



Figure 1. Canal Flats, 2020. Video still courtesy of prOphecy sun.

an interview with prOphecy sun

7-channel video and sound installation. iPhone film transferred to HD video, 17:05 mins, loops. iPhone environment sounds transferred to line 6 pedal with the addition of processed voice, delay, keys and loop.

As a practicing artist, emerging scholar and ecofeminist, I contemplate how new technologies, humanity and environment can engage, collaborate and connect to each other through more-than-human shared spaces of temporality. I define the environment as everything that surrounds us, including energy, plants, animals, air, water, land, fire, light, spirituality, dreams, stories, bodies, matter, sound, frequencies, politics, literature and culture.

From afar, nestled in complex rows, the mountains of the Columbia Basin appear as wondrous, breathtaking and hyper-impenetrable beings. But up close they are vibrant and seem impervious to human touch even after long occupation and mineral mining, holding space for a plethora of organized systems in which trees, plants, water, mycelium threads, linking roots, fungi and other life forms cohabitate, communicate and live in a state of consensus. Yet, even then, these systems, organisms and water passages are competing against and challenging each other, and in a way, co-becoming other (Dooren, 2016). Theorists describe this complex act as a multispecies relationship, which continually re-forms and transitions into something new – revealing more-than-human shared spaces of temporality (Kirksey, 2014; Morton, 2010).

Inspired by the multiplicity of regions in the Columbia Basin in southeastern British Columbia, in particular, the ecosystems from Valemount, Nakusp, and Rossland, to the Tobacco Plains and Canal Flats, in the traditional territories of the Ktunaxa, Sinixt and Syllis, Yaqan nukij, Secwepemc, sə'xwEpməx and ?akisqnuk, ***Feminist Bodies in Posthuman Mountain Imaginary*** (2020) features 7 vignettes filmed in the mountainous communities and water passages surrounding the Basin (see Fig 1-6). The artwork creates artistic accounts and movements between historical, fiction and figuration – all in response to the ever-changing landscape of the watershed.

Referencing recent traditions of Art Intervention, Performance Art, Land Art, and the canon of feminist art history and what Donna Haraway calls “vibrant-human actors,” this research seeks to investigate some of these tensions by invoking feminist stewardship (Haraway, 1988; 1997; Hayles, 2008).

Asking the questions:

What does a posthuman mountain imaginary look like?

How do the watersheds change the ecosystems throughout the Basin region?

Can bodies move through these systems without disruption?

And, how do the views up close vs. far away change these systems?

[Visit the virtual exhibition by clicking here.](#)

Oxygen Art Centre (OAC): *Please briefly describe your project for those who might not already know of it.*

prOphecy sun (ps): The project consists of two projects: 1) 7-channel audio and video work; and 2) a 60-minute sound composition. Both pieces explore my movement and sound investigations through various topographical locations throughout the Columbia Basin region.

(OAC): *How do the converging mediums of sound, video, performance, and text interact on this project?*

(ps): The various mediums converge to support one another. For example, the field recordings were captured whilst filming and then translated in post. The 7-channels share elongated and granulated snippets from 60-minute composition. In this sense, both pieces communicate with one another as they share similar tones, sounds, frequencies and ruminations on place.

(OAC): *How does this project relate to your previous works?*

(ps): This project relates to my previous artworks in three ways: 1) in the research, production and presentation of multiple concurrent perspectives and vantage points; 2) the use of handheld capturing technologies; and 3) explorations of the female form in the landscape.

(OAC): *How does this project expand and mutate from your previous works?*

(ps): In previous work, I have focused on shooting in one or perhaps two locations. However, in this project the goal was to shoot eight or more locations across the Columbia Basin. This in turn expanded my understanding of how to manage time, shoot, mitigate and interact with unknown landscapes.

(OAC): *How has this project evolved your artistic practice as a whole?*

an interview with prOphecy sun

(ps): Absolutely. As I mentioned above, this particular project has given me much insight and field research on how to prepare, shoot and traverse in and through a variety of weather conditions and across diverse infrastructures.

(OAC): *Please describe your embodied experience in performing and documenting yourself in these landscapes?*

(ps): This research was shot before the first snowfall. The air was crisp, and, in some areas, fragmented patches of winter had already dusted the surface. When I was performing in front of the camera, I was aware of a body-wide response to the cold, the slippery boots on my feet stepping on crunchy grass, and tree debris, the stretchy clothing on my legs, the bright and equally diminished light. Yvonne Rainer's Trio A (1978); embodied experience

(OAC): *What artists inspire this project? What artworks in particular?*

(ps): I draw much inspiration from Sophie Calle's Suite artwork, Vénitienne (1980) and her approaches to documenting the everyday, and, in particular by Rita Wong's artwork River Relations (2017), which discusses the complexities of the Columbia River.

(OAC): *Your project explores notions of posthumanism, feminism, and place. How does theory inform your artistic practice?*

(ps): As an emerging artist/scholar, I see theory as an essential element that helps center, contextualize and foreground and shape my practice. Theoretical framing has opened up new way to engage in creative research possibilities.

(OAC): *What is your understanding of feminism? How does it manifest in your practice? In your everyday life?*

(ps): I see feminism as a type of stewardship. It is collaborative, vital, and considers everything – including energy, plants, animals, air, water, land, fire, light, spirituality, dreams, stories, bodies, matter, sound, frequencies, politics, literature and culture. I see feminism as a continual conscious and unconscious process of documenting and shining light on unseen moments that would otherwise be ignored or forgotten.

(OAC): *What are you reading right now?*

(ps): I am reading *Helium Dreams* by Jeanne Marie Laskas. It's about a new generation of airships, cameras and surveillance systems.

(OAC): *What song / book / article / film / artist / exhibition / artwork is particularly poignant to you?*
To your artistic practice?

(ps): Song: I am moved by so many songs, sounds and moments. So, in that sense, I have no particular song, however, the sounds that surround me inspire me to no end. Really, I am inspired by the wind moving across the bedroom window or the sound of my own breathing. It could be anything really that can entice and drive me forward into unknown auditory spaces.

Book: Laurie Anderson's *All the Things I lost in the Flood* (2018).

Film: *Wings of Desire* (1987).

Artists: Yvonne Rainer's *Trio A* (1978); Pipilotti Rist's *Pour Your Body Out* (2009).

(OAC): *How do you approach your artistic practice? What does a single day look like for your artistic practice?*

(ps): My life and artistic practice are inseparable. By this, I mean that my experiences and daily rhythms are often featured in my research. For example, as a mother, artist, and researcher, I have to work in short, temporal bursts. I collaborate often to see a project to completion. I work fast and decidedly and generally schedule 3-hour creative pockets.

My experiences are often front and central and shown in public settings. This circles back to the first point, which refers to the intertwined and often inseparable way I practice. My artwork often showcases my process and indeed my process is often the finished work.

Pre Covid: A typical day for me included clocking in familial duties, and then dedicated writing in the mornings and I editing in the evenings (sound, video or text) when the littles went to bed.

Covid times: I find that creative projects and writing are mainly dedicated to the short window when the littles are in bed.

(OAC): *How does collaboration and the everyday inform your practice? This project?*

(ps): Collaboration and the everyday are very important to my creative practice and inform how I the artwork is made. I take up Bracha Ettinger notions on collaboration being an act of process (Ettinger, 2005). More to that point, I see collaborations as more; as a feminist practice and sensibility that decenters the single voice, embracing new ways of working with others through interdisciplinary research and skill sharing. Indeed, as Long et al. point out, collaborative efforts allow for human and non-human beings, animals, objects and things to work together over time on shared activities (Long et al., 2018). I think this is important point to consider, and I try and let the creative and collective process that informs aspects of the artwork.

The everyday also informs my practice in a multitude of ways. I like how Stephen Johnson describes the everyday: as an action or event that brings things into focus that are overlooked, or in, "the realm of the unnoticed" (Johnson, 2008, 15).

I see my work as chanceful, full of many unknowns. Or perhaps as a process snapshot – capturing breath, light, routine, or, maybe more specifically, banal life...



Figure 2-3. Creston Swamp and Hoodoos, 2020. Video stills courtesy of prOphecy sun.

...events or irregular pedestrian actions or activities that unfold around me. Succinctly put: my practice is a meditation on nothing and everything, sharing everyday events and moments. When I show a work, I consider the feel, smell, touch or trace of a space and try and incorporate or imbue the space with another residue or bring out a feeling already there.

(OAC): *What are you most excited to be working on next?*

(ps): I am excited to be working on three new projects. The first, my sixth solo album, Skykitten (2021), which is a mix of improvised vocals, dark electronic beats and field recordings. The second project, Queering the Dams (2021) is a series of cinematic movements in and through the dams of British Columbia. And, thirdly, Intertidal (2021), a complex interdisciplinary program for SFU Galleries in the Summer of 2021.

(OAC): *How do you see yourself moving on from this project?*

(ps): This project has taught me a lot about collaboration and also about working with and across extreme elements. For example, when filming in the Creston Swap video, I slipped and fell 6 feet backwards when a log rolled on top of me. Luckily, I did not break any bones or puncture my lungs. I did however go to the hospital as I was having extreme difficulty breathing from where the log had hit the top of my sternum and I felt incredibly lucky that in the end I just had some incredible scratches and bruises and was very lucky to walk away from that shoot without any broken bones. That shoot reminded me about the importance of wearing weather appropriate foot gear and about having someone on site at all times in case of emergencies.



Figure 4. Creston Swamp and Hoodoos, 2020. Video stills courtesy of prOphecy sun.

(OAC): *How do you conceptualize place and memory in regard to this project?*

(ps): On the topic of place: this artwork was shot across diverse ecosystems and terrain, which spans the Columbia Basin region in southeastern British Columbia. This includes: Valemount, Nakusp, and Rossland, to the Tobacco Plains and Canal Flats, in the traditional territories of the Ktunaxa, Sinixt and Syllis, Yaqan nukij, Secwepemc, sə'xwEpməx and ?akisqnuk people.

On the topic of memory, I see memory as interconnected and elusive, often even fleeting, yet, it is meshed with our cultural history, perception and relationship with a place, site and/or sound.

In this project, I consider memory in relation my body, technology and the various historical articulations across and through the topographical regions.

(OAC): *How does this project refer to projects that explore performance, feminism, and embodiment throughout art history?*

(ps): This project follows a long lineage of feminist production, that incorporates bodies, performance, filmic process and emergent ways of viewing the everyday. I draw much inspiration from past and present experimental makers such as Mark Kelly (1973), Kate Craig (1979), Judy Chicago (1980-1985), Lenka Clayton (2012), and Zoe Leonard (2014) to name a few.

This project carries in the spirit of these artists and takes up Rosi Braidotti ideas on the historicity of female bodies, which embraces the specificity of lived bodies and their embodied experiences (Braidotti, 1994).



Figure 5. Feminist Bodies, 2020. [Soundtrack still via Soundcloud.](#)



Figure 6. In Between and The Spit, 2020. Video stills courtesy of prOphecy sun.

(OAC): *What do you mean by the following phrases:*

- *site-specific feminist engagements*
- *posthuman mountain imaginary*
- *feminist stewardship*

And, how are they challenged/interrogated/explored in this project?

(ps): On thinking of site-specific feminist engagements, my thinking here is rooted in notions of site, as a shared space of temporality – where life forms cohabitate, communicate and live in a state of constant encounter (Van Dooren et al. 3; Kirksey 217-219). Stacy Alaimo describe this as transcorporeality: where bodies, politics, surroundings and substances merge and become blurred. I see site-specific engagements as complicated and ever evolving and approach each new space, landscape or moment as a relational/locational/situational/improvisational/responsive kind of endeavor.

On thinking about posthumanism and mountains, I take up Eben Kirksey's articulations on posthuman meshing, in which a variety of species, time frames and realities blend together, and form something new. This is how I see imaginary – an emerging set of approaches and shapes and experiences.

On thinking of feminist stewardship, my research advocates for an auto-ethnographic, research-creation, corporeal approach, in which I both restrain and take up action and stewardship in the landscape. I see stewardship as a call to action, a posthuman meditation, in which bodies, objects, species, technologies, environment, inherently move, liberate and co-evolve, and co-become together – creating new systems that queer, aid and extend our gaze, perception and position beyond (Barad 2007; Hayles 2010; Braidotti 2010; Kirksey, 2016; Haraway 2015).

In Feminist Bodies I feel like I have just touched the surface and would like to revisit this series again in the near future, as each landscape and microclimate and my relationships to each of these unique systems develops.

(OAC): *Is there anything else you would like to say about this project?*

(ps): I would like to thank you both for this engaging and thoughtful conversation and I would like to thank the Columbia Kootenay Cultural Alliance for the 2019 Major Projects Award.