

North Dakota Museum of Art

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VIVIENNE MORGAN: A SENSE OF PLACE TO OPEN AT THE NORTH DAKOTA MUSEUM OF ART

An exhibition by English born, Bemidji photographer, Vivienne Morgan opened at the North Dakota Museum of Art. On display are twenty-three, full-color photographs. Each large-format image depicts a view of the Minnesota, many on or near the Continental Divide. The show is on display in Grand Forks through January 5, 2009. The public is invited to a reception on November 22, at 5 pm for *Vivienne Morgan: A Sense of Place*, a landscape photography exhibition by Bemidji-based artist Vivienne Morgan. There will be a short lecture by Morgan.

According to Morgan, “After living in the United States for nearly thirty years, I still define myself as English. I almost live in two worlds, watching BBC television, listening to BBC Radio 4: all my news and sense of America is filtered through those sources. It keeps me happy to remain connected, but when I leave my house, the whole wild wooded landscape of Northern Minnesota tells me plainly: I'm not in England anymore. Of all things English, my identity is most closely tied to the English landscape. This series of photographs is part of my conscious effort to become connected to this country, and this land, to feel truly present in my surrounding landscape. I immersed myself in the local landscape.”

“I walked in Minnesota along a part of the Continental Divide, an area where I hope to live some day, and through a field close to my house. I watched the grasses grow wildly at the edge of the forest and watched the fields transform into pastoral hayfields. I went out every day, often in the gloaming, watching the rapidly shifting light, soft mists, or swift clouds change the sense of space. At this time of day, everything hidden in the shadows is slowly revealed. Standing in this light, I could almost be anywhere in the world. There isn't much color in the gloaming—only forms—but there are sounds as the world wakes up. For a few moments as the sun hits the horizon everything turns golden, filled with transcendental light. I feel a sense of connection, a sense of being present in the world. The sweet light moves quickly. The only thing that keeps me in the same frame of mind—an acute awareness of being alive and present—is the weather. Foggy mornings are quiet and shrouded, paring the world down to what is underfoot. There is a sense of intimacy in the fog, which falls away when the sun burns through. Only that moment when the sun sits in the fog is the land filled with a transcendental light.”

“During this exploration of the American landscape I felt akin to the nineteenth century, European-influenced Barbizon painters. Like them, I went looking for tranquility, familiarity, and intimacy in the wild wooded landscape around me. Like these painters I saw how much light transforms the sense of place.”

The North Dakota Museum of Art is located on Centennial Drive, Grand Forks. Weekdays 9 – 5 pm. Weekends 1 – 5 pm. The Museum Shop is open during these hours as well. The Museum Café is open weekdays 10 – 4 pm with lunch served from 11 – 2 pm. Although the Museum does not charge an admission fee, the suggested donation is \$5 for adults and change for children. Wireless internet access available.