Introduction

ON A BRIGHT COLD DAY IN DECEMBER 2016, A DRONE CAMERA FLYING OVER THE confluence of the Cannonball and Missouri Rivers in North Dakota recorded a dazzling sight: an undulating current of light rippling across the landscape. This was neither a natural occurrence nor even a supernatural one but a staged act of resistance. On this day more than 150 protestors holding "mirror shields" (16-by-48-inch reflective boards) above their heads processed in loose formation across the snowy ground of the Oceti Sakowin camp near the Standing Rock Sioux reservation to dramatize their opposition to the construction of the Dakota Access oil pipeline (DAPL).[1] The collective performance, *Mirror Shield Project: Water Serpent Action* (figure 1.1), was conceived and orchestrated by artists Cannupa Hanska Luger (Mandan/Hidatsa/Arikara/Lakota) and Rory Wakemup (Ojibwe), who joined the standoff against pipeline security forces and local law enforcement at Standing Rock, the reservation on which Luger was born.[2] According to Luger, the *Mirror Shield Project: Water Serpent Action* was inspired by images of Ukrainian revolutionaries using mirrors to reflect back the images of Russian government forces amassed against them.[3] Wakemup and Luger's version advances the nonviolent spirit of the demonstration staged in Ukraine to encompass an even broader scope of sovereign political action and artistic expression; the work is, like all other forms of organized resistance to DAPL, fundamentally an assertion of Indigenous sovereignty.[4] As a site-specific performance echoing the flow of the nearby river and gesturing to both what is above (a reflected sky, an unmanned camera) and below (the "river" of oil), *Mirror Shield Project: Water Serpent Action* is also, I contend, firmly situated within an emerging and distinctly Indigenous idiom of contemporary landscape representation.[5]

1.1 Cannupa Hanska Luger (Mandan/Hidatsa/Arikara/Lakota, b. 1979)
Mirror Shield Project: Water Serpent Action (2016)
Collective performance, Oceti Sakowin camp, North Dakota
Copyright Cannupa Hanska Luger. Drone image still by Rory Wakemup.
Courtesy of the artists

If drone footage of a group of protestors walking in the snow can be considered a landscape, it may seem that the term has all but lost its valence, that the designation has ceased to function as the coherent category of art that it once was, especially as originally constituted as a genre of European painting. In that well-established tradition, the term generally referred to views of a landscape as "captured" in the eye and depicted in paint through the use of a single-point perspective that positioned the artist and viewer as if looking out to the horizon. This basic definition of the term "landscape" in art held for hundreds of years, until the mid-twentieth century, when abstract expressionism dispensed altogether with mimesis and the illusionistic depiction of space on a painted surface.

By the 1960s the term "landscape" was more likely to be encountered in reference to sculptural forms and nascent installation and performance practices. When land art—including installation-based geological constructions such as Robert Smithson's *Spiral Jetty* (1970)—came into being as a bewildering amalgam of architecture and minimalist sculpture, it caused a category crisis in virtually every established artistic discipline. This crisis provided the

impetus for one of the most widely influential documents of contemporary art criticism: Rosalind Krauss's 1978 essay, "Sculpture in the Expanded Field." In the opening passage of the essay, Krauss described standing in an actual field on Long Island, looking down into a subterranean earthwork construction by Mary Miss. She wrote, "Over the last ten years rather surprising things have come to be called sculpture: narrow corridors with TV monitors at the ends; large photographs documenting country hikes; mirrors placed at strange angles in ordinary rooms; temporary lines cut into the floor of the desert. Nothing, it would seem, could possibly give to such a motley of effort the right to lay claim to whatever one might mean by the category of sculpture. Unless, that is, the category can be made to become almost infinitely malleable."[6]

Krauss went on to describe the efforts made by critics to construct a historical genealogy for such works, one that stretched from Stonehenge through Russian constructivism right through to Long Island, reifying the category of sculpture along the way. "But in doing all of this," she continued, "the very term we had thought we were saving—*sculpture*—has begun to be somewhat obscured. We had thought to use a universal category to authenticate a group of particulars, but the category has now been forced to cover such a heterogeneity that it is, itself, in danger of collapsing. And so we stare at the pit in the earth and think we both do and don't know what sculpture is."[7]

A similar thought may occur to us today as we watch the video of *Mirror Shield Project: Water Serpent Action*, confront the torn and mended canvases of Nadia Myre's *Scar Project* (2006–13), or stare at the slab of concrete excised from an art gallery floor in Postcommodity's *Do You Remember When?* (2012) and try to make sense of them as *landscapes*. Yet if in "Sculpture in the Expanded Field," Krauss was able to assert that "we know very well what sculpture is" and follow that with an exposé of the "internal logic" of sculpture as a form of monument, so too can we begin to explore the "logic" of contemporary Indigenous landscape representation.

I stress the word "Indigenous" here to call attention to the fact that while much of the logic that undergirds the forms of representation discussed in this study—drawn from a range of contemporary media, including painting, sculpture, site-specific installation, video, and performance—may be congruent with more broadly mainstream postmodern art practices, the logic I am interested in is a particularly Indigenous logic or epistemology. In the pages that follow, I explore themes of presence and absence, connection and dislocation, survival, survivance,[8] memory, commemoration, vulnerability, power, and resistance that surface again and again in reference to the Native landscape, and I situate these within a larger discourse of Indigenous visual sovereignty.[9] In the broadest terms, Indigenous visual sovereignty describes the visual expression of Indigenous knowledge, and I am particularly attentive to what Tuscarora artist and theorist Jolene Rickard refers to as "place-based knowledge."[10]

My conception of contemporary Indigenous landscape representation is to some extent also informed by an understanding of what landscape art was (and meant) before the field expanded into the multiple dimensions and media of the postmodern era. In other words, just as Krauss had to return to the logic of the monument to discern the logic of contemporary sculpture, so I begin this study with a brief return to the history of landscape art in an era when that term was still restricted to painting—back to when "the landscape" was easier to define and easier to read. Landscape historian W. J. T. Mitchell is instructive here: in his revealing history of the genre, *Landscape and Power*, published in 1994 and substantially revised in 2002, Mitchell asked not just what landscape *is* but what it *does*. Taken together, the essays assembled in Mitchell's volume demonstrated that the formal characteristics of European landscape painting (e.g., the illusion of recession into space, and the constant reiteration of pictorial tropes such as deforested lands and roads leading from the foreground to the background) reflected an ideology of habitation, occupation, and domestication. Moreover, Mitchell posited the intriguing notion that all of the world's "originating movements in landscape painting—China, Japan, Rome, seventeenth-century Holland and France, eighteenth- and nineteenth-century Britain"—coincided with periods of imperialism, the literal expansion of empire.[11]

That Mitchell discerned a causal relationship between colonialist ideologies and landscape painting traditions bears directly on interpretations of Indigenous landscape art, which refuses to reproduce the "invitational" tropes of the European landscape tradition. Contemporary Indigenous landscape art is largely *anti-invitational* in character, in the sense that even the most seemingly representational paintings by Native American artists such as James Lavadour and Kay WalkingStick employ devices to block the imaginary entrance of a viewer into a scene, and sculptural works such as *Do You Remember When?* tend to insert themselves into the space of the viewer rather than the other way around.[12] Performance-based art practices are especially adept at achieving an anti-invitational stance, as the body of the artist literally intervenes between the spectator and the land: Mandan/Hidatsa/Arikara photographer Zig Jackson's series *Entering Zig's Indian Reservation* (1997) demonstrates just how effectively the presence of the Indigenous artist can decolonize the landscape.

While the sea change in national politics in the United States has lent new urgency to strategies, acts, and discourses of resistance, the NoDAPL protests and Idle No More treaty rights movement (as well as the Occupy and Black Lives Matter movements) and all of the works in this study that were produced before the 2016 elections should remind us that for Indigenous people in the United States and Canada, the colonial era has never ended. The coercive power of the settler state is as persistent as the Indigenous resistance to it.[13]

Nevertheless, these forms of artistic expression should not be considered exclusively oppositional; to define them only in reference to the European landscape tradition or the politics of decolonialism would deny the richly generative and vitally compelling aspects of Indigenous landscape representation. This is a crucial distinction, considering that even Mitchell concluded in 1994 that the European landscape tradition was an "'exhausted' medium."[14]

By the time Mitchell revisited *Landscape and Power* in 2002, his thinking on this matter had shifted perceptibly. While downgrading the power of the landscape from a more coercive form of real power to a softer, subtler form of persuasion or affect, he nonetheless observed, "Whatever the power of landscape might be . . . it is surely the medium in which we live, and move, and have our being, and where we are destined, ultimately, to return."[15] What accounts for this change of heart? Several possible answers to this question are discussed in chapter 1, but the most germane proposes that as Mitchell's attention turned toward ever more contemporary—and not, incidentally, non-Western—forms of landscape representation, his approach to the subject gravitated away from ideological discourse toward phenomenology, a philosophical approach that considers how individuals experience space in a more fully embodied, multisensory way.

The works of art that form the basis of this study—evocations of the landscape created in the last thirty years by Indigenous artists from North America—are rarely if ever primarily visual representations. Rather, they evoke all five senses: from the overt sensuality of Kay WalkingStick's tactile paintings to the eerie soundscapes of Alan Michelson's videos and Postcommodity's installations to the immersive environments of Kent Monkman's dioramas, all of these landscapes resonate with a fully embodied, one might even say *embedded*, subjectivity. Ideology is not replaced but joined in these works in an expression of what Stó:lō sound and performance scholar Dylan Robinson has termed "sensate sovereignty."[16] All of this is on display in *Mirror Shield Project: Water Serpent Action*, a work of art that emanates from, takes place on, and moves through the Native landscape, proclaiming, like all of the works in this book, the ongoing presence—and vigilance—of Indigenous peoples on an ever-shifting ground.

This volume is not by interest or necessity an exhaustive survey of the innumerable works by Native American artists that evoke a sense of space and place; it is instead an exploration of contemporary art as a vehicle for the expression of place-based knowledge. Loosely organized by medium, the first three chapters of this book are primarily concerned with painting, not only as the genre most closely associated with landscape representation, but also as a material process. The discussion centers on the work of two of the most prolific Native American painters of the contemporary period, James Lavadour and Kay WalkingStick, who have both been deeply engaged with landscape

imagery for nearly four decades. Both artists' innovative approach to the physical process of painting precipitated the emergence of landscape on their canvases. While this approach is not specific to Indigenous painters (including George Morrison and Jaune Quick-to-See Smith, who are also discussed here), the repositioning of the artist as an insider—a conduit for a subjective experience of landscape rather than a disembodied spectator—joins the discourse of decolonialism in destabilizing forms of representation that traditionally figured both the artist and the viewer as potential "investors" in the landscape.

The final two chapters of this book consider a wider range of postmodern media and art practices, including site-specific sculpture, installation, video, and performance art. The three-dimensionality and literal emplacement of these artistic media present unique possibilities for shaping space and marking place, and many of the works discussed here assume a kind of monumental stature, asserting Indigenous presence in culturally contested landscapes from blighted urban centers to highly charged border zones. Because these media directly involve or invoke the body, themes of vulnerability and trauma are also addressed—especially the trauma of dislocation and dispossession. Again, the discussion centers on a few well-established artists who have turned (and frequently *re*turned) to the land in their work, including Alan Michelson, Kent Monkman, Rebecca Belmore, and Postcommodity. What binds all of the works in this study is the sustained engagement of the artists not only with land and landscape but also with the history of representation itself. Their efforts to reclaim history and establish connection to place *on Indigenous terms* constitutes a powerful rejoinder to the invitational tropes of the European landscape tradition.

CHAPTER ONE

The Lay of the Land

> Like life, landscape is boring; we must not say so.
>
> W. J. T. MITCHELL

IN THE SUMMER OF 2000, WALLA WALLA PAINTER JAMES LAVADOUR HAD AN epiphany. Two strains of his work that had for some time run parallel suddenly converged with tectonic force. The first strain, which has been described as Lavadour's "signature" style,[1] is exemplified by works such as *Salamander* (1997; figure 1.1): built up of hundreds of layers of oil on wood, these paintings depict primal landscapes shrouded in haze or consumed by fire, arranged in multipaneled compositions that resonate as whirling vortices of energy.[2] The second strain, which emerged more recently in Lavadour's practice, is far more abstract, characterized by pronounced drips and flows of paint and overlays of opaque washes. The material itself is more viscous than in the signature panels, so much more so that in works like *Untitled* (2000), Lavadour employed a squeegee to create broad gestural wipes of fluid paint. These later works were inspired in part by Lavadour's experimentation with printmaking processes, through which he learned to "separate the stages of an individual painting and conceive of [it] as being formed of many successive layers, like a print."[3]

Both of these strains of Lavadour's painting are inspired by the landscape, the forces of nature, and the physical properties of paint. As Lavadour puts it, "In paint there is hydrology, erosion, mass, gravity, mineral deposits"; his intent is to "display the occurrence of landscape inherent in the act of painting."[4] While these forces course through all of Lavadour's work, the artist perceives the variants described above as distinct enough to refer to the more imagistic paintings as "landscapes" and to the more abstract forms as "architectural abstractions," "structures," or "interiors."[5] It is tempting to interpret Lavadour's two forms of imagery—and his early hesitation to let the two

1.1 James Lavadour (Walla Walla, b. 1951)
Salamander (1997)
Oil on board, 48½ × 60 inches
Copyright James Lavadour. Courtesy of the artist.
Portland Art Museum

streams merge—as connoting a shift in his vision, from a more outward and objective view of the landscape to a more expressionist, even visceral perspective. Yet Lavadour maintains that none of his paintings are truly objective views of the landscape; instead his paintings are records of fully *kinetic* experiences, of walking in the mountains of the Umatilla Reservation, where he lives in eastern Oregon, and paying close attention to the "elemental aspects of the world" he encounters there. "I realized that what I was looking at and what I was doing were the same thing. . . . As a physical being, I was an event of nature myself. I could become a conduit for making art, a conduit of nature, a conduit of the extraordinary event."[6]

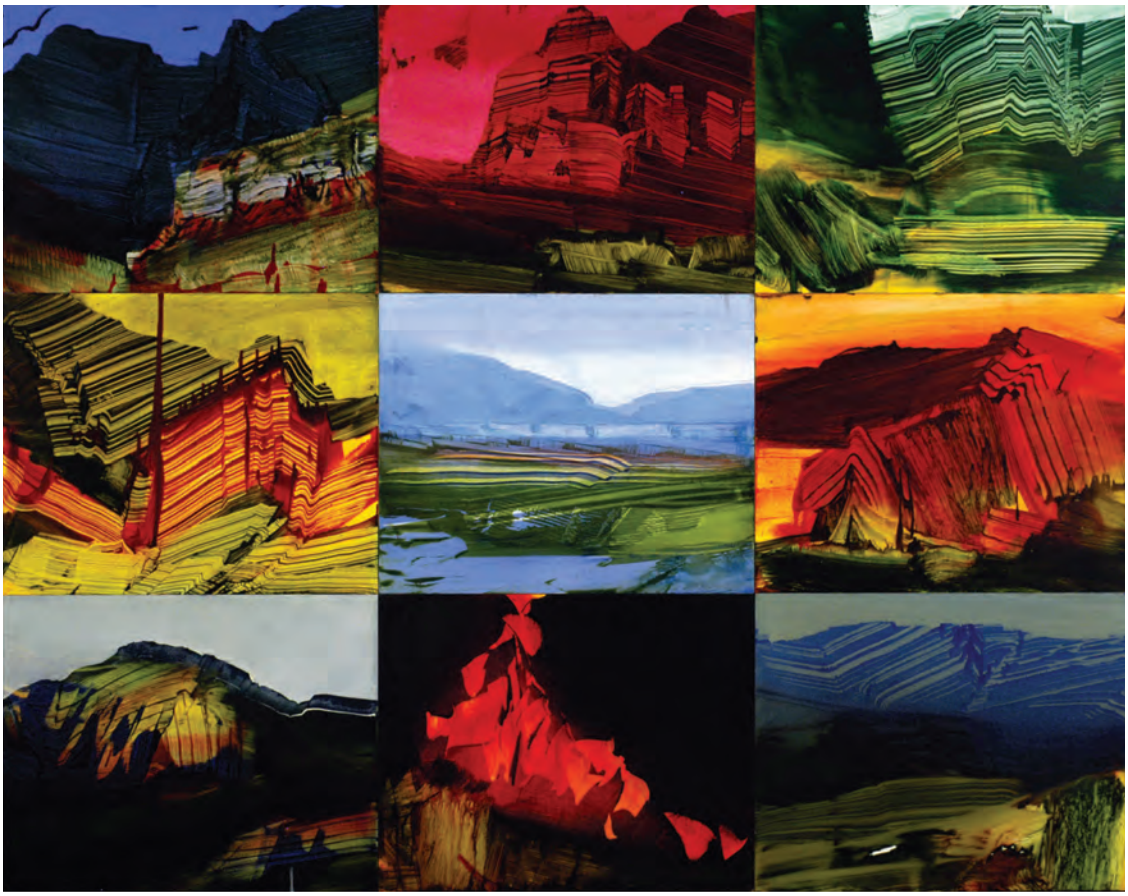
The intention of this book is to draw on the language that Lavadour and other Indigenous artists use to describe their art and their experience of place

to build an inclusive theory of contemporary Indigenous landscape representation—one that can account for both strains of Lavadour's work and especially for the convergence of the two forms of perception that they seem to represent. In this chapter and the two that follow, I will revisit Mitchell's question of what a landscape painting *is* and what it *does*; however, while Mitchell sought answers in the European landscape tradition, I adopt key concepts regarding land and Indigeneity from sources well outside the realm of art history. I have already indicated that the broader discourse of Indigenous sovereignty heavily informs this study. In this chapter I trace the migration of the legal concept of sovereignty first into Indigenous cultural studies, then more specifically into visual culture theory. I also take into consideration the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP), which provides ample evidence for the centrality of land in Indigenous culture and self-governance. The language of the UNDRIP codifies an Indigenous view of land that encompasses much more than physical territory—a view that was echoed by George Longfish and Joan Randall in their influential 1983 essay, "Contradictions in Indian Territory," where they defined "landbase" as "the interwoven aspects of place, history, culture, philosophy, a people and their sense of themselves and their spirituality, and how the characteristics of [a] place are all part of a fabric."[7] Taken together, the language of Indigenous visual sovereignty and the UNDRIP provide new insight into the question of what a landscape painting is, what it does, and even what it pictures. In its contemporary and Indigenous form, a landscape painting is an assertion of Indigenous presence, a transmission of place-based knowledge, a depiction of *landbase*. It is a chronicle of what Lavadour terms the "extraordinary event."

CONVERGENCE

It was Lavadour's relentless pursuit of the extraordinary event that led him to interweave the two strains of his imagery in 2000. Recognizing that each form had a unique expressive power and inspired in part by the improvisational techniques of jazz music, Lavadour began to juxtapose his panels in multipaneled compositions. The process began tentatively at first: in *Flag 2* (2001) and *Scaffold* (2000), for example, five "landscapes" and four "structures" are woven into unified compositions, yet the individual panels remain basically true to type. In the latter example, however, a few panels edge toward a hybrid form in which structural drips or wipes are laid over the surface of a landscape.[8] One of these hybrid forms centers the composition of *Deep Moon* (2004; figure 1.2): the hazy, atmospheric landscape of the central panel is transformed by the addition of streaks of vibrant color in the middle ground. After *Deep Moon* Lavadour embraced the energy of the new forms, and gradually the

distinction between the landscapes and architectural abstractions ceased to apply. Landscape and structural elements are fully integrated in each panel of *Blanket* (2005), *Wash* (2007), *Cache* (2007), *Straight Ahead* (2010), *Tiicham* (2013), and innumerable individual panels produced in the past decade. In these works, it is the convergence of the two strains of imagery, like the fusion of separately charged particles, that Lavadour credits with generating an explosion of energy.[9] To some extent, Lavadour's epiphany in 2000 was an extension of earlier innovations, such as his arrangement of individual panels into larger compositions. He likened this action to composing a poem: "I realized that like poetry, you put one against the other and they enhance one another and they do something larger than the individual pieces do."[10]



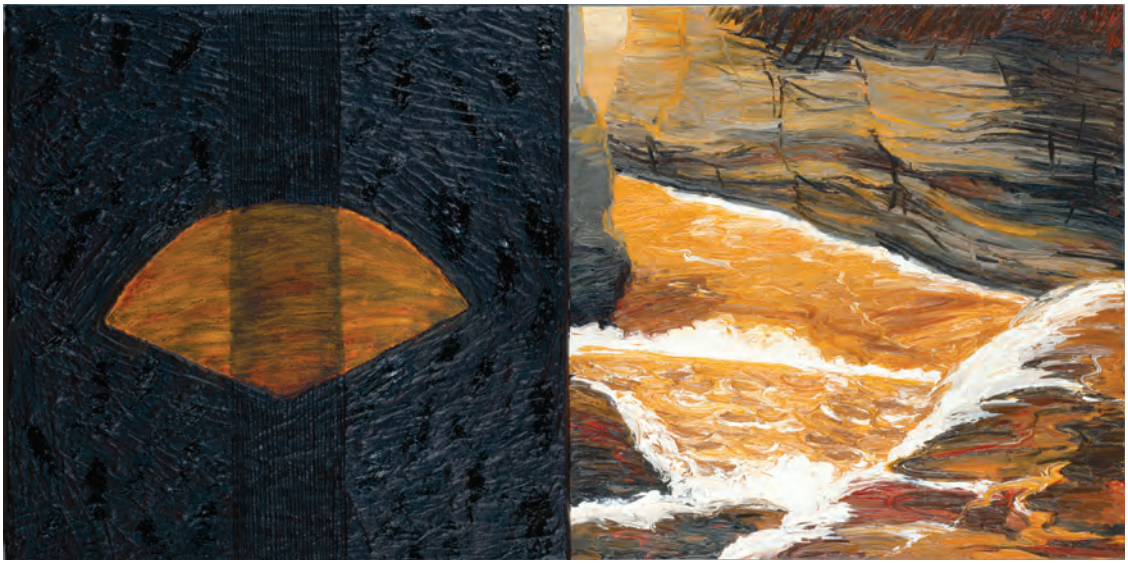
1.2 James Lavadour (Walla Walla, b. 1951)
Deep Moon (2004)
Oil on wood, 72 × 90 inches

Private collection

The kind of resonance that Lavadour's compound compositions produce is also felt in the multipaneled paintings of Cherokee artist Kay WalkingStick. For more than thirty years, WalkingStick has worked in diptych format, pairing what she calls "imagistic landscapes" with "pure abstractions"—forms that are analogous to the two strains of imagery that converged in Lavadour's work in 2000.[11] Describing the two types of panels that make up diptychs such as *On the Edge* (1989; figure 1.3) and *The Abyss* (1994), WalkingStick echoes Lavadour in asserting that "one is not the abstraction of the other, one is the extension of the other. I want the two portions to resonate with one another like the stanzas of a poem."[12]

In WalkingStick's case, the impetus to pair canvases came as a way to mitigate the specificity of the landscape imagery, which emerged gradually and unintentionally as a by-product of her working method. For years WalkingStick had been painting with layers of saponified wax and acrylic, laying down the material with her bare hands and scratching through successive layers to reveal the colors in the layers below. Though her imagery was resolutely abstract, employing a minimalist vocabulary of lines and arcing forms, she found that the thick layers of material were increasingly suggestive of the landscape. As she explained to interviewer Lawrence Abbott in 1991: "The paintings became more and more about the earth, the landscape, and they looked, many of them, like seeing the earth in the geological diagrams one sees of the different-layered remains of the various eons of the history of the earth. The paintings had this feeling of accruing the way the earth has accrued with layers of rock and sediment."[13] As the association with landscapes in her work became more prevalent—evolving by 1985 into "imagistic landscapes"—WalkingStick recalls that she was reluctant to abandon abstraction. Instead, she began to pair the landscape panels with purely abstract counterparts, and she found "a kind of symbiosis there that was quite remarkable, that [she] would not have predicted."[14]

Perhaps the two canvases of WalkingStick's diptychs resonate with one another because they both stem from the same source, namely the artist's love of paint's material properties and her search for archetypal or universal imagery. Rather than negating the qualities that WalkingStick strongly associated with abstraction, the pairing of abstract images with imagistic landscapes enabled her paintings to "encompass more of the visual world."[15] Nevertheless, it was important to WalkingStick that the balance in her diptychs remained weighted slightly toward the abstract side. Simply put, she did not want the viewer to regard the landscape imagery as representational in the sense of describing a specific place because that kind of particularity ran counter to her more metaphysical approach to painting. In her view, "They are paintings that are about landscapes, they are about land. The subject is the land, the earthscape, but [these are] not pictures of a place."[16] Thus, the



1.3 Kay WalkingStick (Cherokee, b. 1935)
On the Edge (1989)
Acrylic, saponified wax, oil, and oil stick on canvas, 32 × 64 inches
Copyright Kay WalkingStick. Courtesy of the artist.
Private collection

joining of images in WalkingStick's diptychs both enhances and mitigates the properties of the individual canvases, allowing her work to speak of one subject in two different idioms. Over time, WalkingStick has articulated how each of the two types of images contributes to expressing "two kinds of perceptions of the earth."[17] She feels the imagistic landscapes are inspired by the visual world and rooted in the present, albeit in a fleeting moment. The abstractions on the other hand are everlasting, referring to "both the past and the future."[18] In WalkingStick's view, the diptychs "represent a balance between the spiritual and the temporal—between our inner and outer selves."[19]

WalkingStick's bridging of the threshold between physical and metaphysical realms in her paintings is strongly reminiscent of Lavadour's integration of landscapes and structures, which art historian W. Jackson Rushing has characterized as a "determined fusion of internal and external realities."[20] The relative ease with which artists and critics came to reconcile these differences between strictly visual and more broadly phenomenological forms of perception in the early 2000s is reflective of the ways that landscape theory had shifted in the previous decade from regarding landscapes primarily as social hieroglyphs or textual systems to something much more subjective and integral to the individual human experience. To better understand the significance of this paradigm shift, we return to Mitchell's groundbreaking study of *Landscape and Power*.

SETTLER LANDSCAPES

In the first edition of *Landscape and Power*, Mitchell articulated the thesis that landscapes—and landscape paintings, though this distinction is not always as clear as it could be—are not simply objects of contemplation but also "a process by which social and subjective identities are formed."[21] This argument assumes the a priori position that landscape paintings have always been a "subjective formation" (rather than an unmediated visual encounter) and that the subjectivity in question extends from the paintings to the individuals and communities that create and consume them. Mitchell advanced Denis Cosgrove's work of a decade earlier, which established that landscape is "an ideological concept. It represents a way in which certain classes of people have signified themselves and their world through their imagined relationship with nature, and through which they have underlined and communicated their own social role and that of others with respect to external nature."[22]

Mitchell espoused an essentially postmodernist view: a "semiotic and hermeneutic approach" that regards landscape representation as not only steeped in ideology but also open to interpretation as text. He contrasted this view with what he characterized as the modernist attempt to "narrativize" the history of landscape painting "as a progressive movement toward purification of the visual field."[23] Whether one favors modernism's contemplative approach or postmodernism's interpretive version, the assumption is that landscapes convey meaning, that they signify. This raised two questions that Mitchell and the authors who followed him in the volume sought to illuminate: *What* do landscapes signify? And, importantly, *how* do they signify?

In her essay "System, Order, and Abstraction: The Politics of English Landscape Drawing around 1795," Ann Bermingham made a concerted effort to map the ways that landscapes might signify, not only through allegory and symbolism (what is pictured), but also through their formal properties (how it is pictured). Earlier in her career, Bermingham had established that spatial strategies of composition and perspective were key components of landscape representation. She argued that landscape paintings were essentially invitational: "Traditionally, when viewing a landscape painting, we expect the organization of light and color to highlight what is important and to lead the eye in stages into the distance. We also expect objects to be arranged in a way that facilitates this movement."[24] Though Bermingham's field of study is the English landscape tradition, her observations apply equally well to paintings of the Hudson River School, which imported many of the ideals of the English rustic tradition to American painting in the early nineteenth century. Thomas Cole's *View of Fort Putnam* (1825), for example, uses light to "lead the eye in stages into the distance" and even provides a road to facilitate travel from the foreground into the deeper recesses of the scene.[25] In her contribution

to *Landscape and Power*, Bermingham explicitly linked these formal devices to the politics of the Age of Revolution, arguing that the imaginative ability of the viewer to move freely into the spaces of a composition was expressive of the larger discourse of political liberty in the wake of the American and French revolutions.[26] In such paintings, she wrote, "liberty is precisely the liberty of the beholder's eye to 'range abroad' to command a view of the landscape, to subject it to one's vision and imagination. Thus the viewer's experience of nature's expansiveness is in fact an experience of subjecting this expansiveness to visual control."[27]

It is significant that in this passage, Bermingham's concept of liberty encompassed both the freedom to experience a view and to command one; she acknowledged the degree to which European landscapes privilege the spectator's position. Moreover, Bermingham's description and a passage that follows it referencing "panoptic control" revealed her indebtedness to Michel Foucault, who firmly established a relationship between power and looking in his study of the disciplinary apparatus known as the panopticon.[28] Foucault's influence can be felt in Mitchell's introduction to *Landscape and Power* as well. It is evident in his assertion that "landscape . . . doesn't merely signify or symbolize power relations; it is an instrument of cultural power, perhaps even an agent of power."[29] Mitchell's certainty that landscape representation exerted real influence drove him to inquire "not just what landscape 'is' or 'means' but what it *does*, how it works as a cultural practice."[30]

All of the essays in *Landscape and Power* strived to demonstrate that what landscape *does*, fundamentally, is create social cohesion in European societies. Ann Jensen Adams, for example, argued in her essay on seventeenth-century Dutch landscape representation that even paintings without apparent literary or textual referents (those that were produced primarily for visual pleasure) served an important ideological purpose in helping to naturalize significant changes in the geography and demographics of an emerging nation-state. Noting that landscape was by far the most popular genre of Dutch painting, collected avidly across all classes and segments of the population, Adams concluded that a landscape "can, through the associations it engenders, create in the viewer a sense of affiliation with or difference from others, an individual identity in relation to a variety of communally held identities."[31] Just as Adams detailed the process of identity formation at the level of distinct communities that ultimately cohered on a nationalist level in Holland, other contributors to the volume addressed similar processes of nation building in England, South Africa, New Zealand, and the United States in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Though these case studies move beyond the boundaries of Europe, the focus is always on European communities. David Bunn's article on South African landscapes, for example, begins with the statement that the author is concerned with "the way landscape . . . is exported from

metropolitan Britain to the imperial periphery"; the study focuses on a population of Scots settlers who emigrated to South Africa in 1820.[32]

Of the essays in *Landscape and Power*, Mitchell's own study, "Imperial Landscape," was perhaps the widest-ranging in scope, commencing as it did with an itemized list of nine "Theses on Landscape" that purport to address landscape expression both inside and outside the European community. In short order, Mitchell both proposed and dismantled a number of commonly held notions about landscape, including the myth of its "Western-ness," its modernity (by which he means the seventeenth to nineteenth centuries), and its association with "a new way of seeing" (roughly an aesthetics of natural beauty). In the place of these myths, Mitchell offered some alternative truths—for example, "Thesis 1: Landscape is not a genre of art but a medium. . . . Thesis 5: Landscape is a medium found in all cultures,"[33]—and a reminder that landscape is a commodity as much as it is a site of social formation. Of all of Mitchell's contributions to our understanding of landscape, however, none is more important than his willingness to look beyond nationalism to a more global phenomenon and to name it: imperialism.[34] Having mobilized the example of classical Chinese landscape painting to dispense with the notion of a Western hegemony of landscape representation, Mitchell was moved to offer the following observation: "Is it possible that landscape, understood as the historical 'invention' of a new visual/pictorial medium, is integrally connected with imperialism? Certainly the roll call of major 'originating' movements in landscape painting—China, Japan, Rome, seventeenth-century Holland and France, eighteenth- and nineteenth-century Britain—makes the question hard to avoid. At a minimum we need to explore the possibility that the representation of landscape is not only a matter of internal politics and national or class ideology but also an international, global phenomenon, intimately bound up with the discourses of imperialism."[35] This is a crucial turn in Mitchell's thinking, for it raised the stakes of examining landscape's function as ideology to the highest level and justified his rather surprising insertion of the term "power" into a study of landscape representation. If landscape can be shown to be not only *complicit* with the ideologies of imperialism but to have had *agency* in shaping global politics, then it is powerful indeed.

In addition to amplifying the rhetoric of landscape studies in general, Mitchell's move toward the global produced two subtle shifts in his argument. First, it abandoned consideration of single individuals, be they painters or viewers, to move irrevocably to the level of collective identity, further complicating the issue of what exactly constitutes subjectivity.[36] Second, in associating landscape firmly with the politics of imperialism, Mitchell found himself in the curious position of having to admit the "death" of landscape in the postcolonial or decolonial era. Logically, though not convincingly, Mitchell was left to conclude that "landscape in the form of the picturesque European

tradition may well be an 'exhausted' medium, at least for the purposes of serious art or self-critical representation."[37] Given how firmly invested the essays in the first edition of *Landscape and Power* were in the art of the seventeenth through the nineteenth centuries, this seems rather a foregone conclusion. Only the final essay in the collection, Charles Harrison's "The Effects of Landscape," steered the conversation toward the early twentieth century. Harrison insisted that the practice of modern art "allows for a degree of resistance to the protocols of vision" established in earlier periods; in fact he went so far as to pronounce that "no interpretation can be adequate if it does not recognize what [a] painting significantly *withholds* from vision."[38] Harrison's view ran so much against the grain of the collection that Mitchell characterized the essay as taking an "antithetical approach" to his own position.[39] This is no small matter, and Harrison's inference that modernist practices provide an avenue of resistance to ideological systems must be carefully considered in light of the omission it exposed in *Landscape and Power*. Despite Mitchell's admission in his own chapter that imperialism is "not a 'one-way' phenomenon but a complicated process of exchange, mutual transformation, and ambivalence," the essays in the volume failed to credit landscape strategies that have effectively *opposed* colonialist processes and coercive practices of identity formation.[40] Had any of these authors directed their attention to the landscapes being painted by Native American artists in 1994, they may well have recognized the anti-invitational strategies of that emerging tradition.

The preparation of the second edition of *Landscape and Power* in 2002 afforded Mitchell the opportunity to reconsider the strengths and weaknesses of this landmark study and its impact on the field in the intervening decade. One of the significant modifications made to the second edition is the inclusion of four new essays, some of which consider contemporary landscape representation and new media. The most compelling addition to the second edition, however, is Mitchell's six-page preface, subtitled "Space, Place, and Landscape." This short rumination on the status of landscape studies in the new millennium reveals a radical transformation of Mitchell's thinking, one that amounts to a near total refutation of his original premise that landscape is a potent instrument of political ideology. He writes, "If one wanted to continue to insist on power as the key to the significance of landscape, one would have to acknowledge that it is a relatively weak power compared to that of armies, police forces, governments, and corporations. Landscape exerts a subtle power over people, eliciting a broad range of emotions and meanings that may be difficult to specify. This indeterminacy of affect seems, in fact, to be a crucial feature of whatever force landscape can have."[41] What are we to make of this disavowal of power as a primary force in landscape studies, a disavowal so sweeping that Mitchell admits that he would excise the word "power" from the title if given the chance? On the one hand, Mitchell may have been

adhering to an even more Foucauldian conception of power as something that is distributed among multiple points in a system, rather than concentrated in any singular position or expression.[42] On the other hand, his statement also reveals a growing appreciation for landscape's capacity to inspire a range of responses in a range of beholders. It is this shift—a return to focus on individuals and perhaps also to a narrower form of subjectivity—that distinguishes Mitchell's revisionist impulse in 2002, though that is not immediately evident in his newly privileged terms, "space" and "place."

These are curious terms to stress, given that they are nearly interchangeable with one another and with the third term in the revised title, "landscape." Mitchell grants that landscape paintings are basically just depictions of spaces or views of places; however, he argues that these distinctions are important and that the effort to parse them holds open the possibility of seeing landscape in a new light. Mitchell's optimism in this respect is inspired by key texts in the philosophy of perception. He notes that "in both the phenomenological and historical materialist traditions of this subject, space and place are the crucial terms" that generate radical new ideas about how we experience and order our world.[43] Mitchell notes that space and place are usually conceived of as binaries, the particulars of which are strangely reminiscent of the dichotomies that plagued interpretations of Lavadour's and WalkingStick's paintings at the beginning of this chapter: "A place . . . is basically the same thing as 'a' definite, bounded space, while space as such, without the definite article, becomes abstract and absolute."[44] Remarking that "space has connotations of abstraction and geometry, while place resonates with particularity and qualitative density," Mitchell fairly echoes WalkingStick's description of her diptychs as expressing "two kinds of perceptions of the earth"—the imagistic landscapes that are inspired by the visual world and rooted in the present (i.e., place) and the abstractions that are more timeless and eternal (i.e., space).[45] Unlike Mitchell, who is less than direct in associating space and place with forms of perception, let alone with the subjective experience of the individual, WalkingStick is explicit in this regard, asserting that the binary landscapes of her diptychs represent a balance between inner and outer selves.

Lavadour is more reluctant to characterize the two strains of his imagery as internal and external or to position the two types as binaries. Nevertheless, both he and WalkingStick have acknowledged that the pairing of disparate forms of imagery produces unforeseeable and occasionally astounding results. As Lavadour put it, the multipaneled compositions "do something larger than the individual pieces do." In the same way that Lavadour and WalkingStick embrace the tendency of juxtaposed forms to move beyond binaries, to create something unexpected, Mitchell strives to compound the "dialectical opposition" of the terms "space" and "place" with the addition of the third term:

"landscape." He writes that by employing a "dialectical triad" he hopes to engender a "more capacious and differentiated theoretical field."[46]

In summary, then, the paradigm shift in Mitchell's thinking from the first to second editions of *Landscape and Power* is from a focus on ideology (on the highest level, that of global politics) to an emphasis on philosophies of perception that privilege individual experience, especially those that contemplate a subject's perception of physical space and place. In gravitating away from a strictly historicizing impulse, Mitchell also grants landscape a wider range of both affect and effect in the present, and this leads him to conclude his preface to the second edition with a rather astonishing emendation to his earlier lament for landscape's decline. He writes, "Whatever the power of landscape might be . . . it is surely the medium in which we live, and move, and have our being, and where we are destined, ultimately, to return."[47]

Whether Mitchell can be credited with leading or following a larger trend in landscape studies between the mid-1990s and the mid-2000s, many prominent theorists moved toward a "more capacious" view of the field during this period. An Art Seminar roundtable on the topic of landscape that was convened in 2006 by art historians James Elkins and Rachael Ziady DeLue took as its initial premise that ideology may be the *starting point* for understanding what landscape is or does but that it is neither a definitive nor exhaustive approach to the subject.[48] DeLue challenged the seminar participants to consider the questions that Mitchell seems also to have asked himself: Are there "other ways of thinking about the interpretation and meaning of landscape than thinking about it as *always* and *only* ideology? . . . What do we miss when we don't allow ourselves to see anything but ideology?"[49] The consensus in the seminar was that something of the *experience* of landscape—what Mitchell called the "range of emotions" or "indeterminacy of affect"—had been occluded, and again participants looked to philosophies of perception to fill this void. Critical theorist Jessica Dubow remarked that "landscape experience . . . is not just how a given view comes to be represented, but how its viewer stakes a claim to perception and presence. It's not just about an optical sight or its symbolic mediation, but all those more hidden sensory and affective processes that allow a view to 'come into being' for the subject, all those embodied practices which, prior to representation, allow for its realization, its actualization."[50] I am sympathetic to this theoretical perspective that not only moves from a privileging of vision and visuality toward a greater awareness of the other bodily senses but also promotes a blurring of the "lines drawn between self and society, inside and outside."[51] In refusing categorical partitioning, phenomenology holds out the possibility of reconciling the internal and external events that surface in both Lavadour's and WalkingStick's paintings.

Perhaps another question DeLue should have posed, however, in addition to "what do we miss when we see only ideology?" is "what are the possible

consequences of turning away from ideology toward phenomenology?" As several contributors to *Landscape Theory* warned, by denying landscape's "semiotic, political, or moral determinations," this new rhetoric invites the return of previously discredited assumptions regarding landscape's benign or apolitical aesthetics.[52] They are right to be concerned: if the complicity of the European landscape tradition in colonialist processes can be denied, then so too is the power of Indigenous landscape representation as a decolonial strategy undermined. Still, few would argue that phenomenology is any more capable than semiotic, structuralist, psychoanalytic, or even ideology theory is in accounting for landscape's multivalent and enduring power. Even as the seminar closed in 2006, it was clear that, while still elusive, the persuasive capacity of landscape has not diminished. Elkins conceded that "like the body, landscape is something we all feel ourselves to be inside. It's our subject, but we're also part of it: we help make it; we live in it."[53]

SOVEREIGN LANDSCAPES

It is encouraging to find landscape studies opening into a space of increasing complexity and inclusiveness; however, it is important to remain mindful of the ways in which the field has—and continues to—turn a blind eye to Indigenous perceptions of the land. Just as the European landscape tradition has tended to depict the landscape as if it were empty of its aboriginal inhabitants, so too has landscape theory tended to ignore the degree to which the Indigenous landscape has been fully conceptually realized. Mitchell's canonical essay on imperial landscapes, for example, not only failed to acknowledge landscape strategies that have effectively opposed colonialist processes, but it also failed to consider the view from *within* the Indigenous territories that made up the colonial peripheries. The aim of this study is not to correct these oversights or even to expose the weaknesses and biases of landscape theory per se; on the contrary, the field of landscape studies provides many tools for looking "deeply and well" at Native landscapes, and not only as an articulation of difference.[54] Nevertheless, many aspects of contemporary Native American art trouble or complicate the assumptions made when only European forms are considered, and some discourses that are less pertinent to the study of European landscapes are absolutely crucial to understanding Native articulations, such as the emerging discourse of Indigenous visual sovereignty.

The era of the early 1990s to the 2010s—the time span in which the artworks in this book were produced—was a time of rapid change in cultural studies, as the effects of postcolonial theory were felt in nearly every humanistic discipline. In the art world, postmodernism held sway, ushering artistic populations and practices that were previously marginalized into the very

center. For contemporary Native American artists in particular, the year 1992 proved a pivotal moment, as the five-hundredth anniversary of Columbus's "discovery" of the New World brought a surge of public interest in Indigenous cultures past and present. In both the United States and Canada, uncritical celebrations of the Columbian quincentennial were countered by efforts to inspire meaningful reflection on the legacies of colonialism, including the mounting of group exhibitions of contemporary Native American art such as *Submuloc Show/Columbus Wohs: A Visual Commentary on the Columbus Quincentennial from the Perspective of America's First People* (multiple venues in the United States, 1992); *Our Land/Ourselves: American Indian Contemporary Artists* (multiple venues in the United States, 1991–93); *The Post-Colonial Landscape: A Billboard Exhibition* (Saskatoon, Canada, 1993); *Indigena: Contemporary Native Perspectives in Canadian Art* (Quebec, Canada, 1992); and *Land, Spirit, Power: First Nations at the National Gallery of Canada* (Ottawa, Canada, 1992).

In focusing on the experiences of Indigenous peoples in North America, these exhibitions were in their very conception decolonial projects. They were also postmodernist in the sense that they purposefully transgressed the boundaries between the art world's centers and peripheries, and they seamlessly incorporated artworks in a broad range of media, including video, performance, and installation art.[55] By and large, the intent of the quincentennial response exhibitions was to affirm and celebrate the survival of Indigenous cultures while acknowledging the devastating effects of more than five hundred years of colonialism. According to curators Gerald McMaster and Lee-Ann Martin, for example, the works of art selected for *Indigena: Contemporary Native Perspectives in Canadian Art* examined the "tangled complex of history, language, feelings, identity, concepts, preconceived notions and contemporary realities that define Aboriginal cultures today."[56]

Chief among all of the concerns addressed in these exhibitions was regard for the land itself. The curators of *Land Spirit Power: First Nations at the National Gallery of Canada* put this succinctly: "As the ongoing struggle of the aboriginal people of North America for their ancestral lands reveals, the land has social meanings that are profoundly spiritual and intensely political in their implications. To other North Americans it is becoming clearer, in part through an awareness of the environmental crisis, that survival depends on recognizing that notions of the land as an empty, alien place, or a frontier to be conquered, are not only inadequate, but destructive."[57] While this preface established a universal concern for land and the environment, it nevertheless underscored the unique centrality of land in the matrix of aboriginal culture. After all, a people's occupation of and connection to the land is the defining aspect of the words "Indigenous," "aboriginal," and "Native." Moreover, as many of the Native artists and curators who participated in the quincentennial response shows stressed, the relationship of Native peoples to the land is intimate in

ways that do not apply to settler cultures. Jaune Quick-to-See Smith explained: "Euro-Americans often wonder why the American Indian is so attached to the land. Even after Indians have lived in an urban environment for two generations, they still refer to tribal land as home. . . . Each tribe's total culture is immersed in its specific area. Traditional foods, ceremonies and art come from the indigenous plants and animals as well as the land itself. The anthropomorphism of the land spawns the stories and myths. These things are the stuff of culture which keeps identity intact."[58] For Ho-chunk sculptor Truman Lowe and for Lavadour too, the land and its features "run through the body."[59] As Lavadour put it: "Whatever is in the earth is in me and whatever is in me is what I make art out of."[60]

Underscoring these more personal reflections on Native landscapes in 1992 was an increasingly vocal political discourse on Indigenous self-determination. At that time, the term "Indigenous visual sovereignty" was not yet in use; however, the language and tenets of political self-determination were becoming ever more refined due to the efforts of the United Nations to adopt an international Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. Beginning in 1982, the UN Working Group on Indigenous Populations held hearings and gathered copious testimony in support of the Draft Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, which they submitted to the UN in July of 1993.[61] The final declaration, which contains proclamations on an exhaustive array of concerns, from protections against forced relocation to the right to speak and preserve Indigenous languages, was not ratified by the UN General Assembly until 2007, but in the fourteen-year interim its contents were widely distributed, influencing public policy in both domestic and international arenas.[62]

On the subject of land, the UNDRIP is unequivocal. It states that "Indigenous peoples have the right to own, use, develop and control the lands, territories and resources that they possess by reason of traditional ownership or other traditional occupation or use, as well as those which they have otherwise acquired."[63] In addition to affirming these legal and economic rights, the declaration also officially recognizes and sanctions the "distinctive spiritual relationship" of Indigenous peoples and the land, reinforcing the sentiments expressed by Smith and others noted here. Moreover, the UNDRIP reads, "Indigenous peoples have the right to . . . uphold their responsibilities to future generations in this regard."[64]

One of the paradoxes of the legal discourses of sovereignty is that the relationship of a people to the land, particularly the occupation of territory, is both a prerequisite for and the principle benefit of sovereign status. As one legal scholar put it, "Territorial sovereignty is an indispensable attribute of independent nations; the territory is the very basis on which national existence rests." Simply stated, "Sovereignty needs territory on which it is to be exercised."[65] Thus, in the early 1990s, both the need and the right of Indigenous

populations to proclaim their relationship to the land were of paramount concern for Native peoples worldwide. This was especially true for the Indigenous peoples of Canada, the United States, Australia, and New Zealand—the four UN member nations that refused to sign the UNDRIP, in part because it contains provisions that call for restitution or compensation made for lands that were unlawfully taken.[66] In the decade after the formal ratification of the UNDRIP, constant pressure by Indigenous groups and their allies has moved all four dissenting nations to publicly endorse the declaration; most recently, Canada formally removed its objector status in a statement made to the United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues in May of 2016.[67]

No matter how the articles of the UNDRIP are legally interpreted and enacted in the coming years, it is clear that the language of sovereignty has gradually pervaded every aspect of Indigenous cultural studies.[68] As early as 1994, Osage critical theorist Robert Allen Warrior argued for a broadly inclusive understanding of sovereignty as a communal and individual empowerment: "If our struggle is anything, it is the struggle for sovereignty, and if sovereignty is anything, it is a way of life. That way of life is not a matter of defining a political ideology. . . . It is a decision—a decision we make in our minds, in our hearts, and in our bodies to be sovereign. . . . The struggle for sovereignty is not a struggle to be free from the influence of anything outside ourselves, but a process of asserting the power we possess as communities and individuals to make decisions that affect our lives."[69] Warrior's capacious definition of *intellectual* sovereignty is reflective of a particularly Indigenous epistemology, according to Tuscarora artist and scholar Jolene Rickard. Rickard, whose grandfather Chief Clinton Rickard founded the Indian Defense League in 1925, writes that "This notion of sovereignty as a matter confined to the legal sphere is not the kind of sovereignty that I grew up with among the Haudenosaunee."[70] Rather than accept either the European definition of sovereignty or the U.S. legal interpretation of it, the Haudenosaunee created a unique understanding of the concept "that embodies our philosophical, political, and renewal strategies."[71]

Rickard has long argued for such an approach to Indigenous visual arts, asserting that sovereign thoughts, strategies, and practices cut across the whole spectrum of cultural production. In 1995 she wrote in a special issue of *Aperture* magazine devoted to Native American photography: "As part of an ongoing strategy for survival, the work of Indigenous artists needs to be understood through the clarifying lens of sovereignty and self-determination, not just in terms of assimilation, colonization, and identity politics."[72] In Rickard's view, contemporary works by Native photographers join the discourse of Indigenous sovereignty by asserting presence, as in Zig Jackson's *Indian Man in San Francisco* series (1993). Rickard insists that viewing such works through the "lens of sovereignty" allows us to perceive the shift from "a victimized stance to a strategic one."[73]

Of the many scholars of Native American art and visual culture who took up Rickard's charge, Seneca literary theorist Michelle Raheja deserves recognition for introducing the term "visual sovereignty" to the field in 2007. In an analysis of Zacharias Kunuk's film *Atanarjuat*: *The Fast Runner*, Raheja defined "visual sovereignty" as an act of artistic resistance and agency: created from an entirely Inuit perspective, Kunuk's film, according to Raheja, effectively supplanted the salvage paradigm bias of the 1922 ethnographic film *Nanook of the North* with a "flow of Indigenous knowledge."[74] The example of *Atanarjuat* suggested to Raheja that works of art might open to a range of sovereign strategies and practices beyond the political. She wrote that "visual sovereignty . . . is not always directly involved in political debates. . . . There is more room for narrative play" than in other forms of sovereignty discourse.[75] In the case of *Atanarjuat*, Raheja argues that the film's construction of imaginative narrative sequences of a spirit/dream world, and its incorporation of humor, parody, and absurdity reveal an Indigenous perspective beyond the strictly legal rhetoric of sovereignty. Nevertheless, Raheja's concept does hinge on a notion of Indigenous agency as construed primarily in opposition to structures imposed upon Indigenous communities from without: she refers to visual sovereignty as a "*corrective* cultural narrative."[76] In this respect, Raheja differs from Rickard, who configures Indigenous sovereignty not as a primarily deconstructionist stance, but rather as an inherently affirmative practice of self-determination.[77]

Rickard concluded her 1995 article on sovereignty as a lens for understanding Indigenous artistic practices with the statement that "[artworks] made by Indigenous makers are the documentation of our sovereignty, both politically and spiritually. Some stick close to the spiritual centers while others break geographic and ideological rank and head West. But the images are all connected circling in ever-sprawling spirals the terms of our experiences as human beings."[78] While Raheja's discernment of the resistant strategies of Indigenous art practices provides useful insight into many of the individual works created in the last quarter century—especially those that clustered around the Columbian quincentennial—Rickard's broader view of visual sovereignty as encompassing *all* works that convey an Indigenous worldview is arguably more useful for understanding contemporary landscape art. Her analysis invites us to see contemporary art produced by Indigenous artists as an exercise of Indigenous visual sovereignty, no matter its subject matter, medium, or even its message. And if contemporary Native American art of the past twenty-five years is best understood as "part of an ongoing strategy of survival," then this is perhaps nowhere more apparent than in representations of land.

Helen Marie Ryan Wyman was intelligent, curious, and gregarious; she took great stock in books and reading, and books abounded in her life. The Wyman family is proud to sponsor this book in Native American and Indigenous studies in her name.

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FRONTISPIECES: Kent Monkman, *History Is Painted by the Victors* (2013), acrylic on canvas, 72 × 113 in., Courtesy of Denver Art Museum (full credit at fig. 5.7, p. 135); Postcommodity, *Repellent Fence* (2015), earth, cinder block, paracord, PVC spheres, helium, installation length 2 mi., US–Mexico border (full credit at fig. 4.11, p. 103); George Morrison, *Spirit Path, New Day, Red Rock Variation: Lake Superior Landscape* (1990), acrylic and pastel on paper, 22½ × 30⅛ in., Collection of the Minnesota Museum of American Art (full credit at fig. 3.1, p. 59); Postcommodity, *Do You Remember When?* (2012), cut concrete, exposed earth, light, sound, Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney (full credit at fig. 4.1, p. 82)

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