

THE PERSPECTIVES OF EARTH
AND WORLD IN SASKATCHEWAN
LANDSCAPE PAINTING

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**THE PERSPECTIVES OF EARTH AND WORLD
IN SASKATCHEWAN LANDSCAPE PAINTING**

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INTRODUCTION

The best of landscape painting draws itself from a layer of meaning in life which is rooted in specific and regional experience. The best painters are endowed with an awareness that permits them to penetrate the skin of regional experience, allowing them to disentangle the experiences that are common to all. In Saskatchewan, as elsewhere, and particularly amongst landscape painters, geopiety, "the broad range of emotional bonds between man and his terrestrial home,"¹ often provides the emotional force behind this awareness. Our feelings and responses are tied to our experience of homeland and consequently are inescapably linked to our struggles in art.

In geopious terms, landscape painting of this province can be divided into two broad traditions: a tradition of earth painting which involves the contemplation of nature as a source of inspiration, and a tradition of world painting in which the landscape becomes a means in the discovery of the nature of man and the world human beings have created. In reality there are probably degrees of both earth and world encountered in any painting experience. However, landscape painters of the generation of which I am a part are perched upon a cusp between earth and world. They feel the pull of opposing tides: the compulsion to explore images and symbols tied to human struggle, and the compulsion and impetus found in the predominant tradition of earth painting which distrusts the notion of a distinction existing between the nature of nature and the nature of man.

An undercurrent of fear of provincialism also lurks behind each tradition, a threat of ethnocentricity: the belief in a closed and fixed system of existence which limits the human horizon. In the discussion of landscape painting in this

province the notions of provincialism and regionalism have become blurred. One is often considered the result of the other and the two terms are often viewed as interchangeable. I hope to establish that provincialism exists not as a result of regional and specific experience but out of an inflexibility within society itself. Further, even as artists attempt flight from what they perceive as the shadow of provincialism, through an abandonment of homeland, they inescapably do so from within the perspective of that homeland. Art is a process of the unfolding of the unfamiliar, a delimiting and expanding of society's threshold for discovery. Landscape painting has the potential to precipitate this process because of its close link to nature, the mother of our sense of reality and survival of our species. It is also an important force in the discovery of world, inescapably carrying with it our responses and feelings towards home.

CHAPTER I

Landscape: The Earth Perspective and the Pursuit of Organic Form

Nature is often elevated to the position of a deity within the tradition of earth painting in this province. Often painters who have studied the earth and the rhythms of nature as a system in itself do not feel the necessity to deal with the psychological encroachment or physical presence of humankind into that system. Evidence of man's presence is perceived as organic form and is assimilated by the artist to become nature as it has evolved. Aspects of world do not function primarily as things, but as form. A building is not simply subject to the conditions of nature (atmosphere, weather, season); it is nature. In the landscapes of Cézanne, for instance, fields and buildings are conceived as part of and from within the realm of natural forces. Cézanne discovered earthly forces through the painting process. He said "The landscape thinks itself in me and I am its consciousness."²

An implicit distrust of man's willful activities is central to this perspective in landscape painting today. It is believed that the human inhabitant impinges upon a balanced and established order in nature which precedes humankind. A denial and omission of the evidence of humankind's separate course within the landscape is evidence of this belief system, underpinning a notion of how this relationship, between humankind and nature, should exist. Reciprocity, the credence that one must put back into nature what one gets out of it, is a cornerstone of this belief system. The landscape painter of this province, among others, is often one who "loves the earth [and] shapes himself to please it,"³ distrusting instinctively any forces, intrinsic or other, which might attempt

to reverse this relationship.

Conversely, it could be argued that the pursuit of nature in painting of this province has really occurred at the expense of an examination of ourselves. The human condition is often present within the painted landscape only in a subliminal sense, as a silent partner, accompanying the predominant pursuit of organic form.

In Saskatchewan, as elsewhere, this pursuit is linked to two aspects of vision which, I believe, are the basis of the perception of organic form and the comprehension of earth within the creative process. They are the state of Kuan and what M. Merleau Ponty describes as the nature of the link between the eye of the artist and the environment.

The state of Kuan was defined in 11th century Taoist belief in China as a mode of pure vision in which the thoughts of the artist are released in order to encourage an unfolding of a greater reality, the spiritual rhythm which flows through life.⁴ This state, described in terms of a stork watching for fish in a pool, emerges at a point when "stork and pool become one."⁵ If only for a moment an artist may experience a connection in which it is difficult to perceive where the stork (the artist) begins and the pool (earth) ends. The familiar labels and analogues which cloud the essence of nature drop away and the unfamiliar reality of it surfaces. To the Taoist Chinese of the 11th century the landscape was a key to the contemplation of spiritual rhythm in life. Some landscape painters of today seek a parallel course as a means for penetrating pure organic form and as an impetus for initiating an emotional quickening within the painting process.

A second experience as described by M. Merleau Ponty suggests that the artist "especially painting, draws upon [a] fabric of brute meaning which

operationalism would prefer to ignore. Art and only art does so in full innocence."⁶ Art, therefore, is not simply of the artist, a consequence of his mind; it is a process of physical partnership between the artist and nature. Vision, the vehicle of this partnership has two distinguishing features. Vision is a thought in that it is conditioned by our mind. It is also automatic, "instituted by nature," and dependent upon activation from the external environment. "It does not choose either to be or not to be." Consequently, "the artist's eye learns only from seeing and learns only from itself."⁷ (This position, of course, assumes the existentialist view that the mind is a blank slate at birth.)

M. Merleau Ponty suggests that that part of vision which is thought clouds and suppresses the essence of what is perceived physically. It causes the artist to "recoil in relation to the object."⁸ Most people, he argues, are trapped in this mode of perception, perceiving only the labels of things. Painting, out of its physical nature, frees the artist from these fetters. The painter draws upon the interconnecting web between vision and environment. This web is not rooted in operational thought, but is saturated with the physical essence of an exchange between artist and earth. A Cézanne painting, as described at the beginning of this chapter, embodies these processes. The artist relied upon the physical exchange between himself and nature in order to push the painting process beyond the limitations of his own mind. The embodiment of this interdependent state is present in the painting today, allowing it to act as a catalyst for the reconciliation of man with nature.

In contrast to this existence of art as an act of reconciliation, much of contemporary art does not seek to bind man to man or society to nature. As has been suggested by M. Merleau Ponty, the artist draws upon whatever "fabric of brute meaning"⁹ might be present in the environment. It is not by

accident that much of contemporary art above all reflects and speaks of disconnection and alienation. As artists, our twentieth century habit of discarding the old, of building the new upon the ashes of the relatively new, is a symptom of increased separation of individuals from one another and of society from nature. We find it necessary to inject the new and superficial into art for the sake of newness, out of our own desire to relieve a societal condition of shiftlessness and boredom, the outcome of a separation from meaningful activities in our lives. As is suggested by Eli Bornstein in his writings on art and nature, we have fallen out of nature. The links which at one time held us within nature, have eroded away leaving humankind in what can be perceived as a rootless and precarious position.

In response to this condition Bornstein asserts that one may find the keys to the reconciliation of man to nature within the harmonies of nature itself. He asserts that the pursuit of organic form flows as naturally as a tree creates a leaf.¹⁰ He describes organic art as any artform which parallels the attributes of organic form in nature. Looking to Coleridge he cites these attributes as follows: "(1) the origin of the whole precedes the differentiation of the parts ... the whole is prior to the parts; (2) it (organic form) manifests the process of growth by which it arose and is the end result of progressive sequences of development; (3) it assimilates diverse elements into its own substance as all experience nourishes and stimulates the mind; (4) it is directed from within and; (5) the parts of the whole are interdependent."¹¹ The supposition behind these attributes is, I think, found within the definition of ecology itself: it is an awareness of the relationships existing between living organisms and their environment. The consequence of society's fall from grace within nature is now echoed in art. In society art has now become reflective of the separation

that exists between man and nature. For Bornstein, the course towards which we must direct ourselves, as artists, lies in the pursuit of organic form. We must begin to reintroduce the interconnections between humanity and nature through the reinforcement of our own awareness of those interconnections. But will this reinforcement necessarily create meaning for other human beings? We know that it is not simply the availability of affluence or necessities, nor the close proximity of the individual to the land which creates an ecologically conscious individual or art form. It is an inner awareness that society, nature and technology, as plastic expressions of man, must exist as "not a rigid, closed, perfect structure, but an open one, with a wide variety of alternatives and changes possible within a functioning order."¹² That this ecology can exist in art at the exclusion of human nature as something distinct and separate in itself gives rise to an important question. Perhaps the probing into our separateness from nature also contributes to our awareness of the unity of the planet just as vision itself feeds and nourishes the mind.

CHAPTER II

The Perspective of World in the Landscape

I have previously asserted that landscape painting in this province stems primarily from an exploration of organic form which finds its source in nature. I have also suggested that those who perceive the planet from this perspective inherently distrust the world of man. I have suggested that earth painting as a tradition has developed at the expense of a form of painting which uses the human condition as a means for understanding the universe. Landscape painting, however, is really the experience of both earth and world. A painting may appear to be a comprehension of organic form, but it carries with it, always I think, a silent partner: the experience of world.

My cosmology of earth, world and planet originates with Dennis Lee. He suggests that "from their usual perspective the first fact of life is that the beings which make up world and those which make up earth are engaged in war against each other."¹ To Lee both earth and world are each an ensemble, part of a duality which is basic and irreducible. World is conscious, encompassing man and civilization. As a force it strives to dominate and destroy nature. As a perspective within human beings, it is that part of ourselves which perceives nature as residue; as resource or raw material. Earth in Lee's ensemble is "nature red in tooth and claw."² "Earth teems with life and drives towards consciousness. Yet it destroys individual life and frustrates consciousness."³ It is life, but life in which the struggle towards consciousness is never realized, it tumbles forth according to its own rules. Lee's cosmology establishes the planet as a confrontational field upon which these two basic ensembles, each in opposition to the other by nature, battle for control. That this conflict is a reality is

undeniable (twenty-five species of animals have been added to Canada's endangered species list this year⁶). The question that surfaces in relation to art and the landscape is one of evolution. Are we as a society capable of and in the process of developing a level of consciousness which is ecological, one which allows us to glimpse the planet as a totality, as one living organism? This glimpse of unity, this non dualistic vision of the planet, is the cornerstone of the ecology of art described in the previous chapter.

In response to this Lee's words I would like to offer two visions of world as examples of this developing cosmology in my work. As I travel to Eston weekly, I have come to know, without anything but passing impressions, two areas on the skirt of the town. In one area fields have been recently dotted with black oil storage tanks and pumps, irrhythmically placed, according to function, for as far as the eye can see. A large spruce-lined graveyard lies a bit further on, on an open field, but surrounded by a symmetrical and evenly cultured windbreak. The problem that I encountered in confronting these two visions, in close approximation, is found in the silent assumptions that were inherent in each. In the oil fields I had no trouble perceiving the savage fields,⁷ that is the strife between earth and world of which Lee speaks; moreover it was clear that the functional aspect of the oil field predominated over the integrity of the organic form present. The world of man was attempting to reduce and obliterate nature without compassion for it. The destroyers were blind to its presence, perceiving land and nature as resource (albeit within the parameters of what they would perceive to be a tradition). Within this vision we had fallen out of nature, and yet everything present within this particular world was governed by the laws of nature and would eventually return to it.

When confronted by the graveyard I was greeted by a more complex

problem. The spruce and gravestones were no less world than pumps or tanks. Nature had been bent, shaped and reduced in this vision as well. Or had it? What created the perception that one vision was of a savage field and the other as natural as organic form?

My explanation is really twofold. The first part has to do with what Heidegger says of the origins of art, that it is the unfolding of truth and that it is the decloaking of the familiar shadow of reality. The functional aspect of a thing (tank or tree) cloaks the reality of what we see.⁸ This cloaking dissipates our perception. The longer we live within the presence of an aspect of world, the more natural it becomes, or rather the more likely we are to accept its functional presence as its only presence. The cumulative history of a place consequently allows one to perceive fields and graveyards, which are present within the context of a tradition as natural and assimilated. There is a silent assumption that these elements are part of nature as it has evolved, nature perceived not as static wilderness, but as an evolving open system. This brings one to the second aspect of this explanation: geopiety, the love and expression of the emotional bond between a people and their terrestrial home. The graveyard was built out of the fruition of geopiety. It is a part of a tradition which I think attempts to reconcile man's position to earth, recognizing a glimpse of a greater reality. The oil field, assembled blindly and without compassion, as a beaver assembles a dam, out of the survival imperative, represents our instinct as it has evolved. One cannot really say that oil tanks are the fruition of a culture, although they are part of one. They are the outcome of our need to provide for ourselves, the survival imperative interpreted. While a prairie graveyard could be dissected with similar conclusions, it demonstrates evidence of another level of thought, an awareness of a unity between earth and world and a manner

of reconciling and binding these two forces into one. Further it is potentially a means for conceiving of and perceiving the planet as one living organism. Art as a similar manifestation of one's culture, it follows, is capable of both paths. It can be a means for the detection of and reflection upon two warring ensembles (as in the painting of Dix and Grosz), or it can act as a binding force between these two fields. The point of difference hearkens back to Coleridge's attributes of organic form: a sense of inward direction accompanying a glimpse of the total organism (planet, society or oneself).

In the first chapter I discussed the separateness between man and nature that is now reflected in the predominance of an art of alienation. A related thread runs through landscape painting. There is often a moment of yearning in landscape painting which hearkens back to romanticism. This yearning is found in the perception that we are not quite part of the unity of experience that is before us in nature. It is not quite attainable, within the grasp of our senses, but unattainable just the same.

Whether through fault or design there is separateness between man and nature. However, world painting, the examination of the human condition and the unique nature of man, does not necessarily preclude the process of achieving ecological wholeness as talked about in the previous chapter. Rather, this wholeness occurs as part of the examination needed to create an open and flexible system within society. What occurs, I believe, is something similar to what is described by M. Merleau Ponty as creation which is both complete and incomplete.⁹ Art is complete in that it can achieve a unity of experience which is a compound of the active presence of the environment, the soul and the body. Art is incomplete in that this exchange is coded and processed into a soup which is purely visual. All of the sensations of the senses, for instance, may be present

but they are distilled into a purely visual language. Similarly, when an artist examines the world of man he becomes inherently introspective, pursuing only a fragment of human and world experience. Like vision itself, this fragmentary glimpse is a means for perceiving something greater than man: his connection to the universe. Similarly, when an artist deals with the I-It separateness between man and nature in landscape painting he is also capable of transcending the fragmentary vision and glimpsing at the issue of unity existing there. Within landscape painting in Canada this yearning and separateness as a level of meaning are accepted as given. The landscape is manifest within an I-significant other relationship which is a compound of and meeting of artist and environment, a point of exchange and a crossing of paths. Consequently, it embodies both the inner disposition of the artist and the physicality of nature.

Within the realm of this I-significant other relationship Northrop Frye suggests that the landscape in Canada for the most part is imaginatively undigested. The integration between land and people is incomplete; the land, unpeopled and unfathomed, is wilderness. It is largely unknown and uncomprehended, in a sense foreign. The nurture of this integration between land and individual requires something more than an immediate exchange. One must experience an environment as terrestrial home, developing and maintaining an awareness of a sense of place.¹⁰ This awareness is imprinted upon us at birth and grows with experience. To attempt to assimilate another environment through art is to do so as "an imaginative foreigner,"¹¹ as one who will never have quite the same completeness of experience which allows the artist to penetrate that environment from a position of ground common to those living there. For Frye, then, the experience of art is regional and specific. There is a distinct imprint from birth and life in Canada, as there is from living in

a prairie town or a Montreal suburb. Further, Canada, by its nature, is a loosely connected patchwork of regions and locales, often unique and relatively isolated.

Within the I-other relationship two dispositions in particular have been woven into the Canadian fabric in response to nature, wilderness and the landscape. They are a sensibility of understatement and a belief in **la survivance** (as Atwood uses the term, cultural and economic survival). Northrop Frye describes a sensibility of understatement as being characteristic of the Canadian. Frye, in looking to the work of artists such as J.W. Morrice, David Milne and L.M. Fitzgerald, perceived a common thread of coolness, detachment and understatement which he considered to be typical of the way Canadians respond to their environment.¹² Canadian artists, Frye would suggest, have a habit of looking upon the world from within a perspective of psychological and emotional distance which is the result of living within a colonial society, one which ultimately is never in control of its own destiny, one which does not perceive itself as the originator of world shaping events. The Canadian response to modernism, as in the case of Morrice and Milne, was found in the assimilation of modernist beliefs as opposed to the discovery of them. Their genius lay in the manner in which they individualized these beliefs and made them their own.

This sensibility is evident when one compares the small jewel-like paintings of Morrice with the work of his friend Matisse. They often painted together in Tangere,¹³ but in the consideration of this relationship the important aspect is not that the work of Morrice exists as a shadow of the work of Matisse but that it exists in relation to it. The work of the latter was rich, explorative and generative, the former's colourful, but small and intimate. We do not talk about the manner in which Morrice affected Matisse, although he may have. We focus instead upon the way in which Matisse altered our perceptions of the

world. Similar dispositions can be found in both David Milne and Paul Emile Borduas, both of whom carried with them, from Canada to the international art world, a response which included intimacy and yet coolness, detachment and understatement. The bombastic, aggressive approach of twentieth century modernism was absorbed but tempered and individualized in a Canadian manner.

Is this sensibility so much at work today and is colonialism really the impetus for its presence in contemporary Canadian art? The increase in influence of internationalism and urbanization, not to mention developments in communication technology, have expanded the collective consciousness of the global village. We are in one sense more in touch with and more aware of new ideas and significant differences among people. Confronted as well with the perception that truth is relative to our place and point in history it follows that we should be less ethnocentric and less provincial. But again we return to Frye's notion of sense of place and the observation that the bulk of the most profound art in Canada is the result of regional and specific utterances. The shiftlessness and disconnection which is the hallmark of large urban art centres today does not contribute to this consciousness. We have greater mobility, the perception of greater choice through anonymity, a more transitory society, but we do not have a more compassionate, a more tolerant, or more diverse art; rather current art forms speak of denial and suffer from rootlessness. The colonial perspective of which Frye spoke is present but has been transformed into a worship of a form of internationalism which stresses homogeneity and the abandonment of the regions.

If a cool, detached and understated sensibility remains as part of the Canadian fabric, it is found in the continuing imprint of wilderness and consequently earth itself. Whether the artist in Saskatchewan is attempting

to abandon the hinterland, his experience of the world remains attached to the physical presence of nature as a significant other. The imposition of solitude, the impediments to survival, our everyday battles with natural forces, the influence of dramatic seasonal changes all effectively dominate the evolution of the world within us. They are our blood and paint as well as monster and teacher. They continue to act as the catharsis for a process of awareness which is slowly relinquished by some artists as they perch themselves above a morass of transitions. Uncertain as they look towards the challenge of the question "where is here," they scan the void looking for "what's next"?

Another common ground amongst Canadians is described by Margaret Atwood as "la survivance."¹⁴ Atwood suggests that Canadians are obsessed with survival, that survival in the face of a significant other acts as a unifying symbol and core of our underlying mythology and belief system. It is consequently central to the way that we perceive the world and the manner in which we create art. Atwood suggests that this central concern with hanging on and staying alive generates a victim motif within, which stems out of an intolerable anxiety towards and preoccupation with the obstacles which impede survival. We fear and are obsessed with obstacles, but in the end retain our dignity out of the retainment of the will to survive. Attainment of this will to survive, like survival itself, is a conquest; our integrity becomes caught up in the pitting of will against external forces. We do not defeat and divide these forces, as is the case in American mythology; we endure them, often in the face of defeat.

Perhaps this victim motif best explains our obsession in Canada with the empty landscape and the consequent vehemence with which the landscape is rejected in the present day. In much of Canada, wilderness, the uninhabited wasteland, dominates our mythology. We perceive ourselves as insignificant

in relation to mythological wilderness, but our paintings are as often a celebration of this fact as they are a recognition of it. I have previously asserted that there is a melancholy in Canadian landscape painting, a yearning for a unity of experience that is sensed in nature. This yearning predominates in our response to the wilderness. We do not necessarily seek to tame it, as Frye suggests, or subjugate it, as is suggested by Dennis Lee. We are often comfortable with it as it is and yearn to become part of the unity which is sensed there. **La survivance** is a part of those responses, but our love of exploration and our enthusiasm for the challenge and joy of the meeting is there as well. The elements are not always met with quiet servitude. They are relished as a vehicle for growth. And yet in painting, increasingly we attempt to ignore these forces in preference for a perception that wilderness itself does not dominate our reality. Because of the exterior cushion of comfort affordable to our society, we assume that our internal reality is untouched by the myth. Mistakenly, I think, we attempt as well to abandon both earth and wilderness, but in doing so cannot escape their influences. Characteristically we maintain the victim-at-home motif even in flight. Canada is a victim, an oppressed minority that is exploited as a colony, "a place from which profit is made but not by the people who live there."¹⁵ Consequently our affection for our terrestrial home and the searching of our world through art is inescapably coloured by this relationship.

CHAPTER III

An Examination of the Influence of World and Earth Perspectives in Landscape Painters of the Province

It should now be clear that while the tradition of landscape painting in Saskatchewan may appear to be primarily a study of organic form, it also inescapably incorporates the presence of world. I have also asserted that artists of my generation feel the pull of these opposing forces. They are aware of a necessity to be of the world, to deal with the human condition. They feel also the necessity to break away from the limitations of provincialism, which are thought at times to be inherently a part of landscape painting. In doing so they often abandon the past, which is rooted in the study of organic form, in favour of an urban phenomenon, marked by cynicism and disbelief, which is perhaps not really a part of their reality. Amongst landscape painters specifically, there is a conflict at work between a basic underlying faith in earth as both impetus and teacher, and a fear of that underlying belief, which is perceived as a force which may control creative invention. The imprint of geopieté, while essentially individual in its nature, also holds within it patterns such as **la survivance** which seem to play a fundamental role in the emergence of metaphors within landscape painting in the province.

Let me begin the discussion of these metaphors and this uncomfortable collusion between earth and world by presenting two broad paths within the spectrum, which are drawn upon by landscape artists of this milieu in association with nature. I will call them cathartic and metamorphic. The definition of cathartic taken here is a process of cleansing or purging, while metamorphic I take to be a process of change from one form to another. If we examine these

two paths in terms of the imprint of geopiety, their distinctive shape as experiences begins to emerge. Geopiety, on the one hand, is the result of a cathartic exchange between man and nature. The experience of the natural environment of one's home is cleansing and regenerative. The unpeopled, empty landscapes of this area are the point of inspiration that project the artists who live here into subtle awarenesses which are not available to strangers such as Frye's imaginative foreigner. These awarenesses come about only when the artist embraces the earth for what it is, in a spirit of reciprocity, accepting its unrelenting qualities as well as its beauty. The awareness of the unity between man and nature is not achieved or pursued within the comfort of the mind. Consequently when Northrop Frye speaks of a restless tension in the work of Tom Thomson,¹ associating it with an uncomfortable disposition towards raw wilderness, and a need on Thomson's part to create order within it, he is missing the point. The exchange between earth and artist is at times horrible, much of the time uncomfortable, but even in the most difficult exchanges the artist begins to recognize that the process of exchange is the energy and regenerative force within his work. Further, the aesthetic emotion which projects the painting process forward is also cathartic. It parallels the process in nature. The result is a stripping away of the familiar and an unfolding of truth as suggested by Heidegger.² The artist is a partner in the exchange who does not attempt to create a landscape, but facilitates the unfolding of truth, synthesizing that which is being projected to him.

In Saskatchewan this cathartic process is perhaps best represented by the paintings of Rita Cowley, among others. As Bornstein reminds us in his discussion of the ecology of art, "Art is a new nature, fixed on another level of being, but the rules which govern it are not new as rules. Nature recognizes

itself in art and even if the spirit has added something of its own to art, it remains nonetheless true that on earth the spirit, if it is to remain living cannot abrogate the laws which are the laws of life."³ While many artists such as Cowley have incorporated aspects of modernism into the painting process (which stresses the unique and personal vision of the artist), the basis for that process remains rooted in a belief in nature as an absolute, as is suggested in Bornstein's words. I think it is correct to say that a fundamental concern for each is the disclosure and distillation of what is presented to them as significant within the earth. Cowley's watercolour Farmstead Near Hague (1969; see figure 1), offers evidence of this pursuit. This painting emerges out of a sequence of particular experiences, each the result of the exchange between artist and earth at a particular moment in time. Each plane of colour, as one moves from subtle transitions of greys in the sky to rusts in the field constitutes a residue, a record of an immediate exchange between artist and environment. Each observation as it occurs takes the artist's awareness closer to the truth, pushing the artist into more sensitive and subtle awareness. Each observation in turn becomes a relationship on the painted surface which is activated in relation to the whole. The roof of a building responds to dots in the foreground brush which in turn responds to dancing brushwork in the sky. Consequently the painting is not a distillation of a thing, a group of buildings on a stormy day, but instead is the key to a web of experiences and sensations which are the residue of an exchange between artist and environment.

For Cowley the instability of the experience of painting **plein-air** is of paramount importance. It is through the acceptance of the conditions of nature and a belief in the principle of reciprocity (one gets out of something what one puts into it) that allows her to delve with such penetration into the truth

of what is happening before her. She typifies the group alluded to on the previous page in another respect. In Heidegger's terms she is placing herself in conditions in which the familiar cloak of things falls away. The environment is always unfamiliar and changing, but concurrently she is approaching it through a focal point of deep understanding which is attained only through familiarity and study. She is responding out of a sense of place from a position of geopoetry, and also, I feel, from a position of distrust of the validity of the world experience. The universal rhythms from which she is able to tap her strength are strongest in nature and earth. "Nature is constantly changing. I look up and see a colour and I record it. The next time I look up the colour is no longer there, but I see another colour somewhere else. Gradually my painting is built up of these patches of colour."⁴

I offer in comparison a similar quotation by Kuo Hsi, an essayist on landscape painting from the 11th Century Sung Dynasty in China. He describes the purpose of landscape painting as a key to the contemplation of universal rhythms which are observed in nature. The vehicle for the understanding of these rhythms is not so much the mind, but pure, open sensation in which mind and environment become one. Of a landscape painting he says, "Without leaving the room, at once [the observer or artist] finds himself among the streams and ravines, the cries of the birds and the monkeys are faintly audible to his senses, the light on the hills and reflections on the water glittering, dazzle his eyes."⁵ In deceptively simple and straightforward terms Kuo Hsi and Cowley both take a stand concerning the presence of spirit over matter in life. They perceive the painting process as a connected line of perceived relationships, of subtle glimpses of reality. The artist is a vehicle for the unfolding of reality, a voice, but he is not the creator of that reality; the voice is not an independent entity.

Kuo Hsi makes his claim from the 11th Century, in keeping with the basic premise of Chinese Taoist philosophy, believing that there is a rhythmic vitality, a spiritual rhythm which is expressed through nature. Cowley takes the stand in assertion of a similar rhythm through simple observation. She does so in direct opposition to everyday malaise and evidence in the world of the demise of the ability to cope with belief itself, a world in which the artist's mind and his own individuality are held up as the fountainhead of creativity.

For the Chinese of the Sung Dynasty the landscape was a point of entrance creating a mode of being inspired by the contemplation of nature. As established in Kuo Hsi's words, the painting process while visual is really the experience of many levels of awareness, including all of the senses recoded into the painted form. The painted form is the opening and the mandala which allows for the unfolding to occur in the observer. From the Kuo Hsi perspective the notion of the landscape as a reflection of the inner being of the artist is second to the expression of the rhythms of nature, of which he is a part. The process is inextricably tied to earth. The Saskatchewan painters of this cathartic group, as exemplified by Rita Cowley, operate within a context similar to Chinese landscape painting. At their best these artists seek to create works which are like the mandala, a physical key to the unfolding of a perception of unity between man and nature. Cowley does this through the tradition of **plein-air**. She needs the direct presence of the elements in order to create a catharsis which is the adventure of painting and the essence of her work. It is characteristic of these painters that, while they have integrated aspects of modernist concerns into the painting process, they retain a strong belief in the primacy of nature, perceiving in themselves a necessity to suppress their preconceived impulses in favour of pure perception.

A second group of artists painting landscape in Saskatchewan deals specifically with earth as opposed to world, but within a process which is essentially metamorphic and therefore different from the distillative, cathartic experience of Cowley and others. This process may begin with nature but essentially is tied to the evolution of this stimulus into a new form which is dependent upon the expressive nature of the artist and the emergence of independent organic form in paint. The instincts of exploration and invention in the artist are more important than nature as a partner within the creative exchange. As well these artists, while rejecting the modernist premise that subject matter as content is irrelevant through a tentative assertion of landscape as metaphor, maintain it as they endeavour consciously to create the new and unfamiliar through exploration of plastic and formal concerns.

David Alexander, one of a number of this second group speaks of leaving nature out of the studio. He considers his work to be "a synthesis (which) allows outside dynamics to lapse and helps my invention to exist in painting. I am not trying to recreate nature as an accurate record of events, but I use nature as a bouncing board."⁶ Nature then emerges as a source and point of departure in the painting process. David Milne made similar assertions, maintaining a modernist belief in the irrelevancy of subject matter throughout his life.⁷ It is a major ambiguity within his work that he would choose to live in wilderness isolation and paint landscapes, but refute the importance of landscape as content. Milne saw aesthetic emotion as beginning in nature through the perception of both sensory relationships and feeling. The artist and nature crossed paths, creating an aesthetic quickening that began before the physical painting process. Aesthetic quickening was then carried on into the painting process, eventually to be translated into an aesthetic emotion that was sustained through formal

concerns. There is further ambiguity to be found in the fact that Milne meditated for long periods upon the subject he was about to paint, indeed premeditating much of what was about to happen within the painting before the physical process began. John O'Brian in his book David Milne and The Modern Tradition of Painting, suggests that Milne, while a modernist, was also attached to the broader history of landscape painting, and in this sense I think his sensibilities were closer to earth painters such as Cowley, in which the experience is a catharsis and distillation of what he fathoms in nature.

Artists such as Alexander are, I think, attempting, like Milne, to deal with a tension that is created between a formalist sensibility and a tradition which is predicated upon the physical essence of nature. Their sensibility which is largely formalist in character is struggling within a tradition which uses both symbol and earth to propel the painting process forward. It has to do really with where one finds the inspiration to paint. Neither of these groups, the cathartic or metamorphic, denies, I think, the "fabric of brute meaning in life" of which M. Merleau Ponty speaks. However, formalist concerns are really the larger point of inspiration and impetus, at present, in the metamorphic group. The landscape, at its worst, becomes a convenient substructure for these concerns.

A comparison of these two groups offers insight into two tendencies currently at work in Saskatchewan art. I had spoken earlier of the basic distrust that painters of earth feel towards 'the world' in general. The metamorphic painters of this area, I believe, have a distrust of a different kind in that they distrust observation of and interaction with nature itself. The representational and interpretive aspect of landscape painting is perceived as an antithesis to modernist principles in that as a process it is seen as a limitation and suppression

of the artist's expressive license. Observation and interaction with nature then limit the artist from doing what he will, in a manner seeking to eliminate the painter from the process. A challenge to anything which may hinder the flow of the creative process is perhaps valid, but in terms of perception in nature, because it parallels the development of sensitivity within the spirit, perhaps the reverse is true as well. If we examine Alexander's Skinny Twins in Preparation (1985), and Norm Dallin's Afternoon on the River (1985; see figures 2 and 3), this link between awareness and perception becomes clear. In both paintings there are areas in which the inability to perceive 'a thing' as form becomes a hindrance to the clarity of the vision. For instance, the bottom third of foreground in the Alexander painting lacks the bite and resolution which is present in the middle ground river and distant bank. Dallin's river study is structurally unresolved. We see pockets of formal expression, but do not sense a unity of the whole. While both of these concerns are formal they relate to Coleridge's attributes of organic form. The problem in each case lies, I think, in the inability to translate the thing, for example, the bank or bluff, into a form which relates to the overall unity. The process of the unfolding of truth is blocked in these areas by the label of the structure, and the artists' inability to leap beyond the cloak of familiarity. It is a problem between vision as thought and pure perception. The resolution to the dilemma goes back to geopoetry and a sense of place, knowing a subject to the point that the unfamiliarity and uniqueness of it become apparent to the artist. Knowledge of a subject can only come about after relentless pursuit of the subject through observation within the creative process. In other words, the key to the formal problem lies in inspired and penetrating observation as opposed to a casual brushing with surface sensations. It is not in the end the predominance for a concern in plastic and

formal expression which hinders this metamorphic group. It is a generalization of sensations both in observation and in form which encourages the relationships to become repetitive and nondescript. They become mired in the surface representation they attempt to reject.

This tendency to brush only the surface of reality, as well as an inherent distrust of nature, are part of a larger issue, that of increased anonymity and rootlessness. I had suggested previously that anonymity, disconnection and rootlessness in society are the result of the breakdown of the ecology of society, and that anonymity and rootlessness in art are manifestations as well of the breakdown of the ecology of art. I would suggest that landscape painting in Saskatchewan has begun to reflect this tendency. Specificity is avoided in favour of surface generalities. One's terrestrial home is approached cautiously or abandoned. At its worst these paintings consequently embody the landscape as a convenient framework for formal concerns. In response to the world within, the artist not only abandons nature, but manifests consequent belief that home somehow limits the artist. The consequence is a form of painting which at times under the guise of simplification attains only the superficial.

A second tendency amongst landscape painters in the province is found in the pursuit of space. Dorothy Knowles in her painting The Tree and the River (1986; see figure 4) attempts to integrate both earth and world, environment and artist, working towards a unity of exchange between the two. This is particularly apparent when we examine the artist's treatment of space within the painting. Terry Fenton suggests that "for the past hundred years artists have successfully reduced the illusion of space in their pictures.... Flatness in painting today has become something artists accommodate themselves to almost unconsciously."⁸ Fenton further suggests that prairie light and atmosphere

are fluid, an experience of light and colour obtained from moisture, dust and deep space. Light, colour and spacial relationships are therefore particular to this place.

In The Tree and the River this flatness, the emergence of formal elements such as colour and opacity upon the surface of the picture plane is apparent. Elements such as opaque blue areas of sky and chunks of isolated bits of orange and blue green in the foreground reinforce the two dimensionality and physical presence of the painting's surface. But space is also studied as a phenomenon within nature. Through the use of the structure of the underlying drawing and through the establishment of value relationships, as is found in transitional washes in water and sky, we begin to sense a partnership between artist and nature. This painting attempts to contemplate space specifically. The attempt remains mired within the boundaries of representational space however. It is the use of convention such as the inclusion of a foreground screen of foliage in the upper left of the composition, and the wide angle transition from foreground to distance which in the end defeat the inclusion of a greater pursuit found in a deeper awareness of space itself.

The thread of this pursuit can be traced through from artists such as C.W. Jeffreys to Robert Hurley and contemporaries such as Otto Rogers. These artists have a fascination with space which is not simply the result of an obsession with the environment and is not only a concern with the plastic formulation of spacial relationships on the canvas. Their fascination has more to do with space in itself and the imprint of geopiety. They are at home with the predominance of space here, accepting it as it is, while outsiders often sense instead only the loneliness between things. The compulsion to tie themselves to the world with pictorial devices is forsaken. Space is not controlled, it is

not static, but rather sensed as a fluid, all-encompassing body. The strongest of our painters feel the necessity to take up the challenge of reckoning with this spacial reality within both earth and world. When they do so it is from a position of depth of knowledge and familiarity which allows them to step through the surface envelope of space towards a metaphor for the universal.

What I am hoping to demonstrate in reference to space, is a concern with surface interpretation of nature as a 'thing', at the expense of a process of penetration of the unfamiliar and the unique. The conflict created between the sensibilities of the artist and an implicit tradition such as flatness of the picture plane, as described by Fenton, ultimately will not allow the artist, as Fenton suggests, to "achieve the supreme unity that is characteristic of a major art."⁹ A degree of this unity of purpose and expression is perhaps present in The Tree and the River. It is a compound of body, soul and earth, each an active presence in the creative process. As Heidegger suggests, it is difficult to perceive where nature ends and body and soul begin.

It has been established in a previous chapter that the tradition of landscape painting in Saskatchewan is largely a pursuit of organic form: the artist perceiving the planet from a perspective of earth. This perspective has dominated painting in the province in the past, at the expense of a tradition of the human inhabitant, of world. I have also suggested that the landscape tradition is really of both earth and world. It emerges from a savage field, but the world perspective is often present only as a silent partner, an inflection.

Our feelings and responses towards home are individual but there are patterns and commonalities in those responses as well. Geopieté is the love of both earth and world. However, I would suggest that there is not a strong tradition of scanning the human inhabitant within the province; rather, the

tentative steps taken in this direction in the present day often reflect the breakdown of the ecology of art. A disturbing number of artists speak of abandonment of sense of place, often exhibiting a distrust of belief itself.

These points can be better established through the discussion of two pairs of paintings, each of which deals with the human inhabitant through the tradition of landscape, attempting to be of world as well as of earth. The first pair, Winter Fishing (1821; see figure 5), by Peter Rindisbacher and Ruth Pawson's Fulfillment (1952; figure 6) are both, I think, an expression of man's separateness from earth, but in each case the genre of the day prevails and hides this layer of meaning. Winter Fishing is perhaps the most narrative, a record of pioneer life depicting traders and Indians carrying about daily activities on the bed of a frozen river. It is, however, the most essential of the two, in that it is composed of finely tuned perceptions relating to man's tenuous existence in the wilderness. The rhythms of nature prevail, the clarity of blue snow, prairie light and space penetrate the landscape, but man's co-existence with nature within the savage field is fragile. The painting suggests the fragility of man in a new land but also carries with it the excitement of all the possibilities of exploration. We see the possibilities of co-existence with nature which speaks of a comfort with the reality of it, as it is. Reciprocity is at work here, despite the predominance of 'nature at bay'. Fulfillment (1952) marks the transition in our perceptions of the land from earth and wilderness to world and civilization. It is romantic in that it looks towards an ideal with longing and love but in doing so establishes a myth at the expense of reality. In this harvest scene the earthy sense of the land is suppressed by its functionality. There is a consideration of the harmony between man and nature, but fulfillment as suggested in the title is found in what man can do with the land and his love for it is coloured

by this reality. So in Winter Fishing and Fulfillment the experience focuses around the creation of a world. In the Rindisbacher painting the landscape becomes a metaphor for man's tenuous relationship with the wilderness, Atwood's nature at bay, and the nature of the explorer. In the Pawson painting the land becomes a metaphor representing the fulfillment of man's goals and the strength of his imagination, the imagination as Frye sees it, as man's constant pursuit of his possibilities. World suppresses earth.

David Thauberger's Grey Day (1981) and Rick Gorenko's The Act of Painting (1985; see figures 7 and 8) are substantially different from the previous two paintings. They clearly contain a different type of barrier between artist and subject. World exists and predominates; earth is suppressed and excluded. There is only a qualified response to place, indeed almost an abandonment of it. While the Rindisbacher and Pawson paintings record between them a transition from the predominance of earth to the predominance of world there is always a feeling of reciprocity evident, a sense that the artists sought out their subject on intimate grounds. They accepted the brute layer of life before them and integrated it with their mythological homeland. In Grey Day and The Act of Painting this sense of reciprocity disappears.

In the Thauberger painting a sense of disconnection prevails which at first seems to be a result of the vernacular Thauberger has developed from his explorations in folk art. The essence of folk painting, however, lies in its concern with visual storytelling and specific events. Geopieté and an accompanying sense of reciprocity, in general a deep commitment and caring for the subject, are the backbone of the genius and clarity of vision which exists there. In Grey Day there is an element of self-consciousness which hearkens back to Cartesian thought, the piece asserting the ingenuity of the artist over

the profundity of the process and image. The questions that remain to be asked of this created world then are as follows: Does the inspiration in Grey Day come from the environment and the artist's response to it or does it parody someone else's loves and beliefs? Is reciprocity at work in this piece or is there an element of genteel fallacy, an implied discourse between seigneur and peasant? Is this a work which, while focusing upon the representational surface of a world, does not really penetrate that world except through parody? Thauberger, while attempting to speak within a vernacular of the common people, explores 'their' world as a Cartesian might, within the framework of only the exterior envelope and the representational surface of the environment. His acceptance of that world is too severely qualified that he might do otherwise.

Rick Gorenko's The Act of Painting takes the experience of landscape painting, from the perspective of world, into another avenue of metaphor which speaks further of the abandonment of homeland, as well as suppression of belief itself. This abandonment is described by Carpenter in a discussion of Canadian fiction as a "literature of abandonment"¹⁰ in Canada. There has come about a "qualified, lukewarm affection"¹¹ for home which is expressed in themes such as flight or escape from the land, enduring the land, rejection of homeland. "Home becomes the stranger, the adversary."¹² While the four paintings presented in this discussion are regional utterances there is a bite to both the Thauberger and the Gorenko which is disquieting. They are in part registering the change in our society from rural to urban life, one in which the city is mythologized and incorporated into our sense of place--at the expense of the small town and rural spirit. It seems to be an either/or situation. Particularly in The Act of Painting there is a sense of abandonment of place. The landscape of this painting, while childlike in its innocence, is anonymous but not innocuous;

it speaks of the rejection of the landscape as organic form and as symbol. Gorenko satirizes the notion of **plein-air** and the search for the essence of earth through the exploration of its specific relationships. Unlike Thauberger, who I think records with some fondness the shifting of our promised land, Gorenko does so through a typical rejection which Carpenter refers to in Canadian fiction as 'a literature of abandonment.' Home becomes the adversary, uncouth, worthy only of contempt or satire. In this respect Gorenko's piece can be interpreted from within Atwood's Canadian-victim motif. He feels the compulsion to reject a tradition of the hinterland in favour of a greater reality which he does not find there. Further, while Gorenko may feel that flight and rejection are necessary, he prefers to fill the gap created by the rejection of that belief with rejection itself.

This fear of commitment and a subsequent creation of art in a "vacuum of belief,"¹³ or as reaction to and rejection of a belief, have existed as underlying motivations in many aspects of discussion in this paper. Marx calls it alienation; Bornstein asserts that we have fallen out of nature. It is my belief that each of these is correct and exemplify countless responses to disconnection within our society, the result of dualistic reality based upon the conflict of two warring fields, earth and world. Pluralism in society and access to numerous belief systems and norms should not have as its equivalent a discontent within our consciousness. It is a sense of reality, hearkening back to the survival imperative, which pits these forces against one another. We are bombarded daily with evidence that religious belief, moral values and societal norms are subjective and determined in response to the material world. One consequence of this constant shifting of values is what Peter Berger calls the homeless mind, a mind that never truly believes,¹⁴ a mind which remains rooted in the external

envelope of the world believing only in itself.

What is more at work in the paintings of Gorenko and Thauberger is a rejection and only superficial examination of the values of the past which they perceive as fallacies, chains and fetters. So believing, they respond from the position of limited acceptance of the landscape, asserting the superiority of their values. 'This is me,' becomes, at times, the predominant metaphor for the landscape within their work. The result, we sense in Saskatchewan, is a type of visual and narrative tap dancing and a loss of significant meaning. I think the problem with this phenomenon is eloquently stated in Carpenter's analysis in terms of literature. "What are Canadians to learn about their origins, their place, from a terminally genteel literature which urges the abandonment of that place?"¹⁵ What are we to learn from a form of world painting which attempts to flee from and abandon one's terrestrial home, world painting which too often, in brushing over an external representational envelope of reality, asserts that that is all that is there. This attitude reinforces the severe consequences of the cult of the new: boredom and superficiality in life.

CONCLUSION

I have argued that the artist engages the universal through the regional. Modern artists, in reaction to the terrors of the second world war, attempted to create an art form out of the non-objective, which at first may have acted in response to a loss of faith in humanity, but quickly asserted a new beginning, one in which a new language of art would speak to the planet as opposed to a group, a region or a nation. To attempt to bring a sense of global vision and universal language to art was a noble endeavour. In a similar vein Bornstein has spoken of the planet as as an ecosystem; as a system the planet must be open and flexible, stable because of its diversity. Within this ecosystem there must also be an awareness of an inner direction which is related to a consciousness of the whole in relation to the parts suggested in common dispositions such as **la survivance**. Similarly, the assumption behind universality is a potent one, that art clarifies and reconnects the thread of unity between individuals. Ethnocentricity, the root of provincialism, opposes these aims. Ethnocentric behavior implies a closed system which protects itself. Fear is its motivator, a distrust of change the outcome, the result of a pervading sense of disconnection and alienation in our society as a whole. Regionalism and landscape painting as an expression of regional experience are not the culprits. The course, the direction of which Bornstein speaks, it seems appropriate, is reflected in the nature of the nation as well as that of the planet; that is, that it remains as a loose web of specific locales and regions. Tolerance and openness are the result of choice and diversity of experiences. Society, like an organism, like art, grows and evolves "as naturally as a tree creates a leaf"¹ within such a system. The power of such a force lies not in the development of any one

language which speaks to all but in the development of the perception, through diversity, that diverse paths point in the direction of the global village.

In Saskatchewan the landscape has effectively evolved into a tradition, regardless of mainstream urban demands and the efforts of critics and art administrators to place the tradition in its coffin and relegate it to volumes in art history. Bruce Ferguson, for instance, states of Saskatchewan painting that, "The most predominant depiction is that of the landscape, either in its 'natural' state or in its conjunction with man, in other words the concerns of the late 19th century art."² This view, I hope it is now clear, is simplistic, demonstrating a consideration of landscape painting only as an expression of an external reality. It is the need to reaffirm ourselves as constituents of earth, that constitutes the impetus for the development and maintenance of a tradition of landscape painting in Saskatchewan. This tradition may borrow and import other layers of meaning from other realms of art, but the point of return is always a concern and fascination for the earth and perhaps in the present, a fear for its survival. The reality of this concern is larger than critics, administrators, movements and fashion. The landscape tradition is more stable than the new for the sake of the new, and more tenacious than the beliefs of a generation raised on a cult of boredom and 'what's next artforms' which are increasingly exclusive and reactionary. The neat idea, Cartesian based this-is-me philosophy of big mainstream centres, is what Kenworth Moppett is talking about when saying that "Most of the members of today's art world—artists, dealers, critics, curators are no better at recognizing the really new.... It takes time and effort to develop an eye for this new form of art, and most of the art world is too preoccupied with other things, like staying in the know or being in the swim."³

I have suggested that as artists, myself as well as my peers, we are perched upon a cusp. That we feel the pull of opposing tides. Specifically in landscape painting it is the pull of sensibilities which are modernist and organic in nature coupled with a desire to deal with the human condition, to contribute to man's discovery of himself. The landscape painting on one level becomes a kind of savage field, a field of conflict and collision between earth and world. With a predominance of earth within the landscape tradition our best paintings achieve a mandala like symbolism into which a web of earth experiences are placed. The perspective of world is often subliminal, found in an attitude or disposition towards the landscape which the observer accepts as second nature.

With regards to the presence of world I would like to present one final experience. Climbing the toboggan hill at night in our park, as I did as a child, I record the changes. The Bessborough is no longer visible in the distance, but highrises blink and fade into the grey of light snowfall. A child runs across the park below and calls out. I absorb the physical sensations of world. They are not of the mind. They are a compound of environment, body and soul. They are no less a web of experiences, a mandala, than the organic sensations recorded by Cowley, but they are of world because they are inextricably attached to one's disposition and history. They are introspective and psychological, only a glimpse of the larger picture. These experiences are no less significant in the creation of aesthetic emotion, the force that carries the artist forward in the painting process, than the pursuit of organic form. Further, I have come to the conclusion, as have others, that we must deal with these experiences within the realm of art in order to help point society in the direction of ecological unity. Potentially, I think, they exist as part of the brute layer of life which must be explored with openness by the artist if he is to achieve the unity between

subject and form which is characteristic of great art.

Notes

Introduction

¹ David Carpenter, "The Literature of Abandonment in Canada," Mosaic, XVIII, 12, 1985, p. 111.

Chapter I

² M. Merleau Ponty, "Cezanne's Doubt," The Essential Writings of M. Merleau Ponty (New York: Harcourt, Brace and World Inc., 1969), p. 242.

³ Stan Rowe, "Nature, Self and Art," The Structurist, N° 23/24, 1983-84, University of Saskatchewan, Saskatoon, p. 7, quoting Thomas Mann.

⁴ Hsi Kuo, An Essay on Landscape Painting (London: J. Murray, 1935), p. 12.

⁵ David Carpenter, p. 111.

⁶ M. Merleau Ponty, "Eye and Mind," Aesthetics, Harold Osborne, editor (Oxford: Oxford Press, 1972), p. 57.

⁷ M. Merleau Ponty, p. 70.

⁸ M. Merleau Ponty, p. 72.

⁹ M. Merleau Ponty, p. 57.

¹⁰ Eli Bornstein, "Toward an Organic Art: Ecological Views of Man and

Nature," The Structurist, N° 11, University of Saskatchewan, Saskatoon, 1971,
p. 59.

¹¹ Eli Bornstein, p. 59.

¹² Eli Bornstein, p. 66.

Notes - Chapter II

- ¹ Dennis Lee, Savage Fields: An Essay in Literature and Cosmology (Toronto: Anansi, 1977), p. 7.
- ² Stan Rowe, p. 6.
- ³ Dennis Lee, p. 5.
- ⁴ Dennis Lee, p. 5.
- ⁵ Dennis Lee, p. 7.
- ⁶ Saskatoon Star-Phoenix, Editorial, "Conservation Proves Worth," June 2, 1987, p. 4.
- ⁷ Martin Heidegger, "The Origin of the Work of Art," Poetry Language and Thought (New York: Harper & Row Publishers, 1971), p. 165.
- ⁸ Dennis Lee, p. 11.
- ⁹ M. Merleau Ponty, p. 61.
- ¹⁰ Northrop Frye, The Bush Garden: Essays on the Canadian Imagination (Toronto: Anansi Press Ltd., 1971), p. ii.
- ¹¹ Northrop Frye, p. ii.
- ¹² John O'Brian, David Milne and the Modern Tradition of Painting, (Toronto: Coach House Press, 1983), summary on Frye, p. 16.
- ¹³ Dennis Sexsmith, unpublished lecture on Matisse, University of

Saskatchewan, Saskatoon, 1985.

¹⁴ Margaret Atwood, Survival: A Thematic Guide to Canadian Literature
(Toronto: House of Anansi Press Ltd., 1972), p. 32.

¹⁵ Margaret Atwood, p. 35.

Notes – Chapter III

- ¹ Northrop Frye, p. 200.
- ² Martin Heidegger, p. 165.
- ³ Eli Bornstein, p. 59
- ⁴ Ronald Rees, Land of Earth and Sky: Landscape Painting of Western Canada (Saskatoon: Western Producer Prairie Books, 1984), p. 53.
- ⁵ Hsi Kuo, p. 33.
- ⁶ Norm Zepp et al., The Second Generation: Fourteen Saskatchewan Painters (Regina: Norman Mackenzie Art Gallery, 1985), p. 16.
- ⁷ John O'Brian, p. 14.
- ⁸ Terry Fenton, Watercolour Painters from Saskatchewan (Ottawa: National Gallery of Canada, 1971-72), p. 12.
- ⁹ Terry Fenton, p. 12.
- ¹⁰ David Carpenter, p. 111.
- ¹¹ David Carpenter, p. 111.
- ¹² David Carpenter, p. 118.
- ¹³ Jacques Barzun, The Use and Abuse of Art, Bollingen Series XXXV (Princeton University Press, 1973), p. 123.

¹⁴ Peter Berger et al., The Homeless Mind: Modernization and Consciousness (New York: Vintage Books, 1974).

¹⁵ David Carpenter, p. 122.

Notes - Conclusion

¹ Eli Bornstein, p. 59.

² Joan Borsa, Out of Saskatchewan: An Exhibition of Contemporary Art (Regina: Saskatchewan Expo Corp., 1986), p. 10.

³ Kenworth Moffett, "Abstraction offers the Most Exciting New Possibilities," Art New England, September, 1985.

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Figure 1
Farmstead Near Hague, 1969, Rita Cowley
watercolour on paper



Figure 2
Skinny Twins in Preparation, 1985, David Alexander
acrylic on paper, 60 x 67 inches



Figure 3
Afternoon on the River, 1985, Norm Dalling
oil on canvas



Figure 4
The Tree and the River, 1986, Dorothy Knowles
acrylic on canvas, 78" x 78"



Figure 5
Winter Fishing, 1821, Peter Rindisbacher (1806-34)
watercolour



Figure 6
Fulfillment, 1952, Ruth Pawson
oil on canvas



Figure 7
Grey Day, 1981, David Thauberger
acrylic, glitter, mactac on canvas, 66" x 90"

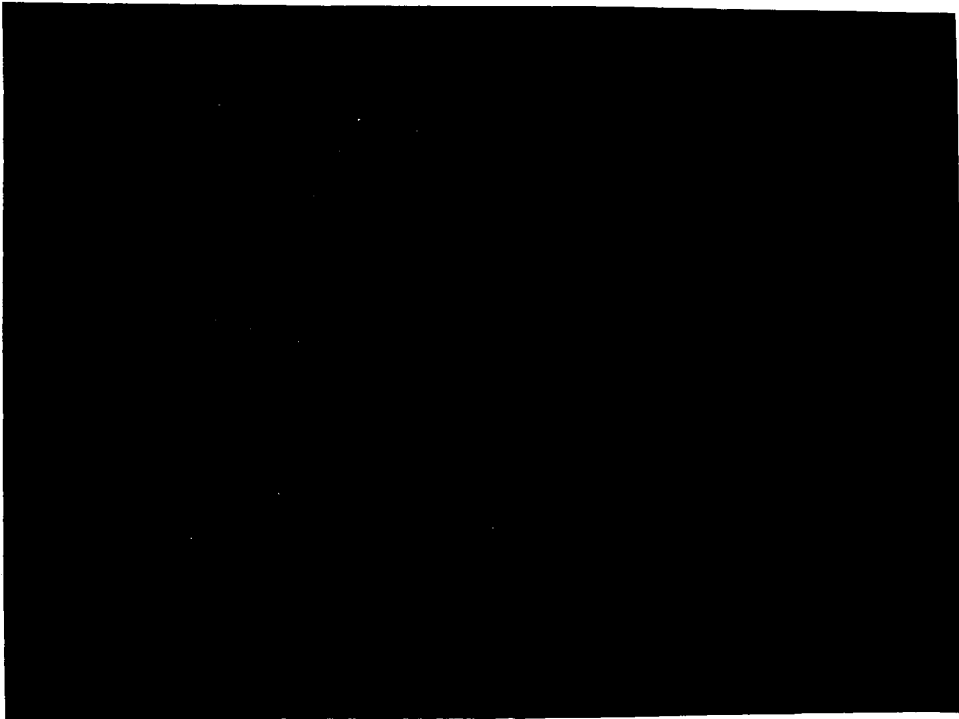


Figure 8
The Act of Painting, 1985, Rick Gorenko
mixed media