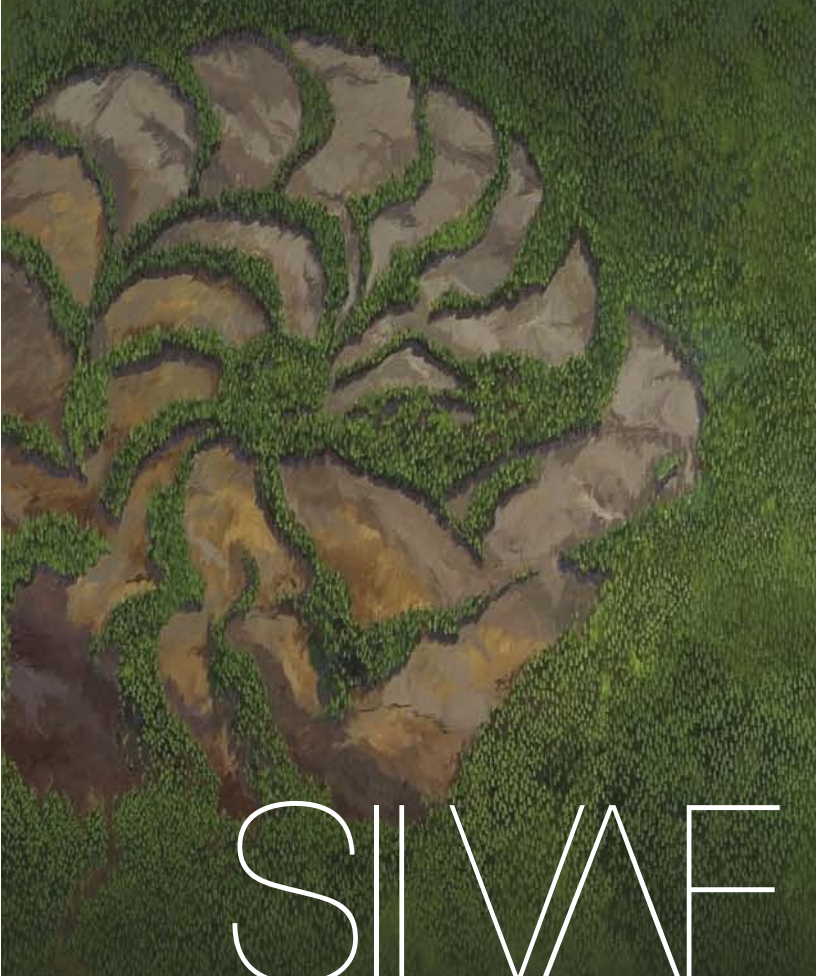


SILVAE

Design Visions for Future Forests

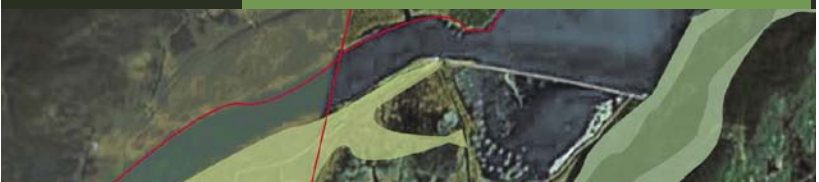
An exhibition of artwork by

Laurie McGugan

and supporting digital visualisations
of future forest designs
in collaboration with Dr. Stephen Sheppard / CALP,
Faculty of Forestry and
Landscape Architecture Programme
University of British Columbia

May 3-9, 2006

Forest Sciences Centre
University of British Columbia



But why engage the landscape?… Changes in the landscape produce changes in the works, enhancing our perception of them; the works are simultaneously the means by which we enter a landscape, observe its characteristics, learn its history, absorb its attendant mythology. John Beardsley

Silvae is a monumental public art project that challenges the process of how we use nature as a resource.

Can you imagine a method of harvesting lumber that is endorsed by both environmental groups and business?

Variable retention practices take into consideration animal habitat and other environmental impacts while considering the bottom line. If you can plan logging cuts to retain animal habitat and prevent soil erosion, why not expand this concept to create an artwork in place of a clear cut; an artwork that reminds us all of the integral connection between humans and the landscape?

Silvae, visually inspired by fossils, will be viewed from ground level. The fossil, an indigenous image of the earth, is discovered by removing the top surface layer of the land (the tree canopy) to create an abstract, yet universally recognizable image on a mountain slope.

As a public artwork, the artwork includes the complete interactive process between the artist and the communities that will be part of the final product.

Silvae is essentially about sustainability and process, about aesthetics and industry and, significantly, about challenging our perceptions around our relationship with nature.

Laurie McGugan, Artist

Creative expression is rooted in our intuitive intellect. Recent experiences and distant memories are combined with sensory awareness to form the seed of creative growth. This intuitive aspect of art making often results in work that parallels art of other cultures past and present. Similarly, McGugan's *Silvae* is reminiscent of monumental, mysterious, ancient works, like the sacred hill Geogliphics of the Azapa Valley of Northern Chile. The Geogliphics are stone line images in the mountainous desert landscape of the Andes. They have been described as ancient memories passing on mythical visions of life and death. The images of both the Geogliphics and the proposed *Silvae* projects are viewed from valleys. The real and proposed images appear to touch the sky. The fossil images of *Silvae* evoke the idea of time before memory.

Silvae is paradoxical. On one hand a memorial to harvested trees; on the other hand it exists because trees are harvested. It is a monumental modern artwork connecting science and art yet it is also an ephemeral homage to nature. The fossil images of *Silvae* refer to prehistory, yet it is an image revealed by man and machine. The *Silvae* proposal depends on the commercial use of forests, yet its size and image forces us to think about our daily consumption of trees. The paradox is compelling. It demands that we own up to our use of living organisms, and demands that we become and continue to be more responsible and respectful of our shared world.

Patricia Kozowyk

Artist and Curator

Landscape Immersion Lab at UBC

This public art project symbolizes a new paradigm for sustainable forestry that is emerging on the west coast: the science, practice, and art of Variable Retention. Forestry is now becoming a sophisticated design process, integrating scientific knowledge, local expertise, and advanced planning tools. This makes possible the sensitive, precise, and creative use of new harvesting methods, which can emulate natural processes and respect social/cultural needs. The arbitrary square clearcut is becoming a thing of the past.

Various scientific disciplines now inform forest management, supported by constantly improving tools: ecological modelling (from the landscape level to the individual tree) can forecast how ecosystem productivity can be maintained long-term, or how biodiversity can be sustained over space and time; wind-modelling can tell foresters where the risks of windthrow call for redesign of harvesting plans; hydrological and slope stability monitoring help managers control the effects that changes in the forest may have on fish and community water supplies. Research in the social sciences – studying how people think and behave – at UBC and elsewhere has shown that urban, rural, and First Nation communities typically prefer forms of partial harvesting which retain residual trees, create organic patterns fitted carefully to the land, perpetuate traditional uses, and leave a softer footprint on the landscape.

Forest designers are now able to use advanced 3D computer modelling, animation, and visualisation tools to help them see what the future forest would look like and pinpoint appropriate designs for each unique site. With realistic landscape visualisations, every tree can be shown at the right scale, every design variation can be tested before it is implemented on the ground, the public can comment on what is proposed, and the logging crews can see what they are trying to achieve. Using various new harvesting practices, expert crews can extract individual trees or create complex openings with minimal disturbance if necessary, to bring the Variable Retention vision to reality, as called for by site conditions. This is not about hiding forestry, but about making forest stewardship visible: showcasing sophisticated new design methods now being used to create the future forest, then standing back to watch nature overlay its own changes on the forester's work.

Dr. Stephen Sheppard

Associate Professor, UBC

building SILVAE

Building *Silvae* will not be as simple as placing a stencil on the landscape and tracing a pattern. The exciting opportunity to work with foresters to shift and adapt the design to 'fit' the topography is what makes *Silvae* a powerful artwork.

Together we will choose the best site, a site that not only provides the public with the best vantage point, but a site where *Silvae* is able to meet the environmental and other criteria for performing a cut.

Silvae is a time-sensitive artwork. Consideration of what trees will be replanted will extend the visual impact for years to come.

Public art is as much about the process of making it happen, the thrill of bringing people together to make it happen, as it is the end product. *Silvae* could create an extraordinary educational opportunity and talking-point for the community, visitors and the forest industry.

Funding for *Silvae* is from the sale of the artist's studies and project partners.

Opportunities to comment and be part of the process of making *Silvae* a reality on the ground are available through contacting the artist at lauriemcgugan@rogers.com or by calling 416-466-6099.

Collaborative for Advanced Landscape Planning (CALP)

Director: Dr. Stephen Sheppard, Associate Professor
Forest Resources Management and
Landscape Architecture Program

University of British Columbia
2045 – 2424 Main Mall
Vancouver, BC V6T 1Z4

Tel: 604.822-6582 Fax : 604.822.9106
Email: adelle.airey@ubc.ca

The Collaborative for Advanced Landscape Planning (CALP) is a group of researchers at the University of British Columbia from the fields of Landscape Architecture, Forestry, Planning, Environmental Psychology and Computer Science, specializing in landscape visualization, environmental perception and aesthetics, socio-cultural values, planning and design processes, and perceptions of sustainability and climate change.

We use innovative computer tools, modeling techniques, and perception testing to help the public and experts visualize and explore alternative futures for our landscapes, forests and communities.

CALP Website: www.calp.forestry.ubc.ca
Forestry website: www.forestry.ubc.ca
Landscape Architecture website: www.larc.ubc.ca
Laurie McGugan's website: www.lauriemcgugan.com

Computer generated images created by Jamie Nicholls, artist and designer, currently working towards a Master's Degree in Landscape Architecture at UBC.

The exhibition runs from May 3-9th, 2006.

Paintings will be on view in the atrium
Weekdays from 7 am to 6 pm,
Saturday and Sunday from 12-4 pm.

Atrium and Landscape Immersion Lab
Room 2430, Forest Sciences Centre
2424 Main Mall, University of British Columbia

Presentations and Discussions:

Thursday, May 4, 10 am - 12
Community Forestry Group – 10:30 screening

Thursday, May 4, 2-4 pm
Forest Industry Group – 2:30 screening

Friday, May 5, 2-4 pm
Aboriginal Forestry Group – 2:30 screening

Monday, May 8, 2-4 pm
Environmental Focus Group – 2:30 screening

The artist will also be present:

Saturday, May 6, 12-4 pm screenings at 1 pm and 3 pm
Sunday, May 7, 12-4 pm screening at 1 pm
Tuesday, May 9, 1-6 pm screening at 4 pm