Geneviève Chevalier is a visual artist, independent curator, doctoral student in the programme Études et pratiques des arts at UQÀM (Montréal), and the recipient of the SSHRC Joseph-Armand Bombardier CGS Doctoral Fellowship. Her research focuses on exhibition practices, site-specific methodologies and ideas around public spheres. The approach Chevalier generally privileges is contextual, and as part of her research, she has worked as a guest curator for the Foreman Art Gallery of Bishop’s University on the 2011–12 two-part, site-specific exhibition *Stanstead Project or How to Cross the Border*. As a curator, Chevalier has worked with such artists as Ron Benner, Ursula Biemann, Valérie Blass, Geoffrey Jones, Jim Holyoak, Thomas Kneubühler, Christian Philipp Müller, Andreas Rutkauskas, Andrew King and Angela Silver, and Althea Thauberger.

Chevalier's work as an artist has been presented at the DUMBO Arts Center in Brooklyn, New York; Thames Art Gallery, Chatham, Ontario; CRANE lab (Research Center for Digital Arts, Ethics of Art and Regeneration), Chevigny, France; Pêcherie and Dupuis on Île d'Orléans, Quebec; Musée de la Verrerie in Sainte-Anne-de-la-Pérade, Quebec; and the Foreman Art Gallery of Bishop’s University on the 2011–12 two-part, site-specific exhibition *Stanstead Project or How to Cross the Border*. Chevalier has served as co-curator at the Foreman Art Gallery, and as an assistant to the late artist and architect Melvin Charney. Born in Quebec City, she now lives and works in Eastman, Eastern Townships, Quebec.

Geneviève would like to thank artist Colette Laliberté for her contribution to this project.
The Natural World That Remains to be Seen (and Experienced)

Karla McManus

Mountains, forests, and small villages dot the landscape of Mont Orford, a provincial park in eastern Canada. In her project, The Natural World That Remains to be Seen (and Experienced), artist Geneviève Chevalier engages the viewer in a conversation about the landscape, encouraging them to reflect on how history, politics, and philosophy have shaped the way we use and experience the environment. Chevalier’s work exists as an experiential whole that combines more traditional art forms with participatory art-making methods and exhibiting strategies, inviting viewers to participate in the creation of the piece.

Chevalier’s project is a multi-sensory and multi-disciplinary project that opens up this simplified understanding by demonstrating how much our cultural attitudes and questions the conceptual boundaries we have placed around the natural world. Chevalier’s work asks us to reflect on how history, politics, and philosophy have shaped the way we use and experience the landscape. Without placing any value judgement on our interactions with “wilderness,” a term that has come to connote both a wasteland and a place for recreation that exists as an experiential whole.

Chevalier’s artwork is a series of digital photographs of the park that at first glance appear as beautiful and pastoral impressions of Mont Orford’s natural splendour. Yet in each image we can find aspects of human occupation and usage. Sometimes these are deliberately added by the artist, as when she layers a topographical map over the image of one of the park’s peaks. At other times these cultural traces, a golf flag or a road marker, are present as a result of human alterations made to the landscape. These little reminders of how humans have represented and shaped the natural world are complemented by a display of archival documents and press clippings from the recent debates around preserving the park’s non-commercial status. Finally, Chevalier includes an audio recording of a talk by art historian and landscape theorist Benedict Fullalove, who was invited to give a public presentation at the park on the cultural history of wilderness.

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Chevalier’s project also reflects the artist’s deep interest in creating art that encourages the viewer to ask the viewer to consider how nature remains an essential part of our sense of community and the outdoors — from the more sedate recreational practices of the day-tripping urbanite to the hardy explorations of wilderness backpackers. Cultural and artistic events take place within the park: the Cultural and Democratic Institute offers a classical music academy, a summer festival, and exhibition spaces for visual artists. The importance of this park as a cultural and democratic instituative cannot be overstated. Mont Orford represents a natural and heritage landscape, a place of importance both for its environmental value and cultural contributions to the community, and for its historic value as a signifier of social and political cohesion. In 2006, a plan was revealed for its environmental value and cultural contributions to the community, and for its historic value as a signifier of social and political cohesion.

The Natural World That Remains to be Seen (and Experienced) exists as a cultural and democratic institution that cannot be overstated. Mont Orford represents a natural and heritage landscape, a place of importance both for its environmental value and cultural contributions to the community, and for its historic value as a signifier of social and political cohesion. In 2006, a plan was revealed for its environmental value and cultural contributions to the community, and for its historic value as a signifier of social and political cohesion.

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Karla McManus is a PhD candidate in the department of Art History at Concordia University, Montréal, where she has taught the history of photography and contemporary visual culture. Her research examines the translation of naturalistic landscapes into the contemporary photographic visual culture.
composted plant and animal matter, and subject to heavy geological pressure, have been transubstantiated into liquid capital and flow through environmental problems can be traced back to petroleum and the other fossil fuels. Millions of years of prehistoric sunlight trapped in its difficult to pin down scientifically impeccable data that would confirm a notable warming curve in the last forty years or an increase in the reluctance to draw a direct link between Haiyan and planetary warm-up claims. They note that increased temperatures in the upper ocean layer... Nevertheless, as of it would seem that science and narrativity have a problem harmonizing their epistemic modalities. We know that warming waters expand determinations about what to do next is as labyrinthine and exasperating as seeking out justice in the early stages of the Michael Kohlhaas story. Researchers line up on opposing sides of the debate. Is the planet actually warming due to unprecedented amounts of fossil-fuel emissions, or is...
the hikers, as was Benedict Fullalove, the art historian who teaches in the studio-intensive program at Calgary’s Alberta College of Art and Design. Fullalove is interested in the medium’s potential to explore the role of the public in the production and dissemination of art, especially in the realm of conceptual art. He argues that this approach allows for an inclusive and participatory model of art-making, which is in stark contrast to the traditional art world dominated by museums and galleries. Fullalove believes that this new model is transforming the art world, making it more accessible and engaging for a wider audience.

Contemporary design offers the same potential for engage ment as it bridges the gap between art and daily life. By using web access to dissolve deictic concepts of site-specificity, we are able to transcend the limitations of the physical world and to explore new possibilities for creative expression. This is evident in the work of the Blackhole Factory, a small German collective that exhibited at the Thames Gallery in 2008. Their exhibition was part of a group exhibit and featured a series of interactive installations that challenged traditional notions of art and design.

In one regard, the politics of the relational turn in art hanker back to 1960s counterculture by way of the Habermasian public sphere. The human sensorium has become in recent decades, one could argue that the art work, as a stand-alone object, merely and illusively reifies a line from Adam Gopnik: “20 In the age of conceptualism and relationality that spiderless centre or that twinkling web, that’s where we locate the event of “art.”

For example, the parkland hikes organized by Chevalier, as well as Laliberté’s temporary residency in a recognized institutional precinct. From this new, ontologically elusive conception of “art” flows an inclusivist mode of appreciation (for lack of a better term) that takes its bearings from such things as the farming and beekeeping toils sung in Virgil’s *Georgics*. Ever since Adam and Eve were expelled from the garden, their exiled descendants have been drifting and questing, and cutting and burning across the landscape in every direction. These images contrast with large photo stills that offer a more contemplative perspective, and audiences with an enveloping interest in the installation, and a change of heart in the historical framework of the exhibition.

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