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Plot

Meredith F. Conger

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PLOT

by

MEREDITH CONGER

(Under the Direction of Robert Farber)

ABSTRACT

This body of work, *Plot*, examines the perceptual relationship of the viewer to the landscape that surrounds them through the use of informational paintings that reference, aerial perspective, mark-making and texture. The primary objective of these works is to explore an alternative form of creating contemporary landscape paintings in response to a familiarity with his/her surrounding landscape. As an artist living in middle Georgia, I have always wanted to integrate the subject of landscape into my studio practice.

INDEX WORDS: Aerial perspective, Aerial landscape, Plot of land, Plot, Ownership, Abstract landscape art, Landscape art, Documentation art, Tax assessor

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B.F.A., Georgia College and State University, 2014

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MASTER OF FINE ARTS

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

I create paintings that are reminiscent of the landscapes that surround me in different counties in the middle Georgia area; Lamar, Monroe, and Pike are a few of the counties. The choice of color emphasizes the mark-making and abstracted forms used to build the landscape imagery. By utilizing tax property documents and GIS (Geographic Information System) mapping, I interpret the textures of the natural landscape and map out the imposed property lines of the land on top of the abstracted painting. A geographic information system (GIS) is a computer-based system created for capturing, storing, checking, and displaying data related to positions on Earth's surface. By relating seemingly disparate data, GIS can help individuals and organizations better understand spatial patterns and relationships. A tax assessor website generally provides the public with real estate information that includes: GIS mapping, land ownership, acreage, and land purposes. I select images of aerial perspective from tax assessor websites as source references in an attempt to alter the traditional landscape view.

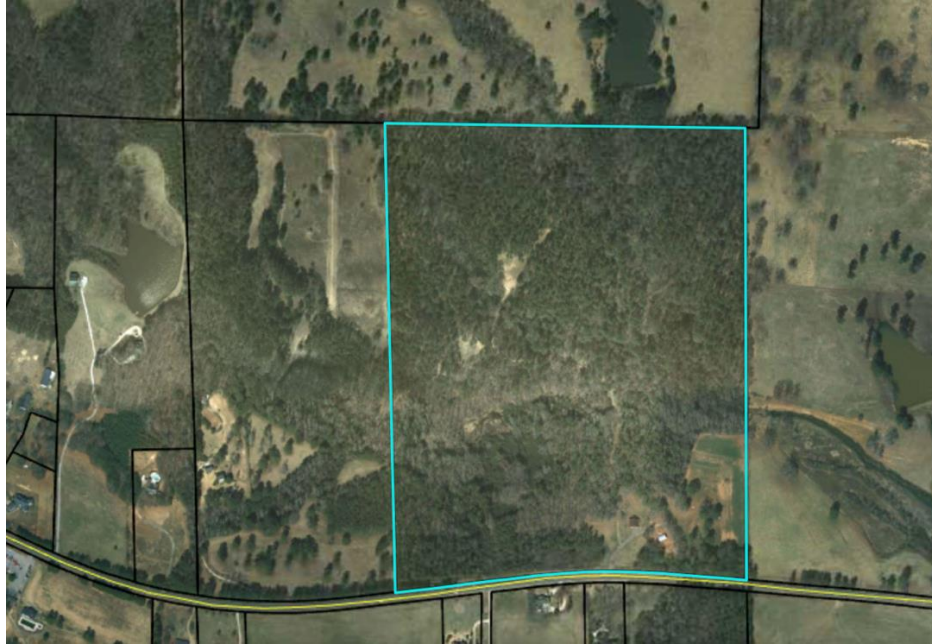


Figure 1. Digital Photograph of Tax Assessor Website Image of Pike County Land Section

Traditional landscape painting involves the pictorial depiction of landscapes in art, a natural scenery that usually includes trees, rivers, forests, sky and mountains normally shown in a formal landscape orientation. The sky is an important formal element in landscape paintings as it informs the viewer of the weather which could infer a mood or the atmosphere of the painting. Early on when I was working on traditional landscape paintings, the sky was always an afterthought for me and I wanted to work through how I could make the sky an equally important part of my landscapes. I considered the various ways I look at the land, in the traditional sense and how I view it when researching information about the land through GIS mapping on the tax assessor website. Both views provide me with a vast amount of source information. Information is defined as what is conveyed or represented by a particular arrangement or sequence of things. The traditional view of a landscape or my physical presence therein, informs the colors, time-of-day, temperature and an overall sensation of being in the land. The tax assessor/GIS map

provides me with the coordinates, acreage, ownership, land uses, layout of the land, and its adjoining pieces of land.

In these pieces, I am exploring expressive mark-making and gestural paint application through layering and superimposing property lines of the land on to the painting. In my practice, I enjoy the freedom and process of intuitive painting in relationship to the accuracy of positioned GIS mapping on the painting surface. Reoccurring brushstrokes and marks work to create patterns and represent various textures of land within the composition. The inclusion of fabric and thread represent additional mediums that provide multiple textures evocative of both the natural land and the abstracted forms I create. This combination of the painted land and physical tactility of the yarn work bring me back to a comforting viewpoint of home. My work deals with my familiarity of the land I am a part of, the land has been divided and property lines have been superimposed onto the natural landscape creating different plots of properties owned by various people. It is no longer a unified natural landscape much like the paint application and threadwork on to the canvas, it has had information imposed onto it. It is within those boundaries that we make a home or become caretakers of the land and within those borders, we begin to care for the land in a new way.

I see my works as informationally dense pieces of art. There are multiple layers of information working simultaneously in a single painting. The application of paint combined with the overlay of a map brings a new layer of information to the work, as well as the thread and fabric which is meant to emphasize and create textures in the work. The utilization of mark making, color palettes, embroidery techniques, property boundaries, land documentation, and nature are all aspects I like to consider when working on a piece.

CHAPTER 2

CONCEPTS & INSPIRATIONS

Ideas and source inspiration for my work is primarily informed by the land that surrounds me and how that land effects my living habits, everyday conversations, and expectations. Born in Monroe County, Georgia in the city of Forsyth, I grew up hunting, fishing, and always being outdoors. Preparing pieces of land for various activities such as dove shoots, controlled burns for pine straw growth, and gardening is what I experienced growing up in this country lifestyle. We became stewards of a piece of land and controlled what would be done to the land for the most part. The land my family owns is typically used for either profit or our own pleasure depending on the character of the land. We have owned pieces of land solely used for hunting or fishing and/or the enjoyment of outdoor recreational activities. We also own land that is strictly reserved for harvesting timber and pine straw.

As the landscapes that surround me, I am a singular part of a larger complex environment, similar to the relationship of separate pieces of land creating a whole landscape. The property lines separate ownership of the land however nature does not cease because of those lines. Foliage, woodlands, and streams will still pass between property lines. One can see beyond their own land, it isn't just blocked in, like it is on the tax map. The land in a digital format is vastly different from physically being on the land and present in it. Online you see the boundaries in the form of blue, black and yellow lines, and in person there might be a fence, tree line, or maybe nothing at all that divides the land between ownership plots. Online viewing enables us to see a vast amount of land on the map that includes: aerial viewpoints, clusters of trees, foliage, roadways and bodies of water. When one is present in the land, a person has the

ability to notice smaller details. This is why I think it is important to include the physical materials of yarn and thread into my landscapes.

The thread allows for smaller details within the larger work to come to the surface and it connects back to how landscapes have many details in them that are unseen until investigated up close. Not all of my threadwork or fabric is obvious at first glance in my paintings, I prefer that the viewer approach the works and observe them up close, as one would do when walking in a natural landscape. Thus, discovering the intimate details that make not only the paintings but the land a unique experience. In my earlier pieces, I allowed the thread to be used throughout the canvas and enhancing the paint marks with the thread. I soon realized that the threadwork was the most intimate aspect of my paintings, as I was sitting there slowly pulling needle and thread through a canvas that I had painted of my land. The thread was the tool I was using to emphasize the interesting areas in the land. In my works, my piece of land highlighted and outlined in blue, was the most important section in the painting for me personally so why was I causing focus in areas outside of this? I then shifted my threadwork to only reside within those blue highlighted boundaries to push the emphasis of our land. In the two photos below, one can see in Figure 2. that the thread crossed over outside the blue boundary line, while in Figure 3. the thread butts up to the blue line and stops. Perhaps areas outside my own blue highlighted land is just as interesting as inside it, however I am no longer spending as much time on the land outside of the blue boundary. I am forcing myself to focus on that one section of land and becoming a steward of that piece to enhance and care for it in a more unique way.



Figure 2. Meredith Conger, Detail of *Washington* Figure 3. Meredith Conger, Detail of *Lamar*

During my second to last semester in my master's program I invited Dr. Wei Tu, a Georgia Southern University professor, to come for a studio visit and view my work. Dr. Wei Tu is the head of the Geography department at Georgia Southern and teaches a class called Advanced GIS and Spatial Analysis. The Advanced GIS course covered the advanced spatial analysis and modeling functions of GIS and offers fundamental theoretical background and hands-on experience in spatial analysis and modeling. Topics such as network analysis, surface modeling, spatial patterns analysis, spatial data visualization, and basics of spatial statistics were going to be discussed in the course. I thought he could give me some insight into how GIS mapping and the tax assessor website really works. During his studio visit he spoke about how the tax assessor is often used for business development and building projects in a more urban setting the majority of the time. He really explained how important the data is in helping decide major components about developments and the process of how plans begin.

GIS data can be separated into two categories: spatially referenced data which is represented by vector and raster forms, including imagery, and attribute tables which is

represented in a tabular format. Within the spatial referenced data group, the GIS data can be further classified into two different types: vector and raster. Most GIS software applications mainly focus on the usage and manipulation of vector geodatabases with added components to work with raster-based geodatabases on a tax assessor website. Vector data is split into three types: polygon, line, and point data. Polygons are used to represent areas such as the boundary of a city or forest. Polygon features are two dimensional and therefore can be used to measure the area and perimeter of a geographic feature. Polygon features are most commonly distinguished using either color schemes or patterns. Line data is used to represent linear features. Common examples would be rivers, trails, and streets. Line features only have one dimension and therefore can only be used to measure length. Common examples would be road centerlines and hydrology. This is why the yellow line is always represented when looking at the tax assessor website, it shows the yellow centerlines on a road. Point data is most commonly used to represent nonadjacent features and to represent discrete data points. Points have zero dimensions, therefore you can measure neither length or area with this dataset. For instance, point locations could represent city locations, place names, or points of interest. Raster data represents the fourth type of feature: surfaces. Raster data is cell-based and this data category also includes aerial and satellite imagery, like the images I use when creating my work. I see my work as relating most to line data in many aspects, as I am working with lines and creating various textures and emphasizing areas of interest in my pieces.

CHAPTER 3

ARTISTIC INFLUENCES

Sally Mann is an artist who has really inspired my exploration of landscapes to go deeper, specifically southern ones. Her works titled, *Southern Landscapes*, which was later turned into a book titled *Deep South*, is the collection of her photographs that I connect my work with the most. Being born and raised in the south, southern landscapes are a subject matter I can and always will immediately relate to and have interest in. I feel connected to nature and I want to interpret it onto canvas, in both realistic and abstracted ways. Mann's photographs of the southern landscapes interest me because they aren't picture perfect, there is usually a blur or smudge in the photos. She wants the photos to have as much character as the landscapes themselves. Her photos of the South have been described as haunting and dreamlike, showing a great history in the photos. I think my own interpretation of southern landscapes are a form of history too, through documenting the location and property lines in a painting. I am creating a visual landscape from interpretations of my own land and then applying the dictated boundaries that I have no choice but to follow. Similar to Mann's photographic techniques where she is using traditional photography methods that prevent her from knowing how a photo might turn out, and where a blur might be in the photo. I am forcing myself to adhere to the property boundaries which add new challenges in my work.



Figure 4. Sally Mann, *Southern Landscapes*, photograph, 1998

My work sources a similar inspiration to the work of Sally Mann. We are both working with images of southern landscapes, something we have constantly been surrounded by and find that using a sense of place to create work is important. I don't want to look far and wide for inspiration in my art, I want to work with the authentic subject matter around me and let those ideas lead me down different paths that could take me somewhere new. I find it is so important for an artwork to successfully represent the artist in the work, there needs to be that connection. Otherwise what is the point of making art that the artist themselves has no ties to it. Making art void of personal experience is hard to accomplish and artificial in my eyes. Art to me is meant to be a form of self-expression. Mann uses minimal imagery in her works, and yet the final product is, to this day, extremely layered and interesting to her audience. Her landscapes series prove that something simple can still be visually stimulating to viewers. Nature is ever evolving making it an amazing subject to explore, the inspiration will last a lifetime and beyond. I can look at a photo of a piece of land from 2008 and ten years later, that landscape has changed into something new, whether new tree growth, clearing of that land, or even different division lines. I

believe my paintings are able to withstand the test of time, as I said earlier, they are a form of documentation of the land with the inclusion of the tax property lines. They could change if the land within changed, which is inevitable.

Do Ho Suh's theories about home have also really influenced my exploration and study of home and what it can mean to someone, particularly what it means to me. Do Ho Suh's installation titled *Almost Home* features large-scale installations of the artist's brightly hued "Hub" sculptures which are detailed, hand-sewn fabric recreations of homes where Suh has lived. At first Suh wanted to create a work of art because he had become homesick from his move to America from Seoul. The Hubs consist of a series of conjoined rooms and passageways that one can enter and walk throughout to get the exact layout of one of Suh's homes he has lived in. He crafts his works using traditional Korean sewing techniques combined with 3-D modeling and mapping technologies.



Figure 5. Do Ho Suh, *wielandstr. 18, 12159 berlin*, installation, 2011

As does his work, my work also utilizes a mapping technology to help create a form of art, or a new perspective of viewing art. Suh is also using various sewing techniques that relate back to a tradition from his home. Suh sees these works as “suitcase homes,” so lightweight and portable they can be installed almost anywhere. His work fascinates me because rather than carrying around a photo of an old house, he takes mapping and memory and combines the two to create physical spaces that provide the feeling of home in an artistic form. As my work are maps, they are also images of a home, a piece of land that ties me back to home. As a house has a floorplan normally viewed from an aerial perspective, I see a relationship between the concept of home and a map.

Another artist I found while researching aerial perspectives was Georgia O’Keeffe. When Georgia O’Keeffe was in her 70s, she flew on an airplane for the first time and discovered a fascination with the earth from the view of the plane, in the clouds. This is what inspired her to start working from an aerial perspective to try and understand her new-found vantage point. She created *Sky Above Clouds IV* in 1965 which spans an entire twenty-four-foot-long canvas. The repetition of the white clouds created an abstract pattern over the canvas which in reality is a landscape. As in my process I repeat certain patterns throughout my canvas, often imitating a natural occurrence. Her work is largely the expression of her deep connection with nature and the landscape through her personal, abstract, visual language.



Figure 6. Georgia O'Keeffe, *Sky Above Clouds IV*, 1965

CHAPTER 4

PROCESS

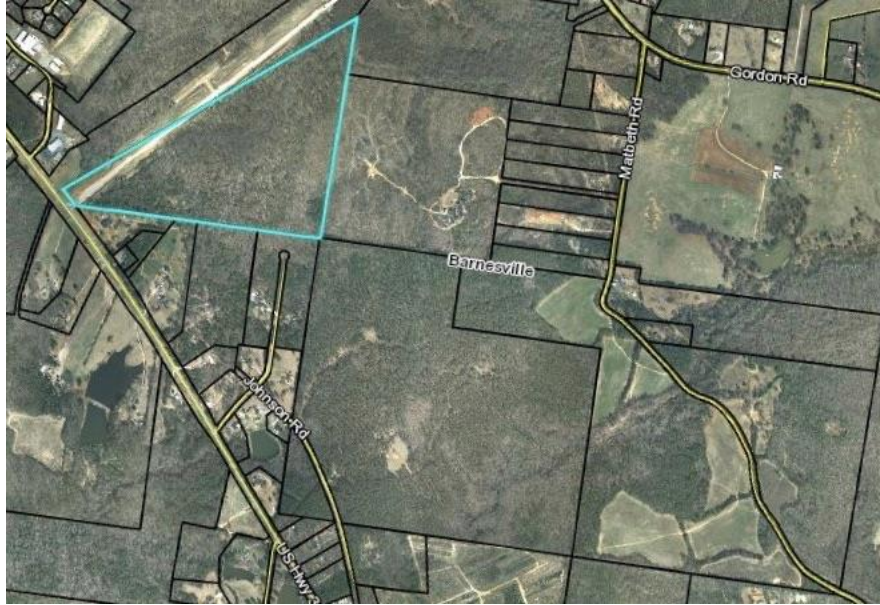


Figure 7. Tax Assessor Website Image of Lamar County, Georgia

I reference source imagery from the tax assessor websites in the counties where my family owns land. Each county has its own webpage for its GIS maps. I first choose and locate the land I want to focus on for a piece of work and pull up the map of that land on the website. I try to envision the placement of the piece of land on the canvas and how I want to compose the property and how the land/boundary lines around it will appear on the surface. Once I have lightly mapped out the lines that divided the land up, my next step is to determine the color palette. I reflect on what has happened recently to that specific piece of land, is it lush at the moment, was there just a controlled burn, might it be dry since there hasn't been rain? The land is ever changing, but new photographs on the tax assessor websites do not update as often. The property lines can change, but the images generally do not. In the Pike County piece, Figure 21.,

I know in the tax assessor map there appears to be lush trees throughout majority of our land however, we just cleared about half of those trees. I take that into consideration when I envision how I want to apply the paint and textures on to the canvas. My goal is not to replicate the map precisely and mimic how the natural land appears on the computer. I do adhere to the accuracy of the property lines of the map though. Nature gives me the freedom while the property implemented map lines inform how I can divide up the land on the canvas. I use artistic discernment when placing the map onto the canvas, I will shift it if there is something I want to have more at an angle. I do not completely flip an image however, only minor tilts, the map orients itself in the traditional north, east, south, west orientation so I like to keep north at the top of my canvas as well, only slight tilts for formal and compositional purposes.

I work in layers, reflecting back on the land itself having various layers. The building of layers of paint started to make me think about the layers of land itself. The layers of soil include surface layer, surface soil, subsoil, parent rock and finally bedrock. When I first start a painting, I begin with an overall coat of a color then randomly apply textures through a mixture of paint and medium, mixed with modeling paste. I use the technique of indirect painting because I want my work to have layers to it similar to how layers of land build up when observing from an aerial perspective. Indirect painting involves procedures in which the final picture is built up gradually by placing several layers of painting, one over the other, the upper layers modifying but not altogether concealing the lower layers on the canvas. I know there is a history with the layers of land and how each layer effects the preceding layer. Transparent layers of painting show the history of the buildup of paint on the canvas and how various tones affect the one below it inevitably altering the overall picture. In comparison of the layers of paint to the layers of actual earth I recognized similar aspects of each that are included in my work. The

layers of ground, referred to as soil horizons starting from the surface going down are; surface soil, topsoil, subsoil, weather rock (parent material), and bedrock. I found this connection of layers to paint and soil interesting, and now think of my layers of paint as similar to the layers of land. My first layer would be comparable to the bedrock, a singular tone just to get some color onto the canvas rather than a stark white canvas. My next step is the parent material, large areas of altered colors with some textures being put onto the canvas, rather linen fabric or modeling paste to create texture. The subsoil layer of my paintings includes smaller areas of visible brushstrokes and more thoughtful texturizing of the canvas. The topsoil is where I start including more transparent layers of paint and finish any areas of the canvas I want to alter. The surface soil is the layer of the painting that I lay the property map down on and sew yarn into canvas.

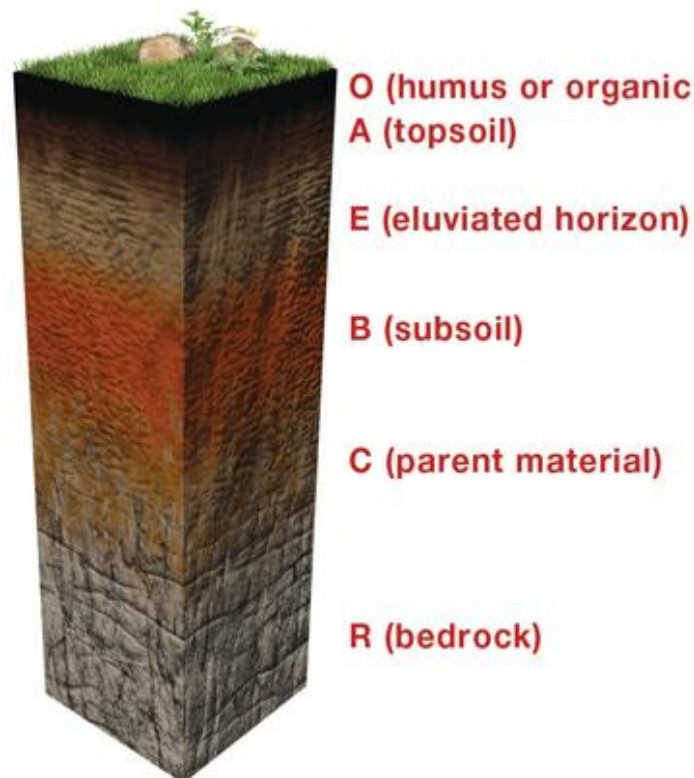


Figure 8. Soil Layer Diagram

The inclusion of yarn and thread is that intimate connection I wanted the viewer to experience when observing my work. For generations, the women in my family have sewn clothes and knitted blankets. My mother was able to sew skirts and hem pants for my sister and I, while my grandmother made my moms' clothing when she was younger. It was a life skill that was passed down from one generation to the next. I wanted to acknowledge the experience and incorporate the skill into my paintings. I see the land aspect as my father, the yarn aspect as my mother, with the inclusion of myself in my paintings, the three aspects become a whole in visual form. I am selectively using the yarn and thread to add textures to the land that is encompassed within the blue boundary, which is ours. The yarn enhances the painterly marks and tones. There are many types of stitching I include when I am doing my needlework part of my painting, some are random patterns I create while others are very common stitches in the embroidery/sewing world.

The Running stitch is very similar to the backstitch except there is spacing in between each stitch, good for dashes and covering large amounts of area. I use the running stitch in a more sporadic pattern in my works to cover an area in one tone of thread. I utilize varying lengths for each stitch and the majority of the time I overlap the stitches. This thread technique is similar to dashes of paint I also apply to my paintings. This mark is reminiscent of random marks I see when looking at an aerial perspective image of natural land.



Figure 9. Example of Running Stitch Figure 10. Meredith Conger, Detail of *Washington*, 2019

The straight stitch begins by bringing the needle up through the canvas and then simply going back through in a straight line and working your way back to the beginning stitch. In the (Pike County piece, Figure 12.) I have created a large straight stitch that expands outward and draws attention to that certain area of land due to the pattern this stitch creates.



Figure 11. Example of Straight Stitch

Figure 12. Meredith Conger, Detail of *Pike*, 2019

The French knot is one of several knotted stitches used in surface embroidery and produces a knot similar to a colonial knot. A colonial knot is a surface knot that is commonly used in candle wicking as it forms a tight knot that holds up well to wear, making it also good for embroidery on clothing. The French knot stitch has a reputation for being one of the most difficult but is actually

quite simple to work, and one I use most often in my paintings. One can create a French knot when they bring their needle up through the fabric where you want the knot, then wrap the thread around the needle once for a small knot or twice for a larger knot. To finish the knot, insert the needle back into the fabric close to the hole you came out of, almost in the same hole. Then you will slowly pull the needle and working thread through the wrapped loops to complete a French knot. I normally do three to four loops in my French knots for larger size knots. I cluster my French knots to replicate the imagery of a woodland or a heavily dense tree area.



Figure 13. Example of French Knot Stitch

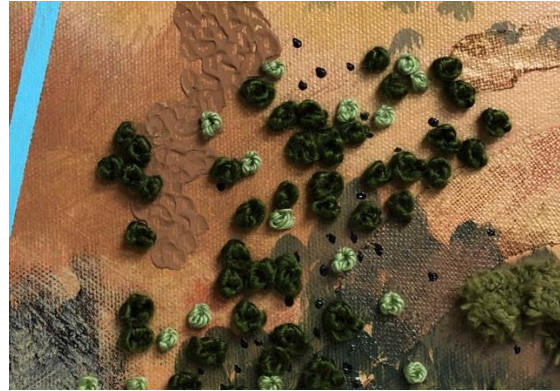
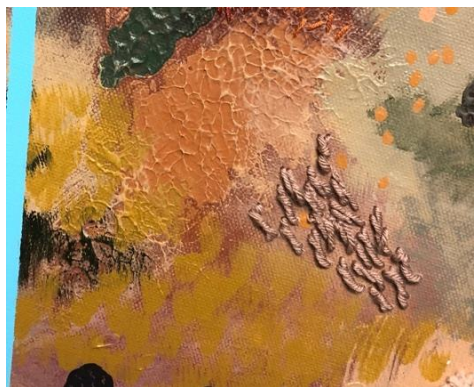


Figure 14. Detail of *Pike*, Meredith Conger, 2019

The stem stitch is another embroidery stitch that I have adapted to and replicated in a more sporadic form. I am not trying to create a curved or straight line to outline a shape with the stem stitch, which it is commonly used for. I am trying to create various textures, therefore I split up my stem stitch and overlap them which creates a more randomized pattern on the canvas.



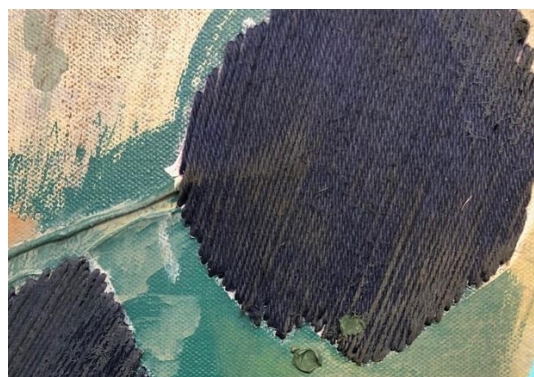
Figure 15. Example of Stem Stitch

Figure 16. Detail of *Pike*, Meredith Conger, 2019

Another embroidery stitch I frequently use in my canvases is the Satin stitch. The satin stitch is created by placing stitches in close proximity to one another side-by-side incrementally until a whole space is filled or covered in thread. This produces a smooth finish in that area and really covers what is underneath the thread. I have found this to be an interesting stitch to include in my work, as it has tricked many viewers eyes, as they think it is a stroke of paint rather than a smooth solid area of thread. That is exactly what this stitch seems to me to be, a stroke of paint yet in thread form since it covers what is underneath it and appears opaque on the canvas. I alter the stitch slightly by not sewing it in a consistent line, as it is traditionally done. Rather I like to layer the threads on top of one another to create more volume in the texture.



Figure 17. Example of Satin Stitch

Figure 18. Detail of *Washington*, Meredith Conger, 2019

CHAPTER 5

THESIS WORK

I chose the title of my thesis exhibition, *Plot*, for a number of reasons. Plot has many definitions, one is the main events of a play, novel, movie, or similar work, devised and presented by the writer as an interrelated sequence. I interpret this into art terms as I am the artist presenting my final works from my time in the Master of Fine Arts program. The past three years have been filled with trial and error and monumental moments in my life much like the plot of any storyline. My art as well has had a plot of its own, when I first started at Georgia Southern University I was painting still life paintings for the most part and was at a loss as to where I should take my art next. I knew I wanted to stay true to the same subject matter I had always worked with, my natural surroundings. Through the semesters I navigated through the creative process and have found an exciting subject and studio practice that I am now interested in learning more about. Plot also means a small piece of ground marked out for a purpose such as a garden. This is the exact subject matter I am dealing with, my own plots of land.

Beginning in the second half of the 19th century, many artists believed that for painting to be relevant to modern life, it needed to throw off the tradition of illusionistic depth and historical reference. Painting was no longer to be a window to look through but an emphasis on what it was, a piece of canvas with paint on it. Clement Greenberg agreed with this idea of exposing the two-dimensional flatness of the canvas and the paint as nothing more than a material that did not represent anything else. As in my work I have taken the idea of a traditional landscape that would have implied depth in it and shifted the perspective. In this new orientation of an aerial view, the land appears flat meaning the painting is technically flat, however I utilize different formal elements. Even though I am now working with a flat surface and subject matter I include

physical textures in my work. I replicate patterns and textures of the natural land with my inclusion of yarn, mediums, and fabric. I am combining the flatness of the aerial abstracted perspective with the recreation of various land textures, I am still referencing something recognizable, land, in my work.

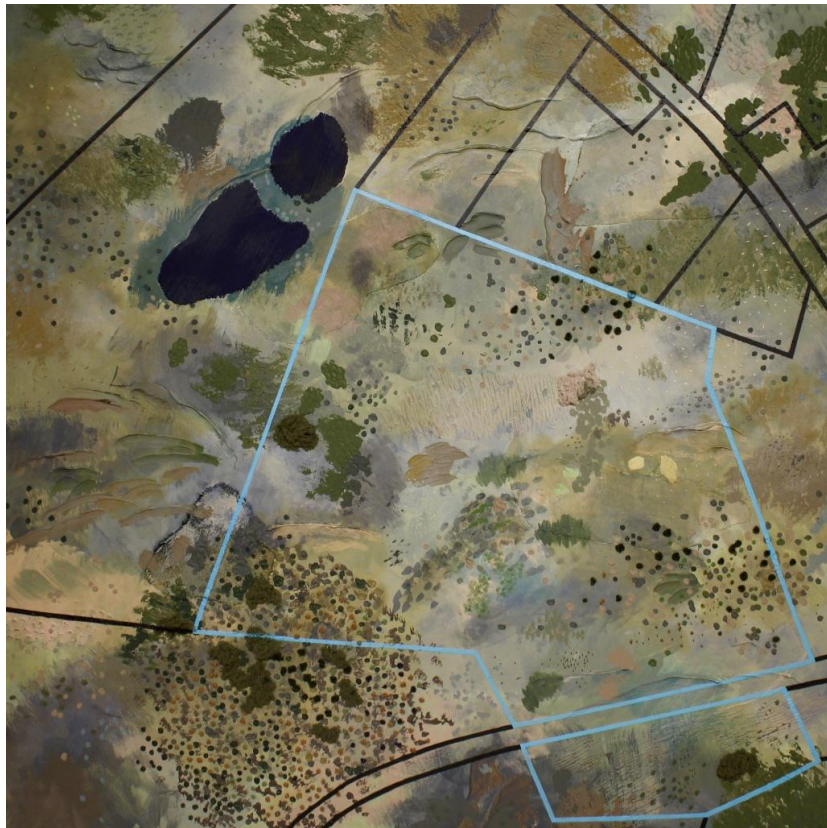


Figure 19. Meredith Conger, *Washington*, acrylic, thread, fabric on canvas, 2019

When I first started this series of paintings I experimented in a variety of ways. I wanted to explore the paint application, the threadwork, and even the map layout on the canvas. The first painting I worked on, *Washington*, Figure 19. above was safe and experimental in a few ways. I kept the color palette for this one fairly simple, reminiscent of the natural land with a bunch of greens and blues and really experimented with the threadwork. This is the one painting in the series that has threadwork outside of the blue plot of land. I hadn't made the decision yet to

solely have the yarn inside the blue outline to signify my land. This was the painting that lead me to that decision, I had spent so much time with the threadwork that was outside of my land I felt like my land was lacking care.

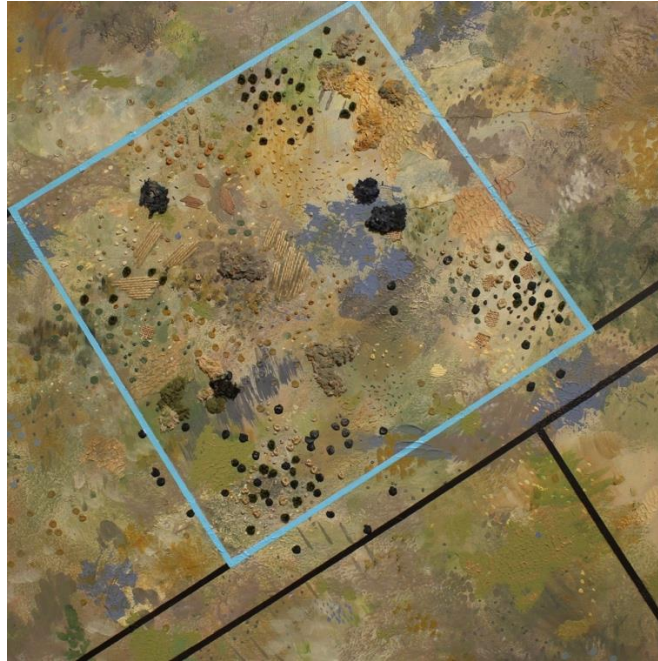


Figure 20. Meredith Conger, *Monroe I*, acrylic, thread, fabric on canvas, 2019

Following the *Washington* piece, I wanted to create a similar painting in regard to the color palette but I wanted to make sure that I only did threadwork within the blue outlined plot of land. My goal in doing this was to create more of a focus on what is being portrayed which is the land owned by my family. This was very experimental for me at the time so I did this on a smaller canvas, 30x30, and this piece is the smallest in the series. After this piece though I made the decision moving forward that all my paintings would have the yarn work only within the blue outline.



Figure 21. Meredith Conger, *Pike*, acrylic, thread, fabric on canvas, 2019

The third painting, titled *Pike*, is probably the most accurate and truest in form piece I created in this series in many ways. First, the color palette, this was a piece of land that had just been cleared of its timber and built on. There was a lot of the red Georgia clay exposed and brought to the surface while cutting the trees and digging into the ground for a foundation for a small house to be constructed on. Due to those events I wanted to experiment more with the colors of the paint and thread rather than just basic natural-like colors. I worked with oranges, reds and muted yellows for this piece with hints of green to represent the trees that were left behind.



Figure 22. Meredith Conger, *Monroe II*, acrylic, thread, and fabric on canvas, 2019

In *Monroe II*, my main priority with this piece was to play around with new marks and a more colorful palette. This piece of land was from my childhood and really was a location we went to as a family to fish or hunt and just be out in nature enjoying the outdoors. I wanted the colors to reflect a fun time through the inclusion of multiple colors that are still subdued to represent the presence of nature.



Figure 23. Meredith Conger, *Lamar*, acrylic, thread, and fabric on canvas, 2019

Lamar, was the first 48x60 painting I had ever created, working at that scale was new for me and made me deal with situations I wasn't accustomed to previously. The work includes two properties that touch each other which posed a new compositional approach as I was working to have both pieces of land included on the surface. Zooming out on the tax assessor website meant I was going to be able to include both properties as well as more land owned by other individuals. Providing more information of the land that surrounded mine further pushes the importance of the threadwork I include within only my blue outlined plot of land. It represents the care the owner would take of the land that is their own.



Figure 24. Meredith Conger, *Monroe III*, acrylic, thread and fabric on canvas, 2019

For some reason this past fall season with the changing of the leaves struck my attention and I wanted to emphasize the strong colors within the season. The foliage was at the moment where a majority of the colors were warm but there was still this bright lively green present that I wanted to include in my palette. I found the process of creating a color palette from the current season enabled me to focus on nature more so than the line work in this piece. This painting in particular helped me further understand my creative process of selecting specific plots of our land, it also enabled me to examine the unique features inherent in each plot. I might be more obsessive about the color palette, like in this one, while in another I want to have more line work and mapping, while in another I go heavier with the threadwork. All of these components exist in each painting.



Figure 25. Meredith Conger, *Monroe IV*, acrylic, fabric, and thread on canvas, 2020

Monroe IV, worked in a similar way as *Monroe III* did in regard to the color palette reflecting the time of the season that the painting was produced. I found the linework and the division of land in this piece to be the most uniform out of the other paintings. The land is located in a more urbanized area and it is interesting to compare how land is divided up differently due to the location. Land that is more rural is divided in odder shapes while the plots seem to cut up in squares and a more organized manner closer to the city.



Figure 26. Meredith Conger, *Beaufort*, acrylic, fabric, and thread on canvas, 2020

The final painting I completed for the exhibition was also my most experimental in many respects. This piece was the first instance where I decided not to depict a plot of land in Georgia. Using a new form of GIS mapping as well one that was representing a different type of land as it was an island provided me with more experimentation in my work. This particular piece of land overseen by my family is an island located on the coast of South Carolina. Tax assessor websites are usually open resources of public real estate information, however for certain counties as I came learn you need to have an account with a password to access the information. At the time of creating the painting I did not have access to that information and I used an alternative form of plot map. This particular plot map was in printed form and was used

at the time of the land deal to indicate the survey of information required for the buying and selling of the land.

CHAPTER 6

CONCLUSION

By using a subject matter that is familiar while providing multiple levels of information I am creating paintings that are a form of documentation. My work involves an alternative perspective of looking at a landscape rather than a traditional view of horizons. An aerial perspective gives me a new way of looking at nature and the land within it. The viewer is still looking at the natural landscape but, in a way, they might not always think of when actually being present in it. I generally categorize my work in relationship to the genre of abstracted landscapes, not skyscapes or cloudscape art, as the paintings depict either while still placing importance on the sky as a viewpoint for the viewer. I enjoy experimenting with mark-making and finding techniques that I can replicate to represent aspects of land through the use of thread patterns that may appear rather random or intentional. The threadwork is crucial to my work as they reflect the additional care in that area of the painting as well as how owners care for their land. The boundaries of the plots of land provides the viewer with the opportunity of engaging the work as a whole observing individual plots of land. My work reflects the importance of placing care and reflection into where you are.

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