



# Wilderness Acts

August 16-19, 2007

Lori Blondeau  
Rita McKeough  
Janet Morton

A series of outdoor performances taking place at Kejimikujik  
National Park and National Historic Site, Nova Scotia.  
Curated by Eyelevel Gallery, in partnership with Kejimikujik  
National Park and National Historic Site.

To:



# Wilderness Acts

Wilderness Acts is a partnership in which Kejimikujik National Park and National Historic Site offers the location and Eyelevel Gallery provides the artists. The project builds on a strong tradition of performance art in which artists' bodies are considered the medium, and their actions, the artwork. Often site-specific in its relationship to the surrounding environment, performance art can happen anywhere, at any time, and often incorporates elements such as instrumental or electronic music, song, dance, television, film, sculpture, spoken dialogue and storytelling.

Wilderness Acts was created as a means of questioning the idea of "wilderness." The participating artists were asked to think about the making of contained, untouched or sacred natural spaces (such as national parks and land preserves) and how humans create, experience and view these spaces. Performance artists Lori Blondeau (Saskatoon, SK), Rita McKeough (Halifax, NS) and Janet Morton (Guelph, ON) invite campers and visitors of Kejimikujik to view, react and interact with thoughtful and thought-provoking art performances related to their concept of wilderness.

## Participating Artists

### States of Grace Lori Blondeau

Each sunrise and sunset, Lori Blondeau will perform a new variation of *States of Grace*, a piece she has presented in Saskatoon and Venice. At carefully chosen sites in Kejimikujik, Blondeau will translate her personal experiences and influences through ritualized gestures, symbolic actions and audio narratives to create unique, site-specific performances. Through her actions, Blondeau mediates between personal and social histories, the present and the past, and cultural identity. Her actions evoke and make aware the passage of time and the fleeting moments of life, both in the present and remembered.

Lori Blondeau is a Cree/Saulteaux artist whose work explores the influence of popular media and culture on Aboriginal self-identity, self-image and self-definition. Blondeau has been producing as an artist, instructor and curator for the last twenty years. She is currently exploring the impact of colonization on traditional and contemporary roles and lifestyles of Aboriginal women by interrogating popular stereotypes of the Indian Princess and the Squaw. Blondeau uses humour as a performative storytelling strategy to reconstruct these stereotypes, reveal their absurdity, and re-insert them into the mainstream. She is currently completing her PhD in Interdisciplinary Studies at the University of Saskatchewan.

Location and Performance Times: **At sunrise and sunset.**  
Specific locations and times will be posted daily.

### Countless Rita McKeough

Kejimikujik is home to a fragile population of Blanding's Turtles. For Wilderness Acts McKeough was inspired by a deep sense of grief knowing that many animals are slowly being eliminated: a loss that we perpetuate and yet feel very deeply. The loss of animals on roads is heartbreaking, and for the slow and silent turtle it is all the more sorrowful. For her new performance work entitled *Countless*, McKeough will enact carefully contextualized rituals where the particularities of animals and the realm of nature are honoured. *Countless* asks how we balance the freedom and mobility allowed by cars, with our concern for the environment and the animals that inhabit it.

Rita McKeough is an audio, media, installation and performance artist who has exhibited extensively in Canada and internationally for 28 years. She has taught at various art institutions and has been a drummer in many independent bands, maintaining her commitment to artist-run centres, community-based art and music-based initiatives. She is motivated by the challenge of responding to specific sites, whether gallery or public space, with a practice that integrates humour and self-criticality. McKeough insists that she has been fortunate to have the support and assistance of her friends and community to produce her work.

Location and Performance Times: **Merrymakedge Parking Lot (P3). Thursday to Saturday, 7-9pm and Sunday, 12-4pm.**

### Nature Repair Janet Morton

For Wilderness Acts, Morton has assembled a nature repair kit, akin to a First Aid or sewing kit. She will spend a portion of each day attempting to mend damaged leaves and fix broken branches with stitches and custom-made Band-Aids, performing these small, symbolic gestures as acts of compassion and care. Morton will also create an installation revealing the imaginary veins, arteries and internal organs of a tree.

Janet Morton has been exhibiting nationally and internationally since 1992. She has received numerous awards for her textile-based work that playfully and critically examines our relationships to nature and everyday objects, infusing the mundane with a sense of wonder. Through her use of knitting, sewing and collecting, Morton investigates and subverts issues of time, labour and value, mixing private, domestic practices with large-scale public work. Morton received a B.F.A. in 1990 from York University, and has been influenced by extensive travels and a decade spent planting trees in remote regions of Canada.

Location and Performance Times: **Along the Slapfoot Trail (specific sites will be posted daily), 10am-5pm.**

## Schedule of Special Events

### Friday, August 17: *Into the Woods*

Artist presentations and discussion with Lori Blondeau, Rita McKeough and Janet Morton. **7pm, Kejimikujik Visitor Centre Theatre.**

### Saturday August 18: Artists' Reception

Everyone is welcome to attend a special Wilderness Acts reception. Meet the artists, ask questions about Wilderness Acts and enjoy complimentary snacks and refreshments courtesy of Eyelevel Gallery and Kejimikujik. **7pm, Mill Falls Picnic Shelter.**

### ...in the forest, does anybody hear?

Halifax-based artist Lukas Pearse presents a one-night live audio performance in Kejimikujik's outdoor theatre. Using sounds he has collected from around the park, Pearse will present an electro-interpretation of the wilderness sound-scape.

Lukas Pearse is best known for creating live electro-acoustic performances, where he assembles broad palates of sounds which can then be re-combined in performance using flexible real-time audio software, offering the listener a perspective both crystalline and fractured. He considers himself a polyvalent sonician that is both a musician and sonic artist. Previously he has presented audio work in various settings ranging from concert halls to nightclubs to art galleries to site-specific installations across Canada, the U.K. and Germany, as well as music for film and video. **9pm, Outdoor Theatre, Jeremys Bay Campground.**

## Eyelevel Gallery

Eyelevel Gallery is a not-for-profit charitable organization dedicated to the presentation, development and promotion of contemporary art. Through a range of programming initiatives such as exhibitions, performances, special projects and workshops, Eyelevel Gallery provides a forum for the discussion and education of contemporary visual art. For over 30 years, Eyelevel has established a supportive environment that fosters the research and development of innovative artistic practices. Our programming consists of exhibitions in a variety of media by local, national and international artists. We present the work of emerging artists who are in the formative years of their careers and those with more established practices.

Eyelevel Gallery is located at 2063 Gottingen Street, Halifax, Nova Scotia, B3K 3B2. More details about the gallery can be found at: <http://www.eyelevelgallery.ca>. For more information, please contact: [director@eyelevelgallery.ca](mailto:director@eyelevelgallery.ca), or phone 902-425-6412.

## Kejimikujik National Park and National Historic Site

Protecting 381 square kilometres of lush forests, gentle rolling hills and interconnected lakes and rivers, Kejimikujik is home to an abundance of wildlife. Warm summer temperatures foster a special collection of rare species usually found further south. One hundred kilometres southwest of the main park is Kejimikujik's Seaside Adjunct

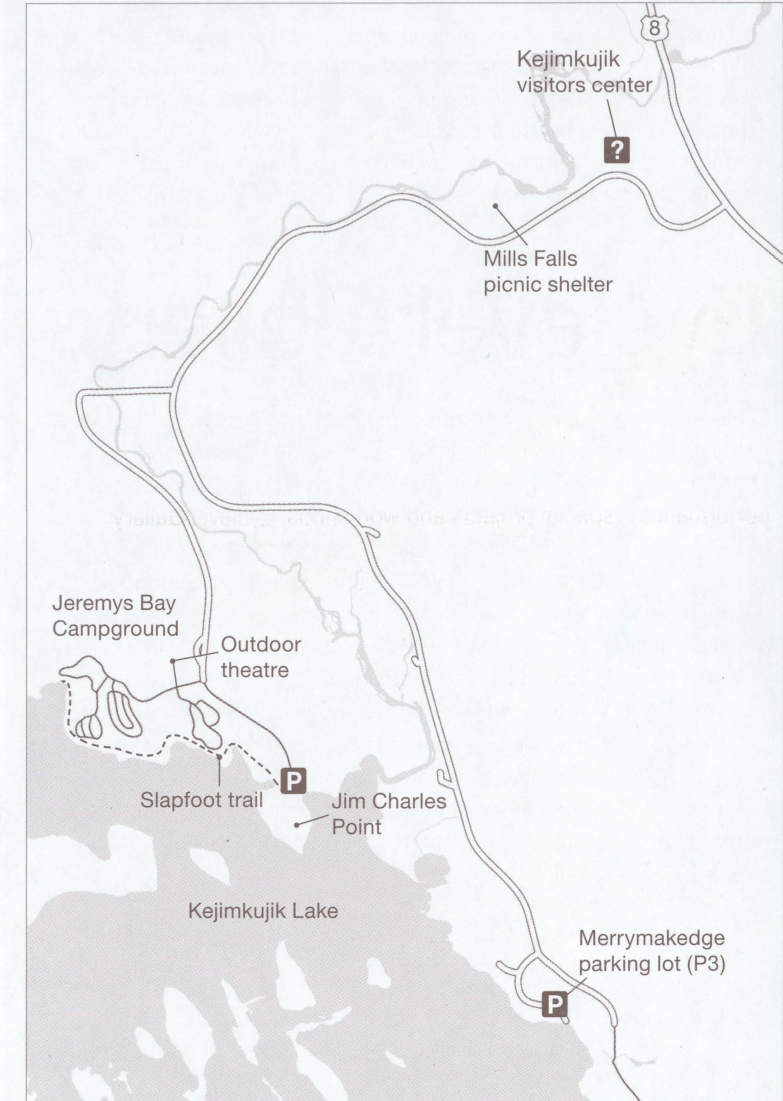
day-use area, protecting 22 square kilometres of the most beautiful coastal wilderness in the region.

Kejimikujik commemorates the presence of the Mi'kmaq since time immemorial and is home to the largest collection of petroglyphs in eastern North America. These rock carvings, as well as ancient canoe routes and encampment areas, tell many stories of the land and its people.

For more information, visit the Parks Canada website: <http://www.pc.gc.ca/pn-np/ns/kejimikujik>, or phone 902-682-2772.

### Directions to Kejimikujik

Kejimikujik is accessible off Route 8, the Kejimikujik Drive, by traveling approximately 160 km from Halifax via Highway 103, 190 km from Yarmouth via Highway 101, or 90 km from Digby via Highway 101.



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