interactive landscape' that I produced early in 2011 was the epitome of this active interaction and articulation of self. A white panel with “You are (W)Here(?)” and an arrow to the centre of the surface where a vivid marker was attached via a cord. At the bottom of the work was writ, “ Notes on the New Zealand Landscape.” The work was installed in the painting dept at Wintec. It lay as insignificant as a vacant lot, or the roadside verge, but stating its context all the same. This work/landscape slowly amassed a palimpsest strata of text. A

terrain began to assert, state and contest, for, over and through this 'landscape'. The hierarchy of 'fine-art' was slowly superseded by a twilight liminality, the audience began to activate their voice, claim their 'land' and express their identity.



“YOU ARE (W)HERE.....Notes on the New Zealand Landscape.”

(Interactive Landscape Painting. 2011.)

An experiment in research producing a theoretically successful work, and the only consciously produced interactive landscape painting I know of. Each authored statement signifying a differently stated 'I AM' in the 'white noise' (as opposed to the dark silence) of the New New Zealand Landscape.

Here is Pound surmising on McCahon wanting to fill the silent blank rootless land of New Zealand with Christianity, “ He wanted to fill that New Zealand blankness with Christianity, to inscribe Christianity all over the empty land.”

(Pound.2006.p.146). On analysis McCahon's scripts appear to be more than Christian dogma. They are foreign to the image, overlaid not in-bedded. Graffiti? Graffiti makes the action of otherness explicit, especially scrawled across a public or National space that is produced for us, rather than by us. The insertion of text, fragment, collage, allows for the exposure of an image referent that refers to a plurality. If identity was searched for in the depiction of place then the fractured and fragmented image presented as locator of identity potentially allows via its 'confusion' an arena of multiplicity and inclusion.



Thunderbolt's Rock, NSW. (Wright.2010)

A 'silent' and isolated land on which the colonist searched for identity and place in geographical isolation at the 'bottom' of the world, is now downloaded upon at high-speed. The economy has now framed and colonised the land whilst marketing identity. Land is as pretty as a picture, someone else's picture that you do your best to comfortably locate yourself within, (or without), with job, or without. Though, momentarily bored like us all, you can't help but write something into the view.

PERSONAL INSCRIPTION. The love letter. The articulation of emotion and soul, presence and absence, dedication, history and future. Writing emotive knowledge and identity into being a place of being. Re-scribing and wrestling the land/place away from the grips of sublime capitalism. I posit such action as acceptance of otherness with the merging of horizons and texts, untouchable by social, economic and Nationalist dictations. Public personal inscription offers up revolutionary texts that defy and reunite people and place giving context to the bombardment of societies pressures. "people are not separate from their worlds; rather, they are immersed through an invisible net of bodily, emotional, and environmental ties." Seamon.D. (as cited in Wright.2010). I see this as the strength of the personal text. The indexical scribing of the personal, the lovers name carved in stone or tree, such self inscriptions like, ' _____ was here, (date)', reserve a space for the individual in the land, time and history. The memorial seat or cemetery, function in a similar way. A dedication to a named life haunting the place with otherness, with the previous. Encountering such inscriptions offer a refreshing moment of the personal in the promotion dominated scriptorial landscape of the sign-age. Scriptorial landscape, "refers to all lexemic

constructions that are meant for public eyes (though not necessarily on public property) and that are visible to more than one person at the same time.” (Gade. 2003.p.447). Could these personalised affective scratchings of name and feeling upon rock and tree be the uncanny traces and essence of a Nationalist identity laying quietly and inherently in the land? Identity reflected in the fragmented emotive utterances of the other, persisting quietly outside the control of existing social forces? A deep strata of identity common to us all, quietly communing and commenting amidst the dominant discourse of the time?



Personal text in the land. (Wright.2010)

The texts layered upon my projects paintings co-mingle capitalistic coercive language with auto-ethnographic personal inscription in an attempt to make explicit a landscape/identity of dialectical intertextuality.



“WHAKARONGO KI TE AWA, LISTEN TO THE RIVER”. R.G.Shaw. 2011.

These encountered personal inscriptions haunt the location with traces of otherness that affect our sense of self and place. Individuals just as us inventing their time and place between the earth, the landscape of the past, and the tightening framework of economic access to the future. The vast, silent potential filled endless terrain that we gazed at previously with McCahons *The Listener*, is now littered with commercial logos, blaring advertisements deferring the present and offering brands of identity. A land framed in credit and debt.



"WELCOME TO (Y)OUR WOR(L)D"R.G.Shaw 2011.

CONCLUSION:

In this essay, the idea of an inherent National identity has ungrounded itself and fragmented, revealing its exclusive ideas of an inherent identity as its own myth. Place and identity have been revealed as dialectical interpretation layered over an inert geography. The 'clean and green' land to play out our liberations upon reveals itself as another billboard mistaken for the real thing. Untouchable and quiet in its promise as the white noise of promotion and commotion solicit for our attentions and time.

A privatised paradise.

The promised land privatised.

Additional Information: R.G.Shaw Honours painting research, details, and contextual imagery viewable at: www.this-is-not-a-landscape.blogspot.com

BIBLIOGRAPHY:

Austen, J. (1994). *SENSE AND SENSIBILITY*. Great Britain. Penguin Group.

Brett, G. Benjamin, R. (2006). *JUAN DAVILA*. Australia. The Miegunyah Press.

Ensminger, D. (2010). *POPULATING THE AMBIENT SPACE OF TEXTS: THE INTIMATE GRAFFITI OF DOODLES. Proposals Toward a Theory*. Volume 13, issue 2.

Francina, F. (1993). Realism and Ideology. An Introduction to Semiotics and Cubism. In C. Harrison, F. Francina, G. Perry (Eds.), *PRIMITIVISM, CUBISM, ABSTRACTION. The Early twentieth Century*. (pp.87-183). USA. Yale University Press in association with The Open University.

Harmon, K. (2004). *YOU ARE HERE. PERSONAL GEOGRAPHIES AND OTHER MAPS OF THE IMAGINATION*. USA. Princeton Architectural Press.

Harmon, K. (2009). *THE MAP AS ART. CONTEMPORARY ARTISTS EXPLORE CARTOGRAPHY*. USA. Princeton Architectural Press.

Harrison, C. Francina, F. Perry, G. (1993). *PRIMITIVISM, CUBISM, ABSTRACTION. The Early Twentieth Century*. USA. Yale University Press in association with The Open University.

Ingold, T. (1993). *THE TEMPORALITY OF THE LANDSCAPE*. In *World Archaeology* 25:5
Reprinted with permission of Taylor & Francis group and the author.

Lay, G. (2008). *IN SEARCH OF PARADISE. ARTISTS AND WRITERS IN THE COLONIAL SOUTH PACIFIC*. New Zealand. Random House.

Pound, F. (1983). *FRAMES ON THE LAND. EARLY LANDSCAPE PAINTING IN NEW ZEALAND*. New Zealand. Williams Collins Ltd.

Pound, F. (2009). *THE INVENTION OF NEW ZEALAND. ART AND NATIONAL IDENTITY 1930-1970*. New Zealand. AUCKLAND University Press.

Roob, A. (2005). *ALCHEMY AND MYSTICISM*. Italy. Taschen.

Simmons, L. (2002). *THE IMAGE ALWAYS HAS THE LAST WORD. On Contemporary New Zealand Painting and Photography*. New Zealand. Dunmore Press Ltd.

Sobieszek, R. (1996). *PORTS OF ENTRY: William S Burroughs and the Arts*. California USA. Los Angeles County Museum of Art.

Wedde, I. (Ed) (1994). *FOMISON-What shall we tell them?* New Zealand. Wellington City Gallery.

Wilson, M & David, B.(Eds). (2002). *INSCRIBED LANDSCAPES: Marking and Making Place*. USA. University of Hawai'i Press.

[Wright, K. \(2010\).*Signatures of Resistance: Graffiti as Dialectical Collaboration at Thunderbolt's Rock, Uralla \(NSW\)*. Retrieved from http://www.arts.mq.edu.au/documents/6_Katherine_Wright.](http://www.arts.mq.edu.au/documents/6_Katherine_Wright)

Zamora, L & Faris,W, (Ed). (1995). *MAGICAL REALISM, Theory, History, Community*. Durahm & London. Duke University press.