

## AKIMBLOG



TORONTO  
**TERENCE DICK**  
LANDSLIDE AT THE MARKHAM MUSEUM | KEVIN JEROME EVERSON AT TIFF FREE SCREEN  
OCTOBER 01, 2013

The easiest thing to understand about art galleries is who belongs there – the artists. It's their home and designed specifically to host their work. However, when artists leave the self-imposed confines of the white cube for alien territory, things get a bit dicey. You don't often find athletes offering to play basketball in an opera house or chefs cooking on the subway, but artists are ready and willing to do their thing in whatever circumstance a clever curator can conceive. I get the feeling such interventions are meant in the spirit of a gift - an inclusive gesture of opening up discourse with new communities - but sometimes I worry that the contesting of territory is happening around, not through the artwork. Such questions of belonging are both implicit and explicit, inadvertent and intended in **Janine Marchessault's** latest large-scale site-specific group show *Landslide – Possible Futures* at the **Markham Museum** in, you guessed it, Markham (a city rapidly becoming absorbed into the sprawl of Toronto).

A couple years back, Marchessault (along with co-curator Michael Prokopow and their team of collaborators) set up the *The Leona Drive Project* in a row of suburban bungalows about to be razed for a new development. Their status as transitional spaces made it easier for the participating artists to occupy them without displacing any previous, concurrent, or subsequent residents. It also allowed them free rein in having their way with the site (An Te Liu's landmark lifesized Monopoly house being just one example).



Deidre Logue, *Euphoria's Hiccups*, 2013

A couple of the same suspects reappear in *Landslide*, but landing as it does on the grounds of a heritage museum with a longer and more ambiguous history than a suburban street, there are more rules for the visitors to adhere to. Marchessault also ups her game by stretching the number of participants to over thirty and programming more screenings, talks, and assorted happenings throughout the short three week run. When it works, as with **Deirdre Logue's** *Euphoria's Hiccups*, the artist retains her own identity – in this case, through a barrage of short and small-screened obsessive videos – while also intergrating seamlessly with the Honey House in which she has set up shop. The latter is accomplished by a landscaped garden that could easily remain as a suitable addition to the museum when the exhibition ends.



Frank Havermans, *Untitled*, 2013

Similarly dramatic and effective collaborations respond to the architecture of different buildings. **Phil Hoffman** turns an inaccessible shed – the local slaughterhouse – into a film installation viewed through knots in the wood walls. **Frank Havermans** builds on an extant pulley system to create an internal web that suspends an external array of metal bars that grow haphazardly off the walls. The past and the present come together in strangely appropriate pairs that emphasize the radical shifts in urban temperament you pass on your way to the site: recently plowed fields next to massive condo towers, strip malls beside hundred-year-old houses. Whose place is this and who belongs here are just two of the questions you have to ask even before you get to the art.



Kevin Jerome Everson, *The Island of St. Matthews*, 2013

Also engaged with the history of particular places, but depicting them through the medium of film, **Kevin Jerome Everson's** latest is screening this week as part of TIFF's **Free Screen** series along with some of his earlier work. He'll also be around to introduce the film. *The Island of St. Matthews* would be an interesting counterpart to Ed Burtynsky and Jennifer Baichwal's *Watermark* as it also turns its lens to water, but on a far more human-scale, all hand-held camera and first person tales of floods along with a roving water-skier and a lift-lock supervisor balancing the river's surface for the sake of travelling ships. It reminds one – as does the Markham show – that we never truly belong, we are all just passing through.

**Landslide – Possible Futures:** <http://www.landslide-possiblefutures.com/>

The exhibition continues until October 14.

**Terence Dick** is a freelance writer living in Toronto. His art criticism has appeared in Canadian Art, BorderCrossings, Prefix Photo, Camera Austria, Fuse, Mix, C Magazine, Azure, and The Globe and Mail. He is the editor of Akimblog. You can follow his quickie reviews and art news announcements on Twitter [@TerenceDick](https://twitter.com/TerenceDick).