

DEVOS ART MUSEUM

# RABBIT ISLAND

2015  
RESIDENCY  
EXHIBITION

PRINTED IN CONJUNCTION  
WITH THE EXHIBITION:

# RABBIT ISLAND: 2015 RESIDENCY EXHIBITION

SEPTEMBER 25 – NOVEMBER 8, 2015

## Artists

Beau Carey

*Painter*

Noam Enbar

*Composer, Musician*

Josefina Muñoz

*Visual Artist*

## Collaborators

Eugene Birman

*Composer*

Scott Diel

*Writer*

## DeVos Art Museum

School of Art & Design

Northern Michigan University

## Rabbit Island Foundation

[rabbitisland.org](http://rabbitisland.org)

## Museum Director

Melissa Matuscak

[nmu.edu/devos](http://nmu.edu/devos)

## Graphic Design

Edwin Carter

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### RABBIT ISLAND RESIDENCY

The Rabbit Island Foundation is a non-profit arts organization that offers artists complete immersion in a 91 acre wilderness four miles from shore in Lake Superior—the largest body of freshwater in the world. Artists respond directly to nature, expanding on a growing discourse concerning the impact of the creative act on the environment. Artists are engendered to align their practice with modern science and ethics while removing negative externalities, an important step for the history of art and a symbol for all objects citizens in society create and consume.

This island has never before been developed or subdivided, making it a unique space to explore new ideas. Through the Rabbit Island Residency we invite artists from around the world to bring their practices to this inspiring landscape & contemplate them relative to unimproved nature. We reward them for their thoughtful work & proposals, and challenge them in this raw, humbling environment.

Beyond the boundaries of one small island, the Foundation’s effort is rooted in our combined urban, suburban and foreign experiences, as well as our criticisms and exultations of various aspects of society. We believe the intelligent organization and celebration of wild spaces is the most civilized thing we can value collectively. We protest the fact that there is no antonym to the word subdivision in the English language, and in broad terms we hope to improve the cultural framework we all see the world from, adding a more rational understanding objectively while contributing guidance to what we find beautiful within it subjectively. Artists are the most fitting participants of this idea, and our residents play a vital role as our ambassadors, critics, and champions of the Rabbit Island concept.

### RABBIT ISLAND RESIDENCY PROGRAM BOARD OF DIRECTORS

- Dr. Robert Gorski* Co-Founder
- Andrew Ranville* Co-Founder / Lead Artist
- Melissa Matuscak* Director & Curator  
DeVos Art Museum
- David Gorski* Board Member

**BEAU CAREY**

*Painter*



**EUGENE BIRMAN**

*Composer*

**SCOTT DIEL**

*Writer*



**JOSEFINA MUÑOZ**

*Visual Artist*



**NOAM ENBAR**

*Composer, Musician*




**BEAU CAREY** (*beaucarey.com*) is a painter and educator based in Albuquerque, New Mexico & Boulder, Colorado. He received a BFA (2006) & MFA (2010) in painting and drawing from the University of New Mexico, (Albuquerque, NM). His modern landscape painting has led him to search out some of the most extreme climates in the world, including the Arctic Circle, where he was in residency in 2012. His work has been shown around the United States, including the Boulder Museum of Contemporary Art (Boulder, CO), New Mexico Museum of Art and Center for Contemporary Arts (Santa Fe, NM, for an exhibition juried by Lucy Lippard and Joel Peter Witkin), and the University of New Mexico Art Museum, among many other galleries and universities. He is co-founder of TANK Studios in Denver, a 6,000 square foot studio space for artists. He was in residence at Redline Denver from 2010–2012 and is represented by Goodwin Fine Art (Denver). Carey is currently adjunct faculty in the Department of Art & Art History at the University of New Mexico, College of Fine Arts.

JULY 06

—

JULY 23

# BEAU CAREY

A close-up portrait of Beau Carey, a man with a full, dark beard and mustache, wearing a grey baseball cap and a grey t-shirt. He is smiling slightly and looking towards the camera. The background is a light-colored, textured wall, possibly made of stone or brick.

ALBUQUERQUE, NEW MEXICO &  
BOULDER, COLORADO  
*Painter*

(From sketchbook)

**July 14th**

**9th Full day on the Island**

*North winds 15 to 25 knots diminishing to 10–20 knots by mid-afternoon.*

*Areas of fog this morning. Waves 3–5 feet subsiding to 1 to 3 feet.*

*...Rabbit Island doesn't need to be mapped, it's been mapped enough. Any attempt to do so is to see it in parts.*

*The map is key to sub-division. To see this from that. I own this; you own that.*

*So what then? How to leave it whole yet comprehensible? In the words of Hakim Bey how do we make the island 'invisible to the cartography of control'? To remove Rabbit Island from the process of mindless sub-division is in a very real way an attempt to remove it from the map, not as Terra Incognita (Unknown Territory) but as Terra Invisibilis (Invisible Territory)? How do we un-see something? Or how do we leave enough of the right parts to stitch together the right whole?*

The above might be impossible or nonsense, the loose, unorganized sketchbook thoughts of an isolated artist on a remote 91-acre island in Lake Superior. As a landscape painter my very task is to divide and omit. I paint this and not that. I condense or expand details according to the whims of the genre. I cram the world into neat little squares and rectangles of foreground, middle ground and background. I divide and sub-divide the visual into comprehensible organized space. It is folly to believe that any landscape painter paints the world as it actually is. The history of modern western landscape painting itself is rooted in imperial ambitions and environmental dominance<sup>1</sup>, a language of division and sub-division. Rabbit Island is a chance to paint a space that envisions itself as different. The resulting work strives to say something new with old words, knowing the limits of knowledge are the limits of the language. The hope is that the encounter creates a new visual vocabulary.

<sup>1</sup> Landscape & Power, ed.  
W.J.T. Mitchell

What emerged was the abandonment of the rectangle as an acceptable format to start a composition. The 'tondo' or circular painting, largely a Renaissance tool, was used to leave those right-angled edges behind. Perception is anything but square and with the ubiquity of cameras our vision and experiences are increasingly being squared off, life as an instagram feed, an endless scroll of square memories. So two days into my stay I was tracing the main camp's largest frying pan making most of my rectangular paper into circles. The X's are both a form of division, a measurement, a survey, a reference to what I'm trying to avoid in the square, and they are a negation, a literal crossing out of the painted view. Some of the X's are exposed under-painting, flat spaces beneath the painted surface that subvert the illusion of deep space that defines the landscape genre. And finally to paint coastal profiles from a boat even in calm glassy water is an exercise in futility. Traditionally profiles were used in navigation requiring a type of preciseness that a moving boat in my experience makes nearly impossible. It was with this revelation in mind that the July 14th sketchbook entry was written. The idea that Rabbit Island doesn't need to be mapped and profiled at least not in the way it has been done in the past. Those tools lead us to a sub-divided world of haphazard development. What is required is the long project of developing new ways of seeing, of talking about spaces. What is required is more Terra Invisibilis.

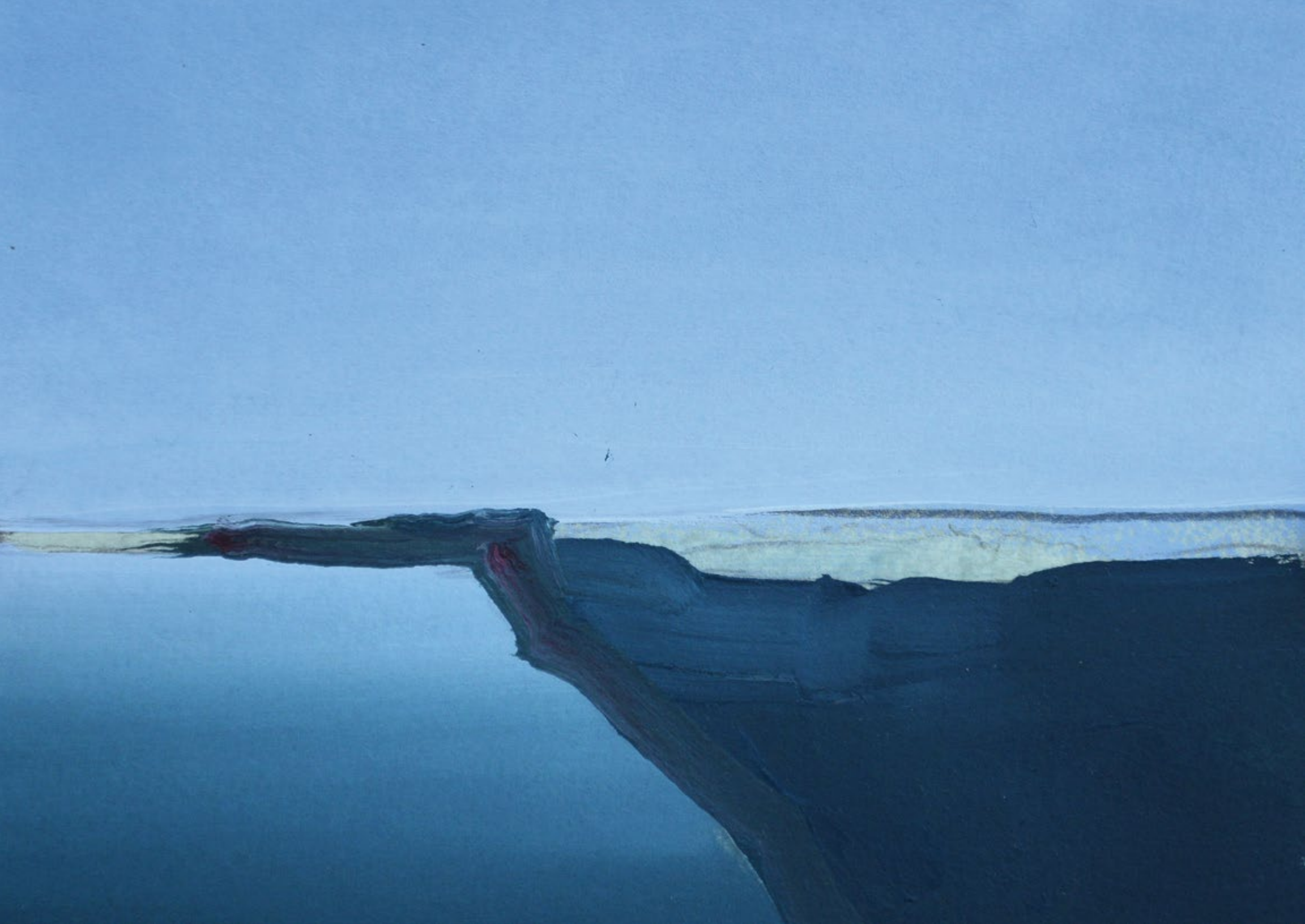
**Image, (Opposite page)**

Beau Carey painting on the point of Eagle Rock, which was nearly submerged by Lake Superior this summer. Image by Andrew Ranville.

**Eagle Rock (Next spread)**

6" x 7½", oil on paper, 2015.  
Painted on July 9th from a barely exposed Eagle Rock, wearing waders.







**Main Camp**

8" x 10", oil on paper  
mounted on panel, 2015.  
*Painted on the evening of  
July 7th. First tondo with an  
X. Painted from the main  
camp shore.*

**Arts Coast**

*(opposite page)*  
24" x 15", oil on paper, 2015.  
*Painted on July 15th from the  
small boat anchored off the  
southern shore. Had trouble  
pulling the anchor. Stuck for  
about forty minutes getting  
battered by increasing waves  
and wind.*



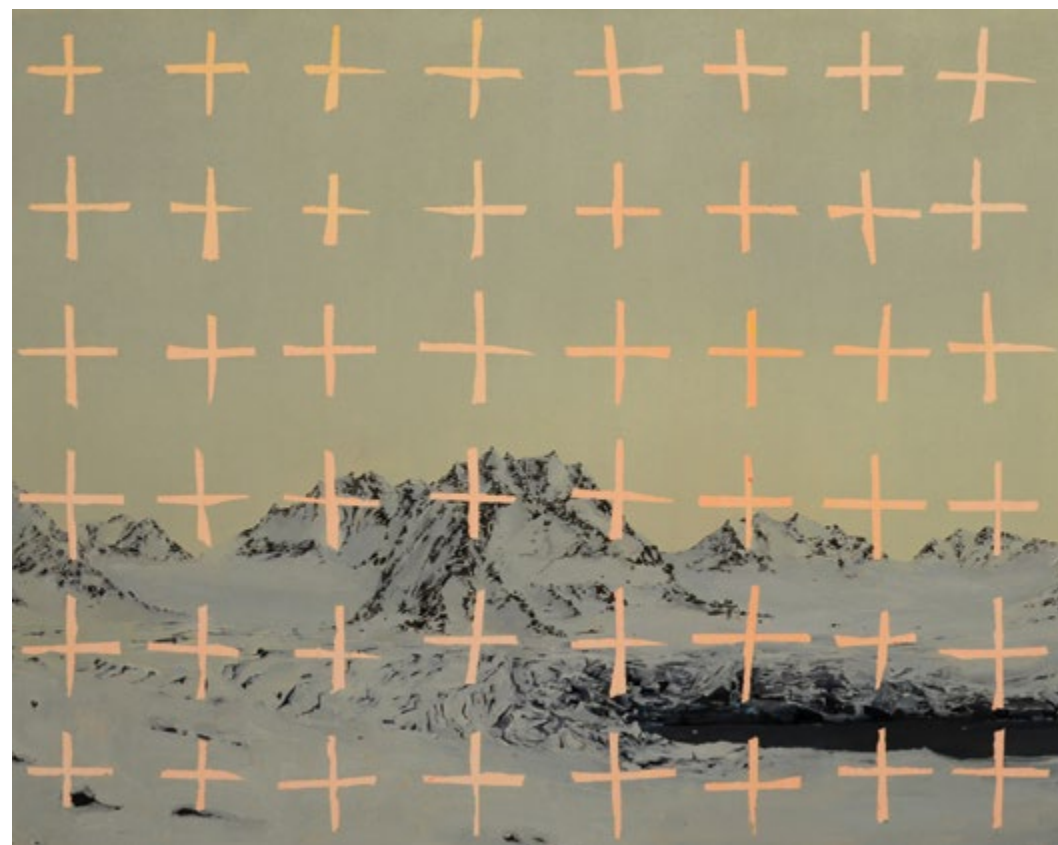




**Resolute**

48" x 60", oil on canvas, 2014.

*Previous work*



**Veil**

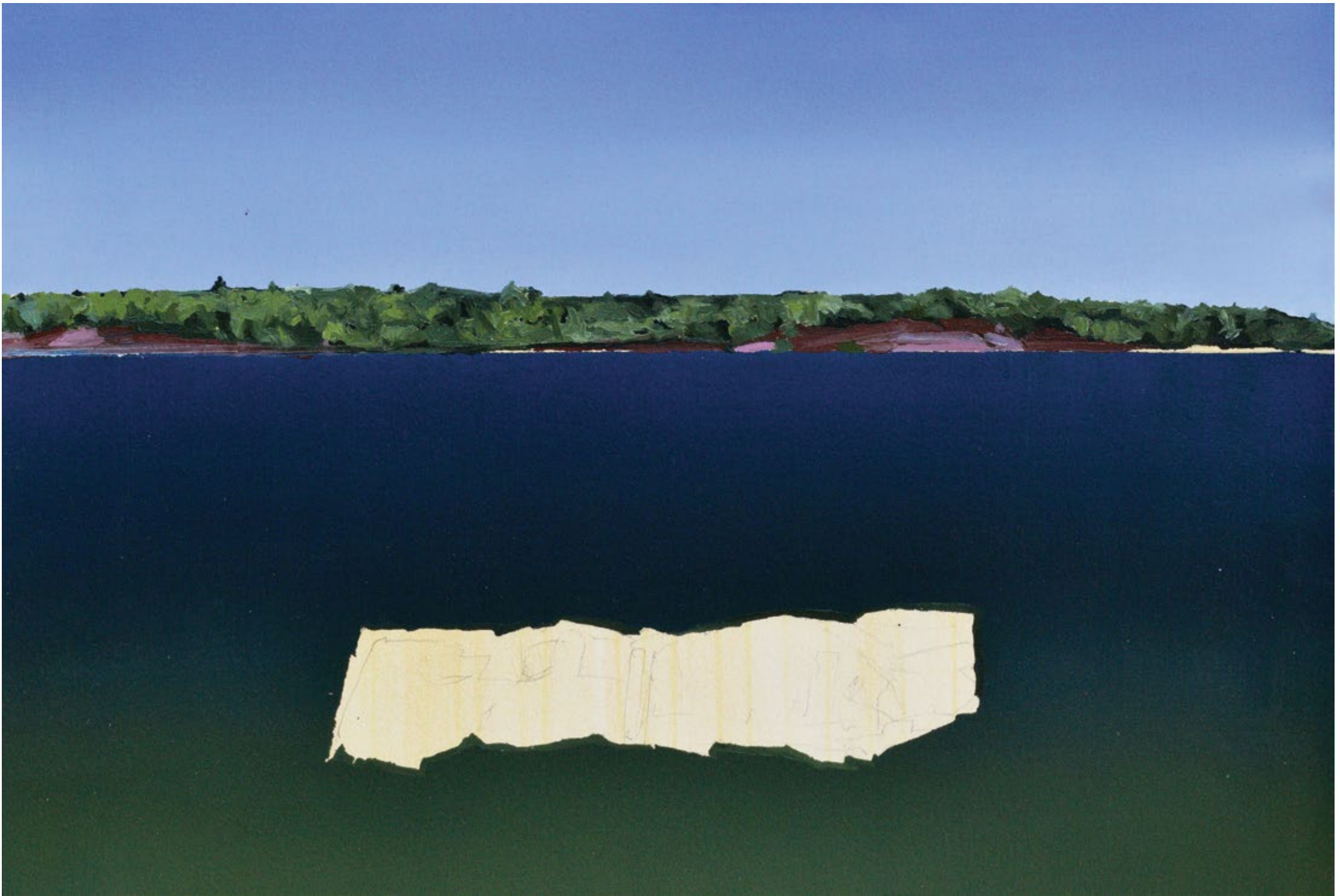
48" x 60", oil on canvas, 2014.

*Previous work*

**Red Cliffs**

*(next spread)*

15" x 24", oil on paper, 2015,  
*Painted morning of July 7  
near Hot Tub Rock*



UNITED STATES  
UK /  
COMPOSER

# EUGENE BIRMAN SCOTT DIEL

ESTONIA /  
WRITER



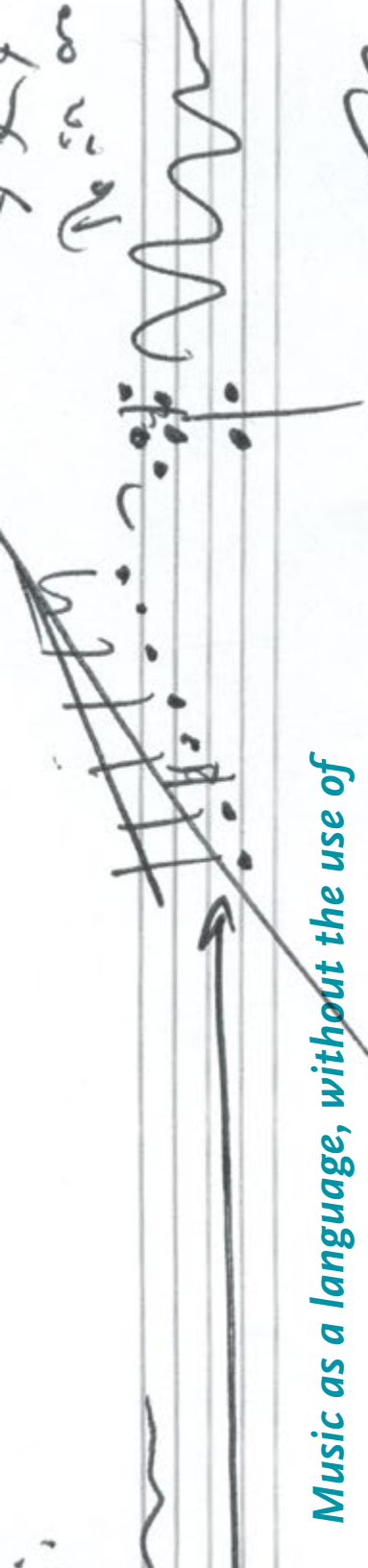
**EUGENE BIRMAN** (*eugenebirman.com*) is originally from Daugavpils, Latvia, and is currently living between the United States and UK. Birman received a B.A. in Economics from Columbia University (2009) and an M.M. degree from the Juilliard School (2010). He is currently working towards a D.Phil in Music Composition at the University of Oxford. Birman has led orchestras, choirs, and soloists across the United States, Europe, Asia, and South America. He has received commissions and performances from leading ensembles and orchestras such as the London Philharmonic, BBC Singers, Latvian Radio Choir, Juilliard Symphony, Sinfonietta Riga, Tallinn Chamber Orchestra, Estonian National Male Choir, the World Youth Symphony Orchestra and many others. He has been profiled by several international media outlets including CNN, BBC World TV, Radio France, Bloomberg TV, NPR's All Things Considered, Sveriges Radio, Deutsche Welle, CBC/Radio-Canada, ABC's Good Morning America, and countless others. Birman is also an alumnus of the Fulbright grant program, having received a 2010–11 full grant for studies in Estonia, when he met collaborator Scott Diel.

**SCOTT DIEL** is a writer who grew up in Kansas, but has lived in Estonia since 1992. He holds a BS from the University of Kansas (1987), MBA from Washington University (1989) and MFA from the University of Arkansas (2004). He has worked as an advertising executive for large companies such as Saatchi & Saatchi, Jack Daniel's Tennessee Whiskey and Grand Marnier. He has shared his business knowledge as a Peace Corps Volunteer, which first led him to move to Estonia. He has authored several books under his name and as a ghostwriter of essays and books, including a No. 1 bestselling book in Estonia in 2008. Diel also works as a freelance writer with work published by *The Huffington Post*, *Estonian Public Broadcasting* and *Forbes Estonia* among many others. Diel and Birman have collaborated on performances in the past with Birman as composer and Diel as librettist. These works include *No. 289* in 2014 and *Nostra Culpa* in 2013, which received international press coverage from CNN, NPR and BBC among others.

JUNE 21


—

JULY 06



*Music as a language, without the use of charged, divisive words, can create the kind of discussion that even the most profound of debates could only hope to achieve. Given our track record in producing high-profile concerts covered by the world's leading publications, a new opera that focuses not on mythological monsters but on the very real issues facing the world could inspire many people to re-consider their role in their urban environment and the world around them.*



+  (megaphone)



| solo whispering, Good luck,

1. MAANVALIJA I

3 yell  
8 say  
1 WAH/LA I  
2 yell

silence

stuck side by side

1 whistling

breath

repeat

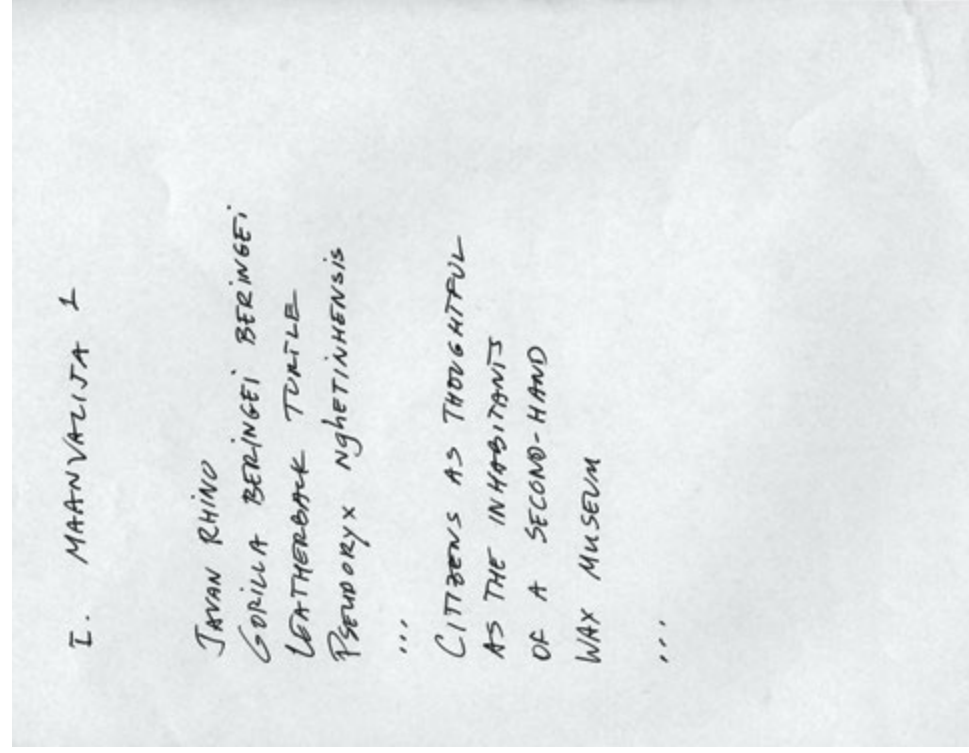
(WAH/LA I) do twice song (abs.)

ligger break interjection

"The machine has won," some have concluded after witnessing the construction of the American interstate highway system, coupled with vast concrete intersections that rise to the heavens. Yet these structures are being dismantled in many places, and a more human-friendly environment is sometimes the result of re-thinking the way we interact as human beings in an urban space. Our project will examine such a possibility (and in the cases of some cities, already a reality) in a musical space. The resulting piece of music, which will constitute an extended 40-minute one act opera, will focus on human relationships in such a reality—but the piece will not be overly utopian. Much like the outmoded machine must be destroyed to form closer bonds of communication in the real, urban world, our opera must first destroy the "deus ex machina" that is so essential to dramatic denouement in the operatic world.

**Image Caption,**

Hand written lyrics for movement 1. *Maanvalija I*.  
Scott Diel



**Image Caption**

Scott Diel (L) and Eugene Birman (R) in front of Rabbit Island's amphitheater, made naturally by an uprooted tree.

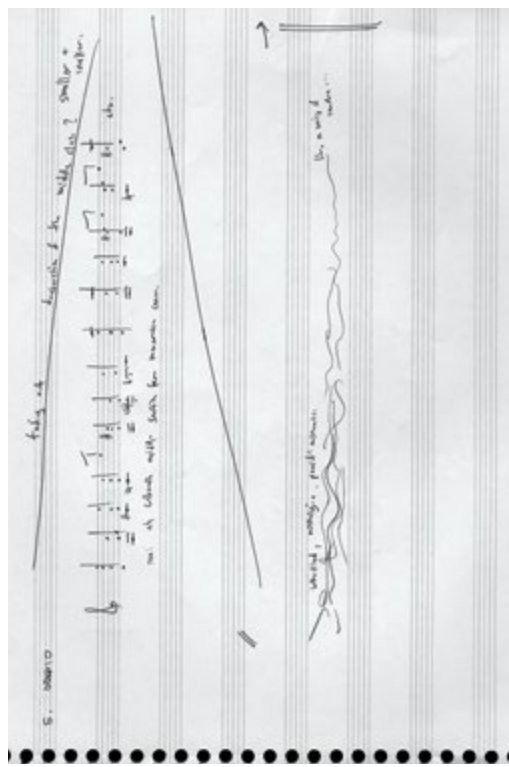
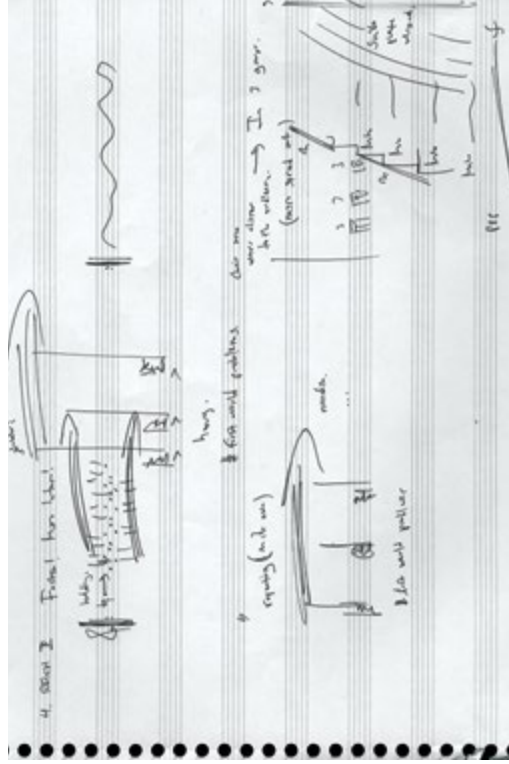
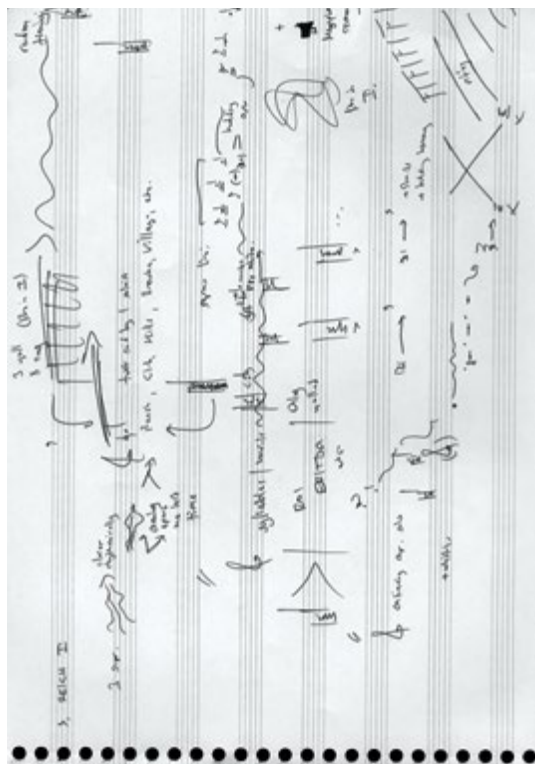
*Images by Andrew Ranville.*

*Freed from forced conciliation in the very beginning, our project will not only challenge audiences to consider their role in an urban society and how to improve it on an individual scale, it will also challenge essentially all the existing rules of opera as well. Central to the opera's development will be characters' responsibility to cope with an altering reality—ever-aware of their increasing responsibility to combat climate change and over-population, their decisions will reflect our own choices instead of dramatic archetypes. The role of the music will be, without bias, to show various possible conclusions, instead of one, allowing the audience to decide for itself (or individuals, to decide individually) what reality it must pursue.*

*Instead of clothing these themes in some vague, modernist gloss, we intend to show the transformation of our cities and the relationships within as they really are and inspire audiences to react to the narrative on stage after the performance. Life following art, or art following life, are both questions to be explored in our project but most succinctly, we look to create a world of opera that, minute by minute, note by note, looks remarkably like our own.*

—From Eugene Birman and Scott Diel's Rabbit Island Residency proposal, 2014





State of the Union *(above)*,  
2015.

### CALLING DR. GLOWACKI: SAVING OPERA FROM ITSELF

Scott Diel, July 2015

Composer Eugene Birman likes to say that opera was started by a bunch of elites trying to recreate Ancient Greek dramas in their living rooms. It may have been doomed from the very beginning.

But opera did have redeeming qualities. Before the 20th century it was actually fun. There was booing, hissing, exiting en masse, food throwing, and sometimes even rioting. In the opera house one encountered prostitutes, beer sellers, thieves, businessmen, as well as members of the proletariat. Opera of the 17th, 18th, and 19th centuries was "live" in the best sense of the word, and it likely had more in common with a World Wrestling Federation triple cage match than with an operatic production of the 21st century.

Not only was opera fun, it did not fear politics. The operagoer got both drama and commentary. Take the works of Verdi. Although a true opera buff might offer better examples, *I vespri siciliani* depicted the French as evil oppressors, *Attila* addressed the Austrian occupation, and *Un ballo in maschera* dealt with regicide.

OBLIVIO  
" THE CLASS THE  
US HATE THE  
GREATEST WIZ  
UCKS AN HOUR  
RVE US BURG  
OFF your AS  
AD, CIRCUS,  
SING WITH T  
TEVER WITH

But something happened between then and now. Eugene likes to blame Germany. After all, it was Wagner who brought us a 16-hour story about a magic ring stolen from a dwarf. *Parsifal* (only five hours) has a two-hour first act where nothing happens. To attempt to make up for it, Wagner impresarios have had tenor Jonas Kaufmann appear shirtless, and magazine articles are published about why it's okay to fall asleep during opera.

It seems opera in our day and age has become little more than an upper class ritual, where old white people applaud 200-year-old Greatest Hits by Verdi, Mozart, and Bizet. In "modern" works you get the operas Anna Nicole (as in Smith), Jerry Springer, or Two Boys (about online bullying). John Adams commemorates Nixon for going to China and Klinghoffer for being murdered in his wheelchair by the PLO, making opera more of a monument (something dead) than a vehicle to provoke thought and discussion.

In Florida (God's Waiting Room) it's not uncommon to see someone die in a restaurant, and it's somewhat surprising this doesn't happen more often at the opera. If young people are present, it's likely because they've been given tickets by their company or have been forced to attend by a humorless teacher. Even in Europe, which has a more active opera scene than the US, the audience usually encountered is largely white-hairs. I once attended a performance of Rigoletto in Tartu, Estonia, with an audience populated mainly by people in their 30s. I thought perhaps the Estonians had figured out how to save opera, but upon further investigation the audience proved to be out-of-work Danes on a "training mission." Sending them to the opera in Eastern Europe was cheaper for their government than feeding them in Scandinavia.

Opera continues to make itself more irrelevant. Despite efforts by the Met to stream it into theaters worldwide—and I fail to see how a broadcast of an opera can compete with a movie—it seems there is no worse idea than watching a movie of an opera, when the concert down the street offers a mosh pit.



In State of the Union, we've tried to remedy all this by writing an opera we ourselves would like to attend, about a topic we believe matters.

Early on we were asked what our elevator speech was for SOTU. I tried: "An opera about everything wrong with the planet..." But the problem here is that there's actually nothing wrong with the planet. There's something wrong with us.

SOTU is four characters—the environment, the rich, the middle class, and the poor—meeting and interacting over seven movements. It reflects my belief that many of our problems stem from how we view and treat one another. As a society, at least in the US, we equate wealth with wisdom, and poverty with personal shortcomings. SOTU attempts to offer the perspective of each character, without being so depressing that a concertgoer would go home and kill himself. It offers hope, in its own sobering way.

We also like the idea of this opera being performed somewhere unconventional, that it should not be so easy to access. In an era where music can be downloaded and shared essentially for free, what if some SOTU performances could say something about what it means to be a listener and how to appreciate music?

Eugene has suggested SOTU be premiered on a difficult-to-reach island, where you have to take a Boston Whaler, then a dinghy, and then scythe your way through a dense forest to reach the performance grounds. It would offer an unconventional experience and attract a rather special audience.

We're not alone in this desire. There are writers, composers, artistic directors, as well as performers out there who also would like to give the audience a better experience. But their efforts are not always positively rewarded.

In 2014, the Bristol Old Vic theater's artistic director invited the audience to "clap and whoop" during a performance of Handel's *Messiah*. One audience member, the scientist David Glowacki, took the director at his word but was then dragged from the theater by audience members when he tried to crowd-surf during the Hallelujah Chorus.

If you're out there Dr. Glowacki, and you happen to be reading this, you are exactly the audience we want. We hope we've created something worthy of your attendance.

SANTIAGO,  
CHILE  
Visual Artist

**JOSEFINA MUÑOZ** ([josefinamunoz.net](http://josefinamunoz.net)) is a visual artist based in Santiago, Chile. She received a BFA from Pontificia Universidad Catolica de Chile in Santiago, Chile (2006) and an MFA in Glass from Rhode Island School of Design (2013). Muñoz has been awarded artist residencies around the world, including Kenya, Tanzania, Germany and Scotland. Her work has been shown in solo exhibitions at the Nairobi National Museum (Kenya) and WaterFire (Providence, RI, USA). Group exhibitions include Far4 Gallery (Seattle, WA), Glass Museum (Monterrey, Mexico), North Lands Quatre Bras Gallery (Lybster, Scotland) and Centro Cultural de la Reina (Santiago, Chile). She has lectured and taught at Rhode Island School of Design, Pilchuck Glass School, Kuona Trust Centre for Visual Arts in Kenya, and TimeSpan Scotland, among others.

AUGUST 08

—  
SEPTEMBER 01

# JOSEFINA MUÑOZ

*Highly influenced by architecture, demographics, and space distribution, I employ different media/processes to comment upon the particularities of the places where I live and work. Trying to understand how space can be perceived in the absence of permanent constructions, I recently spent 10-months in Kenya completing field research for a project and exhibition about the Turkana nomads of northwest Kenya.*

*Living with the Turkana people made me gain a new understanding of the concept of habitability, whether through public/private space (Temporary Structures Series, opposite page) or domestic space (Provisional Form Series, pages 44–45). Similarly, the remoteness of the Ilemi Triangle triggered diverse spatial issues regarding the notion of isolation.*



**Temporary Structures,**

2014

*Branch installation / Variable  
measurements*

*Everything refers in fact to the differentiation which makes possible the isolation and interplay of distinct spaces. From the distinction that separates a subject from its exteriority to the distinctions that localize objects, from the home (constituted on the basis of the wall) to the journey (constituted on the basis of a geographical “elsewhere”), from the functioning of the urban network to that of the rural landscape, there is no spatiality that is not organized by the determination of frontiers.*

Michael de Certeau,

*The Practice of  
Everyday Life*, 1984

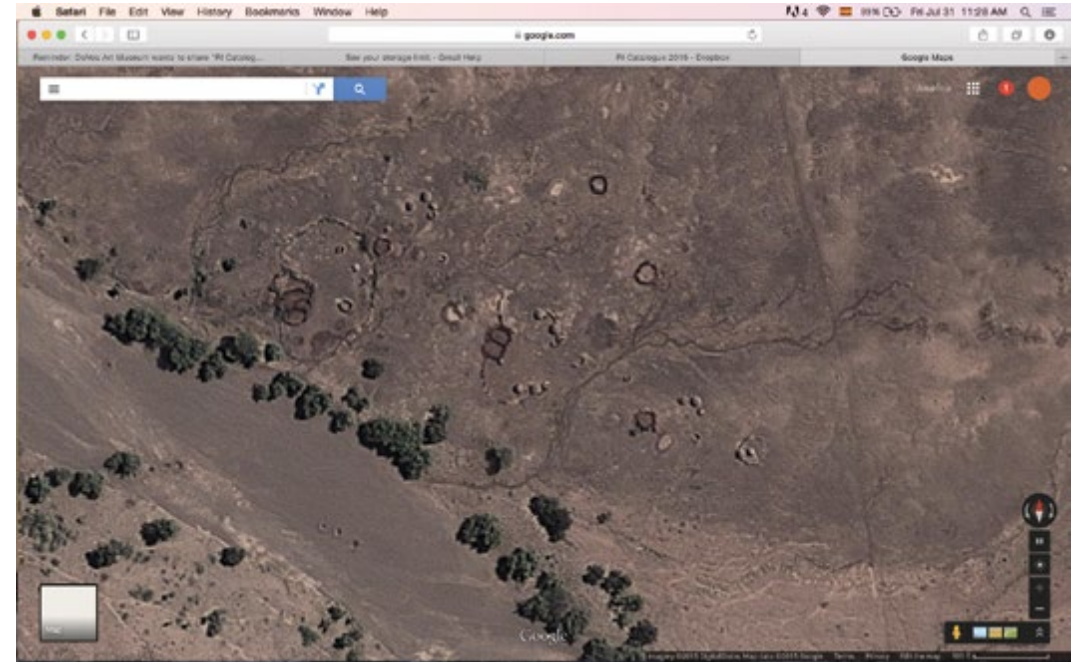
### BORDERLESS LAND

As we migrated through the Lokwanamoru Mountains, I could understand that we were transiting through a context of rare, yet impeccable state of total isolation. Only the materiality of a few elements could reveal that we were in the 21st century: a plastic jerrycan to carry water, tier-rubber sandals, or the industrially loomed kitenge<sup>1</sup> garment. Everything else was carefully handcrafted from wood and leather, as so were the traditions and cultural system. The scene could only be framed in a different time period; ages back.

Living with the Turkana nomads<sup>2</sup> allowed me to gain a new understanding of the concept of space, place, and habitability. Likewise, the remoteness of the Ilemi Triangle<sup>3</sup> epitomized the notion of isolation as an enduring imprint within my creative vocabulary. Somehow, while rambling through this dry and hot Sub-Saharan region I felt like an islander, in the reign of a borderless land, merely signified by twig bomas<sup>4</sup>, utterly absent of any permanent demarcation.

### INSULAR ISOLATION

The possibility of studying real insular isolation grew as an idea until it took the form of a multistep research, residency, and exhibition initiative. I have called this project *Is\_Land*. Adhering to the premise that an island can be a geographical territory surrounded by water, but also a metaphor of sociocultural global issues, the *Is\_Land* project focuses on a comparative analysis between the remotest inhabited island in the world, Tristan da Cunha, and other islands with unique features.



- 1 Kitenge: Colorful and highly patterned fabric used in East Africa.
- 2 The Turkana people live in northwest Kenya, averaging a population of around 900 thousand people. Traditional Turkana families nowadays live as nomadic pastoralists, migrating according to water-access necessities.
- 3 Ilemi Triangle: Disputed land between Kenya, Ethiopia and South Sudan, covering over 5,000 square miles.
- 4 Boma: Swahili term used to describe branch enclosures constructed in the form of fences that conceal cattle or housing.





From the Akai | House Series,

2014

The fundamental question is to define whether a detached landmass can act as a mirror of our larger society, or if an island is an exception to the general rules that currently structure our world.

Rabbit Island, an uninhabited, pristine speck of protected land in the middle of a lake in North America, will be the first step in the process. While at Rabbit Island I will be exposed to complete solitude for around a month. The idea is to be alone. No reading, no music, no talking, no art making, no nothing. The goal is to use time exclusively to embrace the sense of solitude and to explore the island as a concept: as a space, as a place, as a metaphor.

*Is\_Land* is an enticement to rethink the way we inhabit land and how we conceive of space—in the multifaceted sense of the concept, as defined by writers Carol Becker and Yi-Fu Tuan as a set of relations which not only refer to a material condition, but also to a complex sociocultural schema.

## FRONTIERS

As I prepare to head to Rabbit Island, I can't avoid thinking about the way spatiality is organized by frontiers (de Certeau), and how one should approach a borderline. Now, even if the assertion given by *divortium aquarum*<sup>5</sup> seems respectable, I want to fully comprehend the essence of the immediate water boundary that delineates the land. The tide, the wave, and the current, all permeable topographical elements that demarcate space, are not equivalent to those imposed by human—the wall, the fence, the line. Yet, how can we entirely apprehend these natural or human-imposed perimeters?

<sup>5</sup> *Divortium aquarum*: Latin concept employed to describe the boundaries delineated by bodies of water.

At the end, the examination of an island—the land, the isolation, the concept, the perimeter—is nothing more (and nothing less) than a symbol for the examination of the distinction that divorces the object or subject (island or human) from its exteriority (world). Still, as stated by English poet John Donne, and sung by many through Dennis Brown's classic reggae tune, no man is an island (...) every man is a part of the main.

Turkana family,  
2013





**Provisional Form I, II, III,**

Digital print on watercolor  
paper, 2014.

*(clockwise from top left)*



# NOAM ENBAR

JULY 21

—

AUGUST 07

**NOAM ENBAR** ([noamenbar.tumblr.com](http://noamenbar.tumblr.com)) is a composer and performer from Tel Aviv, Israel. His anti-establishment band, Habiluim, formed in 2003, has become one of the main radical voices in the Israeli music scene. The dark, political content of Habiluim's songs is often juxtaposed to ecstatic music, drawing from Russian and East-European folk traditions and inspired by composers such as Kurt Weill and Hanns Eisler. His many musical projects, choral-theatrical pieces and inventive, starkly political works in collaboration with filmmaker Avi Mograbi have been performed at festivals, theaters and museums in Israel and across Europe.

TEL AVIV,  
ISRAEL  
Composer, Musician



## SACRED WARP & WOOF SONG CYCLE

*The Sacred Harp* is a musical tradition of communal singing that has been experiencing a modern resurgence. Sacred Harp “singings”, as they are known, do not have organized rehearsals or separate seats for an audience, thus they are not performances in the usual sense of the word.

During Sacred Harp singings there is no conductor and the events are self-sufficient and democratic. Individuals position themselves to face each other, forming a hollow square, with each side of the square representing a different voice part (Treble, Alto, Tenor, Bass). Musical notation is expressed in a simplified system of common shapes—squares, circles, triangles, and so on—that singers with very little formal training can easily interpret.

My ongoing project, *The Sacred Warp and Woof Song Cycle*, fuses the form and spirit of Sacred Harp singing with a wide range of existential and social themes. Original hymns, anthems and odes investigate the warp and woof of the sociopolitical, existential and spiritual provinces within society.

While in residence on Rabbit Island I composed five new pieces intended specifically for a group of talented singers who would participate in their performance. The song texts were either discovered in books or catalogues found in the island's library or given to me in close proximity to my arrival to the Island

*The music* is written mostly in 4-part harmony, borrowing the color and style of the Sacred Harp repertoire, expanding it, occasionally adding roles to soloists, playing with rhythmic patterns and citing forms and scales of Indian Raga, African Pygmy polyphony and techniques of group improvisation.

*The performance* maintains the hollow square formation of traditional Sacred Harp “singings”. However, the ecstatic energy of the music is redirected from well-established ideas of traditional religion towards pan-spirituality, social awareness and jolly foolishness.

*Special thanks to the talented singers who participated in the Marquette performance: Matt Mitchell (who also organized the group), Allen Dupras, Alexis Mahler, Hannah Moran, Alex Polkinghorne, Roscoe Schieler & Maitri White.*

*Winter Is Icummen* is an antagonistic and ridiculous poem taken from the “Collected Poems by Ezra Pound” found in the Rabbit Island library. Pound's poem is a parody of the Middle English “Rota” song “Cuckoo Song” also known as “Sumer Is Icummen In”. Caricaturing the original Mid-English Wessex dialect, rather than blooming summer, it pronounces the arrival of freezing winter and substitutes the cheerful “sing Cuccu” with the harsh “sing Goddamm!”.

## *Winter Is Icummen In (Ancient Music)*

*/ Ezra Pound*

*Winter is icummen in,  
Lhude sing Goddamm.  
Raineth drop and staineth slop,  
And how the wind doth ramm!  
Sing: Goddamm.*

*Skiddeth bus and sloppeth us,  
An ague hath my ham.  
Freezeth river, turneth liver,  
Damn you, sing: Goddamm.  
Goddamm, Goddamm, 'tis why I am, Goddamm,  
So 'gainst the winter's balm.  
Sing goddamm, damm, sing Goddamm.  
Sing goddamm, sing goddamm, DAMM.*

Noam Elkav 2015

# WINTER IS ICUMMEN IN

A20-1930? Ezra Pound

Soprano (S), Alto (A), Tenor (T), Bass (B) vocal parts. Key signature: three sharps (F#, C#, G#). Time signature: 4/4. The system contains four measures of music with various annotations such as slurs, accents, and fingerings.

Instrumental accompaniment for piano. The system contains four measures of music with detailed annotations including slurs, accents, and fingerings. The bass line features several triplet markings.



**Driftwood** is based on a text by Andrew Ranville found on p.14 of the 2012 Rabbit Island catalogue, *No Island is a Man*. It is an existential meditation on the destiny of all living things. I edited the text, composing it as an allegorical sepulture ritual.

**Driftwood**

/ Andrew Ranville

Great trees, now dead on their sides  
At the boundary of the coast  
Covered in lichen, poised to tumble  
Down the blocks of red, white sandstone.

Bleached by sun, appear as bones  
Old trunks slowly rolled by young shoots  
To their final destination.

**Come Fill The Cup** is based on “Rubaiyat”, written anonymously in the 11th Century by the Persian mathematician and poet Omar Khayyam. It is a surprisingly provocative work (in 11th century terms), praising the virtues of wine and shattering religious beliefs. Here I explicitly adopted the form of a typical Sacred Harp hymn, enhancing its harmonic scope, however, to accompany this unique text.

**Come Fill The Cup (Rubaiyat)**

/ Omar Khayyam (Trans. by Edward Fitzgerald)

Come, fill the Cup, and in the fire of Spring  
Your Winter-garment of Repentance fling:  
The Bird of Time has but a little way  
To flutter-and the Bird is on the Wing.

Perplex no more with Human or Divine,  
To-morrow's tange to the wind resign,  
And lose your fingers in the tresses of  
The Cypress-slender Minister of Wine

Oh, threats of hell and hopes of Paradise  
One thing at least is certain-This Life flies;  
One thing is certain and the rest is Lies;  
The Flower that once has blown for ever dies.

We are no other than a moving row  
Of Magic Shadow-shapes that come and go  
Round with the Sun-illuminated Lantern held  
In Midnight by the Master of the Show.

And that inverted Bowl they call the Sky,  
Whereunder crawling coop'd we live and die,  
Lift not your hands to It for help-for It  
As impotently moves as you or I.





*And The Astronomer Shall Dwell* written by my dear friend Yanatan Levy, is an anecdotal text dealing with the utopian reconciliation of disciplines and their fusion into one continuous human effort.

***And The Astronomer Shall Dwell***

*/ Yanatan Levy*

*And the Astronomer shall dwell with the Agronomist  
And brighter rays than tiger stripes shall path new trails  
When height plus weight shall sum to nix  
And brighter rays than tiger stripes shall path new trails.*

***Ni aazhawa'am-minis*** (not shown) is based on a text by Dr. Dylan A.T. Miner (Métis) found on p.28–33 in the *Rabbit Island 2014 Residency Exhibition* catalogue. Dr. Miner's text explores the colonial politics of renaming territory. The text cites the example of Rabbit Island itself being once named by Native Americans as "Ni aazhawa'am-minis" ("place of crossing over"). In my past as a punk rocker in Israel, I wrote a song in Hebrew addressing an analogous issue: the act of re-naming Palestinian villages and streets by Zionism.

***Ni aazhawa'am-minis***

*/ Dylan A.T. Miner (Métis)*

*For / my / ancestors / islands / where / functional / some  
are / sacred / before / there was / Rabbit / Island / it was /  
known as / Ni / aazhawa'am / minis / newly / created layers  
/ cannot / entirely obscure / the / layers / underneath.*





**DEVOSART**  
MUSEUM



The DeVos Art Museum, founded in 1975, is located on the campus of Northern Michigan University. The museum is part of the School of Art and Design and serves as a regional art museum for the Upper Peninsula of Michigan. The mission of the DeVos Art Museum is to provide the university and local communities the opportunity to experience original works of art and to foster educational opportunities for all audiences through exhibitions, programs and publications. Through the vast academic resources at Northern Michigan University, the museum aims to become an artistic learning laboratory for NMU, the Upper Peninsula of Michigan and the Upper Midwest region.

## RELATED EVENTS

### Artist's Lecture by Josefina Muñoz

Wednesday, September 23, 7pm, AD165

### Artist's Lecture by Beau Carey

Thursday, September 24, 7pm, AD165

### Reception: 2015 Rabbit Island Residency Exhibition

Friday, September 25, 6–8pm

*All residents will be present for the reception.*

### Performance: Sacred Warp and Woof Song Cycle

Friday, September 25, 7pm

*Composed by Noam Enbar, performed by*

*Marquette community singers*





**BEAU CAREY**

*Painter*

**NOAM ENBAR**

*Compser, Musician*

**JOSEFINA MUÑOZ**

*Visual Artist*

**EUGENE BIRMAN**

*Composer*

**SCOTT DIEL**

*Writer*



**DEVOSART  
MUSEUM**