

SHARED HISTORIES

KEITH BERENS, CAROL HEPPER, AND TIM
SCHOUTEN

at the

NORTH DAKOTA MUSEUM OF ART

GRAND FORKS, NORTH DAKOTA

APRIL 17 — JUNE 13, 2010

Join us at the Gala Opening
Saturday, April 17, 7 pm
Informal gallery talk by all three artists



TIM SCHOUTEN

Conspicuously void of figures or identifiable landmarks, their thick, textured surfaces invert the earth-to-sky ratio of traditional landscapes to accommodate the expansive archives embedded below....[They are] cardiographs of sentient surface.

—Steven Matijcio

Tim Schouten, (b. 1953) whose ancestry is from Europe—Belgium, Holland and Scotland—is a Winnipeg-born artist. Having studied art at Arts Sake Inc. in Toronto, he now works in his studio on his ranch near Petersfield, Manitoba. His exploration of Manitoba's shared histories is, in part, personal as members of his family had been early traders with the Northwest Company out of Montreal. His travels around the province are extensive as he follows leads and meets with Elders to gather information to inform his painting. He has exhibited extensively, is represented in a number of corporate and private collections, and has curated, lectured and presented many workshops across Canada.

Schouten examines some of the seminal moments of Manitoban and western Canadian history. The treaty lands have been the focus of his work since 1995 when he began addressing shared histories and long term consequences resulting from the eleven Manitoba Treaties with the First Nations. The Treaty Suites, part of his larger Treaty Lands project, are still in progress. With the landscape as his primary entry point, his goal is to draw attention to issues of long term accountability and troubled cultural trusts emanating from those formal agreements. Schouten has visited each treaty site, researched the treaties and their subsequent impacts. He has interviewed First Nations Elders and Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal historians and 'built' his evocative works to underline those shared histories.

—Pat Bovey

Over: Tim Schouten, *Harrison Creek (Treaty 3 Suite: Outside Promises)*, 2006. Encaustic on canvas. From the Exhibition SHARED HISTORIES, North Dakota Museum of Art, April 17 – June 13, 2010.



CAROL HEPPER

The landscape of South Dakota, remote, yet beautiful, has left its mark on Carol Hepper, a native of the state. It has elicited from her an extraordinarily poetic response in the form of a body of work that unites respect for the past with a new means of expression.

Hepper's sculptures from the early 1980s are three-dimensional structures made from objects that she has found at or near the family ranch on the Indian reservation in McLaughlin, South Dakota where she lived and worked [on the Standing Rock Reservation just across the North Dakota border]. In her work she has incorporated bones, driftwood, and animal hides without attempting to disguise their origin, alter their nature, or aggrandize their inherent beauty as artifacts of a dying time. The animal bones, the hides she has tanned herself, the wood, and the driftwood retain a sense of their history. The tooth marks of the coyote and other scars on the animal skins, the weathering of bone and driftwood remind us of the previous existence of these things; but the sculptures are not meant to represent literally the folklore of the past they honor. Hepper is able to draw upon nature and upon earlier cultures to make a statement that is both timeless and contemporary.

—Diane Waldma

Over: Carol Hepper, *Vertical Chamber 1980*, 1984. Animal ribs, wood, and rawhide strips. From the exhibition SHARED HISTORIES, North Dakota Museum of Art, April 17 – June 13, 2010.



KEITH BERENS

Prairie consciousness, a sense of internal and external space, this is what defines the ethos of the prairies; internalizing the external and manipulating it into a personal vision. Realizing this vision in a work of art is the essence of the prairie artist. —Keith Berens

Ojibwa artist Keith Berens, (b. 1954) was born in Norway House and grew up in The Pas in northern Manitoba. An abstract painter, curator and writer, his love of color is evident as he draws from the rhythms of nature. He graduated from Emily Carr University in Vancouver, having also studied in Montreal. Well-travelled and with an extensive knowledge of art history, he draws from international contemporary art movements, including the work of American color field painters Mark Rothko and Barnett Newman and abstract expressionist Jackson Pollock, as well as his aboriginal roots. Responding to the issues of today, his native Manitoba is his true home where he connects spiritually. His work is reflective of the topography and texture of the land, his brushwork recalling the deliberate calligraphic strokes of Chinese calligraphers.

The light, space and horizon line of the Manitoba landscape is core to Berens work.

—Pat Bovey

Over: Keith Berens, *Palimpsest* (from the *Maps and Dreams* Series), 2005-06. Oil on canvas. From the exhibition SHARED HISTORIES, North Dakota Museum of Art, April 17 – June 13, 2010.