

DON POLLACK
3 4 DAYS TO
WASHINGTON

An exhibition of paintings about a 2000 mile bicycle journey retracing the inaugural train route of Abraham Lincoln.

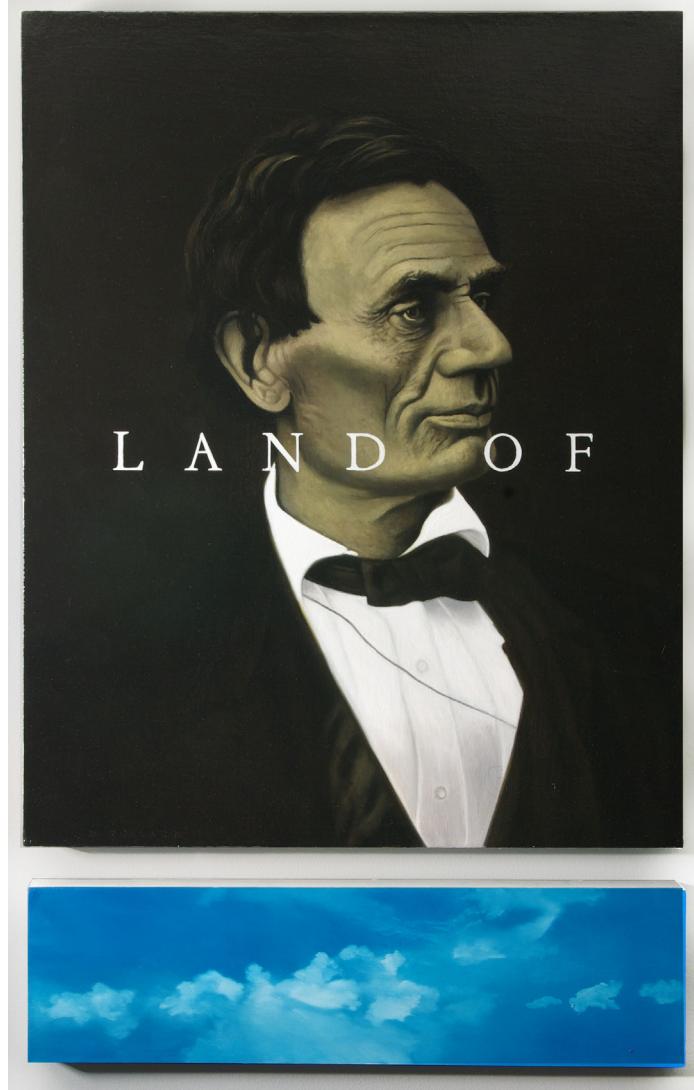
D O N P O L L A C K

3 4 D A Y S T O W A S H I N G T O N

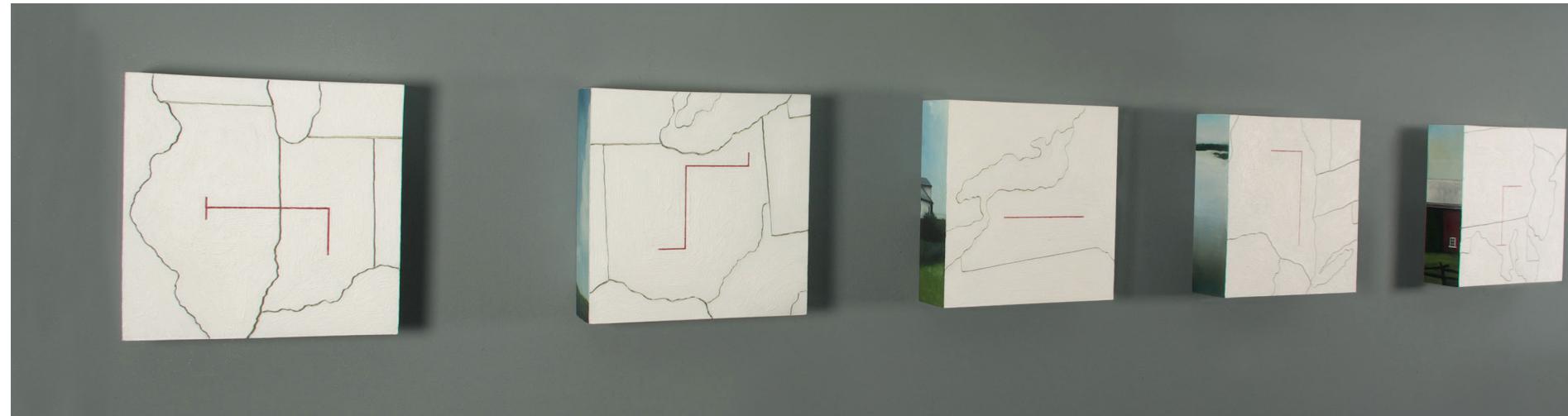
Perimeter Gallery

Chicago

April 19, 2013 - May 31, 2013



Land of Lincoln
32" x 20", Oil on canvas and panel, 2012



Untitled
8.25" x 8.25" each, oil and gesso on panel, 2012

2046 Miles
34 Days
Springfield, IL to Washington D.C.

3



FAR FROM HOME

For me, the thing that really defines us as Americans is a mythic journey; an American journey, as well as the movement west and into the landscape. So I decided to take one of those epic journeys myself.

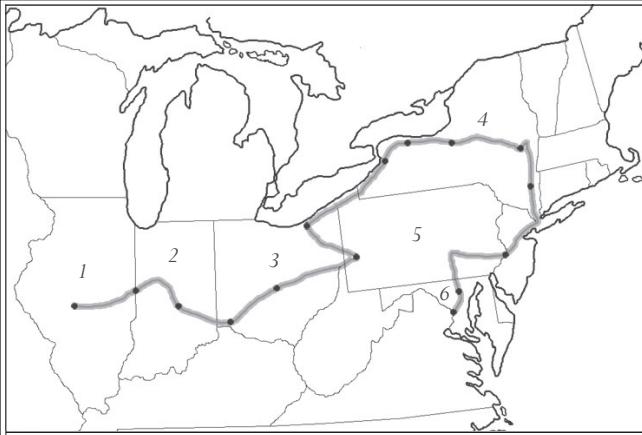
Rather than venture off in some arbitrary direction, I figured I might as well find an historically significant direction, – like the journey east towards Washington. I decided to follow Abraham Lincoln's inaugural train route. A path to the east was and is a defining route for people aspiring to positions of power, but for me the interesting thing was that it was opposite the notion of 'moving westward'. Here I began with an open mind in search of a natural landscape. To make my passage more intimately connected to the landscape, I decided to travel via bicycle for what would be over 2000 miles. This method of transportation would take me no faster than a few miles per hour. I was firmly situated at the intersection of two centuries of technology. In one, I was living within the speed and simplicity of a horse and buggy culture and in the other I was experiencing instantaneous digital downloads of satellite GPS information and cell phone communication.

Coming to terms with this reality meant to also see the limitations and restrictions of both ways of being. The dilemma this posed revealed a paradoxical relationship between the landscape and the methods I used to record it. As I followed Lincoln's path I could sense the presence of history in a small town in rural Indiana and yet just a short distance away, the space was completely indifferent to the past. This would continue on unpredictably as I traveled east- ward. To address this in my work process, I was forced to move towards the dichotomies that form their own natural conclusions such as: how the notion of 'wilderness' contains within it the notion of 'containment' and how a reverential depiction of nature depends on technique; and how all of this reveals that I have created nature in my own image. I especially had this profound experience after riding to Frederic Church's studio in Olana, New York when I realized the beautiful constructions of his Hudson River paintings were not my experience of the landscape.

While riding, I came to know 'time' as a measured visual perception. A tree on the horizon 15 miles away might be calculated as an hour and the bend in the road ahead; perhaps 10 minutes. As I considered the landscape around me, I was amazed at how much modern technology changed my perception of space. I was able to download a weather map and track the heat index of my route several days ahead. The range of my sight was tremendously extended beyond an ordinary view yet I felt small moving through the landscape. I was at the mercy of the elements,– the state of my vehicle, the nature of a changing storm front, the availability of shelter, the tiredness of my body, and the temperament of my mood. All beings are afforded equal treatment to the winds and the rain. Because of this, I couldn't help but infer the direct relationship to this fact and the insights of Lincoln's prose. Past and present combined to create the landscape as I knew it.

Before I left on my journey, I also had not realized how much technology had collapsed my sense of dimensional space. This would begin to affect my paintings. A reductive style may seem at odds with a traditional image making approach but oddly it seemed consistent with my experience. While riding, I had to navigate the landscape by shifting between traditional and contemporary systems. Going off my map course meant relying on GPS coordinates. Both systems provide a limited view of space but practicality deemed it necessary to coordinate their use. After 34 days on a bicycle following Mr. Lincoln's route navigating towards Washington, I felt as though I experienced a shift in my understanding of the landscape. Time and space constantly reminded me that being a casual observer was illusory.

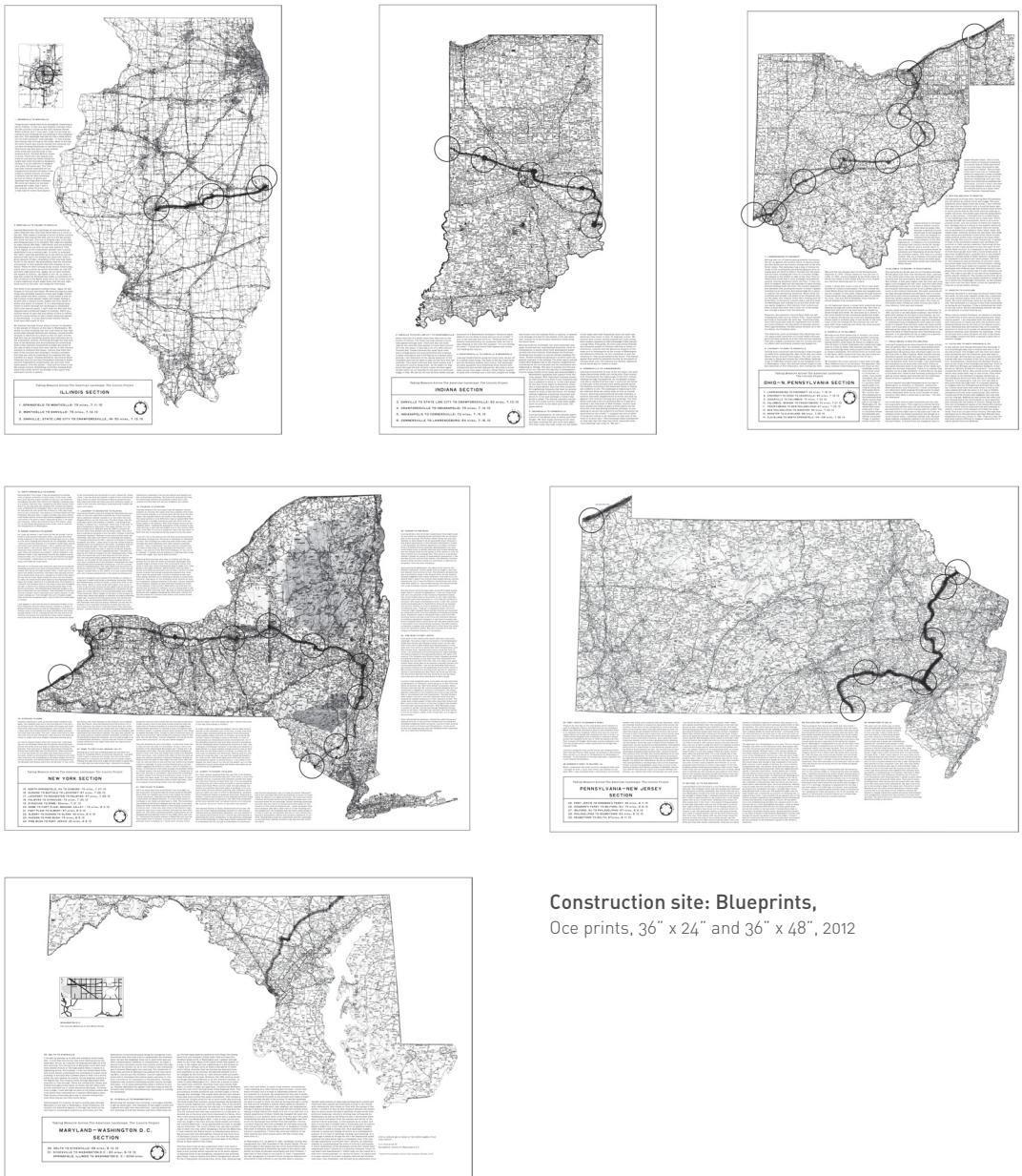
Table of Contents

	
<i>Part 1 : ILLINOIS</i>	8
<i>Part 2 : INDIANA</i>	18
<i>Part 3 : OHIO</i>	24
<i>Part 4 : NEW YORK</i>	32
<i>Part 5 : PENNSYLVANIA</i>	44
<i>Part 6 : MARYLAND</i>	52



Riding the Circuit
1850/2010, installation, mixed media, 2012

6



Construction site: Blueprints,
Oce prints, 36" x 24" and 36" x 48", 2012

7



Illinois,
oil on panel, 12" x 72", framed, 24" x 90", 2012

Day 1

S P R I N G F I E L D t o M O N T I C E L L O

75 miles

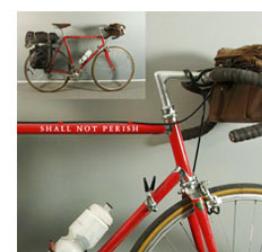
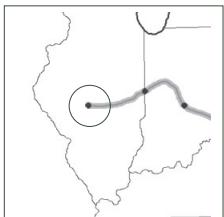
Today we had a great start from Springfield. Departing at about 7:30am, it was cool and slightly overcast when

we left Lincoln's house on 8th and Jackson Street.

8

9

While Anders and I rode east, huge clouds kept following us and blocking out the sun keeping it very pleasant and cool. This landscape was like an oven a week before, but we were granted 'safe passage'. It was Sunday, and nobody was driving on the roads. Most of the day was spent in quietude and punctuated with the chirping sounds of robins and red wing blackbirds sitting on the fence tops. This day was spent in near silence devoid of noise and distractions from the modern world. Thomas Merton comes to mind. There are vast spaces and rows of corn and soy beans lining the single lane roads throughout Sangamon County. It is not difficult to imagine this place 150 years ago. The train line that Lincoln road east for his inauguration follows the same route today in central Illinois. At times, it seemed like we were traveling across an Ocean of grass and farmland with huge skies overhead. We never got rained on but kept passing wet roads. Day 1 had a Zen quality. After 75 miles, now it was time for some Dairy Queen!



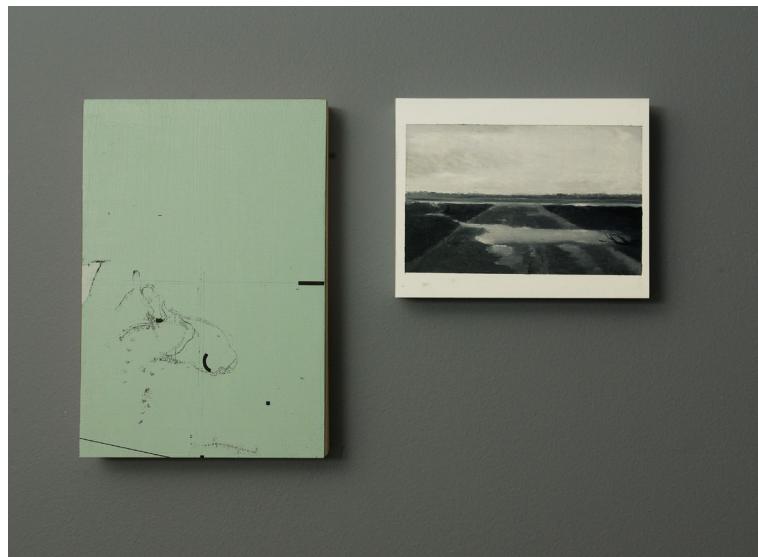
SHALL NOT PERISH



We Are Not Enemies

Shall Not Perish: Second Inaugural, bicycle, 2012

We Are Not Enemies: First Inaugural, jersey, 2012



Untitled series.
Map-scapes, oil on panels,
map: 7" x 5", landscape: 4" x 5", 2012

This is the legacy of the homestead system that Lincoln established over a century ago. In order to populate the 'west', land was parceled up in one mile by one mile sections that had to be worked and improved. After a given amount of time, ownership of the land was transferred to the farmer.

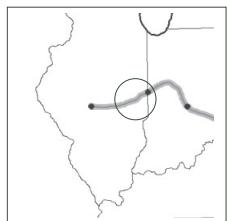
My grandfather was the recipient of property in this manner that still remains in our family. When we were cycling along county roads today, every once in a while we would encounter an odd left and then right hand turn. Again, as our land sections are square in Illinois, the Earth is not. So, in order to map the county by dividing-line roads, a correction for the curvature of the Earth must occur. So, every once in a while engineers would make these odd left and right hand turns on the pike. And today we rode them.

The fields truly appeared endless today, again we saw Oceans of corn and soy beans. We were moving at a pace today that probably equaled a horse and buggy.



Sometime, Now, and Then,
oil on panel, 12" x 36", 2012

12



I can't help but feel that this expanse had a profound impact on Lincoln. There is a sublime sense of open sky and plenty of time to reflect.

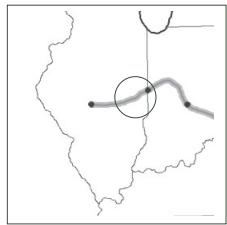
*Lincoln's prose seems to have unique
stops
and
pauses
in the wording.*

– it is my theory that central Illinois must have had a part in this. We traveled through Tolono where Lincoln bid farewell to the people of Illinois on his way to Washington. We ended up criss-crossing the rail road lines all day that moved east towards Danville and Indiana. Lincoln briefly stopped in Danville at a depot in the old part of town that still has an industrial quality that reminded me of the nineteenth century. Traveling through the heat and dust of the farmland and encountering the screeching steel of the railroad locomotives brought me closer to the idea of what it must have been like for a 19th century traveler. Lincoln was from this part of the country and crossing it reveals a perspective that can only be understood by someone who has traveled its open spaces. Thomas Schwartz, the Illinois State Historian, informed me that filmmakers wishing to make Lincoln biographies occasionally call and only visit these vistas 'over the phone', they are too busy to see the actual landscape. Something is terribly missing from these films when a direct knowledge of the countryside that informed Lincoln is absent.

13



14



15

Metagear.
sculpture: North Face Mica solo tent,
history books, landscape painting, 2012

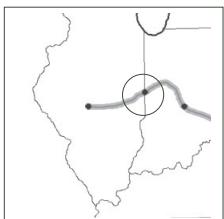


Great Plains,
Oil on paper mounted on curved panel, 25.5" x
55.5", 2012

Day 3

DANVILLE to STATE LINE CITY to
CRAWFORDSVILLE
50 miles

State Line City is a small rural town that sits on the border of Illinois. *The train line that carried Lincoln east passes through here.* There are still old buildings by the railroad that appear to have been around for over 150 years. It still has a bit of a 19th century frontier feel. Tracks traverse the small farm town and a village green lies just yards from the crossing. A small inscription and a US flag fly in a rather plain setting. I am reminded of the casual qualities of the President and how he liked to play on the floor with his children. This small town has that quiet quality and I can picture Lincoln being there. As we made our way south through the dirt country roads, we were again slowed down (on our bicycles) to the pace of a horse and buggy or less. We saw an owl and several hawks and got drenched in a Midwestern downpour! Someone asked what do you do when it rains and you're on a bike? "I put on my raincoat and move on." Nothing about that seemed extraordinary but moments later we met a man walking on the road who quipped - "it's not raining too hard." I think Abe would have agreed and continued walking his dog too.



South East Nine,
oil on panel, 12" x 50", 2012



Indiana, State Line City,
oil on panel, 12" x 72", framed, 24" x 90", 2012

Day 4

CRAWFORDSVILLE to ZIONSVILLE &

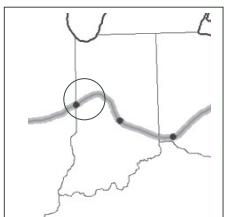
INDIANAPOLIS

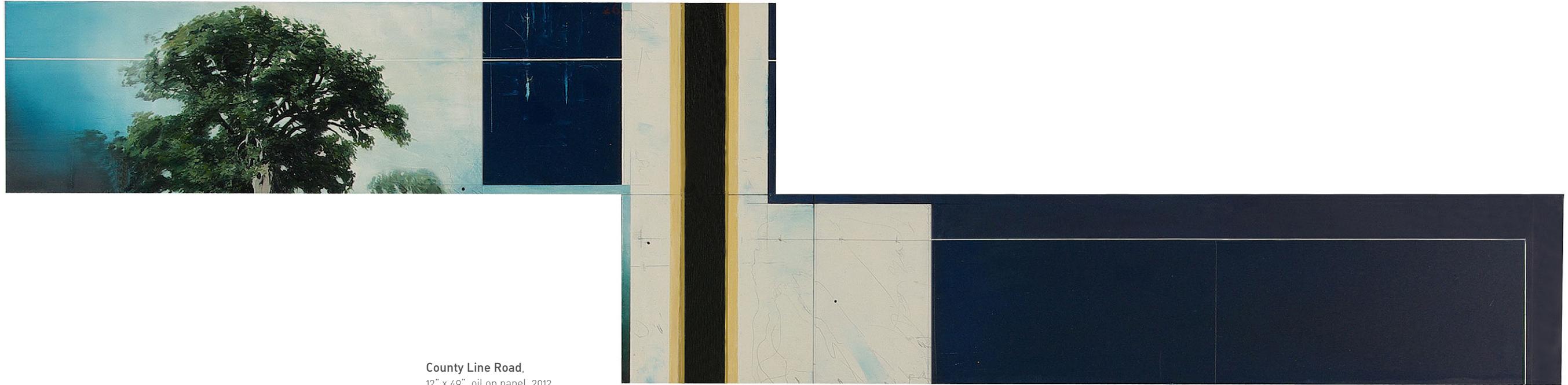
70 miles

Leaving Crawfordsville along the train lines, we got off to a slower start today. The heat of the day came early and the farmland seemed very humid. The landscape at times appeared very differently from Illinois with rolling hills and wooded Oak groves. But then it would open up and once again reveal a 'Great Plains' quality. A hawk flew overhead and a red deer jumped the hedge and bound over the soybean field in a gallop. It seemed a bit strange of a site for the middle of the day when deer usually lie in the brushy transition areas along the fence lines.

Moving south by southeast, the area landscape was quiet, humid and hot. Approaching Zionsville, north of Indianapolis, a quaint small town atmosphere meets up with the 21st century. Picturesque old Victorian buildings are situated on narrow streets designed for carts. People coming and going at a modern pace appeared contrary to the setting. The town layout almost looked New England like in the historic neighborhood indicating we are moving east and the sentiments are beginning to change. The pace is quicker and this prepared us for our ride into the big city of Indianapolis. *Lincoln spoke briefly at his stops and acknowledged a Midwestern sympathy and support from the local people. With important business ahead, he was forced to be brief in his comments and had a schedule to stick to.*

In the town green by the site of the depot in Zionsville, there was a small gazebo that had been prepared for a gathering. Someone had lined up several chairs in front of the structure. Its formal setting suggested something important was about to occur and perhaps a visitor was going to speak. *The setting instantly reminded me of a scene not too unlike what might have occurred on the same spot some 150 years earlier.*





20

Day 5

INDIANAPOLIS to CONNERSVILLE

21

72 miles

Leaving Indianapolis, we were greatly appreciative of the generosity of Jenny and Paul Burger. We then began moving south west and kept crossing the rail lines once again. The heat index was high today but the shade of the huge oaks that frequently lined our path cast shadows that made it feel 10 degrees cooler. We noticed farm houses usually planted tall trees lining their western exposure to take advantage of this natural cooling effect. Frequently, we have come across friendly and pleasant people in Indiana offering us water or directions. *Lincoln had the generous support of the state and in Indianapolis at the corner of Washington and Missouri Streets, he felt confident to ask the citizenry to "rise up and preserve the Union". This was an appeal that would be answered shortly by the people of Indiana when over 100 infantry and cavalry regiments would enlist and be 'called to arms'.*





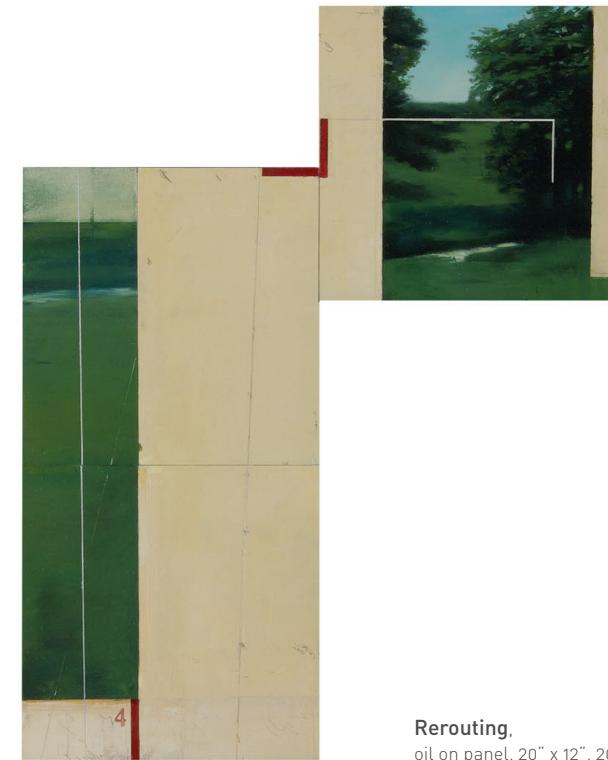
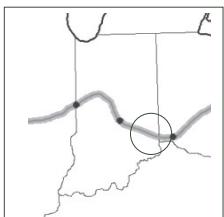
Calculator,
oil on panel, 6" x 24", 2012

Day 6

CONNERSVILLE to LAWRENCEBURG
64 miles

22

Leaving Connersville by way of the old depot, the landscape distinctively shifts into rolling hills. This country side foreshadows the beginnings of the Ohio Valley. Passing through Dunlapsville, an old Quaker community site is visible from the road. I notice all the farms in this part of the country have white painted barns. The familiar red siding of the sheds and barns of Illinois are nowhere in site. The landscape is beginning to feel far different from the inland seas of corn in central Illinois. Entering Lawrenceburg through Glendale, a modern suburban neighborhood is woven into and up against 19th century housing and buildings.



Rerouting,
oil on panel, 20" x 12", 2012

The Ohio River town has a bit of a southern feel to it and for a moment I am reminded of New Orleans. *Lincoln must have sensed this when he gave a brief speech not far from the levee and feeling confident perhaps, or just wanting to secure the support of northern citizenry, he announced to the crowd, "I suppose you are in favor of doing full justice to all whether on that side of the river or on your own," The Cincinnati Daily Commercial' on that day reported that the crowd responded with, 'loud cheering' and cries of, "We are!"*

23

Day 7
Rest.



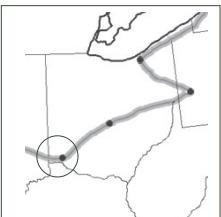
Great Lake Escape to Canada: Ohio,
oil on panel, 12" x 72", framed, 24" x 90", 2012

24

Day 8

LAWRENCEBURG to CINCINNATI
22 miles

Moving east out of Lawrenceburg towards Cincinnati, we ran up against the modern world of casinos along the Ohio River and the bucolic rolling hills of the Ohio River valley. The landscape has a way of hiding the views of the countryside and affords glances more intimate and old world in flavor. Cycling over the state line and then crossing the river on a country bridge, we stopped in the middle to take in the view. This unobstructed scene had a very nostalgic sentimental quality looking westward down the Ohio. It was not hard to imagine 1820 and the flatboats of early German settlers floating down the river. The current meanders and sandbars rise up along the bends. It doesn't appear treacherous at this point and almost begs for a canoe to explore the wandering shore-line. Water birds fly overhead and though I am aware of an industrial city not far away, this location looks like a resting spot for Huck Finn.

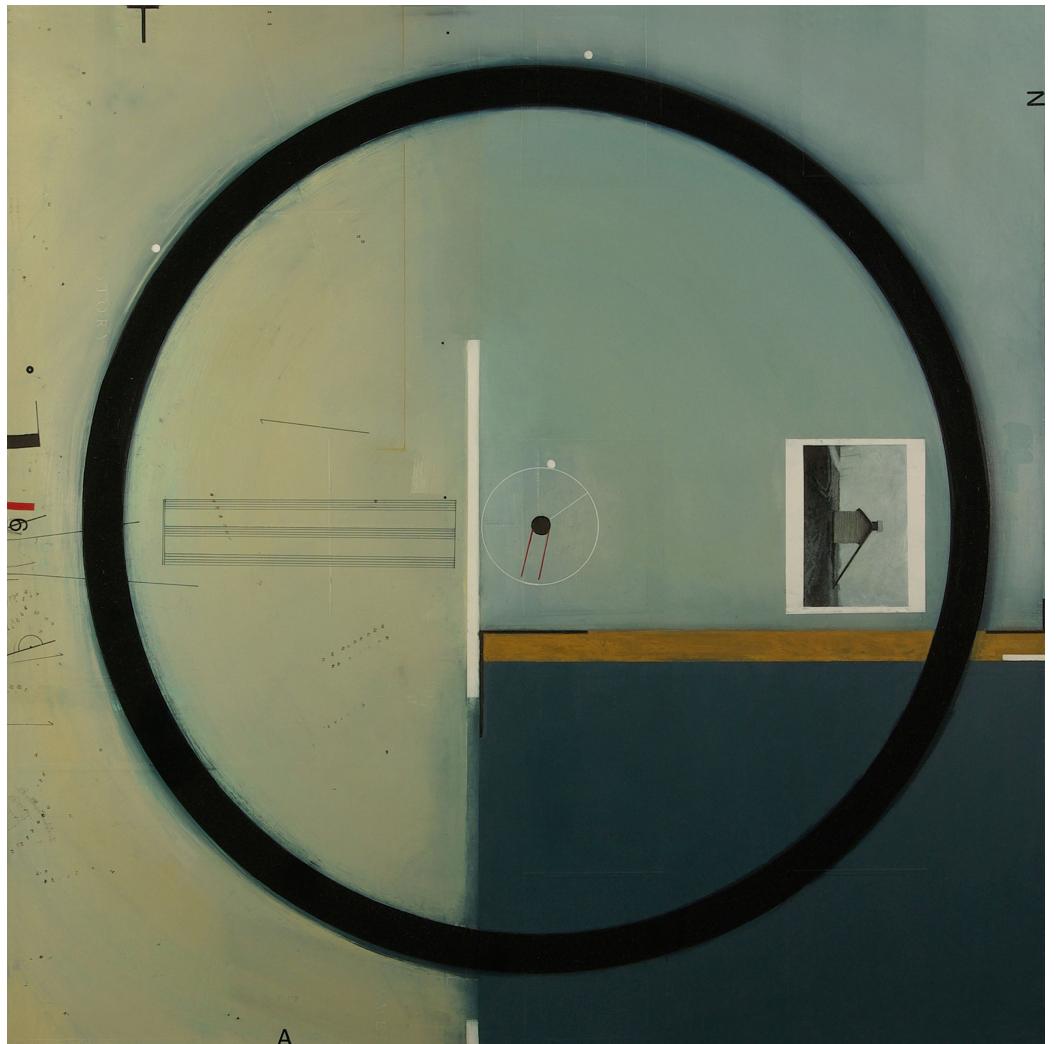


In his youth, Lincoln took a raft trip down the Mississippi and looking out at the Ohio River one can easily imagine a 19th century river culture and what it must have been like to pole out of the shoals and unlodge a plank from the shallows.

However, the schedule Lincoln kept when he left Indianapolis with his son, Robert Todd, found himself arriving in Cincinnati the next day. Traveling along this route must have been an impressive tour as well as a true initiation into the world of national politics when approximately 100,000 people showed up to see his father, the President elect.

The relatively quiet picturesque Ohio landscape and our sepia toned memories of a horse based economy are truly false windows to a mid 19th century America. This was a highly contentious time for Lincoln and public affairs were politically complex and dangerous.

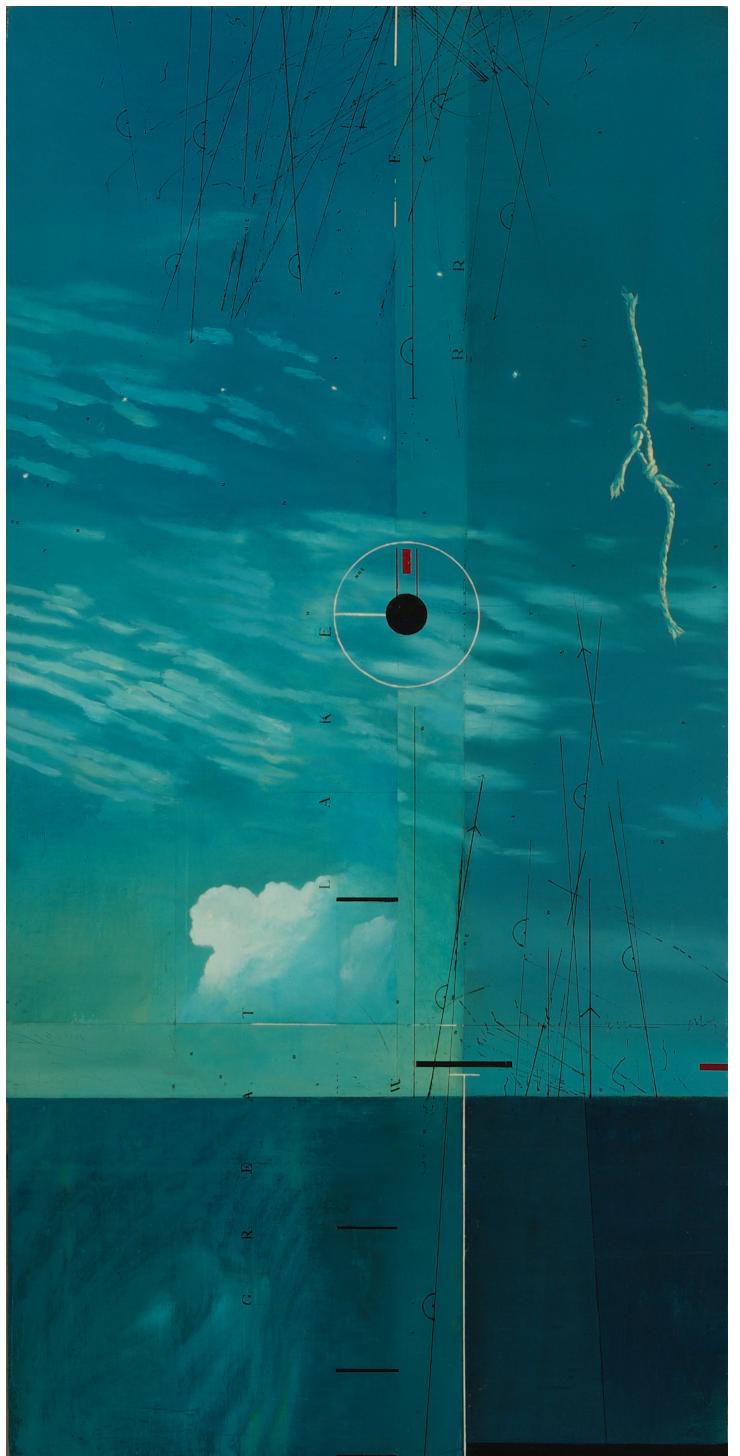
25



RPM, oil on canvas, 30" x 30", 2012



Untitled 700c, oil on canvas, 32" x 48", 2012



Terminus, Underground Railroad,
oil on panel, 32.5" x 16", 2012

Day 9

CINCINNATI to XENIA to CEDARVILLE
80 miles

Cycling from Cincinnati east following a ridge line gave us relief from climbing hills. East of the city, the Little Miami Scenic Bicycle Trail begins. The trail runs all the way to Xenia and follows the *Little Miami Railroad route of 1836 that Lincoln rode on his inaugural route to Washington. Later, this railroad helped supply troops and material to Fort Dennison, Ohio during the Civil War and the line became part of the Pennsylvania Railroad in 1870. Trains ceased to run the line in 1962. In 1861, Lincoln stopped at the brick depot in Xenia and today it still exists with all of its charm as a favorite watering spot for riders.*

Today, I think this route is one of Ohio's best kept secrets for outdoor enthusiasts. The trail follows the Little Miami River and canoe rentals and campgrounds dot the roughly 70 mile path. Passing through historic towns along the way, cafes and shops cater to cyclists en route. Inns and Bed & Breakfast stops display restored facades of an antebellum era.

An old fashioned charm is mixed with modernity when passing through the towns along the way. The trail is paved and flat and for the most part it is shaded by dense foliage and forest. No cars pass by so silence is the norm except for the occasional splashing and laughter of people diving into the river and swamping each others boats in summer play. In the woods by the trail, some of the old railroad trestles can still be seen with vines crawling over them like some ancient ruins of a past empire.

Day 10

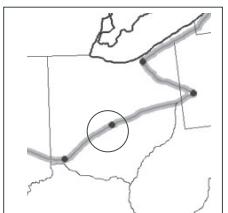
CEDARVILLE to COLUMBUS

70 miles

Moving north from Cedarville to London, our route was also a paved path paralleling another existing train line approaching Columbus. To the side, old decaying electric poles stand as relics to a bygone era. The old depot in South Charleston still exists and right next to it sits an early 19th century log cabin. The scale of dwellings seem oddly proportioned compared to today's standards. The second floor on houses built in the early 1800's seem to be only one and a half stories high. (At tight fit for anyone over 6' tall.)

We followed the route Lincoln's train took through West Jefferson and on to Columbus. The approach, like many midsize cities today can be a bit busy as the landscape transitions from rural to suburban to urban. Once inside Columbus, the city was very friendly to cyclists with paved paths running all along the Olentangy River.

We visited the Ohio Statehouse in the downtown area where Lincoln stopped on his way to Washington DC. He visited Ohio three times and it was in Columbus where he presented anti slavery proposals. Today, a marker exists inside the capitol atrium at the exact location where Lincoln stood when he spoke. Ohio was key in getting Lincoln elected and on his



inaugural train ride, he stopped in Columbus for the last time and addressed a joint session of the Ohio legislature. It seemed a bittersweet knowing that Lincoln would be inaugurated in March and a month later in April, the reaction to his victory would be secession and 'dissolution from the Union' by southern states. The idea of a united 'states' was not a forgone conclusion and his tenure in office would be tested amid extreme hostilities inside and outside the White House.

Day 11

COLUMBUS to NEWARK to FRAZEYSBURG
70 miles

This morning we moved east out of Columbus through Worthington and rode over the Hoover Dam. Leaving on the north side of the city, we cycled through horse country and the picturesque and immaculate city of New Albany. A bike path begins near the town and once again runs alongside the rail lines, only this time there are working lines next to the trail. A stop in Granville and Denison University proved to be a perfect place for lunch in the historic downtown. The path continues all the way through Newark and affords a view of a town hard hit by the current economy. Shells of abandoned factories inhabit spaces along the train line and we are separated by wire fences on both sides. The route of the bicycle path reveals all sides of a boom and bust in local history - both past and present.

Lincoln made several stops in Newark on February 14, 1861 and due to his fast paced schedule, was forced to greet well wishers at the spur of the moment. At one stop he was brief and almost Mark Twain like when he carried on about having nothing to say and remarked, "I understand that arrangements were made for something of a speech from me here, when the train moved down, but it has gone so far that it has deprived me of addressing the many fair ladies assembled, while it has deprived them of observing my very interesting countenance. It is impossible for me to make you a speech: there is not time, so I bid you farewell."

Day 12

FRAZEYSBURG to NEW PHILADELPHIA
67 miles

Leaving Frazeysburg we encountered the steep rolling hills of eastern Ohio. On a bicycle, they seemed more than hills, they actually are a foreshadowing of the Appalachian Mountains that officially begin not too far from here in West Virginia. When settlers moving westward passed through this area, they dumped all of their furniture and heavy belongings upon hearing that the Rockies were twice as high! I can understand the sentiment as we encounter slow hard climbs up and quick descents down to the base of the valley and repeat this process frequently. There is no plateau that flattens out at a high elevation. It feels like an old part of the state but I sense a new economy pushing out the past as horse stables and wineries dot the landscape. Rural poverty is apparent in the back country.

Lincoln passed through Frazeysburg on his way to Washington in addition to Dresden, Coshocton, Newcomerstown, and Urichsville. I could understand his exhaustion after passing through scores of small towns, especially when all he could muster at Cadiz Junction, Ohio after a quick bite to eat was, - "too full for utterance".

Our route also took us past Conesville and the coal burning power plant. This huge monumental facility consumes truckloads of coal for the furnaces that generate our electricity in a never ending need for power. The railroad line sits right next to the plant and I see reminders of the old steam locomotive era though on a much different scale.

Because the 19th century engines constantly needed to be serviced with fuel and water, it would force the inaugural train to make frequent stops, and this in turn would result in frequent comments by Lincoln that at times amounted to no more than the modern day equivalent of ‘tweets’. The journey from here took him to Pittsburgh where he reassured a crowd of people at the Monongahela House nervous about an impending civil war that “there is no crisis but an artificial one”. Ironically, Lincoln’s train ride was previously delayed outside the city for several hours in a small town called Freedom, Pennsylvania.

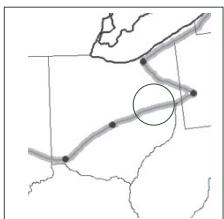
Day 13

N E W P H I L A D E L P H I A to W O O S T E R

60 miles

Cycling early morning when leaving New Philadelphia put me behind an Amish horse and buggy. The pace registered about 8mph down the street. I can't believe this was how we traveled only a hundred years ago. The semi trucks carrying logs and produce were forced to move just as slow as the horse until an opening in traffic occurred. The slower pace was the sympathetic part in my journey, it situated me in a relationship to the landscape that forced me to take time. While cycling through the countryside, it focused me on a more present tense, and the process of travel and observation. Perhaps this is a luxury in the modern world but I think I might begin to understand why the Amish are so persistent in clinging to their 'plain' ways. Not simple ways, however, because we saw some very large scale farms and perfectly constructed white houses albeit without power lines running to the main dwellings. Though this is an old order community, it speaks of some of the attributes common and necessary for survival in 19th century America. Venturing off the larger county roads situated us into the heart of the Amish farm country. It is amazing to see the amount of work that can get done with a horse drawn plow. It was very enlightening to consider this in the present tense as I usually think of these 'historic' modalities as remnants of primitive and naive people. Far from it. *The eloquence and profundity of Lincoln's ideas and prose came from this sort of environment.* Seeing the Amish first hand made me consider the physical landscape with different eyes. Following Lincoln's inaugural train route via bicycle has its own limitations as well. The urge to just get in car and drive somewhere seems almost reflexive. The modern world with all

30



Day 14

Rest.

of its choices and options has simply rendered it unsafe for us to travel into Pittsburgh via bicycle, as the present day route over the Ohio River is just not passable by bicycles or horse drawn vehicles.

Day 15

W O O S T E R to C L E V E L A N D

68 miles

Entering Cleveland is very easy by bicycle travel from the south. On the outer reaches of the city, a metropolitan park system begins with some 50 miles of paved trails. We could ride these trails all the way into the city. The landscape is a canopy of tall trees punctuated by wetlands and marshes. It has a wilderness feel within the city limits! We are descending towards the lake so the ground is nicely leveling out.

When Lincoln visited Cleveland, he seemed to address the crowd with a more serious and pressing tone. Reading his speech, I am impressed with his oratory skills and techniques of reasoning with the audience and demonstrating how he arrived at his logical conclusions. Knowing that self interest was not a complete structure to build civil society, he addressed the 19th century ‘political noise machine’ by reporting, “If all do not join now to save the good old ship of the Union this voyage, nobody will have a chance to pilot her to another voyage.”

Day 16

C L E V E L A N D to N O R T H S P R I N G F I E L D , PA

108 miles

It was almost cold leaving Cleveland this morning! It is a surprisingly easy city to bicycle into and to find my way around. The bridges over the river are pedestrian accessible and the downtown area was easy to ride through. Moving east by Lake Erie I encountered a great bike lane courtesy of the Ohio 'Circle the Lake' tour. In Ashtabula, I discovered the Hubbard House, a stop on the route of the Underground Railroad. Built in the 1840's by William and Catharine Hubbard, it was known as 'Mother Hubbard's Cupboard'. Once slaves crossed the Ohio River, they moved north to Ashtabula where they made their way to this house. They were then taken to the Hubbard Company warehouse on the Ashtabula River and then ferried to Canada and freedom. It is amazing to look out over the lake at this point from the high bluff. It is equally amazing to imagine that the Underground Railroad was a reality. *Lincoln must have had some sense of this as his train passed through the area on its way to Buffalo.* Ashtabula still has some unassuming 19th century houses and brick streets that suggests this time was not too long ago. Making my way across the state line into Pennsylvania the countryside is very beautiful and nothing like the plains of Illinois. Being this far from the contemplative spaces of the Illinois 8th Judicial Circuit (where Lincoln practiced law and intended to retire), I wonder if the distance provoked his melancholy. This is an old part of the country. The sign that welcomed me to Pennsylvania said that William Penn established this as a colony in 1681. That is a timeline and deep history difficult to imagine, especially for a native person from the Midwest.

31

Day 17

NORTH SPRINGFIELD to DUNKIRK

70 miles

Entering New York today, I was accompanied by endless rows of grape orchards on both sides of the road. Lake Erie must provide a good climate for this as I see wineries throughout the area. The 'circle tour' bikelane continues and it is a great view and ride. I passed by the Erie County Court House on my way east and stopped just outside the nearby town of Westfield for breakfast. Here I met a proud resident. He informed me that in town there was a statue depicting Lincoln and a little girl. The statue is of Grace Bedell and the President. *She was only 11 years old when she sent a letter a few weeks before Lincoln was elected suggesting he would look better if he grew a beard. Responding with a 'we shall see' attitude, within the month he had a full beard. Later on, he met Grace sported his iconic look, just in time for the inauguration in Washington.*

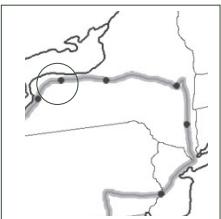
Day 18

DUNKIRK to BUFFALO to LOCKPORT

87 miles

As I type my letters, I can't help but feel as though I am afforded a view across 2 centuries. First, I can send this letter being composed in my iphone, but hitting keys one at a time is a bit nerve racking and reminds me of a telegraph. Second, I have noticed that because of our modern technology, mainly cell phone and internet access, I don't usually see dimensional space. I can call my friends in Ireland at any time and distances seem irrelevant. Well, on a bicycle that is not the case. Time and distance are related. I know firsthand. I am afforded views in my immediate vicinity and maybe a short distance away, but I must consider my movement and gauge it accordingly. I make plans but must also account for how long it will take me to get there.

Moving out of Dunkirk was relatively easy this morning and traveling along the route with a wide shoulder was very nice indeed. Moving up through Orchard Park, I came upon an old depot and steam locomotive. The depot was actually turned into a model train shop and I stopped in to talk to the owner. He told me the lines right outside his door run into Buffalo. In 1860, the route would have ended at the Exchange Street Depot but today I believe it is a Amtrak stop. The massive locomotive sits dormant next to the small house and strangely enough, it was built in Russia during the early days of the Soviet revolution. The Pennsylvania Railroad bought a surplus of these and this one remains. I was reminded of *Lincoln's critical comment about despotism and czarist Russia*. It was a rather strange moment as I first thought this style of engine might have been the kind to have pulled the inaugural train, only to find out it was made in Russia.

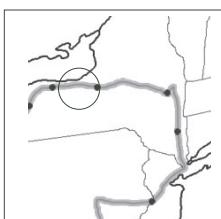


I also happened to see the site in downtown Buffalo of the First Unitarian Church where *Lincoln visited as a guest of Millard Fillmore (before he left for Washington)*. This historic location sits in the middle of a busy intersection and oddly enough seems to fit in. Getting around the city was not too difficult via bicycle but leaving the urban center heading north got busy. Like all good size cities, the transition areas to the countryside are becoming our new 'urban/suburban' cities. I can see from my travels an approaching clash of two cultures trying to work out their boundaries of Nature preserves, bike lanes, wider car lanes, and more entrance ramps, a clash of two cultures striving to simultaneously inhabit the same civic space.

Crossing the Hudson,
oil on wood, 4" x 72", 2012



One Full Measure.
oil on paper mounted on curved panel, 25.5" x 55.5", 2012



34

Day 19

LOCKPORT to ROCHESTER to PALMYRA
97 miles

35

Leaving the Buffalo area and seeing the waterway that narrows to flow into Lake Erie reminded me of the turbulent Saint Lawrence seaway. Canada is on the other side and Niagara Falls is not far from here. The Erie Canal, like the song says, goes from Albany to Buffalo. I am going from Buffalo to Albany but I only know 'every inch of the way' to about Rochester at this point. The canal, believe it or not was thought up in 1808 and built by 1825 to connect the Hudson River with Buffalo and the Great Lakes. The result was a population expansion into the west. Instead of hauling materials overland, flatboats could now be pulled down the waterway. This had a net result of increasing the capacity of transporting goods by 95%, says the information plaques alongside the canal. I spent most of the day riding along the towpath that runs adjacent to the water. Looking at historic photos along the way, I still can't believe that early 19th century technology was able to dig this thing and displace all that water, quite a civil engineering feat! I entered the path by the locks at Lockport by the cascading water. Originally this canal was only 4 feet deep and 40 foot across but over the years many expansions have been made to the system. On the sides of the canal are farms with fields of corn and it

reminds me of the midwest countryside but with fishing boats and houseboats floating by. A bit of a surreal scene to a midwesterner. The calm water and the mirror reflections remind me of Eugene Atget's photos of the 'Ancien regime' outside Paris in the 1900's. It is very otherworldly, still, and visually symmetrical in the early morning hours.

Lincoln's inaugural train passed from Buffalo to Albany in a day and it made brief stops in Rochester, Syracuse, Utica, and Schenectady, as well as Clyde, a small port town on the Erie Canal. Many of these stops were again very quick in order to service the locomotive and again Lincoln would say a few words at each location. Reading his comments, he appears as part Victorian gentleman and part Mark Twain humorist. When caught on the spur of the moment at a short stop, rather than saying 'no comment' as today's politicians might utter, he instead gives brief soliloquies about not having anything to say. At Rochester 8000 people showed up to see the President elect and his family. However, he can also be humble in his comments telling the crowds that they did not come to see him but a "representative of the American people". Lincoln lived at a time when language mattered and reading his comments I can see his talents and mastery as the consummate politician. He knew how essential this was for developing intellect and personal clarity and I also sensed he knew that this was his obligation as a leader.

Day 20

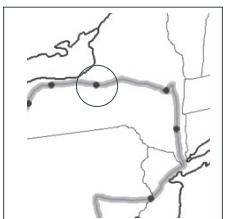
PALMYRA to SYRACUSE

75 miles

Leaving Palmyra this morning it was 63 degrees. Perfect weather for cycling. The small town has a skyline with 3 historic church steeples in a 3 block area. Not far from the Erie Canal, the towpath starts just north of the downtown area. The canal system is over 500 miles long in upstate New York and because it brought commerce back and forth from the Great Lakes to the Atlantic, New York became known as the "Empire State". Leading the population of the country in the 19th century, it also had the largest city in the country, New York. Over 25% of Lincoln's inaugural train ride was spent in New York and he had garnered key support from this state.

I can tell I am in the east by the old farm house architecture that sometimes varies from Victorian to Italianate to Federalist in style. The buildings are older and each small town I pass through also has signposts with 18th century commemorations. I also occasionally run into historic houses that list them as key stops on the Underground Railroad. I must admit, I am jealous of the New York bikeways. If I am not on a 'towpath', I usually end up riding on a road that has a huge 'horse and buggy' lane with a wide shoulder marked for bicycles.

Entering Syracuse was very easy on bicycle and the approach did not have the miles of suburban exchanges that usually plague midsize cities. The countryside comes very close to town and I kept checking my map to make sure I was going in the right direction. Nature seemed close by when I rode into Syracuse and it is here where Lincoln met a



crowd of 10,000 people to greet him while the snowstorms loomed ominously. Nothing to stop the people here. Lincoln's remarks at the time were openly directed at not wanting to ascend a constructed platform. Fearing all of this formality would require an hour or so speech [a common practice of the day], Lincoln declined the invitation. Instead, he was brief and focused his words on the destiny of the country. Meanwhile, his wife was concerned that he needed to sharpen up his clothing style to get ready for a New York City visit. My stay at Armory Square in Syracuse also suggests changing my attire and I switch out my bike jersey for a button down sleeve shirt before dinner. Syracuse taken neatly.

Day 21

SYRACUSE to ROME

50 miles

Outside of Syracuse I pick up the Erie Canal towpath once again. The weather was cool in the morning and I can tell I am further north. The forests are filled with aspen and birch trees with white pines intermingling. Just outside of town I came upon two horses hitched to a small wagon pulling a flat boat down the canal. The trail I came down prior to this was very narrow and seeing this 18th century site made me think if I was in a movie.

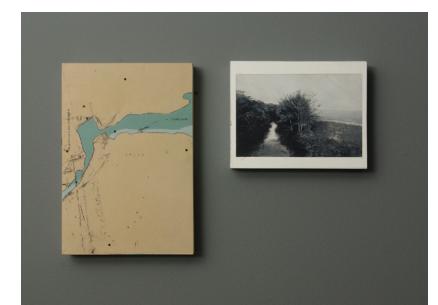
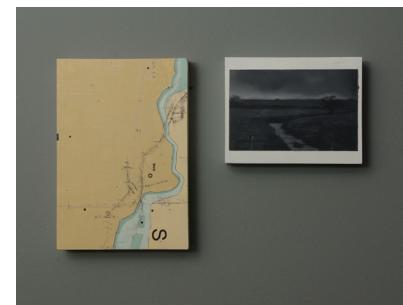
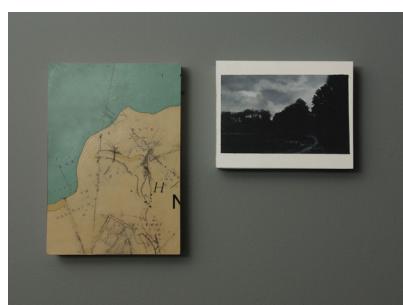
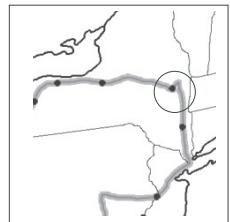
As I moved towards Rome, little did I know that I was heading into the Mohawk Valley and the Oneida Carrying Place. Across the street from my stay is a National monument; Fort Stanwix. This area was of tactical importance during the French and Indian War and the Revolution. What amounted to a four way battle for the same real estate and access to the west, ended up dividing the 6 Nations Iroquois and broke their centuries old confederation and peace treaty. Forced to choose alliances, the Oneida sided with the Colonialists and the Mohawk and Seneca sided with the British. To the north, the Huron, who were enemies of the Iroquois, were aligned with the French. Once the British drove the French out of North America, the seeds of the Revolution were set. After the defeat of the British, the treaty with the 6 Nations and the Americans cast the first concept of native sovereignty and established the reservation system. The land deal opened up the canal area but created further unforeseen problems for US and Native American relations. As if he had enough to do in dealing with secession, Lincoln was also forced to handle violent conflicts on the High Plains with the Lakota Sioux during his tenure.

Day 22

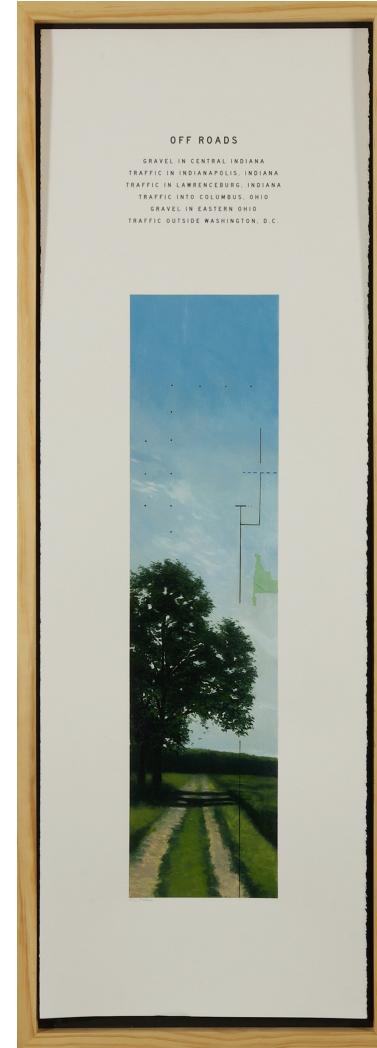
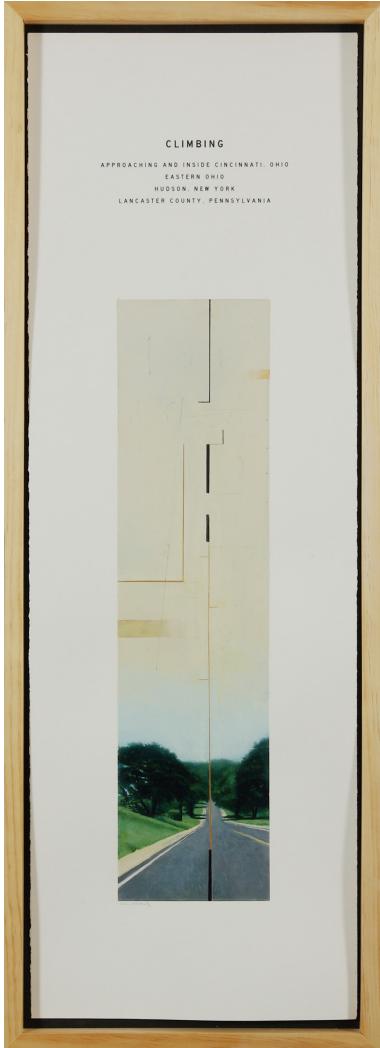
Rest.



Olana: New York,
oil on panel, 12" x 72", framed, 24" x 90", 2012



Untitled series,
Map-scapes, oil on panels, map: 7" x 5",
landscape: 4" x 5", 2012



40

41

Climbing, Bicycle Challenge, Incredible Views, Heat, Bicycle Friendly, and Off Roads, oil on paper, 41.5" x 15" each, 2012

Day 23

R O M E to F O R T P L A I N , M O H A W K V A L L E Y

72 miles

Getting up at 5:30 and breaking camp got me back into Rome for breakfast before a torrential rainstorm. I am glad I didn't have to pack up wet things! The rest of the morning made for a constant soft drizzle not too unlike Ireland. Passing through Utica with soggy streets added a

harsh feel to a town that had seen better days. Industrial buildings along the trainline were closed and the manufacturing sites looked vacant. Some of the farm houses along the way had huge piles of firewood stacked in proportions suggesting a hardscrabble existence to heating a home throughout the northern winter. I suppose Lincoln knew all about this. When he passed through Utica, though he had a humorous quip joking about his arrival. Mentioning that everyone came to 'see him' and 'he saw them', Lincoln remarked, "but as far as the ladies were concerned", he had the "better bargain".

The rain followed me into Little Falls, a town that looks like it was cut into the side of a mountain. Oh yes, I am in the foothills of the Adirondack Mountains and I thank God I am following a level path. The sun broke here and revealed an historic town view from the bridge that crosses the Mohawk River and Canal. Just outside town right off the tow path appears the historic homesite of General Herkimer. Riding my bicycle down the path at this slight turn felt truly 18th century. No cars are were in site and the trail width could easily support a carriage. It turns out the General was a colonial leader engaging the British in order to save Ft. Stanwix (in Rome). Following the river down through the Mohawk Valley to Albany means I am also following history. It tracks me on my route. The key to movement I have discovered firsthand is water, wether it be filling a locomotive, horse, or me, we all share the same needs. It is also infinitely easier to follow a level water path especially under human leg power, and to be spared the gruelling climbs over the highlands!

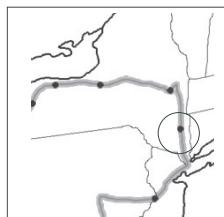
Day 24

F O R T P L A I N t o A L B A N Y

67 miles

Off to an early start this morning and I am once again on the canal path. Rolling through the woods along the Mohawk River with cool weather and cloud cover makes for perfect riding conditions. Passing through Rotterdam Junction I discovered the Mabee farmsite. It is the oldest series of buildings in the valley and date back to 1680. The homestead was deeded by the King of England and had been in the same family for three centuries before it was recently turned into a historic site. I have also seen some of the historic locks along the way that a local resident informed me were 200 years old. The canal numbering system is going down as I'm heading east and getting closer to the origin point and lock #1. Technically the system started in Watervliet and only the local traffic went to Albany. I moved south off the canal to proceed down to Albany so I could more closely follow Lincoln's path. I can now safely say that I "know every inch of the way from Albany to Buffalo".

In order to get into downtown Albany I had to take route 5 and get on the sidewalks part of the time. A busy road with historic signs commemorating the march of the Continental Army seemed rather odd and out of place. Arriving by the current Capitol building is quite a site with it's mix of Romanesque and Renaissance styles of architecture. All of this grandeur however was built after Lincoln's presidency but the immediate sense of seeing the structure is that I am looking at a Parliament building. In the lawn just adjacent to Eagle Street is a small marker noting Lincoln's stop at what was then the Old State Capitol building. In Albany for the first time he admitted



his weariness. Having read his comments all along the way, I can see him repeating himself a bit. This is over 1400 miles away from home and the quiet contemplative spaces of central Illinois. I can relate to the fatigue, but their can be "no rest for the weary" as it is time tomorrow to move south along the Hudson and make my appointments at Poughkeepsie.

Day 25

A L B A N Y t o H U D S O N (t o O L A N A)

42 miles

As I leave Albany heading down the east side of the Hudson, I am met with an enormous bike lane. This route, a local told resident told me, is popular with Canadian cyclists who make the trek from Toronto to New York city. It is a countryside of rolling hills and 18th century homes in various states of repair and rehab. When Lincoln came through Albany, the bucolic countryside must have taken a backseat to his concerns when the wire service reported that Jefferson Davis had just taken the oath of office in Montgomery, Alabama. The Confederate States of America were born. Stopping in Hudson, Lincoln was prudent in his remarks and found other topics besides policy to talk about. The 'New York Illustrated' at the time reported that "all people turned out to welcome Mr. Lincoln" and to do "honor to the brave rail splitter".

Just beyond Hudson is Olana, Frederic Church's home. He was one of the leading landscape painters in 19th century America with an international reputation. As a key member of the 'Hudson River School of Art', Church was instrumental in authoring the vision of grandeur in the American landscape that we still subscribe to today. Mark Twain commented that to understand the US, one had to 'understand its landmass', and Church was going to see to it that you would. Painting 7 and 8 foot canvases that were monumental in scope, these could easily be likened to an IMax production. His home and studio overlook the Hudson River and his 250 acre estate was a constructed model for his paintings. Careful landscape planning ensured that his vision of the grounds were based on the tenants of 19th century Romanticism, neatly arranged trees surrounding a lake and a clear view of a river receding into the background. The humidity that the Great Lakes brings in is held in place by the Catskills and this in turn renders the beautiful atmospheric effects that became a signature of his work. Seeing Olana made me understand Church's paintings on another level. Adding 14 miles and a good climb to my day was well worth the effort.



State of Pennsylvania,
oil on paper mounted on curved panel, 25.5" x 55.5", 2012

Day 26

H U D S O N t o P I N E B U S H

75 miles

Leaving Hudson this morning I experienced very high humidity and dense air. Keeping myself hydrated was the primary goal in the morning. The Hudson River Valley can hold this weather in what seems to be an immovable front. However, I was almost ignoring all of this because everywhere I looked in the farmland the scenery appeared to be taken verbatim from a Frederic Church painting. Melodramatic sun rays would shine down on golden pastures with horses eating hay and the distant fields would appear a softer green in color as they receded into the background. This place is a landscape painter's dream for a lesson on atmospheric perspective. I can see why Church, and for that matter, John Kensett (another Hudson River painter) became so interested in light and atmosphere. This was their workshop!

Approaching Poughkeepsie, the same holds here for the weather conditions. Lincoln spoke more at length in this city and seemed more serious in tone. The dramatic perspectives and monumental views of the Hudson River at this location perhaps suggested this timely reflection. Pointing out in his speech that it wasn't the country that needed saving, Lincoln emphasized that it was the Nation's institutions and what they were based on, that needed saving. This would become one of the President's prime objectives of his career.



44

45

But this would not be an easy task, as the US needed money. Right before I entered Poughkeepsie, I rode into Hyde Park and onto the grounds of the Cornelius Vanderbilt estate. One of the richest men in the world (in the 19th century), Vanderbilt held what amounted to 1/9 of the US currency in his hand. (Bill Gates is estimated to hold 1/138). *Mr. Lincoln would eventually ask for Vanderbilt's help and he donated one million dollars to outfit a warship to bottle up the Confederate ship, "Virginia" at Hampton Roads. The first 'ironclad' fight changed Naval warfare forever and launched an industrial 'north' into the business of building iron battle ships. Vanderbilt came to exemplify what a post Civil War economy would look like in the US as the medieval fiefdoms of southern plantations collapsed. A new kind of society was born in America and it would move into the next century and it was based on an industrialized economy. The 20th century so happens to appear very quickly and it is just down the street from the Vanderbilt estate.* My next stop was the home and library of President Franklin D. Roosevelt.

Day 27

P I N E B U S H t o P O R T J E R V I S

30 miles

Pine Bush to Port Jervis was a short ride but a very hilly challenge. This area is right in the middle of the Shawangunk Ridge that follows the Delaware River south. On the east side of the river is New Jersey and Pennsylvania is on the west side. Port Jervis is where New York, Pennsylvania, and New Jersey meet. Passing small towns along the hilly ravines, I am constantly encountering historic signs marking the Dutch presence in the area going back to the early 17th century. The Delaware and Hudson Canal Company operated a shipping business in this area that was responsible for bringing coal into New York City. The river ways once again turned what would have been an arduous overland journey into a more practical affair. I am not far from New York city at my present location but the geography would never reveal it. My journey by bicycle is moving south and due to logistics, I choose to avoid going into New York city. From my latitude, the only direct way into the city would be to bus my equipment east and then ferry afterwards to New Jersey.

Lincoln's long inaugural train route made one last stop after Poughkeepsie (in Peekskill) before going on to New York city. When he arrived, the "New York Herald" journalist, Henry Villiard reported that Mr. Lincoln appeared fatigued and not interested in engaging in political conversation. He always appears measured in his comments and tries to say nothing that is 'inconsistent with the Constitution'. The New Yorkers were rather curious to see the president elect and they themselves seemed measured in their reactions as well. The locals were a little suspect of this rustic man from Illinois and Mrs. Lincoln tried to see to it that her husband was dressed correctly and carrying himself well. Walt Whitman made it a point to see Mr. Lincoln and George Templeton Strong wrote in his diary, "the great rail splitter's face was visible to me for an instant, a keen, clear, honest face, not so ugly as his portraits..."

After delivering his speeches, visiting the Astor House and dealing with all of his political obligations including the emerging infighting within his party, Lincoln's train journey took him south to Trenton and Philadelphia. I move south as well and make my way over the Delaware River tomorrow and on to approach Pennsylvania.

Day 28

PORT JERVIS TO DINGMAN'S FERRY

20 miles

Today is my rest day, so I'm only going a short distance to stay at Dingman's Ferry, Pennsylvania by the Delaware Water Gap National Recreation Area on the Delaware River. It so happens that Dingman's Ferry also has the only privately owned toll bridge left (bicycles are free to cross). In 1735 Andrew Dingman built a flatboat to transport people across the Delaware River and in 1836 the family built the first of many toll bridges. Eventually, private engineers took over the project and in 1900 constructed the bridge that remains today.

Lincoln's inaugural train moved across the Delaware River after leaving Trenton, New Jersey. He stopped in Harrisburg then moved on to arrive in Philadelphia on Washington's birthday. In the interest of cycling a safe path, I adjusted my route towards Philadelphia.

Day 29

DINGMAN'S FERRY to MILFORD, NJ

75 miles

While I researched the route Lincoln's inaugural train took, I thought at first, I must visit every city exactly on the path. Well, I was surprised when I discovered a list of every marker that every town along the way has displayed, there are literally hundreds of plaques in small towns across the country. Some were on the inauguration route and some were on the funeral train route and some were on both. At times the trains just stopped briefly to service the locomotive and a town's claim was to have had Lincoln merely pass through. I decided my journey would be the inauguration route to focus on the rise of Lincoln. Also, there was something that seemed a bit contrary, geographically speaking. Let me explain. From the time of Daniel Boone forward, as Americans, we saw ourselves moving westward. This symbolically stood for opportunity in the American psyche and to the Hudson River painters as well, the horizon line in their landscapes metaphorically pointed west. Lincoln however, was a person from the west who moved eastward as he rose to national importance. He challenged slavery proponents by logically demonstrating that it was labor that generated wealth, not status and inheritance. He can be identified with having defined a contemporary notion of the 'American Dream' and yet his geographic path runs counter to the direction mythic and historic journeys of Manifest Destiny (the 18th & 19th century vision of a country between two Oceans). As I myself have been moving east and now south, I am struck by the notion of how the mythic 'west' might also appear somewhere east. The landscape in the east can be just as wild, dangerous and beautiful as the 'wild west'.

46



Highway,
oil on wood, 15" x 54", 2012

47



Black Bridge,
oil on paper mounted on curved panel, 25.5" x 55.5", 2012

Moving along my path I have seen an abundance of wildlife and natural beauty along a thin narrow corridor (Delaware Water Gap) between New Jersey and Pennsylvania. Today I was in an approach through a mountain gap that I could have sworn was the Big Thompson River valley of Colorado. Traveling by bicycle has slowed me down not only academically (in order to study a 19th century person) but also emotionally. I am not so fast to judge the merit of a regional location. I have moved along historic paths and natural byways and yet I am always humbled by an exhausting climb, an empty water bottle or a low food supply. These are items I know I have taken for granted when I'm in my normal day to day routines. They seem to be in an inexhaustible supply to my modern eyes. I saw a letter in a museum case not too long ago that appeared to be 150 years old and had been written and then turned ninety degrees and written on in the perpendicular direction in order to save paper. To me this frugality seemed amazing and equally so that Lincoln came from a time not too long ago where people did this sort of thing. Being able to identify my own limitations and make do with what I have at the moment has been the gift and lesson of my journey so far, especially when climbing a ridge today that felt like Pike's Peak in the Rocky Mountains.



Day 30

MILFORD, NJ to PHILADELPHIA

87 miles

Leaving Milford this morning to a cool breeze was a great welcome! The Delaware River was still as glass and reflected the shoreline in perfect symmetry. Not too far from my location Washington crossed this river and plaques remind me of the mileage to Valley Forge. A different century for my project and I have to keep focused on my mission as I could easily spend time at all of these sites. Heading south along the New Jersey side of the river, I find myself riding alongside a road that looks like it was cut out of the side of a mountain. Signs remind me to watch out for falling rocks and I see brick size debris that would not be a welcome event for bicycle or car. The area feels remote in the early morning and I have to remind myself I am not far from Trenton and New York city. These spaces defy my previously conceived notions of what this area of the country should look like. Stone houses from the 18th century hug the sides of the rock walls and they seem rather unassuming. These are not fancy rehabs or historical registry houses but they appear to be ordinary residences that were perhaps passed down to family members. The towns that pop up by the river crossings all have a bridge street and the roadway narrows to suggest their original design for carts and horses. I eventually cross into Pennsylvania on the west side of the river and come up on stone ruins of an old barn. This whole area has remnants from previous centuries and all of this seems quite foreign to a midwesterner.

The approach into Philadelphia is very easy. This is a bicycle friendly city, even in the downtown area. Bike paths lead into the city proper and bike lanes traverse the heart of the downtown streets. William Penn's 17th century design for the Center Square creates a dramatic view. The European roots of his thinking are obvious as I ride around a huge circle by the art museum to traverse my route. The 'Second Empire' style of architectural design for City Hall commands the center space and though it was completed in the early 20th century, it still speaks of history. As I move towards Independence Hall, the several block area becomes part of the National Park Service grounds. These are highly guarded spaces of national importance. Armed guards are outside the site where Lincoln stood by the Hall as well as across the street by the Liberty Bell. On February 22, Washington's birthday, Lincoln responded to death threats on his life by raising an American flag at Independence Hall. His gesture was intended to demonstrate that the Union and the principles that it was founded upon, would be preserved. Having to go through security checks and not being allowed to bring my bicycle and equipment through, I thought that I would miss getting close to this site. The guards brought over the head ranger and I explained my project of retracing the inaugural train route. I also showed him my gallery card of the Lincoln portrait I painted for the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library and Museum in Springfield, Illinois. He was generous in his understanding and gave me a special escort to the Lincoln site so I could photograph the space. I wish to thank him and the National Park Service for their generosity! Across the street on the east side of Independence Hall is ironically, the Gilbert Stuart house. Having painted Lincoln in the style of Stuart's half finished Washington portrait and having just shown my gallery card of the image, I couldn't help but think that the turn of events today were punctuated by the proximity of the President's speech to Mr. Stuart's residence.

Day 31

PHILADELPHIA to REAMSTOWN

63 miles

This morning at 7am the air was thick and very humid. I could tell this was going to be a challenge from the start. Leaving Philadelphia from the Conshohocken bike path along the Schuylkill River however, was very easy and quick. The still waters followed me along a parkway void of car traffic. Leaving the path, I followed another path into Valley Forge National Historic Park. The rolling hills and stone barns and houses stand as stoic reminders of the battle for independence. Washington's headquarters is just off the main road. Though the path is separate from car traffic, it is odd to see commuter traffic run through the park. This still does not disturb the quiet beauty of the fields and it is difficult to imagine cannon fire in what looks like prime farm country. As I left the area, my route took me further into the forest. As the day went on the fields seemed more remote and the wooded areas thicker. I thought I should keep my eye out for black bear. Deer were abundant in the area and I had to carefully ride around one as he just stood in his tracks and gazed straight at me.

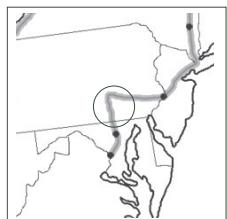
This is Lancaster county, Pennsylvania and the elevation will not let a cyclist forget it! Combining this with 95 degree heat, I carefully monitored my water intake! Pennsylvania is an old state. Continental Armies waged war with the British Empire, the Confederacy launched attacks into its homeland, and the battle with Native Americans began here as well. The landscape holds these memories and knows that struggle is part of its heritage. Stopping in Reamstown for the day, I am made aware of its 250 year old history. Just southwest of here, Lincoln commemorated another space in Pennsylvania. Speaking for what amounted to all of two minutes, his speech at Gettysburg eloquently framed and outlined what would become a new vision for a modern America.

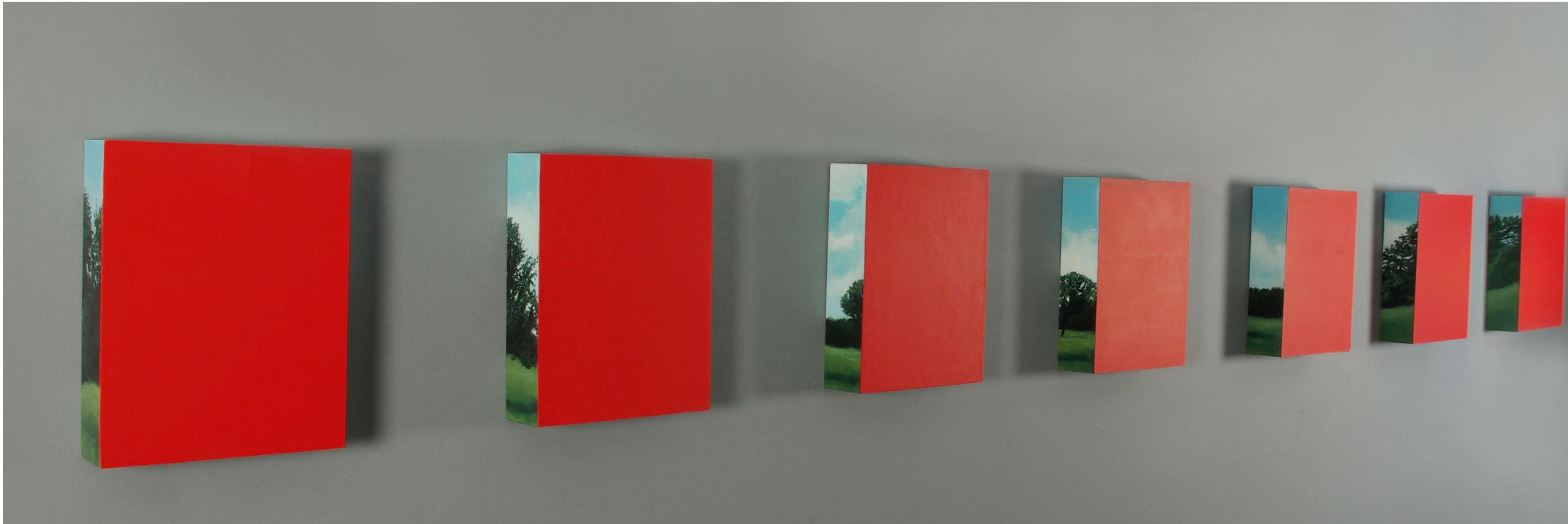
Day 32

REAMSTOWN to DELTA

67 miles

The mist over the fields was so thick this morning that my handlebars felt wet to grab. The farms had laundry hanging on the line that I didn't think would ever dry. Next to a field being plowed by a man using four horses and a gas cutter, I saw a young boy wearing plain work clothes and a straw hat rollerblading towards me. The Mennonite people in this part of Pennsylvania appear to be a liberal lifestyle version of the Old Order Amish I saw in Ohio. Neat homes and stone buildings seem to be the norm. Cycling along a ridge I was a little concerned with its name being 'Furnace Hills'. I didn't want them to live up to their moniker. Moving west and then south I rode for a while along the Susquehanna River. Boats and docks lined the water's edge and its breadth in places seemed more like a lake. Riding here was beautiful on the 'Long Flat' road. But, that only lasted briefly as my southern path had to climb another ridge. It was nice to be in the trees and the houses on this stretch of the road were perched close together with streams flowing nearby. It reminded me of old places I had seen in West Virginia with the only difference being the use of stone to build foundations and retaining walls. I passed a place called Donegal and the stonework made sense. The scale of these buildings were 18th century and the people who built them must have been early Irish immigrants. My day's ride took me to the southern edge of the state line. Tomorrow I enter Maryland and will skirt around Baltimore's western edge. Lincoln had to do the same but for different reasons. He wanted to change trains here quietly and avoid confrontation with antagonistic people from this northern but slave holding state. His task would be to prevent insurrection and keep Maryland solidly in the Union.





Day 33

DELTA to SYKESVILLE

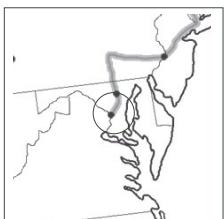
58 miles

I thought by getting up at 5am and eating an early breakfast, I could beat the storms that were heading across the eastcoast. Not so, as I started off wearing rain gear at 6:45 this morning. The rolling hills of Maryland could well have been central Illinois or the high plains when it comes to a lightening storm. Fortunately, I rode into Rocks State Park and found shelter underneath the overhang of a small stone building. It actually was a perfect place to wait out a storm. After the rain passed the partly cloudy weather yielded a 72 degree day. The country roads through Maryland were beautiful to ride through. There are rolling

hills, farms, and forests throughout this state. At times, the tall white pine groves reminded me of upper peninsula Michigan. Crossing over a ridge, I rode through an area of low lying conifers and rock debris that reminded me of eastern Washington state. That terrain eventually gave way to wooded rolling hills, neat white fences, and then horse farms. Unfortunately for Lincoln, he had to quietly pass through Maryland on his way to Washington. Allan Pinkerton, the founder of a detective agency in Chicago was hired by the railroad to investigate suspicious activities and the destruction

American Landscape,
oil on panel, 9" x 7" each, 2012

event and in retrospect his actions seem opposite to the bold confidence he displayed in Philadelphia. Perhaps Pinkerton was correct to discreetly shuttle Lincoln through this state, it's so many personalities make it difficult to sum up. Visually, Maryland can appear rural and urban as well as southern and northern simultaneously, especially in viewing the landscape.



Day 34

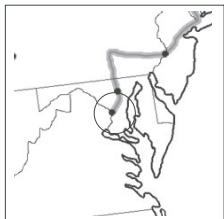
SYKESVILLE to WASHINGTON D.C.

60 miles

Monitoring the weather this morning, I once again decided to get an early start. The remnants of last night's storm still lingered and light rain was predicted. Leaving Sykesville this morning at 6:45 and facing a half mile climb woke me up. The wet roads made for careful but cool riding. The Liberty Reservoir and Patapsco Valley State Park are beautiful forested areas north of Washington and I passed through them on my route. Many of the small towns that appear on a map in the region are just a gathering of a few houses so I make sure I always carry at least a half gallon of water while riding. Actually that has become my standard practice anywhere on my journey. Brookeville seemed to be a bit ravaged by the storms as I saw downed trees and power lines throughout the area. However, the 18th century stone buildings seemed indifferent to all the downed branches. In order to enter Washington D.C., there are a series of trails and paths that traverse otherwise busy main street highways. In order to begin my approach, I entered the Bethesda area from the north through Rock Creek Regional Park. This picturesque wooded preserve also showed signs of storm damage and wreckage. The creeks were swollen and downed trees and mud covered the paths everywhere. This became a 'cyclocross' bicycle event for me to move south this morning. The Rock Creek Trail however, nicely intersects the Georgetown trail at ninety degrees and I took the path.

This is the perfect alternative route to ride into the city and it is clearly marked and paved for the most part. It seems to be a local favorite. The old railroad bed that was converted to a bike path reminded me of the nice trail from Cincinnati to Xenia, Ohio. This route moved along the Potomac River and is a great way to get into the Washington Mall. I met a local cyclist who rode the length of the trail with me which ended just behind the Lincoln Memorial. I truly appreciated his help in navigating me downtown. The cloud covered cool day was a perfect day to enter the city. After changing a flat at the Memorial, I rode towards the White House on Pennsylvania Avenue. My journey that left Springfield, Illinois at the front door of Abraham Lincoln's home on July 11th took 34 days and covered 2046 miles. I reached the front gate of the White House at 2pm eastern time today!

This has been truly an epic experience that I now have to let settle and reflect upon. The last 3 weeks of the trip have been a solo journey which required me to be extra vigilant in keeping track of my navigation, equipment and personal well being. I used an Iphone and GPS to navigate and carried 50 lbs of equipment including tools, stove, fuel, sleeping bag, tent, food, and water. In spite of my modern conveniences, I was traveling at a 19th century pace at times. I know that while driving a car it is easy to daydream however, this is not possible on a bicycle. My awareness for the past 5 weeks has been constantly focused on the present tasks at hand and this has been



Approaching Storm: Maryland,
oil on canvas, 32" x 49", 2012

the gift of the journey. To see the landscape for what it is and to 'work' the land by moving through it under my own accord revealed a beauty easily taken for granted. I was always aware of the wind, rain, weather, and temperature. Though it was hot at times, I could truly feel the coolness when taking a break behind the shade of a silo or an oak tree in a simple experience of what I think has changed the most dramatically in our modern daily lives from the past 150 years. Considering the time it took me to get to Washington and how much the landscape has shifted from Springfield, Illinois, I couldn't help but feel a bit nostalgic for the early morning mist rising from the inland seas of corn in Sangamon County. This kind of distance and longing must have contributed to Lincoln's melancholy. [Travel was slow and difficult in the 19th century and most people never left the county they were born in.]

In Washington D.C. on March 4, 1861, Abraham Lincoln was inaugurated the 16th President of the United States. The address he gave to the people was one of the most profound and eloquent statements a President has made to the nation (and world) at a time of extreme uncertainty and civil violence. I take heed of this today in our post 9/11 time. I memorized the last paragraph of Lincoln's First Inaugural address and discovered it was difficult to put the few lines to memory. Usually, memorization is made easy by listening to a meter and verse and then almost automatically filling in the words with statements that rhyme or flow with the syntax of the writer. I couldn't do this on this occasion because the speech was not about meter but about carefully chosen words with profound meaning. Lincoln's writing was influenced by Shakespeare as well as the Bible but also I believe that there was a direct influence from the pauses and shifts of the central Illinois landscape. A tree appears as an island, and then it is not and it reveals that it is actually part of a grove. Maybe a slight turn in the road shifts for no apparent reason other than to mark a county line. This landscape causes a traveler to pause and change direction in a contemplative manner. It is a text in learning, reading, and listening. In a digital age it seems as though we don't see dimensional space anymore but have given way to a cinematic time. This loss though apparently convenient was I believe, an essential element to understanding the roots of Lincoln's philosophy. A direct experience of the landscape across this 'broad land' emphasizes what I believe is a connection between 'every living heart (and hearthstone)'. 'Swell'(ing) out the (need for a new civic course perhaps-) a 'chorus of union' (in nature and in human nature)? At a time of greater distrust and divisiveness than I can remember, I am advised by an admonition from over a century ago to listen to 'the better angels of our (my) nature'.

7.11.10 to 8.13.10 Springfield, Illinois To Washington D.C.

*inspired from Abraham Lincoln, First Inaugural Address, 3.4.61

Dedicated to Trudy Welker

I am grateful for the generous support of Perimeter Gallery.



D. Pollack, 2012, photo courtesy of James Fraher

Designed by Tasiana Shynkovich

BIOGRAPHY

born, Chicago

EDUCATION

- M.F.A. Ohio State University Columbus, Ohio
B.F.A. University of Illinois Urbana, Illinois

SOLO EXHIBITIONS

- 2013 Perimeter Gallery, *34 Days to Washington*, Chicago, Illinois
Addison Art Center, *Lincoln Project*, Addison, Illinois
2011 Newzones Gallery, *Fa From Home*, Calgary, Canada
Marcia Wood Gallery, *Fa From Home*, Atlanta, GA
2010 Perimeter Gallery, *Mysterious Island*, Chicago, IL
2009 Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library and Museum, *Lincoln Project*, Springfield, IL
The Union League Club, *Lincoln Project*, Chicago, IL
2007 Newzones Gallery, *The Sheltering Sky*, Calgary, Canada
Merwin and Wakeley Galleries, Illinois Wesleyan University, *American Inheritance*, Bloomington, IL
Marcia Wood Gallery, *Night*, Atlanta, GA
2006 Margaret Thatcher Projects, *American Gothic, Past Imperfect*, New York, NY
Perimeter Gallery, *Improvisation*, Chicago, IL
2005 Newzones Gallery, *Missives*, Calgary, Canada
Marcia Wood Gallery, *South of the Tennessee, Remains of the Campaign*, Atlanta, GA
2004 Perimeter Gallery, *Voyages of Discovery, From the Earth to the Moon*, New York, NY
2003 Newzones Gallery, *Garden of Forking Paths*, Calgary, Canada
Perimeter Gallery, *A Search for Heroes, Lincoln & the Illinois Landscape*, Chicago, IL
2002 Perimeter Gallery, *Ancien regime*, New York, NY
Marcia Wood Gallery, *Ancien regime*, Atlanta, GA
2001 Newzones Gallery, *Ancien regime*, Calgary, Canada
2000 Perimeter Gallery, *Between Heaven and Earth*, Chicago, IL
Newzones Gallery, Calgary, Canada
1999 Newzones Gallery, *North American Inheritance*, Calgary, Canada
Marcia Wood Gallery, *American Inheritance*, Atlanta, GA
1998 Marcia Wood Gallery, *Entering the Circle*, Atlanta, GA
1997 Newzones Gallery, *Crossing the Next Meridian*, Calgary, Canada
1996 Marcia Wood Gallery, *Mythopoeia, an American Portrait*, Atlanta, GA
Peter Miller Gallery, *Landscape and Memory*, Chicago, IL
1995 Elliot Smith Gallery, St. Louis, MO
Marx-Saunders Gallery, International Art Exposition, Chicago, IL
1994 Deson-Saunders Gallery, *Shadowlands*, Chicago, IL
1993 Monte Clark Gallery, Vancouver, Canada
Bess Cutler Gallery, New York, NY
1992 Deson-Saunders Gallery, Chicago, IL
1991 Bess Cutler Gallery, New York, NY
Deson-Saunders Gallery, *Between Earth and Sky*, Chicago, IL
1989 Deson-Saunders Gallery, Chicago, IL
1988 Ann Nathan Gallery, Chicago, IL

SELECTED GROUP EXHIBITIONS

- 2008 *This Just In*, Marcia Wood Gallery, Atlanta, GA
Curator's Choice, Contemporary Art Institute of Detroit, Detroit, MI
Art Chicago, The Merchandise Mart, Perimeter Gallery, Chicago, IL
2007 *Artwork 5*, Gallery 2, Art Institute of Chicago, Chicago, IL
Artscapes, Knoxville Museum of Art, Knoxville, TN
2006 *States of Seige*, Fine Arts Center Galleries, University of Rhode Island, Kingston, RI
Landscape x10, Newzones Gallery, Calgary, Canada

PULSE, MARGARET THATCHER PROJECTS, NEW YORK, NY

- 2005 *Summer Sensation*, Thatcher Projects, New York, NY
Perimeter Gallery, Chicago, IL
Landscape x9, Newzones Gallery, Calgary, Canada
2004 Perimeter Gallery, Chicago, IL
Landscape x9, Newzones Gallery, Calgary, Canada
2003 *San Francisco Art Exposition*, Newzones Gallery, Calgary, Canada

CONTEMPORARY LANDSCAPE, PERIMETER GALLERY, CHICAGO, IL

- 2002 *Landscape x9*, Newzones Gallery, Calgary, Canada
San Francisco Art Exposition, Newzones Gallery, Calgary, Canada

DEPARTURE: AMERICAN CONTEMPORARY LANDSCAPE, INDIANA UNIVERSITY NORTHWEST, GARY, IL

- 2001 *International Art Exposition:Chicago*, Perimeter, Chicago, IL
Miami Art Exposition, Newzones Gallery, Calgary, Canada
2000 *Landscape x8*, Newzones Gallery, Calgary, Canada
San Francisco Art Exposition, Newzones Gallery, Calgary, Canada

INTERNATIONAL ART EXPOSITION: CHICAGO, PERIMETER, CHICAGO, IL

- 1999 *Requiem*, Nexus Contemporary Art Center, Atlanta, GA
Family Album, Marcia Wood Gallery Atlanta, GA
1998 *The Nature of Landscape*, South Bend Regional Museum of Art, South Bend, IN

CORNUCOPIA, WINSTON-WACHTER GALLERY, NEW YORK, NY

- Paradise and its Transformations*, Georgia State University, School of Art & Design Gallery, Atlanta, GA

LANDSCAPE X 6, NEWZONES GALLERY, ALBERTA, CANADA

- Land, Air, & Sea*, Elliot Smith Gallery, St. Louis, MO
1997 Marguerite Ostricher Gallery, New Orleans, LA
Marcia Wood Gallery, Atlanta, GA
Peter Miller Gallery, Chicago, IL

INTERNATIONAL ART EXPOSITION: CHICAGO, PETER MILLER GALLERY, CHICAGO, IL

- Seattle International Art Exposition*, Newzones Gallery, Calgary, Canada

SELENIUS, NEWZONES GALLERY, CALGARY, CANADA

- 1996 Center for the Arts, Calgary, Alberta, Canada
Newzones Gallery, Calgary, Canada
International Art Exposition:Chicago, Peter Miller Gallery, Chicago, IL

SEATTLE INTERNATIONAL ART EXPOSITION, NEWZONES GALLERY, CALGARY, CANADA

- Introductions*, Newzones Gallery, Alberta, Canada
Peter Miller Gallery, Chicago, IL

SELECTED AWARDS

- 2009 *Order of Lincoln, Bicentennial Edition*, state of Illinois award, Springfield, IL
School of the Art Institute of Chicago, faculty enrichment grant, Chicago, IL
2008 Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library and Museum, grant, Springfield, IL
2003 Illinois Arts Fellowship grant, Springfield, IL

SELECTED COLLECTIONS

- Marquette University Law Library, Milwaukee, WI
Union League Club, Chicago, IL
Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library and Museum, Springfield, IL
Philbrook Museum of Art, Tulsa, OK
Republican Governor's Association, Washington, D.C.
American Telephone and Telegraph Company, Chicago, IL
Metropolitan Life Insurance Company, New York, NY
Munich Reinsurance America, Princeton, NJ
Poco Petroleum, Calgary, CANADA

34 DAYS TO WASHINGTON



**Perimeter
Gallery**

210 West Superior Street
Chicago, IL 60654
312/266-9473
Fax 312/266-7984

www.perimetergallery.com