

GEOGRAPHICAL DIVIDES:

Finding Common Ground



GALLERY
NOTES



Views from the Great Basin: Nevada Printmakers Connect

Essay by Fred Sigman

Curated by Anne M. Hoff
Professor at the College of Southern Nevada
and
Candace Nicol
Instructor at Truckee Meadows Community College

Gallery Notes by Fred Sigman,
Art Historian, Photographer/Filmmaker, Las Vegas

There were a number of ideas floating about the Nevada arts community in 2009 as several printmakers were considering their geographical identities, their cultural place in the state, and wondering, “What are other printmakers throughout the state involved with?” It was apparent to some of these printmakers that there has been little dialogue between artists of the two dominant communities of Las Vegas and Reno, and that artists living in the remote territories of the Nevada outback are sometimes overlooked. Calling upon the printmakers’ sense of community, sixteen artists were invited to participate in a project to explore these geographical and cultural differences in Nevada, which resulted in this exhibition, titled *Geographical Divides*. Pairing one artist from the north with one from the south, eight collaborations of printmakers each produced two prints. Each artist produced an initial plate that was sent to their collaborating partner for further surface and conceptual additions, then returned for completion. The particular processes and techniques used were of the artists’ own choosing. Each pair had conversations then they were free to interpret the idea of “Geographical Divides” as they wished.

The Modernist myth of the artist is one of isolation, working alone, toiling through some need for self-expression. In this age of social networking, with more artists being schooled in university art programs, and burgeoning arts districts in many communities, artists are intent on creating collaborations rather than retreating into garrets. Printmakers exemplify this artistic networking, while working in shared studio spaces and

conversing about how to apply traditional techniques and new chemistries to the underlying concepts. Like photographers, printmakers produce multiples of their images, often with an eye toward the production of portfolios and print exchanges among their peers.

No place becomes “geography” until humans create divisions and categories that organize and situate social patterns, giving a place meaning. Lines visible only on the plans of cartographers are drawn across an expanse of land, thus creating political and cultural territories. Abstract symbols on maps represent physical features of the earth’s surface, some of which are natural, some of which are human. The boundaries imposed by the mapmaker may follow a natural topographical feature such as a river or mountain range, or they may be drawn along coordinates of latitude and longitude without regard to topography, environment or existing societies of indigenous peoples. Mapmaking creates a geographical divide, with the visual representation identifying the place as now belonging to a people and symbolizing their culture. Printmakers such as we see in this exhibition often borrow from the techniques of mapmakers for their own images.

Nevada, like anywhere else, has its own geographical and cultural divides, often thought of as existing between north and south with Reno and Las Vegas respectively being the urban *loci* around which those contests occur. There are local lines of conflict that have been drawn between continuing real estate development of gated communities and fenced ranch land, leading to disputes over land use, water rights and the preservation of open



GALLERY NOTES

spaces. The novels of Nevada author H. Lee Barnes often explore social differences throughout the state that may be explained by the distance between the political capital and the economic capital of Nevada. He suggests that what separates these two cities is the stewardship they maintain over their respective geographies. While Reno strives to foster its reputation as the “Biggest Little City in the World,” in part by staving off over-development, Las Vegas is more than anxious to leave no stone unturned nor any desert plot left empty. In this exhibition, one of the recurring themes being explored by these printmakers is how Nevada’s land has been abused or cared for; Nevada is defined by land use.

The most difficult part for me, which is also the best part in many ways, was the battle for a physical interaction with such a distance between paired artists. That also seemed to me to be the most successful element of the project for me, taking me out of my comfort zone, and introducing me to another artist, as well as a part of Nevada I was unfamiliar with.

—ERIK BEEHN

For some decades, there has been a kind of sagebrush war among the *culturati* of Nevada, the disputed territory drawn along aesthetic lines. The divide that evolved has been to separate the contemporary artists who prefer to align their styles and interests with the progressive art centers of the Bay Area or L.A. from the more provincial, less critical artists whose subjects reflect their hometown, Nevada experiences. An artist in Nevada may acknowledge living locally but winces at being called a “local artist.” This is particularly the case if the artist lives in a major urban center such as Las Vegas. Yet, such apparent provincialism

avoided by the urbane is encouraged by writers such as Lucy Lippard, who advocates a kind of artistic return to one’s own backyard, appealing to a “lure of the local.” Lippard challenges the intent of much place-based art, sometimes narrowly defined as landscape. Hers is an appeal to go beyond just making pictures of unaffected natural environments, as though that were even possible anymore. “For all the art that is about place, very little is of place – made by artists within their own places or with the people who live in the scrutinized place, connecting with the history and environment.”

Lippard’s call to the local is implicit in this exhibition. Through the representation of the landscape and place, the artists in *Geographical Divides* examine the differences between human nature and nature; the relativity of differing social values that mirror a particular geographic locale; the economic effects on these values by the primary industries of Nevada, namely gambling and mining – which are essentially the same. Some of the artists also deconstruct the cultural and historical myths that have defined Nevada, making use of the symbols themselves such as images of neon signs, flora of the Mojave, showgirls, white picket fences and extra-terrestrial beings.

Whatever divides exist in Nevada, they are dissolved once one leaves the cities behind. Gertrude Stein summarized America as a geography with “more places where no one is rather than where someone is.” Such is the allure of the open road in Nevada, across the Great Basin and Mojave deserts, seemingly stretched to a vanishing point, beyond any geographical divide.

I was able to adapt to a style and imagery completely foreign to my own. Taking a step in someone else's world was nothing short of awesome. I worked in a much different way than I'm accustomed to working and yet I learned of myself that I'm adaptable to think in another artistic language without losing my way. I'm a complete loner when it comes to art and pretty much otherwise; working with my 'partner in printmaking' (Lynn's words) taught me that working with a partner is really a priceless enlightening artistic adventure.

—MARIA ARANGO

Urban Rural Interface
Lynn Schmidt, Reno and
Maria Arango, Las Vegas
Woodcut
10" x 20"
2010



Terra Tribuo Terra Partis
Maria Arango, Las Vegas and
Lynn Schmidt, Reno
Woodcut
10" x 20"
2010



ARANGO: SCHMIDT

LYNN SCHMIDT & MARIA ARANGO

Urban Rural Interface

Schmidt says, with certain astonishment, “I actually *live* at the *Urban Rural Interface*.” A person’s real home is not a house, but the environment that surrounds her, the place where her life may be thought to be rooted much like the trees around her. To be of a place, rather than simply in a place; this is often the promise of the rural life.

There are those who prefer the more cosmopolitan centers with their conveniences of shopping, proximity to places of employment and all of the cultural trimmings of museums and colleges. In Nevada, both the rural and urban remain possible.

Interface is a term associated with industrial and computer technologies, referring to the means by which machines communicate with one another, or how humans communicate with one another through those machines. It is a mechanized and often-artificial means of conversation, one that occurs through binary code, pixels or buttons. An urban rural interface has some of that artificiality associated with it also, even if it is a wonderful place to live. These remain places of an ideal environment, a world believed to be undisturbed, where one can commune with the land, not unlike what we might see in the landscape paintings of the Hudson River School in the nineteenth century.

MARIA ARANGO & LYNN SCHMIDT

Terra Tribuo Terra Partis (*Divided Earth, Shared Earth*)

The Nevada landscape is a shared space, not simply a divided geography. Arango and Schmidt’s print illustrates how Nevada’s wild spaces have been carved up and split into segregated pieces. Such is one of the contradictions of a state with an abundance of open landscape and agencies of wildlife conservation that are often at odds with land development.

In this print we see the grids of human organization and division that establish wild habitat and human settlement. Ranchers share their grazing lands with the coyote; urban development, especially in southern Nevada, pits the desires of people who want to live among the beauties of desert scenery against the wildlife already inhabiting those views.

But in between, if not actually drawing the wild together with the tamed and manicured, are the tributaries that funnel the one resource all people and animals depend upon and sometimes argue over, and that is water. The aerial view seen here of this geographical divide illustrates the need to share that one precious and increasingly diminishing resource.

BIOGRAPHIES:

Lynn Schmidt graduated with a Bachelor of Fine Arts from Fresno State College, Fresno, California. Later she earned a Master’s degree in Psychology from Sonoma State College, Rohnert Park, California. She has taught printmaking at Truckee Meadows Community College, Reno, and Santa Rosa Junior College, Santa Rosa, California. In addition she has taught art in many therapeutic facilities in Sonoma and Napa Counties in California. She has lived in Reno since 1992.

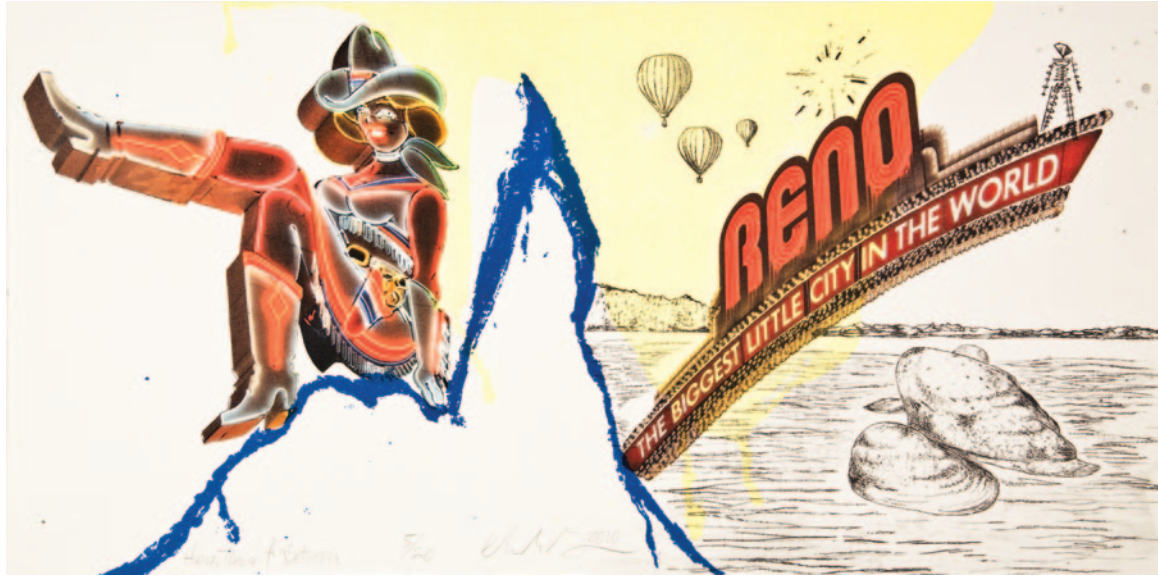
Maria Arango has exhibited in several galleries in the Las Vegas area and has quickly expanded to regional, national and international exhibits. Most recently works have been accepted in the prestigious Brand Gallery and Art Center in Glendale, California for their annual juried works on paper exhibition, the Hunterdon Museum of Art in Clinton, New Jersey and the 5th Print Biennial in the Marsh Gallery of the University of Richmond Museum, Richmond, Virginia. She is represented by the DeZion Art Gallery in Springdale, Utah. Her work is part of permanent collections including the University of Oregon in Eugene, Spencer Museum in Kansas City, Kansas and the Princeton Graphic Arts Collection in Princeton, New York.

Erik Beehn and I had very few difficulties in resolving any differences we had simply because we are easy-to-get-along-with artists and we were willing to flex our schedules, ideas and techniques. We first laid out a time line and we stuck to it. Both of us had to compromise, but we realized this was the best way to finish the job.

—NOLAN PREECE

Here, There & Between
Erik Beehn, Las Vegas and
Nolan Preece, Reno
Digital print, lithograph
20" x 10"
2010

The Milkman
Nolan Preece, Reno and
Erik Beehn, Las Vegas
Digital print, intaglio
20" x 10"
2010



BEEHN:PREECE

ERIK BEEHN & NOLAN PREECE

Here, There & Between

Many of the artists in this project appropriated iconic images easily associated with Nevada: showgirls, yucca trees, nuclear mushroom clouds and of course, neon signs. The assemblage and composition of these recognizable images, along with their associated meanings, allows the viewer to read the print somewhat like a pictogram. And what do we read if we take into account the title *Here, There & Between*?

Wherever you are at any given time in Nevada, outside of the major metropolitan areas of “here and there,” you are miles from nowhere, between somewhere. As you travel across the great basins and over mountain divides of the state, you appreciate this area of emptiness many call America’s Outback, a term used also by Beehn and Preece when they describe the void between the jagged edges seen in this print that separates the south and the north.

Beehn and Preece perch one of several iconic symbols of Las Vegas, Fremont Street’s Sassy Sally, atop the jagged edge of a Nevada mountain peak. Across the print, Reno’s own popular sign along with smaller pictorial references to Reno’s tourism of balloons, Lake Tahoe recreation and the Burning Man event.

NOLAN PREECE & ERIK BEEHN

The Milkman

The assumption that Las Vegas ignores its history is a generalization, and not entirely accurate. This has been a critique by several artists in this project, including ones from the south.

On Fremont Street, this neon sign of a milkman has been restored and placed alongside other historical signs of Las Vegas. Neon may be an invention of the French, but it was in Las Vegas that neon reached its full artistic potential. The neon on the Strip was carried to the scale of architecture as it trimmed the roadside signs and façades of casinos. This beauty was further commercialized on Fremont Street, at motels, pool supply companies and dry cleaners.

Preece and Beehn make use of one of Las Vegas’ more endearing hometown images, that of the 1950s mascot of Anderson Dairy, Andy Anderson. The artists use the venerable Milkman as a symbol of Southern Nevada’s larger population, along with its growing economic and political influences. A growing child needs milk and Las Vegas is here to deliver it’s own power throughout the rest of Nevada, leaving behind the traditional industries of mining with its army of earthmovers. Andy, with his expression of pride, turns his back on the cultural influences of Northern Nevada, striding off on his own.

BIOGRAPHIES:

Erik Beehn was born in Chicago, Illinois and spent his youth in Las Vegas. He returned to Chicago to attend the School of The Art Institute of Chicago where he received his Bachelor of Fine Arts degree in 2005. Upon graduation, he relocated to Los Angeles, California and began training as a master printer for Gemini G.E.L., a fine art publishing house located in West Hollywood, California. In 2010, Beehn returned to Las Vegas, where he currently resides, to continue his studio practices.

Nolan Preece received his Master of Fine Arts degree in photography and printmaking at Utah State University, Logan in 1980. His work has been included in many invitational and solo exhibitions throughout the United States. Preece’s art is in thirty-one permanent collections including the Nevada Museum of Art, Reno; the Utah Museum of Fine Arts, Salt Lake City; the Snell and Wilmer Collection, Las Vegas, Nevada; the Print Club of Albany, New York and most recently, the Southern Graphics Council Archives, Oxford, Mississippi. Preece has been published in books and periodicals. He teaches art classes and is the full-time galleries curator/art professor at Truckee Meadows Community College in Reno.

Open Range
Daryl DePry, Las Vegas and
Sharon Tetty, Carson City
Woodcut
10" x 20"
2010

Virginia City Tapestry
Sharon Tetty, Carson City and
Daryl DePry, Las Vegas
Sculptural intaglio, etching
10" x 20"
2010



DEPRY:TETLY

DARYL DEPRY & SHARON TETLY

Open Range

Open Range originated with artist DePry, with his ranch-like brand Double-D, depicting himself as a figuratively shaped thought bubble, sitting with head down in a moment of reverie. His mind, his body, are filled with images of out there, somewhere. A world of Joshua trees, desert mountains, feral burro and cattle ranches. At home in Las Vegas, the cliché images of showgirls are overshadowed by the promise of Heaven, a word written along the Nevada border that bisects Lake Tahoe. And in this mind map, the artist shows us his press, the means by which he makes his visions of the open range visible to others.

The open range in this print is equivalent to the open road, further symbolized by the depiction of Highway 95, the road that brings together northern and southern Nevada. The open road is a place unto itself, with cultural associations of travel and freedom. The promise of this great escape has always been at risk, even in days past. Open range was not necessarily free range. Its periphery was fenced, and eventually its interior parcels barbed-wired. We often use art as a way to escape, however temporarily, into the imagined world of rural and wilderness landscapes.

BIOGRAPHIES:

Daryl DePry grew up in San Diego, California and moved to Las Vegas in 1989. He attended the University of Nevada, Las Vegas where he received his Bachelor of Fine Arts and a Master of Fine Arts in printmaking. He has participated in several print exchanges including 6 Sides 2 Every Story organized by Candace Nicol in Reno, Nevada, Artist Trading Card Project organized by Barratt Galleries in Australia and Oregon InkSpot 3rd Annual 2009 International Print Exchange organized by Eastern Oregon University in La Grande.

Sharon Tetly received her Bachelor of Fine Arts from Cornish College of the Arts in Seattle, Washington and her Master of Fine Arts from Washington State University in Pullman. She has also done post-graduate studies at the Canadian School for Nontoxic Printmaking in Grande Prairie, Alberta, studying with such innovators in the field as Keith Howard of RIT and Friedhard Kieckhefer of the Edinburgh Print Workshop in Edinburgh, Scotland. Her work has been exhibited nationally and internationally. She is currently a Professor of Art at Western Nevada College in Carson City.

SHARON TETLY & DARYL DEPRY

Virginia City Tapestry: A Printmaker's Viewpoint

Tapestries create narratives and tell stories. The technique of weaving is often used as a metaphor to describe the interlacing of human affairs and as a visual description of history itself. Beyond their pictorial content, tapestries are used to cover or adorn, much like history itself. Weaving is certainly a form of writing and vice-versa. As with writing historical narrative, no weaving begins without the final image in mind.

While Las Vegas may often prefer to identify with the cities it is not – Paris, Venice, Luxor – other Nevada towns look for their own home-grown stories. Tetly prefers what some consider a more authentic story of a place, Virginia City, where she writes, you can find a “history [that] lies just beneath and you have only to scratch the surface to find it,” like peeling away the tapestry wallpaper in an old saloon to see what secrets lie hidden underneath.

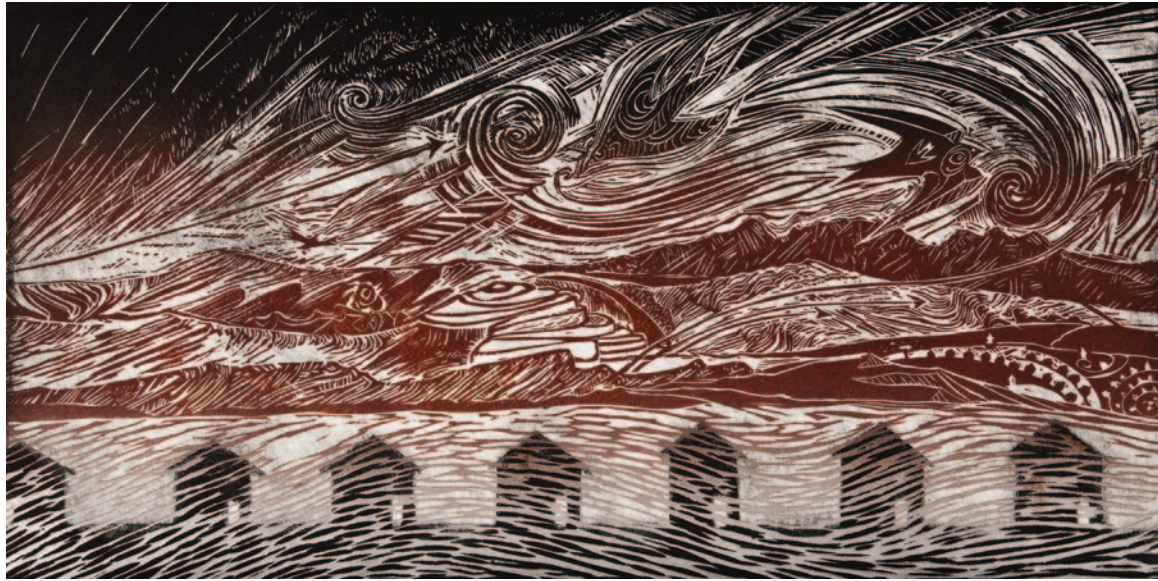
The sense of decay and erosion that sometimes reveal what is beneath the surface is expressed through her use of a printing plate that was a piece of old and discarded roofing copper, which was then further hammered and scratched. A welding torch added the burnt edges and holes, furthering a suggestion of damage and loss. In this way, Tetly's printing technique is a tapestry whose narrative revives the history of an original Nevada, however imagined, of a city filled with dancehall girls and saloons with names such as the Bucket of Blood.

As with any collaboration, finding what will work with your partner, what processes, and the discussion of image concepts that have to be designed while learning about the other artist was challenging but not difficult, rather enjoyable actually. In this instance the collaboration was with someone I did not know so it was kind of a “blind collaboration” to be begin with. Galen is an exceptional artist and we luckily have some commonality in our working methods and a certain affinity for Nevada and some parallels in our growing up experiences, his in the north, mine in the south.

—BOBBIE ANN HOWELL

Tracks
Bobbie Ann Howell, Las Vegas and
Galen Brown, Carson City
Mezzotint, linocut
20” x 10”
2010

Nevada
Galen Brown, Carson City and
Bobbie Ann Howell, Las Vegas
Intaglio, mezzotint, relief, stencils
20” x 10”
2010



BROWN:HOWELL

BOBBIE ANN HOWELL & GALEN BROWN

Tracks

To make tracks. Getting outta town. There's no turning back. These are ideas of departure, like the cliché image of the cowboy riding off into the sunset. But tracks are also roads of a sort, ways into a place as much as out of a place. This print is about both: tracks into the Nevada deserts, into its unknown, unseen territories. In places out of sight, mountains are carved up for their mineral deposits, unseen aircraft fly and pockmarked craters are forbidden landscapes.

All of these places are eventually abandoned long after their indigenous populations have been displaced. The miners, engineers and scientists make tracks and leave town in a cloud of brown dust that remains swirling overhead for generations.

In Nevada, there are landscapes left to weather and wither away, where only the birds overhead have a complete view. For those living in row houses of gated communities, much of Nevada remains a “terra incognita,” a place where, for them, no track leads.

GALEN BROWN & BOBBIE ANN HOWELL

Nevada

Geography shapes our psychology, especially the landscapes of our youth. Our patterns of perception are often wired by the kinds of environments we gaze upon while growing up. Certainly this is so for Howell who was born and raised in Southern Nevada and for Brown who has lived in Carson City and Lake Tahoe for most of his life.

Howell's autobiographical components combine some of these patterns to represent her own history of being a Nevadan. The word *Nevada* is Spanish for “snow-covered.” In the fractal-like snowflakes in this print, Howell references particular visual experiences of being from Nevada. Look closely at the patterns and you will see cowboys watering their horses, a nuclear mushroom cloud, branches of the ubiquitous Joshua tree, petroglyphs of bighorn sheep, horned toads and Las Vegas showgirls.

Both in Southern Nevada and in Northern Nevada, the landscapes of youth are being eclipsed by the expanding rows of houses in the name of development, an element existing in Brown's work. Those memories of home, the home shared with the wildlife and early residents of Nevada – what we might call a primal landscape of Nevada – might easily melt away like a snowflake if not somehow preserved.

BIOGRAPHIES:

Bobbie Ann Howell received a Bachelor of Fine Arts from Abilene Christian University, Abilene, Texas and received her Master of Fine Arts in Sculpture and Drawing from Southern Illinois University in Edwardsville. She taught at Stephen F. Austin State University, Nacogdoches, Texas. Howell exhibited at the 5th Street School Gallery and the Winchester Cultural Center in Las Vegas, Nevada; Nevada Institute for Contemporary Art and Contemporary Arts Center, Las Vegas; Wagner Art Center, Edwardsville, Illinois; Lufkin Museum of Art, Lufkin, Texas; Abilene Art Museum, Abilene, Texas; Downy Art Museum, Downy, California; and the Carriage Gallery, Beorne, Texas. Her works are in public and private collections throughout the West.

Galen Brown received his Master of Fine Arts from San Francisco Art Institute, California. Brown has exhibited his prints, drawings and sculptures in galleries in the United States, Osaka, Japan and Hangzhou West Lake, China. Recent exhibitions include “Red Blue and other Colors” Western Nevada College in Carson City, Nevada; “Simple Pleasures Group Show” Traywick Gallery in Berkeley, California, and “Southern Exposure's Sixth Annual Juried Exhibition Confess” in San Francisco, California.

Cryptid FPS
Keith Conley, Las Vegas and
Sidne Teske, Tuscarora
Screenprint
20" x 10"
2010



Nevada Walkabout
Sidne Teske, Tuscarora and
Keith Conley, Las Vegas
Screenprint, etching
20" x 10"
2010



CONLEY:TESKE

KEITH CONLEY & SIDNE TESKE

Cryptid FPS

The universe is an illusion, our perception of it relative to where we stand, at least as Einstein explained. Not that it is false or imaginary; the universe is simply a view from a point. As the world moves, so do we, our viewpoints constantly shifting at so many frames per second (FPS). There is a relative truth to what we see in Nevada.

The deserts all have their own mirages. Las Vegas and Reno have built an industry on these illusions of time and space. There are other places and things that are deceptive, mistaken as something else, or just hidden from view, such as the Nevada Test Site and its industries of nuclear weaponry and Area 51 with its stealth aircraft and caskets of extraterrestrials.

But the greatest mirage of all, according to Conley and Teske, is the medium of film and television. In 24 frames per second (FPS), the world streams by at a speed the eye can detect, but the mind cannot always determine. With not so much time as to draw and fire, the cryptids of jackalope disappear; the silhouette of Bigfoot flees. Is this technology of media, like the fallout from the test site, mutating us, leading us to doubt all that we see? Or, as experienced in the desert, is it all an illusion?

SIDNE TESKE & KEITH CONLEY

Nevada Walkabout

In the Mojave and Great Basin deserts of Nevada, the sky is most often the largest part of the landscape. Of all of the geographical or topographical divides in this state, "...the separation between heaven and earth..." is perhaps the most significant and memorable.

In the vaulted expanse of the Nevada sky, we can often observe an atmosphere electrified by storm; it is a field of energy. Among the Hopi and Pueblo, the sky was a theatrical event where Coyote encountered the Sun. For the Diné and the earlier Anasazi, dwellings and rituals were aligned to the celestial events of both day and night. Today, this sacred atmosphere is cluttered with the microwaves emitted from cell phone towers that are often disguised as trees in order to fit within the landscape.

Teske and Conley's print reconciles the sacred migrations of a people who, like the flow of the Humboldt River near Teske's home, walked across the land, following its ley line of energy, leaving behind their sacred markings of bighorn sheep. These petroglyphs overlap the blue image of river, together projected across the Nevada sky, their ancient forms of communication now merged with the chatter of cell phone users flowing through the atmosphere.

BIOGRAPHIES:

Keith Conley received his Master of Fine Arts from the University of California, Santa Barbara. Conley is a professor of art at the College of Southern Nevada in Las Vegas where he teaches drawing, digital media, and sculpture in the Department of Fine Arts. Conley has exhibited nationally as well as locally at such Las Vegas venues as Dust Gallery, the Contemporary Arts Collective and the Rotunda at the Government Center. Conley has been an artist in residence at the Goldwell Museum in Beatty, Nevada as well as the Lied Children's Discovery Museum in Las Vegas.

Sidne Teske has received many awards and honors, including an invitation by the Smithsonian Institution, Washington, D.C. to participate in the Folklife Festival on the Mall in June and July of 2005. She was chosen to create the artwork for Nevada Arts Council's Governor's Arts Awards Visual Arts Commission which were presented to the award recipients in 2004, and she designed a poster for the Bureau of Land Management and Nevada Rock Art Association, that won first place at the national competition of the Society of American Archaeologists in 2003. She has been a member of the prestigious women's art group, the Wild Women, since 1995. Teske's works are included in many private and corporate collections worldwide.

We were asked to step out of our comfort zone, allowing little-known individuals to alter, change, and mar our work — not an easy task. On the flip note, this idea of changing someone else's work created new possibilities and new resolutions to images, moving our artwork and concept beyond traditional limits. We received dual benefit, flexing our own artistic minds and reaching out to new members of the art community, starting a dialogue, starting to understand and create bridges where there had recently been chasms.

—ANNE M. HOFF

Along a Thin Line
Anne M. Hoff, Las Vegas and
Vicki LoSasso, Reno
Etching, intaglio-type
20" x 10"
2010



Synergistic Divisions
Vicki LoSasso, Reno and
Anne M. Hoff, Las Vegas
Digital print, etching, screenprint
10" x 20"
2010



HOFF:LOSASSO

VICKI LOSASSO & ANNE M. HOFF

Synergistic Divisions

The title of this print, *Synergistic Divisions*, is an oxymoron, suggesting the somewhat strained relationships between geographical and cultural parts of Nevada. The artists suggest that through arboreal symbolism. There is a sense of restrained and separated energy that lies just at the surface.

The wooden white picket fence is a quintessential symbol of Americana with its references to home and hearth, a world secure and pure. In Westerns, set designers often used the fence to represent the separation between the worlds of law and disorder, framing a world of morality.

Before and behind this fence are two trees equally laden with symbolism. LoSasso reminds the viewers that both artists are women who share a love for the outdoors and the beauty of Nevada. The trunk of a juniper tree in the background, LoSasso tells us, “is an image that suggests the female torso.” In the front is the trunk of a Joshua tree, contributed by Hoff. The Italian word for *trunk* is “torso,” and was used by American women artists, such as Anne Brigman, in the early twentieth century as an interchangeable metaphor of a condition of synergy and the pent up and fenced-in soul of life awaiting release. Along with the subtle contrasts of color, LoSasso and Hoff suggest that while divides exist, they are dissolvable.

BIOGRAPHIES:

Vicki LoSasso received her Bachelor of Fine Arts in English from Metro State College in Denver, Colorado and has exhibited in the Reno area and participated in national print exchanges including Print Zero (included participants from seventeen countries and was exhibited at seven venues across the United States and Denmark), Oregon Inkspot, 6 Sides 2 Every Story, Every Tree Counts and Graf-Exchange. She has shown her work in Prints for Peace '08 in Monterrey, Mexico. She is a member of Nevada's Printmakers' Conspiracy and Inkteraction, an international printmakers association.

Anne M. Hoff received her Master of Fine Arts in Printmaking from University of Arizona in Tucson and her Bachelor of Fine Arts from Indiana University, Bloomington. Hoff is a Professor of Printmaking and Drawing at the College of Southern Nevada, Las Vegas. She has enjoyed showing her work in such venues as Gallery 10 in Washington, D.C. to her recent show, *Ethereal Reflections* at Graficandus in Las Vegas. Recently, she became a Board Member of Oxbow Press in Reno.

ANNE M. HOFF & VICKI LOSASSO

Along a Thin Line

Those who work in the arts in Nevada often express dismay for what may be described as a cultural divide. Some of these concerns are seen locally, as when Las Vegas artists complain of weak gallery attendance or audiences seem to bypass the concert hall for the gambling hall. In the visual arts, there are other differences and allegiances. Artists from Las Vegas often take inspiration from those of Los Angeles, while many in Reno draw from what they see in San Francisco.

The purpose of this project, *Geographical Divides*, was to bring together artists who are separated by differences of geography and culture to create a forum for discussion and collaboration. This has not always succeeded in the past. After her first visits to Reno art studios, Hoff felt her initial encounter with her northern counterparts was marked by a “tension that is palpable between the two sections of the state.”

There has been a spring-tight line of tension between those in the arts of the north and the south and between the urban and the rural. In this print, the two outstretched hands seek to pull together the delicate spine or root of collaboration between the artists. This drawing together has been the accomplishment of this project.

I think I saw it more as a separate process from one artist to the other even though it was collaborative. I think Candace and I worked on things in the same or similar way, and I am sure that is why we were teamed up. Or, because of my time restrictions, I think Candace understood and worked in a way that helped me to finish the portfolio.

—JEANNE VOLTURA

Divided Values
 Jeanne Voltura, Las Vegas and
 Candace Nicol, Reno
 Etching, intaglio-type
 20" x 10"
 2010



Pleasure Garden
 Candace Nicol, Reno and
 Jeanne Voltura, Las Vegas
 Four color etching, linocut, glitter
 10" x 20"
 2010



NICOL:VOLTURA

CANDACE NICOL & JEANNE VOLTURA

Pleasure Garden

The word *landscape* is not strictly applicable to nature. Its philosophical origins lay in the seventeenth-century Dutch word *landskip*, with its reference to nature seen as a view, a prospect of an ideal place, beautifully arranged and balanced before the viewer. As when we “landscape” our yards.

The most perfect and idealized world or landscape is the garden. It is a place both perfect and without sin, fragrant and sensual. Gardens transport us to a place of promise and even redemption, free from guilt to enjoy earthly pleasures. Gardens are casinos, or casinos are gardens. Any thought of a cultural divide fades in the world of the garden. Our reminiscences of the perfect landscape – when the world was in balance – take us to the Biblical Eden or to mythical civilizations like Atlantis, each with their promise of peace and prosperity.

Nicol and Voltura present us with two women who inhabit a paradise like that Edenic first couple, in a life complete with love. These mythologies of hopes and dreams, loss and salvation, are found in, of all places, Nevada casinos – perhaps like the Atlantis Casino; Nicol and Voltura use a representation of its carpet as the background in this print.

JEANNE VOLTURA & CANDACE NICOL

Divided Values

Upon the land people and cultures write their values. After people have moved, what remains are those marks, often mysterious and puzzling, such as the Anasazi petroglyphs. A landscape does not refer only to a place; it can also define the human body, both its surface of skin and its core of heart and soul. In both places, people can leave their marks of images and words.

Scribbled on the walls of opinion, Voltura and Nicol offer those contrasting values, such as “religion,” and “prostitution,” “brothels” and “homes,” and “strippers” and “marriage”; marks that remain to be read later.

Nevada does not hold the monopoly on being a place where beliefs and human relationships collide, creating a land of “divided values.” Yet such oppositions and tensions of morality are certainly prominent here. An entire industry has been created to permit hedonistic behavior while at the same time offering forgiveness. There is that decades-old cliché, “What happens here...” If not in those words, certainly in that sentiment, Vegas and Reno “lets you get away with it all,” while Vegas once boasted of having more churches per capita than anywhere in America. Nevada seems to be divided along lines of morality drawn in arbitrary ways.

BIOGRAPHIES:

Jeanne Voltura received a Master of Fine Arts with an emphasis in printmaking from the University of Tennessee, Knoxville in 1996 and a Bachelor of Fine Arts from University of Nevada, Las Vegas with an emphasis in drawing in 1993. Since this time she has taught adjunct college level art courses at College of Southern Nevada and the University of Colorado, Boulder. Her work experience since then has also included working at the Lied Discovery Children’s Museum as the Arts and Humanities Program Developer and currently, she is the Gallery Coordinator for the city of Las Vegas.

Candace Nicol received her Master of Fine Arts from Boise State University and her Bachelor of Fine Arts from University of Nevada, Reno. Nicol works out of her studio in Reno and is Director of Oxbow Press and an Instructor at Truckee Meadows Community College. Her work has been exhibited both nationally and internationally and occupies such prestigious permanent collections as the Corcoran College of Art and Design in Washington D.C.; The Kinsey Institute in Bloomington, Indiana; National Taiwan Museum of Fine Arts in Taichung, Taiwan; and Painting and Sculpture Museum Association in Istanbul, Turkey.

The Geographical Divides Project was an amazing journey. I was able to take myself out of my comfort zone and truly dive into new processes and work with new people. My partner, Juan, was a joy to work with. Even though we had some obstacles to deal with, such as distance, time, language barriers and a large age gap, we were still able to punch out some amazing work and have an amazing time doing it!

—ASHLEA CLARK

Born to Be On Fire
Juan D. Varela, Las Vegas and
Ashlea Clark, Reno
Etching
20" x 10"
2010

Bridging the Gap
Ashlea Clark, Reno and
Juan D. Varela, Las Vegas
Etching, screenprint, colored pencil
20" x 10"
2010



CLARK:VARELA

JUAN D. VARELA & ASHLEA CLARK

Born to Be On Fire

A wash in subtle colors of blue-green and red-oranges, two figures paint a landscape of joining – a yin-yang/male-female coming together. Varela describes them as “two young artists highly spirited by living in Nevada, working together, physically united by their arms looking forward to creating a better future. Though one is in the north and the other is in the south – geographically divided – they have the same inner fire and dreams.”

In this print the Battle Born State has been subverted as the Passion Born State. Fire, a metaphor for an all-consuming passion to create, is depicted as these artists. Varela and Clark remind us of the creative potential of living in a place like Nevada, a land of artistic opportunity as open as its ranges.

This is an image not of division but of reconciliation, a call for artists to work together in Nevada. With its background images of the state of Nevada and the Stars and Stripes, the artists are optimistic in their desire to foster an aesthetic attitude toward the varied landscapes of Nevada and the role artists should play in its protection.

ASHLEA CLARK & JUAN D. VARELA

Bridging the Gap

To those who have never seen Nevada, or its gambling centers of Reno and Las Vegas, how do they imagine it to be? While Reno is known for its casinos, nearby ski resorts, and the quaint slogan of the “Biggest Little City in the World,” it is Las Vegas as the City of Light that most people around the world think about when they hear, “Nevada.” Just ask anyone who has never been here!

Las Vegas is otherworldly, a planet all its own with landscapes of fantasy and science fiction, of places simultaneously real and imagined. Las Vegas cues the visitor that they are *somewhere else* when on the famed Strip. With the city’s transient population, one is likely to meet people from elsewhere every day who say “Really? You actually live here? In which casino?”

Reno has a small town feel but the ultimate destination is Las Vegas. Seldom is heard from a jackpot winner in an Indian casino in Connecticut or Louisiana, “I’m rich! I’m heading to Reno!” Even extraterrestrials head to Las Vegas.

BIOGRAPHIES:

Juan D. Varela is originally from Chihuahua, México. He studied graphic design at the National University of Mexico City. Varela has illustrated more than fourteen storybooks for children, and is an author himself. His first written storybook “The Mons Story” is in the process of publication. As an artist he has more than twelve decorative murals in different restaurants including the franchises Burger King, Macayo’s Mexican restaurants and *Tamales Doña María* in Las Vegas. He has held three art exhibits in Las Vegas and is co-founder of *La Casa de la Cultura Hispanoamericana* where he is responsible for the art exhibits.

Ashlea Clark currently attends the University of Nevada, Reno (UNR), and is working towards a Bachelor of Fine Arts in Printmaking. She earned her Associate of Arts degree at Truckee Meadows Communities College in Reno. She was shown in the UNR Emerging Artists Show at Stremmel Gallery in Reno and has been part of several group and student shows. Clark has started a student-based printmaking group, InkHeads, and is a member of the UNR Art Club.

GEOGRAPHICAL DIVIDES: Finding Common Ground

WEBSITE RESOURCES

Geographical Divides

www.geographicaldivides.blogspot.com

Nevada Arts Council

www.nac.nevadaculture.org

Truckee Meadows Community College

www.tmcc.edu/vparts/artgalleries/

College of Southern Nevada Fine Arts Gallery

<http://sites.csn.edu/artgallery/>

Oxbow Press

www.oxbowpress.org

Fred Sigman

www.fredsigman.com

Anne M. Hoff

www.printmakersconspiracy.com/ahoff.html

Candace Nicol

www.candacenicol.com

Maria Arango

www.1000woodcuts.com

Lynn Schmidt

www.printmakersconspiracy.com/l Schmidt.html

Erik Beehn

www.erikbeehn.com

Nolan Preece

www.preece.myexpose.com

Sharon Tetly

www.printmakersconspiracy.com/stetly.html

Vicki LoSasso

www.vickilosasso.com

Juan D. Varela

www.graficandus.com

Sidne Teske

www.sidneteske.com

NEVADA ARTS COUNCIL

716 North Carson St., Suite A, Carson City, Nevada 89701

775.687.6680

The Nevada Arts Council is a division of the Nevada Department of Cultural Affairs and is funded by the Nevada State Legislature, the National Endowment for the Arts and other private and public sources.

Bryan Sandoval

Governor, State of Nevada

Michael E. Fischer

Acting Director, Department of Cultural Affairs

Susan Boskoff

Executive Director, Nevada Arts Council

Patricia A. Atkinson

Folklife Program Coordinator

Bryan Christiansen

NTI-Installer, Artist Services Program

Fran Morrow

Artist Services Program Coordinator

Dominique Palladino

NTI - Associate, Artist Services Program

CONTRIBUTORS & SPECIAL THANKS

Gallery Notes written by Fred Sigman with contributions by Candace Nicol and Anne M. Hoff; edited by Nolan Preece, Fran Morrow, Dominique Palladino and Patricia A. Atkinson; and graphic design by Lori Kunder, Kunder Design Studio.

Photographing the exhibit artwork – Nolan Preece

Designing and construction of portfolio boxes – Kate Pulling

Framing the exhibit artwork – Galen Brown, Dry Ice Framing

Building the exhibit crates – Bryan Christiansen

FRED SIGMAN BIOGRAPHY:

Fred Sigman arrived in the Mojave Desert of Nevada in 1968 after a transatlantic flight from France and a six-hour drive from Los Angeles International Airport. From Paris to Las Vegas, such a journey was a change of geography but not entirely a change of culture. That early desert experience significantly affected his way of seeing the land. His photographs of the Las Vegas Wash and the photographic project “Casino Landscapes” explore the experiences between land and culture.

Sigman was an art history professor in Las Vegas for twenty-five years. These days his teaching takes place through distance education as he travels the world. It seems to him more inspiring to teach his courses in Asian Art from Asia and Pre-Columbian art from Peru. Recently Sigman started a non-profit film production organization that produces video and media content from around the world to be used by universities in Humanities eLearning programs. Along the way, Sigman photographs the architecture and cultures where he happens to be. These portfolios and films have been exhibited at the Marjorie Barrick Museum at University of Nevada, Las Vegas and in galleries in Asia. Fred now lives in San Diego, California and Siem Reap, Cambodia.

FRONT PAGE & 2ND PAGE IMAGES:

Colophon

Candace Nicol

Four color etching

27 "H x 27"W x 2 ½ "D

2010



NATIONAL
ENDOWMENT
FOR THE ARTS



This exhibit is part of the Nevada Touring Initiative-Traveling Exhibition Program, and is the result of a collaboration between the College of Southern Nevada, the Truckee Meadow Community College and Artist Services Program of the Nevada Arts Council. The exhibit was funded by the National Endowment for the Arts and the Nevada State Legislature.