



Walter Scott: *Mood Valleys*
November 8, 2011- February 26, 2012

Gallery I

Artist Talk: Friday November 18, 2011 at 7:30pm
Artist Workshop: Saturday, November 19, 2011 10 am - 3 pm

Mood Valleys: The Highs and Lows

From indigenous metaphysical ideologies to raw punk aesthetics, the works presented in Walter Scott's exhibition *Mood Valleys* cover a number of terrains. However at the heart of his artistic practice is a deep preoccupation with the "raw, complex relationship between the spiritual person and their environment." Rather, his works examine both the complex physical and psychic connections we have with the landscapes that surround us. No doubt, the imagery and levels of meaning of this investigation defies a linear understanding as the vivid silkscreened images and video projection offers uneasy glimpses into these themes. Considered as self-portraits, print works such as *Adordarho Emerges* (2010) and the series *Location of the Self* (2010), incorporate images that have been cut, cropped and collaged and at times, intentionally disjointed. These works not only speak to the tropic and iconographic lexicon that have shaped Scott's life, but also to the uniformity of our own cultural attitudes and experiences with the natural environment.

In the video projection *Visitations* (2011), ghost-like images drift and transform onto the screen. Projected in the shape of a shield (which also doubles as a mask), we see hockey team logos merged with snippets of branches along with floating beer cans and twin phantom figures. These eerie and often disparate collaged digital images appear as a stream of consciousness across the screen and are described by Scott as the "personification of our cumulative spiritual being, shared by communities." In other words, these images, while broadly understood, are personalized through Scott's lens. Together with the projection, Scott's online web diary *NROTH AREMICA* continues this exploration into the unknown. Here, while scrolling through the image archive, viewers sense the disjunctive emotions of youth, time and loss, but more importantly, a place that has been turned up-side down and live streamed.

Despite the sheer abundance of knowledge and the heightened possibilities for making connections online, Scott's work points to the isolation that these new technologies bring. Like Alice, who while falling down the rabbit hole, encountered images and objects as she entered an alternative world, Walter Scott's own exploration very much aligns with this sense of displacement and the highs and lows of the valleys encountered along the way.

Nadia Kurd, Curator.

Biography

Walter Scott is an inter-disciplinary Mohawk artist based in Montreal Quebec. Informed by North American Indigenous metaphysics, he attempts explore the chasm between nationalist and religious ethics, and individual spiritual identity. Recent exhibitions include the Museum for Contemporary Native Arts in Santa Fe, New Mexico in 2010, and The Canadian Centre for Architecture in Montreal, Quebec, as part of the international new-media event Bring Your Own Beamer. *Mood Valleys* at the Thunder Bay Art Gallery in November 2011 will be his first solo exhibition.

Artist Statement

Through various multi-media works, I work towards a raw aesthetic informed by indigenous metaphysical ideologies, where youthful chaos and indigenous spirituality share similar notions of life affirmation and an embracing of the uncertain. For the past year, through video, printmaking, and collage, I have been creating a body of work that attempts to make connections between nationalist and religious ethics, and individual spiritual identity. A chasm of uncertainty forms when trying to consolidate the cultural politics of both the individual and the collective. Furthermore, seek to create works that give a shape to the Animus as experienced through my physical self, where the scrambling and re-contextualization of existing images becomes renegade mapping of the location of my spiritual body – in a place that lies beyond the fabricated borders of nationality, citizenship, documentation, and religion.

This essay has been produced for the exhibition *Mood Valleys* at the Thunder Bay Art Gallery. Please contact the Thunder Bay Art Gallery directly to request the rights to use any part of this text.