

DION FORTIE
RYLAND FORTIE
LEVI GLASS
ELIZA HOUG

Egress

The artists exhibiting work in *Egress* are all current BFA students: Dion Fortie, Levi Glass and Ryland Fortie at Thompson Rivers University and Eliza Houg at the Nova Scotia College of Art and Design. The present exhibition follows from their having exhibited together in ... *strange things done* ... at the Yukon School of Visual Arts' Confluence Gallery in Dawson City, Yukon. There, these four artists were also research assistants with the Camera Obscura Project, working alongside an international group of artists and scholars to realize the 2015 *Midnight Sun Camera Obscura Festival*, hosted by the Klondike Institute of Art and Culture. Taking the historical form of the camera obscura as a starting point but, equally, drawing inspiration from Dawson City's twenty-four hour summer light, these artists created self-illuminated artworks in and around the Confluence Gallery. While two of the works, Dion Fortie's *Passing Through*, and Ryland Fortie's *Landmark Peripheral*, are from ... *strange things done* ..., Levi Glass' *Portent* has been created in Kamloops, in response to the local light, topography and cultural landscape. Eliza Houg's *Pretty Noisy* has assumed varied forms: a workshop and series of resultant (*in shed*) projections live-streamed into the Confluence Gallery and, for *Egress*, video footage from her Dawson City project playing on a pair of small analogue televisions. The trunk upon which her televisions sit is perhaps a reminder of Dawson City's history as a transient frontier town. In a manner paralleling the interests of many contemporary artists, Houg, Glass and the Fortie brothers have created an exhibition whose luminous glow recalls artists' and writers' interests in the sublime during the latter seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries—such a sensibility in continual dialogue with aspects of visual culture and technology that they see slipping away with the emerging technologies of their own generation.

Donald Lawrence
Principal Researcher, The Camera Obscura Project

Egress was on display at the Thompson Rivers University Visual Arts Gallery in Kamloops, British Columbia from October 19 to October 30, 2015.

THOMPSON RIVERS UNIVERSITY



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EGRESS
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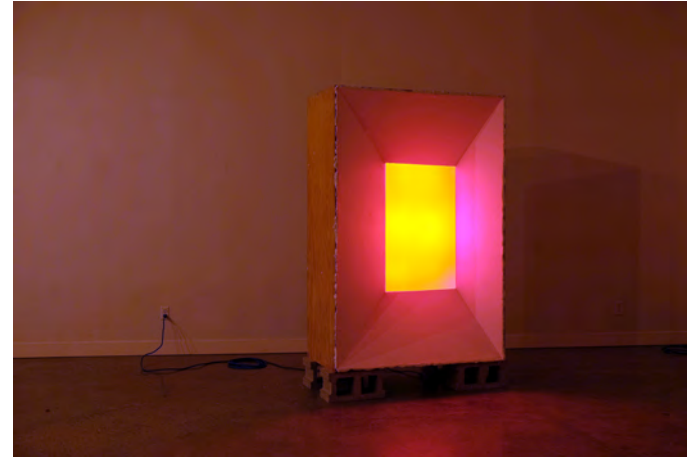
DION FORTIE
Passing Through



Dion Fortie, *Passing Through*, 2015

Passing Through recognizes an appreciation of past analog projection technology through an awareness of such technology's digitalization in recent years. Specifically, the installation references analog cinematic techniques, such as those used in creating three-dimensional imagery on a two-dimensional surface, while examining the loss of human subjectivity that has occurred in the wake of emerging new technologies. As new digital technology seemingly allows for every imperfection to be removed from the screen, the spectators' experience is passive, one of being lost in the illusion. No longer do we identify with ourselves but with wherever the camera takes us. By transforming the screen into a physical space of leaning plexiglass panels, *Passing Through* draws attention to the projected surface as something to be explored and engaged by the viewer in an active experience. Rather than avoiding impurities in the work, *Passing Through* encourages them, thereby breaking tradition with the pristine image on the screen. The projected images, created by collaging or otherwise manipulating individual 35mm slides, are only made visible by fine layers of dust on the surface of the plexiglass panels, encouraging an awareness of the imperfections and handmade quality of the images. Mediating past and future projection technology by a hands-on and tactile approach, *Passing Through* aims to restore an intimacy to the screen and viewing experience.

RYLAND FORTIE
Landmark Peripheral



Ryland Fortie, *Landmark Peripheral*, 2015

Landmark Peripheral is a perspective box that draws a parallel between the linear perspective of the Renaissance and contemporary digital screen space. Like a camera obscura, the sculpture uses light in a dark space to create an illusion; the box appears much deeper than it is, as if one is gazing down a corridor into a red vastness. The result is a contemplative "nowhere" space in which one chooses to confront the illusion or succumb to it. The one-point perspective is skewed; the sculpture's asymmetrical plywood panels cause the illusionistic space to bend as the viewer moves from side to side. Linear perspective, and modern digital interfaces alike, have created social constructs around our processes of perception and the way we interpret meaning in the landscape. These constructs organize our view of the world into something that can be understood, imposing a view where man reigns over nature. The term "landmark" suggests the iconic stature of a monument or relic and, by contrast, "peripheral" vision is fleeting and exists on the outskirts of your vision. These contrasting values underline the infinite striving for perfection and ideals which are always just out of reach.

LEVI GLASS
Portent



Levi Glass, *Portent*, 2015

Portent takes the horizon line of the South Thompson Region, as viewed from a hilltop on Thompson Rivers University's undeveloped lands, and brings it into a darkened gallery space in the form of a self-illuminated artwork. The viewer is inclined to suspend disbelief in the object and the creation of the illusion to see the horizon as what it is. Nevertheless, *Portent* is clearly not the original view, nor is it really a proper copy—if anything, the view is of the Other South Thompson: viewed without the city, fixed in a perpetual sunrise, and given an idealized silhouette. Therefore, *Portent* is a construction of a nearly untouched horizon that no longer exists, nor one that we can ever go back to. The centre of the construction disturbs the horizon, where the viewer can lose themselves in the picturesque, and harkens the viewer towards a disturbing sublime signified by a wedge of industrial copper. This sublime is not the closeness to God through an awe-inspiring nature as characterized by the romantics; rather, it is a gaze at a constructed ideal that carries our disruptive mark on the picturesque. By disrupting a transfixed gaze of the beautiful, the copper acts as the sign of our own mark on nature. The construction of an Other, idealized horizon consequently calls into question the integrity of the actual horizon.

ELIZA HOUG
Pretty Noisy



Eliza Houg, *Pretty Noisy*, 2015

Pretty Noisy is a sequence of collaborative video experiments produced in Dawson City. A workshop based around pinhole and low-tech lens technology is adapted into a digital video vocabulary, with an emphasis on the natural world filtered through the camera's computer and rudimentary lens. The accompanying soundscape verbally explores emotional and geographical environments and, in turn, is filtered through various technologies to rest in its current form. In a manner reminiscent of a camera obscura, *Pretty Noisy* encourages a decided way of looking at the world and a subject through technology in a basic form. What is explored and questioned is how much we know about the tools we use to express our experience and to see how these tools may abstract or may clarify what we intend to capture with them.