

Cultivate: Without Title
March 18 – 26, 2023

How do we individually and collectively cultivate?

How do we approach landscape and relations with land?

Cultivate: Without Title

March 18 - 26

Opening Saturday, March 18, 7-9pm

Closing Sunday, March 26, 2-4pm

March 19 - 25: admission by appointment,
please contact: cultivate@cultivateprojects.net

Featuring artwork by: Anitra Accetturo, Inga Adda, Sobia Ahmad, Mei Mei Chang, Maggie Gourlay, Katie Kehoe, Madeleine Keller, Susan Main, Jonna McKone, Meeting Ground (MJ Neuberger and Susan Main), Murat Cem Mengüç, Hugh Pocock, Elzbieta Sikorska, Lynn Silverman, Gabriel Soto, Olivia Weise, Sue Wrbcian, and Judit Varga.

Without Title suggests the potential of working without a singular designation and beyond boundaries of ownership. The exhibition offers a glimpse of varied practices that explore the qualities, perceptions, contexts, and systems that inform and expand notions of landscape.

Cultivate Studios 4218 Howard Avenue, Kensington, MD

Anitra Accetturo



Anitra Accetturo was born in Washington State and raised amongst the seas, forests, and mountains of the Pacific Northwest. Spending copious amounts of time in these realms have been foundational in advising her how to move herself within the wide world we live in. She is continually drawn towards cross-cultural symbolism, the natural environment and their connections to inter- and intra- personal growth and healing.

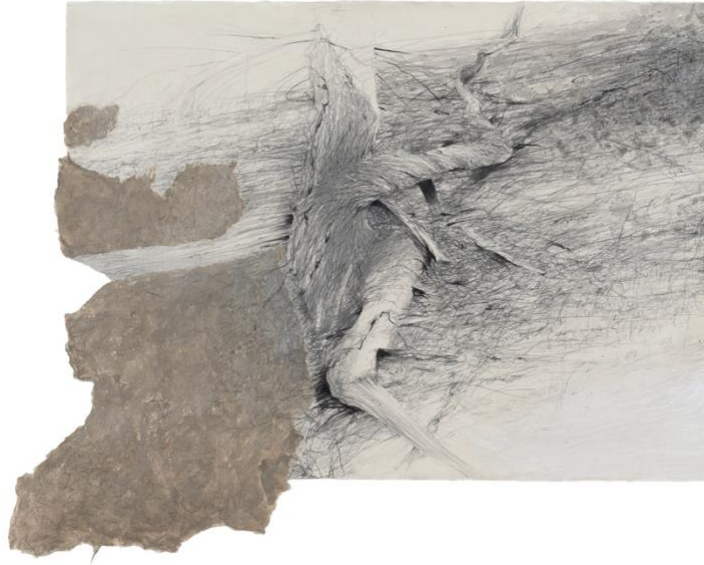
Cultivate... curiosity. Through curiosity one can safely expand what one thinks, feels, knows, understands, and does. Curiosity can be a conduit for growth, an invitation to connect in new ways with the natural, spiritual, inner and outer worlds that we live within.

List of Works:

The Only Way Out is Through...Finding My Way Back to Center (2022) Land Art, Installation. Link to website journal featuring Anitra Accetturo's work:

[The Only Way Out Is Through: Finding My Way Back To Center](#)

Elzbieta Sikorska



Elzbieta Sikorska was born in Warsaw, Poland, moved to the US about 30 years ago, and settled in the DC area a couple of years later. Over her lifetime, she worked in various media, exhibited nationally and internationally, and her artworks are in several private and public collections. Her preferred medium for over 20 years has been large-scale multimedia works on paper focusing on nature.

Land, landscape, and nature. Talking about land suggests maintaining soil, cultivating, planting, harvesting, and also ownership. Landscape brings associations with visuals, surroundings, and surfaces. Nature means all of this and more, including us. Do we use these terms mostly interchangeably? Such precision is perhaps unnecessary, but it is good to realize differences in these terms.

I believe that contemplating and understanding land is as important as working towards saving it and preserving the environment. It means understanding the element of time and layers accumulated to build and affect the present. Is it possible to fully understand and absorb such knowledge? How would such thinking influence our sense of identity? Going back, tracing from the beginning and seeing nature as a witness and participant? Are we positioning ourselves outside nature, or do we understand that we are part of it?

List of Works:

1. Broken Land 1; 2022; graphite pencil, paper, handmade paper; 29" x 31"
2. Broken Land 2; 2022; graphite pencil, colored pencil, died paper, handmade paper; 27.25" x 32.5"

3. Broken Land 3, 2022; graphite pencil, colored pencil, died paper, handmade paper; 29" x 33.5"

4. Broken Land 4; 2022; graphite pencil, colored pencil, died paper, handmade paper; 23.5" x 32"

5. Broken Land 5; 2022; graphite pencil, colored pencil, died paper, handmade paper; 23.5" x 31.75"

6. Broken Land 6; 2022; graphite pencil, colored pencil, died paper, handmade paper; 24" x 33.25"

Gabriel Soto



Gabriel Soto (b. El Salvador, 1993) is a painter with an interest in vintage imagery, political history, propaganda, and esotericism. He graduated from The Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts with a BFA in 2017. Primarily focused on experimental painting and interdisciplinary installation, Gabriel is currently based out of the Washington DC area, where he resides as a DACA recipient.

These works have been the result of my interests in classical and baroque painting, surrealism, esotericism, and history. I want to abstract the concepts of European and Mesopotamian divinities to geometric and oblong shapes. I want to imagine what Plato's forms would look like if I were to encounter them in the wild. I want to create a playhouse that represents the temple where the storm god Baal or the goddess Inana would have been made to live during the bronze age. My paintings are my playgrounds for concepts. I go into the studio with the intention of using images like toys to imagine that which is hard to see conceptually.

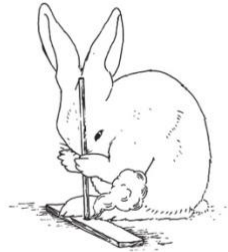
List of Works:

Divine Bacteria, 2022, Acrylic and Charcoal on Panel, 12" x 24.25" x 5.75"

Multiverse Machine, 2022, Acrylic and Charcoal on Panel, 24" x 20" x 3.6"

The House, 2022, Acrylic and Charcoal on Panel, 17.5" x 74" x 5.75"

Hugh Pocock



Hugh Pocock was born in Aotearoa (New Zealand) and raised in the United States, England and Aotearoa. His work investigates the transactions between culture and natural phenomena. Organic materials, such as water, air, salt, wood and earth are the material platforms on which Pocock's work are built. Time, energy, climate change and social connectivity are among the issues Pocock investigates in his sculptures, installations, performances and videos. Over the past three decades, he has shown his work in Los Angeles, San Francisco, New York, Santa Fe and Baltimore as well as internationally in the former Soviet Union, Germany and China. Pocock's current project is the development of an area of land that is off limits to humans. Titled No Man's Land, the project is a park for the non human where nature is its own legal entity. He's interested in the global movement of the Rights of Nature, and how land can be recognized as having "legal personhood". Hugh Pocock is a faculty member at MICA and is the founding Coordinator of the Minor in Sustainability and Social Practice and new studio Major titled Ecosystems, Sustainability and Justice. He is Co-Facilitator of the Global Ecologies Studio taught annually at the Burren College of Art in Ballyvaughan, Ireland

List of Works:

Fire Making Rabbit, screenprint on paper

Picking Things Up and Putting Them Down, video

Inga Adda



Inga Adda (b. 1996, Washington, DC) is a fiber based artist with an emphasis on materiality and conceptual work. She received her BFA in Fiber from the Maryland Institute College of Art in 2020. In 2021, Adda was awarded the Cultivate Project Grant for her public installation, *Walk this Way*, in Clarksburg, MD. Adda has completed residencies at the Icelandic Textile Arts Center in Blonduos, Iceland and the La Baldi residency in Montegiovi, Italy.

How do textiles carry memories and connection to time and place?

How can a handmade object transform its meaning and function to deter obsolescence?

How does one's relationship to clothing influence their perception of labor, time, and raw material?

List of Works:

Olive Branch Skirt (series), 2022

Digital photography, vintage Italian skirt and blouse sourced in Rome, presented as transformable sculptures

Jonna McKone

Jonna McKone is a photographer and filmmaker based in Baltimore, MD. She works with documentary, narrative, archives and abstraction to explore connections between landscapes, the body, and memory. Her work has received support from Robert W. Deutsch Foundation's Rubys Artist Grant, Andy Warhol Foundation's Grit Fund, the Baker Artist Awards, the Puffin Foundation, Maryland State Arts Council, and the Maryland Institute College of Art. She was a Center for Documentary Studies' Lewis Hine Fellow, a Flaherty Film Seminar Fellow and has been an artist in residence at Full Circle Fine Art, Monson Arts' Abbot Watts Photography Residency, Platteforum, and Skidmore College's Storytellers Institute. Her work has been shown at the Zimmerli Art Museum, Power Plant Gallery, The Walters Art Museum, Interloc Projects, VisArts, Transformer Gallery, Washington Project for the Arts and the Midwest Center for Photography.

Alongside her studio practice, Jonna produces independent films. She is currently an American Stories Documentary Fellow through the Points North Institute. She produced ALL LIGHT, EVERYWHERE, which premiered at the Sundance Film Festival in 2021 where it won a U.S. Special Jury Award; as well as MARGIE SOUDEK'S SALT & PEPPER SHAKERS, which premiered at Sundance in 2023. Her films have received support from Sandbox Films, Cinereach, International Documentary Association, Sundance Institute, Points North and Rooftop Films, among others. Jonna holds degrees from Bowdoin College and Duke University's MFA in Experimental and Documentary Arts. She has taught and developed storytelling programs and community-based productions for Skidmore College, Goucher College, Johns Hopkins University, WNYC's Radio Rookies, Appalshop, the Partnership for Appalachian Girls Education and for Boston's Juvenile Justice Facility. These communities and collaborations deeply inform her artistic approach.

joy
attentiveness
weight of history compressing soil, matter, living things
light moving across, soft edges
living things, all
if I could step out of my body I would break into blossom

List of Works:

Fall Smoke, Germantown, MD (2020)

16 x 20

archival pigment print

Judit Varga



Question: So where are you from? Answer: My verbal interaction characterizes my immigrant existence in a place I call home now. Dealing with the seemingly impossible task to assimilate fully is like a small stone I carry around inside me, somewhere above my belly. It is part of me now. It has been there for almost 30 years. Most of the time I forget about it. Until someone hears my accented voice and asks: so, where are you from?

As a ceramic sculptor I use the language of malleable clay to speak freely; to give voice to my muteness in a world which does not understand my mother tongue. I utilize the power of colors and the inflections of rich surfaces to enhance the details which make us all different and all the same. My Flowers come from another land, a strange land, a land far away. From a place I still migrate to yearly, like the birds visiting warmer climates over wintertime.

List of Works:

Ceramic installation

Katie Kehoe

Katie Kehoe creates socially engaged performance and site-specific installation, often incorporating fabricated prop, photography, video and drawing as defining artistic elements to explore themes related to sustainability and climate change. Kehoe's work has been exhibited across the US and Canada, highlights include: The Hirshhorn Museum (Washington, DC), The Contemporary Museum (Baltimore, MD), Center for Maine Contemporary Art (Rockland, ME), RedLine Contemporary (Denver, CO), Emerge Art Fair (Washington, DC), SummerWorks Festival – LiveArt Series (Toronto, CAN) as well as solo exhibitions at VisArts (Rockville, MD), Verso Gallery and Type Books Gallery (Toronto, CAN). Raised in Cape Breton, CAN and currently based in Tallahassee, FL, Kehoe works as a Visiting Assistant Professor in the Department of Art at Florida State University, teaching in the area of sculpture and expanded media. Kehoe is a member of the Atlantika Collective and Cultivate Projects and values cross-disciplinary collaboration. Kehoe holds an MFA from the Maryland Institute College of Art in Baltimore, MD.

To Cultivate:
to be present, observant, and listening
to be engaged
to take action
to demonstrates care and attention
for energy and sustainability
and

List of Works:

Drawing Formations (AND) 2022, Animation, 1:30min

Lynn Silverman



The experience of living on three different continents, North America, Europe, and Australia, has had a profound effect on the way Lynn Silverman sees the world. After graduating with a BFA in Photography, Lynn moved to Australia. She was drawn to Australia's vast inland desert landscape, which was the subject of her first one-person exhibition, *Horizons* (1981), at the National Gallery of Victoria in Melbourne.

In 1983, Lynn moved to the United Kingdom. While teaching photography at several art schools, Lynn published four books, *Furniture Fictions* (1989), *1:1* (1993), *Corporation House* (1996), and *Interior Light* (1997), and participated in solo and group exhibitions including *Viewfindings: Women Photographers: Landscape and Environment* (1994) and the ground-breaking *Inside the Visible* (1996).

Lynn returned to the United States in 1999. Since then, Lynn received a Fulbright Scholarship in 2010 to teach and photograph in the Czech Republic. Exhibitions included *Outlook-Insight: Windows in the Arts*, at the Museum Sinclair-Haus in Bad Homburg, Germany (2018) and *Works in Black and White* at the Klompching Gallery Brooklyn, New York (2019).

In addition to continuing to pursue still photography, working with video is a recent development in Lynn's practice. In 2020, an earlier iteration of her video *Memory Foam* was exhibited in a group show, "Trust the Story" at the Baldwin Photographic Gallery, Middle Tennessee State University, Murfreesboro. This video was also included in "archive: 1" (2021), a collaboration between the Stand4 Gallery, Brooklyn, New York and

the Intermission Museum of Art. In 2022, the full-length version of *Memory Foam* premiered at Goya Contemporary, Baltimore.

Relative Time: A country's landscape and national identity are inextricably linked together. The incredible geographical diversity found in the United States continues to be an ongoing subject for artists and storytellers. Like mounds and pyramids, cemeteries are part of a larger story narrating the impact humans continue to have on the land. A grave marker may serve as a pause or point of focus in the flow of activity visible in the surrounding landscape.

Scrolling through countless maps on Google, mile by mile, I discovered that every state in the contiguous US has at least one cemetery situated on or near a state line. This realization was critical in providing a focus to the project. I like to think of *Relative Time* as a kind of national survey of these border cemeteries. More than a straightforward typology of cemeteries, the photographs reflect my varied responses to the details found in each cemetery and the site's relation to the greater environment.

Like a surveyor, my tripod is grounded in the cemetery with the camera lens directed towards the neighboring state. Adopting this position was critical in thinking about the invisible line that divides swaths of land into separate states. Although there may be considerable political divisions between states, the landscape is generally contiguous, a large plot of land that we all share.

My survey has taken me to some of the most remote parts of the country over the past decade. Without Google Maps my project would have been an almost impossible undertaking. Access to these maps is a game changer when it comes to having a preview of a particular site and plotting a route. In turn, our access and knowledge of a landscape have been altered by these satellite images.

When editing the pictures from this series, I think about the images depicting the western landscape by 19thC photographers such as William Henry Jackson, Carleton Watkins, and others. For these explorers, it was impossible to predict what laid beyond the mountain looming in front of them. Nearly two hundred years later, my survey of the American landscape depicts more quotidian occurrences. Fences not only demarcate the boundary of the cemetery but further divide the land for agriculture, housing, and roads. Sequencing the photographs according to season is another way of noting the passage of time. The annual flow of seasons is disrupted by an occasional passing vehicle that punctuates the stillness of the photograph.

-Lynn Silverman

List of Works: *From Relative Time, Looking Across to Virginia from Tennessee*

Maggie Gourlay



Maggie Gourlay works in screenprinting and papermaking to create both installation and two-dimensional work that explores the intersection of the natural world and domestic space. A current obsession is using natural plant ingredients to make screenprint inks that are used to depict plant motifs. Recent exhibits include Here Not Here at Brentwood Arts Center, Cast/ReCast at George Mason University, and Human Nature at DCAC. Her work is in the collection of the DC Arts and Humanities Art bank and Pyramid Atlantic Art Center, as well as private collections. Artist residencies include Vermont Studio Center, Lacawac Biological Field Station, the Rensing Center, and Pyramid Atlantic Art Center. A graduate of Georgetown University, Gourlay received her MFA in studio art from Towson University where she now teaches Screenprinting. She is a current DCAC Sparkplug fellow and a member of Cultivate Projects and is represented by Adah Rose Gallery in Kensington, Maryland.

Cultivating
Knowing, unknowing, reknowing land
and history
Wildness to bathe in, lose myself
Losing wildness
Mourning the relentless loss
In Nature, slow quiet moments of rejuvenation
restoration
what can I do?

Reuse, recycle the acrylic ink
Embedded in paper,
Re-cast as rounds encircling rounds
Growing rings like tree growth
Mimicking the natural

However still mourning that this gesture
As gesture it is never enough

And...
nature sharing,
Making ink from plants
Using soy as a binder
Happy in my small gesture
Small though so small
As gesture it is never enough

Cultivating change, is it possible?
Did I try?

List of Works:

Growth Rings (1)

Hand-made paper from recycled former screenprints on 1" deep plywood rounds.
63 x 63 inches x 1 inch D

Growth Rings (2),

Hand-made cast paper from recycled screenprints on plywood rounds.
48" H x 48" W x 1" D

In the Weeds

Screenprint monotype with natural pigments and a soy binder on gessoed board. Natural pigments include hand-made weld lake pigment and maya blue pigment.
16" x 12"

Meeting Ground



Meeting Ground App, app.meetinggroundprojects.org

Meeting Ground is a collaborative collection of projects that considers the ground as a point of entry to shared space where interconnection between earth and self, individual and other is made visible.

Artists, curators and activists [Susan Main](#) and [MJ Neuberger](#) invite participants to look down and attend to the spaces they walk upon. Their collaborative work brings together artists and non-artists through simple prompts that encourage co-creation and re-imagination of shared space. From Project: Soils porch chats, quarterly seasonal gatherings, and participatory acts of intention and attention, Meeting Ground explores the limits and possibilities of aesthetics to open up/decolonize/re-center a meeting with the ground.

Susan Main's multi-disciplinary work explores individual and social contracts between space, time, and attention. Using drawing, painting, video, projection, documentation, language and collaboration, her work investigates the liminal, transitory qualities of attention and landscape.

MJ Neuberger's work arises from her ritual attempts to return to a body abandoned in childhood trauma and abuse that she traces in part to colonial history in her mother's native Philippines. Referencing indigenous ceremonies and elemental processes, Neuberger's installations, sculptural work and images suggest acknowledging shared vulnerability and reconnecting with an indigenous, nature-based self as a path toward integrating traumatic memory and reoccupying colonized bodies.

In a hyper-mediated world, how do haptic, visual, aural, language, and digital experiences combined with geolocation and site/cultural context add to a more complex knowledge of the relationship between the ground and humans?

How do we bring people to the ground and the ground to people through simple, attentive acts?

What is the exchange between these bodies?

How do we occupy space within the urban environment/civic consciousness for evidence of connection and amplification of relations with the more than human world?

How do we explore the limits and possibilities of aesthetics to open up/decolonize/re-center a meeting with the ground?

List of works:

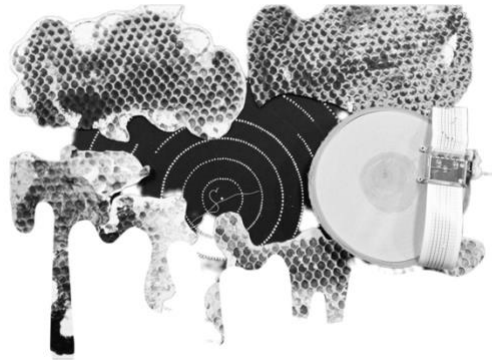
Shared Grounds v.1

2020 -2022

Archival inkjet print

Meeting Ground App, app.meetinggroundprojects.org

Mei Mei Chang



Mei Mei received her Master of Fine Arts in Photography from Ohio University 2002. As a mixed media and installation artist, Mei Mei explores various media to bridge her internal and external worlds. She is a lifelong student of the human psyche, fascinated by the mind's ability to focus on details great and small without limits. Using her internal symbols, she creates rich visual images that are both highly personal and accessible by all. Mei Mei has received numerous awards and residencies, including at the Vermont Studio Center, Great River Art Association, the ARCH Residency at Honfleur Gallery, the Montgomery College Artist Residency, and second place in the Contemporary South Exhibition. As an artist, I've always been drawn into the depth and the mysterious side of the psyche. This is the source of my art and I can only express it in a language that transcends words. Through my work, I have always translated the topographical maps of the mind onto multilayered and patterned surfaces. Studying visual art and photography at Ohio University, and working at various locations and in diverse contexts across the US has led to my personal internal landscape's taking on its own appearances, colors, attractions, and distractions, all of which have culminated in the work that I do. Among the many symbols of my mind is the awareness of similarities and differences between Eastern and Western cultures. There are connections between internal symbols and connections which stretch out to the external. I believe that there is as much to uncover beneath the surface as to discover on the surface. Our minds occupy a space between the conscious and the subconscious; my work encompasses what is beneath the awareness of consciousness and beyond the passive knowing of subconsciousness, and brings it to life. "Another aspect of the human mind that I explore is its freedom from the boundaries of macro and micro scales and its power of infinitesimal infinitude. My work is a place for the mind to move without limits, from the work as a whole down through layers of ever more granular complexity."

List of Works:

Noisescape, Installation

Noisescape: Often we forget about the sound/noise that can be invisible around our surroundings. Noise pollution is around us. We don't even realize that it can be harmful to our mind and body. This installation is just a glimpse of fragments of a personal noisy environment for over 2 years. The intensity of emotion punched to the mind that I have been carrying for a while. The installation is about visualizing the heavy crazy noises, visual/Implied texture to create the internal density.

Murat Cem Menguc



Murat Cem Mengüç is a Turkish/American artist, writer and historian. He was originally trained as a film maker with a degree in religious studies and Ph.D. in history of the Middle East. He has left academia due to personal, political and economic reasons in 2017. Since then he had two solo shows and participated in numerous group exhibitions. His work and writings appeared in a number of websites, academic journals and edited volumes, including *Hyperallergic*, *Maggot Brain*, *International Journal of Ottoman Studies* and *Journal of the Society for Armenian Studies*. He is the founder of *Studio Teleocene* and the publisher of the *Covid Magazine*.

I focus on ecology, geology and anthropocene. I research cultural aesthetics and perceptions of global warming, climate migration and environmentalism. I am a visual interpreter/translator of our changing aesthetics of nature and landscapes. My work strives to bridge the gap between art, science, theoretical studies and culture by offering humorous and morbid visual statements that fall within the perimeters of art.

List of Works:

Deep Data – Take a seed, grow and share its fruits (2023), mixed media

Olivia Weise

Olivia Weise lives and works in Washington, D.C. Her creative practice incorporates traditional photographic processes, video, music and sound design to explore our relationship to the environment through community-based art making. Olivia studied traditional and digital photographic methods at Northern Virginia Community College and currently works at an independent music venue (Black Cat on 14th St NW), teaches photography at the community darkroom at Capitol Hill Arts Workshop, and practices digital archival printing at Red Dirt Studio in Mt. Rainier, MD.

a surreal atmosphere
weight of water in all directions
inward flow,
an outward drive

dense forest surrounds
rhythmic lines in all directions
crimson contrasts
the quiet strength of blue

echoes of sky
between and within

surrender to the roar
liquid cascade of reflections
seeking their ocean home

List of Works:

Without Title, video

Sobia Ahmad



Sobia Ahmad is an interdisciplinary artist working with weaving, community engagement, and time-based media. Ahmad's work has been reviewed in *Al-Jazeera* and *The Washington Post* and has been exhibited at the Johnson Museum of Art (Ithaca, NY), Craft Contemporary (Los Angeles), Queen Mary University (London), and the Smithsonian American Art Museum's Women Filmmakers Festival (Washington, D.C.). She received a Wherewithal Research Grant by the Washington Project for the Arts in 2021.

My work explores tactility and slowness as an ethos for engaging with our inner lives, and for experiencing various spiritual dimensions of social and ecological engagement. For a few months, I took daily walks to a pond near my studio and observed light dancing on the surface of the water. These moments of slowness turned into meditations on the sensuous amalgam of liquid, light, and lingering. This selection of prints is part of an ongoing series that is part of a larger body of work which includes a hand-processed super8 film and installation. Through this work, I attempt to capture the alchemy of a mystical moment. Acutely aware that recounting an inner experience is nearly impossible, I embrace the ghostly renderings of those moments as records of the impulse to try.

List of Works:

Spectral Invocations (2023)

Monotypes on kitakata paper, made with water-based intaglio ink and pressure from a spoon

Sue Wrbican



Sue Wrbican is an interdisciplinary artist who works in photography, installation, sculpture and video. Her large sculptural work *Buoyant Force* can be seen at the Tephra Institute of Contemporary Art in Reston, Virginia. Previous towers inspired by the paintings of surrealist painter Kay Sage have been temporarily installed at the Seligmann Center in Sugarloaf, New York and the College of Design, Architecture, Art, and Planning at the University of Cincinnati . Her work is in various collections such as the Museum of Modern Art Library, the Boston Museum of Fine Arts and the Getty Research Institute, Los Angeles, CA. Wrbican has held residencies at the Robert Rauschenberg Residency in Captiva, Florida, Kala Art Institute in Berkeley, California, The Atlantic Center for the Arts in New Smyrna Beach, Florida and La Baldi in Montegiovì, Italy. Her studio is in the ArtsWalk complex at Monroe Street Market in Brookland, Washington, DC. She received her BA in Poetry from University of Pittsburgh and MFA from Rhode Island School of Design.

Since 1989 I have created photographs, videos, sculptures and installations grounded in personal narrative examining labor, culture, time, place, and weather. My continued practice has shifted from its beginnings in photographic large-format portraiture to a multilayered poetic experience in a dialogue between documentary and the musings of imagination. I have also collaborated with individuals and communities to address issues such as empowerment, the environment and economics.

List of Works:

The Thin Film of Privacy and Promises (2023)

Archival pigment print on Moab Slickrock

19 x 13"

The Thin Film of Privacy and Promises

To represent the inner dialogue I have with my studio practice and ongoing research relating to our petrochemical fueled world I wanted to bring together different aspects of my work in photography. My familial background includes Slovakian grandparents who came to Western Pennsylvania at the turn of the 20th century to find work in the steel mills, coal mines and railroads while keeping boarders to "make ends meet." I also worked briefly at J&L Steel and while working on the coke ovens became acquainted with the dependency steel-making had on coal. For most of my life, I watched coal trains travel past my mother's house and in the last 20 or so years it was hauled by Norfolk Southern. This region, so familiar to me, is also rich with shale gas.

A few days ago I traveled to East Palestine, OH, where an ongoing nightmare is taking place from the derailment of NS rail cars carrying dioxins that have poisoned people, animals and land. On the way I stopped to photograph Shell Oil's new plastic manufacturing plant in Monaca, PA. It is fueled by two pipelines carrying fracked shale gas from its source to the plant. People in Monaca and surrounding areas complain that the air has become tainted and worry about their health. Most recently there was a gas flare at the plant, something had gone awry and in order to prevent an explosion the plant burns off the gas. The relationship between plastic and petrochemicals is well known. Do I really think that using the detritus from the shipping industry as material for my photographic tableaux keeps the plastic wrapping from entering the "recycling" stream? The question is, until when will I keep it? Some unknown being or entity will eventually suffer its forever consequences.

The top image is the Shell Polymer Plant, hidden behind twisted trees on the opposite bank of the Ohio River. The bottom image is the plastic backing from prismatic "privacy film" which I installed in my bathroom window this past winter.

- Sue Wrbican, 2023

Susan Main



Susan Main is a multi-disciplinary artist, curator, educator, and activist who explores relationships between attention and landscape. Her paintings and drawings are in numerous private and public collections. She is the founder of Cultivate, a platform investigating land, place and the commons. Cultivate hosts exhibitions, artist talks, screenings, workshops and residencies and engages with an evolving collection of artists, writers, and researchers.

Her current practice is enriched and inspired by working with artist MJ Neuberger through [Meeting Ground](#) – a collaborative project that centers the ground as shared space where cultural illusions separating earth and self, individual and other are challenged and interconnection is made visible. Main and Neuberger received a Washington Project for the Arts Wherewithal research grant funded by the Andy Warhol Foundation for the Visual Arts. They were resident artists at SWALE House with Project: Soils on Governor’s Island, New York, and have presented their work nationally and internationally.

My multi-disciplinary practice includes painting, mixed media drawings, video and photographic documentation, language, and collaboration. Framing and duration are often used to explore experiences and sites that are inherently immeasurable and difficult to document. Contact with the ground, waiting, light, weather, wind, temperature, sound, smell, observing are constants. I set up a measured space and time to observe and document the ground or light, noticing what draws my attention and the events that are within, move through, and

breach the parameters of a defined space and time. Inevitably I turn my head and find another version of “place” that reveals itself. This uncontainable, uncertain, indescribable, elusive mixture of shifting attention, natural phenomena, and perception is the landscape that I am interested in. It is here that I go again and again because it suggests possibility and exhilaration, a way to expand into relations beyond territorial, political, cultural, and species boundaries, a place to cultivate attention, exchange, respect, and care for what we share in common.

List of Works:

Twilight Studies (Dusk late winter 2023)

Archival Inkjet prints

Dimensions variable

The *Twilight Studies (Dawn and Dusk)* were conceived as a response to a Meeting Ground prompt to pause and share twilight. For some years now I have been stepping outside at dawn and dusk to collect the appearance and disappearance of the light from the ground. I am not disciplined. I do it when I remember and sometimes more or less regularly depending on my attention and circumstances.

The work presented in *Without Title* is comprised of the act of attending to twilight and gathering evidence of the passage of the light from the ground. Photographs were taken over a period from sunset to true darkness which is usually over at least an hour of time and dependent on weather and phase of the moon. The activity gives me time to witness the gathering or leaving light.

Twilight is a threshold space and time wavering between blindness and sight.
A slippage between appearance and disappearance.
A vivid alertness.

-Susan Main