



I remember that, visiting Lethbridge, a cliché became true: there is a city, not a centre, the city itself is a centre to the plains around it, no need for a centre in the centre.

The word Prairie-City speaks of vast lands surrounding it. Aerial photographs show meticulous allotments of agricultural land in a variety of forms, crops. Although the city *is* land, urban development and layout make one forget that some times. Why?

The print shows a concept: a (future) Lethbridge: Expansion of the city has been realised, based on agricultural strategies for the allocation and use of the land. The "coulees" still are what they were: a river of dunes containing life and space in the middle of the built environment.

The city has expanded itself: outward through satellites in the forms and scale of the lay of the land; inward through creating urban space on an agricultural scale, thus bringing (skill of) food-production close to the citizens.

Agricultural strategies have now cultivated the land in another way than urban development normally does: strongly focussed on natural circumstances, dynamic, and operative in a completely different *scale*.

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Notice:

Cultivation of the land.

The city as agriculture.

Agriculture in the city.

Re-membering the lay of the land

Jean van Wijk

april 2011



CALL FOR WORK: DUE MAY 15, 2011
Mapping a Prairie City: Lethbridge and its Suburbs
Southern Alberta Art Gallery, June 24 to September 11, 2011

Mapping a Prairie City: Lethbridge and its Suburbs is an exhibition being developed for the Southern Alberta Art Gallery that will showcase a variety of responses to the identity of a prairie city. These responses can be articulated or approached through ideas generated by aspects of urban design, architecture, landscape, water, cartography, design, history, theory, First Nations, the public, transportation, pedestrianism, gardens, weather and other issues. We are looking for artist's ephemera, notebook jottings, proposals-as-art, hand-drawn maps, notebook pages, or other forms of art that will be displayed primarily en masse. The main exhibition will be at the Southern Alberta Art Gallery with links to external sites throughout the greater Lethbridge area.

Lethbridge as a city has been developed on the same set of ideas of urban development as many other North American centres in the oil rich twentieth century. The questions of this exhibit are: What experiences are unique to Lethbridge? What experiences of Lethbridge are generic but become unique, as they are experienced through the lens of this specific prairie town? How can experiences of site, landscape, intellectual engagement, urban design etc. be mapped?

We are asking for past visitors to Lethbridge as well as local arts professionals to send us a mapped response to a site or experience related to their concept of Lethbridge. These should be 2D works of a maximum size of approx. 20 x 24 in. on flexible material: paper, mylar, tissue, lightweight fabric etc. Digital or short video works are also possible. The form of these mapped responses is open but can take a traditional or psychogeographic format or can be an expanded definition that might include a conceptual approach.

In addition we are looking for visual projects or texts of 500- 1000 that would be suitable for the Spring 2012 edition of *OnSite Review: Rural Urbanisms*. www.onsitereview.ca

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