Postc[art]ographia: A Mapwork Project About Identity and Place

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This collection of postcards, titled *postcartographia* is excerpted from an atlas of Mapwork¹ and was one component of a recent gallery exhibition with the same title.² Incorporating photography and poetic text, the postcards explore aesthetic approaches to knowing in the world, specifically, aesthetic ways of knowing places and identities.
February 23
Drive to Toronto

I took a couple of photographs, but then decided to just enjoy the drive.
There was snow in the air, I noticed that grain blurs occur in pairs.
Hardly ever just one all alone. Pairs of trees too. Never one alone.
The gravel roads were still white, no one had made tracks in the snow yet.
Truckstop Highway #11
Saskatchewan Highways

It is mean, unkind,
unthinking, really
to paint
palm trees and a beach
on the east side of Peany’s Bar & Grill
in the absence of trees (for miles)
in the presence of dirty snow drifts
the ice cream window shut and covered with the sign
CLOSSED FOR THE SEASON
Celinne
Saskatchewan, February 15

**THREE QUESTIONS:**
Do people breathe out that much breath in warmer weather but we just don’t see it?
Do cars have that much exhaust in warmer weather but we just don’t see it?
Would July be as good as it is even without days like this in February but we just don’t see it?
Terquoy, 1962
(What Might Have Been) Found Under the Wooden Sidewalks (partial inventory).

In front of the school, two black pocket combs, half of a wooden yo-yo, stubby pencils, three ball point pens from the Credit Union, an orange fish fin marble, a silver initial ring.

In front of the Lutheran church, pansies, a pair of child’s sunglasses with one arm missing, the knot from a popped balloon, a Christmas card with grey agray sparkles on the front of it (With Best wishes from Bud and Rosemary).

In front of the Catholic church, rosary beads, plastic wedding flowers, penny matches from Ray’s Grill, cigar butts with creamy yellow plastic tips, a broken outline, one clip-on rhinestone cluster earring and one with a screw-on post.

Along the main street, empty Macintosh Toffee boxes, popcicle sticks, bodega cups from Bohemian, Pilonar, Tab, Mountain Dew, Fiesta Grape, and in front of the town office, a black and white photo of a young woman standing beside a television set in a living room. The date along the white zig zag edging shows Oct 6.

That was when she smiled at the camera and gave the snapshot to someone who later did not notice when it fluttered down from his wallet, slipped through the cracks, and landed beside the small plastic whistle no longer tied to the strings of a child’s straw cowboy hat.
Notes

1 Mapwork as an Approach to Exploring Notions of Place and Identity. This is a three year study funded by the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada, with Dr. Wanda Hurren as principal investigator.