

Camera Austria

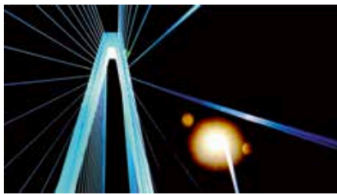
INTERNATIONAL

Sky Hopinka: Centers of Somewhere

CCS Bard Galleries, Annandale-on-Hudson,
17. 10. 2020 – 14. 2. 2021

by Harley Wong

Present throughout Sky Hopinka's solo exhibition is a consideration of land—personal memories tied to landscapes, centuries of settler colonialism that continue into the present, and essentializing perceptions of Indigeneity as contained to reservations. A member of the Ho-Chunk Nation of Wisconsin and the Pechanga Band of



Sky Hopinka, stills from: *Jáaji Approx.*, 2015. HD video (color, sound), 7'39". Courtesy: the artist and The Green Gallery, Milwaukee.

Luiseño Indians, Hopinka offers intimate reflections in the form of visual poems, photographs, and short films. Curated by Lauren Cornell, Director of the Graduate Program and Chief Curator at the Center for Curatorial Studies, Bard College, *Centers of Somewhere* traverses time and space to examine both individual and collective memory, as well as history-making.

In the opening work, *Jáaji Approx.* (2015), Hopinka weaves audio recordings of his father, the Ho-Chunk powwow singer Mike Hopinka, with videos of places they've traveled through, either together or separately. With audio dating as far back as a decade prior to *Jáaji Approx.*'s creation, the short film collapses time and location to present both an intergenerational bond and a familial longing.

The word *Jáaji* is used to directly address one's father in the Hocąk language, but Mike Hopinka appears only briefly in the last few seconds. Still, his presence is felt throughout. His



Sky Hopinka: *Perfidia*.

With a foreword by Lauren Cornell and contributions by Julie Niemi and Sky Hopinka (eng.).
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singing, "I see you standing there all alone, lost and confused . . . I'll come back for you someday," is paired with footage from a car parked off the side of the road and the rhythmic clicking of its hazard lights. When he sings a song from 1977, we watch the illuminated glow of a 76 gas station. Mike Hopinka only materializes after we hear one of the oldest songs he knows—a traveling song sung for protection and passed down to him by the Porcupine Singers—that guides us through rainbow-filtered landscapes and a cyan bridge.

Also on view in *Centers of Somewhere* is Hopinka's series of photographs *Breathings* (2020),



in which the artist similarly etches his thoughts and memories onto the landscape. His quotidian scenes—shot in the winter and spring of 2020 during his travels across the United States—feature lines of gentle cursive that Hopinka carved into the edge of the print. In one photograph overlooking dark clouds are the lines: "It's too much right now. Too much like learning that my father performed the *Breathings* his entire life. I have recordings of him, and I heard them when I was little, and I said them myself after his death."

In *Dislocation Blues* (2017), Hopinka approaches historical events through individual recollections. Instead of pursuing a documentary perspective that feigns omniscience, Hopinka presents the 2016 and 2017 protests against the Dakota Access Pipeline at Standing Rock through two individuals. Even then, we're only given fragments—imperfect memories.

A sense of distance is palpable, both in the way *Dislocation Blues* is filmed from inside protest camps and on the periphery, and in the concluding shot that pans out from a North Dakota road and onto what appears to be a dark production studio. In documenting one of the most widely known instances in recent memory of Indigenous resistance against the US infringement of tribal sovereignty, Hopinka asks how history is constructed and opts instead for collective memory.

The final work in the exhibition, a newly commissioned three-channel installation titled *Here you are before the trees* (2020), focuses on the Indigenous histories of the Hudson Valley, while subverting anthropology's romanticization and overemphasis of land within notions of Indigeneity. The remarks of Renya K. Ramirez particularly resonate in the mixed audio recordings of Indigenous scholars ranging from Vine Deloria Jr., a lawyer and member of the Standing Rock Sioux Nation, to Adrian C. Louis, a writer and member of the Lovelock Paiute Tribe.

An ethnographer and member of the Winnebago Tribe of Nebraska, Ramirez draws upon the Paiute activist Laverne Roberts's notion of the "hub" as "a mechanism to support Native notions of culture, community, identity, and belonging away from tribal land bases," as cited in her book *Native Hubs: Culture, Community, and Belonging in Silicon Valley and Beyond* (p. 1). Paired with footage shot in the homelands of the Stockbridge-Munsee Band of Mohican Indians and the Ho-Chunk Nation, we hear Ramirez reject the notion, perpetuated by the federal government and early anthropologists, that Native people would lose their identities and sense of selves if they left their reservations.

Throughout *Centers of Somewhere*, Hopinka untethers Indigeneity from one particular place, refuting the limiting idea that culture is rooted in the land. "Like a hub on a wheel," Ramirez wrote, recalling Roberts's words, "urban Indians occupy the center" (*ibid.*, p. 2).

Harley Wong is an arts writer and critic based in New York (US). Her work has appeared in *ARTnews*, *Artsy*, *CNN Style*, *X-TRA* (all US), and more.

New Views on Same-Olds

Ausstellungsraum der Akademie der bildenden Künste Wien, 23. 10. 2020 – 13. 3. 2021

von Margit Neuhold

Während des Tanzens verliert sich das normative Verständnis von Zeit. Bei den Beats elektronischer experimenteller Musik von Wiener und internationalen Musiker*innen und Künstler*innen wird Loop erfahrbar. Die Endlosschleifen der Musik, verbunden mit der kulturellen Figur des Loop, bilden den Ausgangspunkt, um über Formen der Zeitlichkeit nachzudenken, die in verschiedenartigen (Bild-)Produktionen widerhallen. Der gemeinsam mit Soso Phist kuratierte Musikraum *Space for Collective Listening* ist zentral für das Projekt *New Views on Same-Olds*, welches das Erfahren von Zeit infrage stellt. Wie



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