Who Decides the Land is Sacred? 2018

.gif animation

Arnold McBay

This work is born out of my recent studies in contemporary and historical visual poetry. While experimenting with my own ideas in visual poetry I gravitated towards creating animated visual poems.

Who Decides the Land is Sacred is a consideration of the recent conflicts between indigenous peoples, oil companies and animal rights groups over land and animal rights have been much on my mind, especially the current tensions in the Shorthills Provincial Park just outside of St. Catharines, Ontario.

The repeated moving line “Who Decides the Land is Sacred?” in the animation is a quote from the headline of a Vancouver Sun article (written by Douglas Todd) on the Supreme Court of Canada case “Ktunaxa Nation versus British Columbia” in which the SCC ruled against the indigenous group.

This animation cycles in an infinite loop suggesting an interminable struggle as well as the elusive nature of resolving such conflicts. The ghost of the ecosystem looming in the form of a deer slowly disappears only to be reborn again. The three fragments of the animation shown in these three stills function as archaeological artefacts, fragments perhaps of a failed past and something lost. The media transformation from moving text to solitary frames stills the potential optimism one might read in the animated work.

Wt

t h i o e v c i d n d l s t . s th	/ W ac ho ci c' V hr crer no d thr ! de dec	d te scr W. . reu i is ? W der ho no d
--	--	---