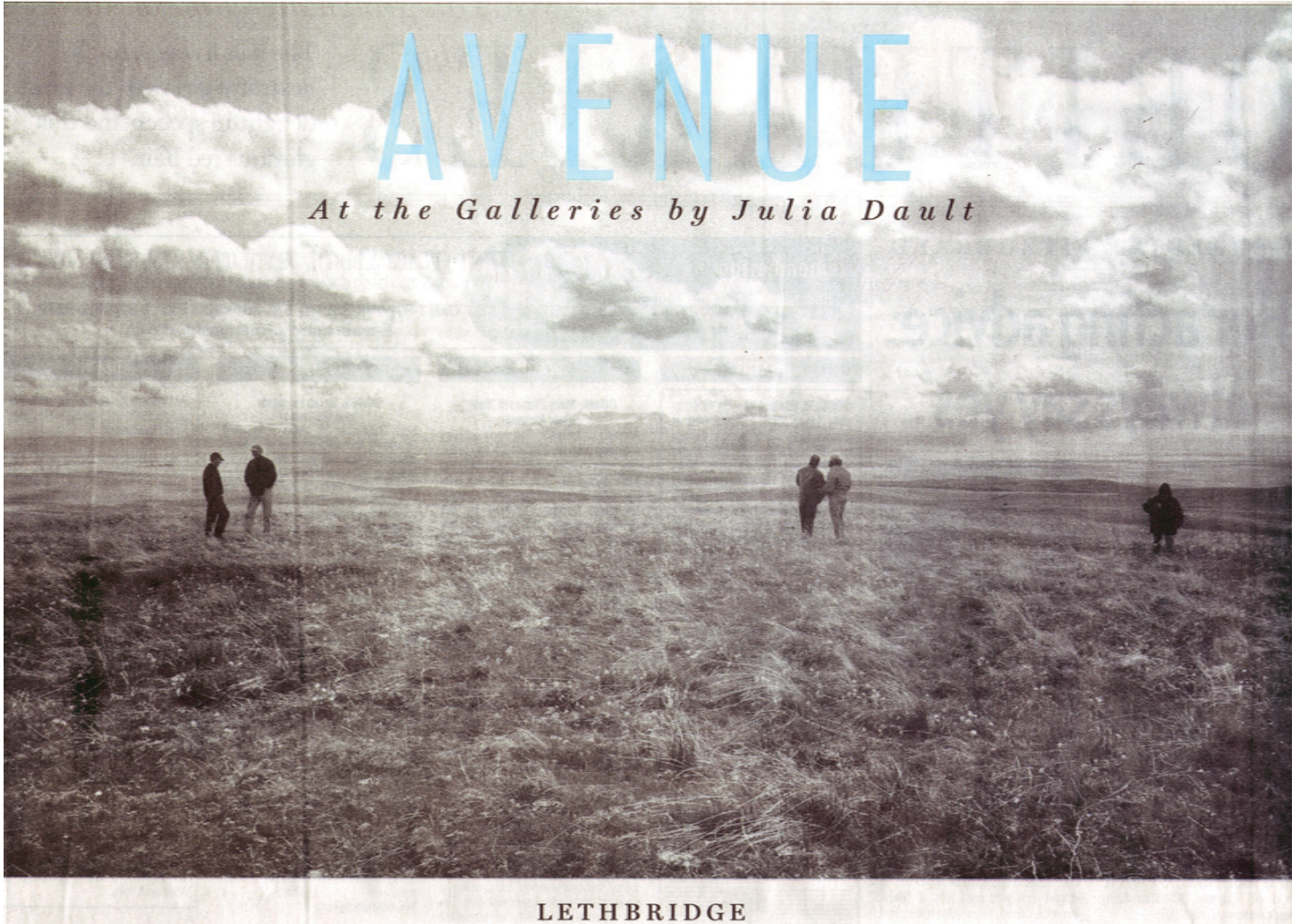


# AVENUE

*At the Galleries by Julia Dault*



LETHBRIDGE



# THEY HAVE SEEN THE WIND

## THE MCINTYRE RANCH PROJECT

### Various Artists

The Southern Alberta Art Gallery  
To Sept. 11

In Alberta, they do everything big, and that includes the artists' retreat.

That's why the 18 artists and writers and a filmmaker who gathered near Magrath, Alta., had a 55,000-acre ranch to share among themselves. The result is The McIntyre Ranch Project.

Of course, this wasn't just any 55,000 acres. The ranch in question is the largest area of pristine grasslands in North America, famous for its timeless, untouched beauty. An astounding 111 years old — older than the province itself — the ranch has been passed down through only two families (the McIntyres and the Thralls), a fact that has without doubt contributed to the happily preserved state of the enormous plot.

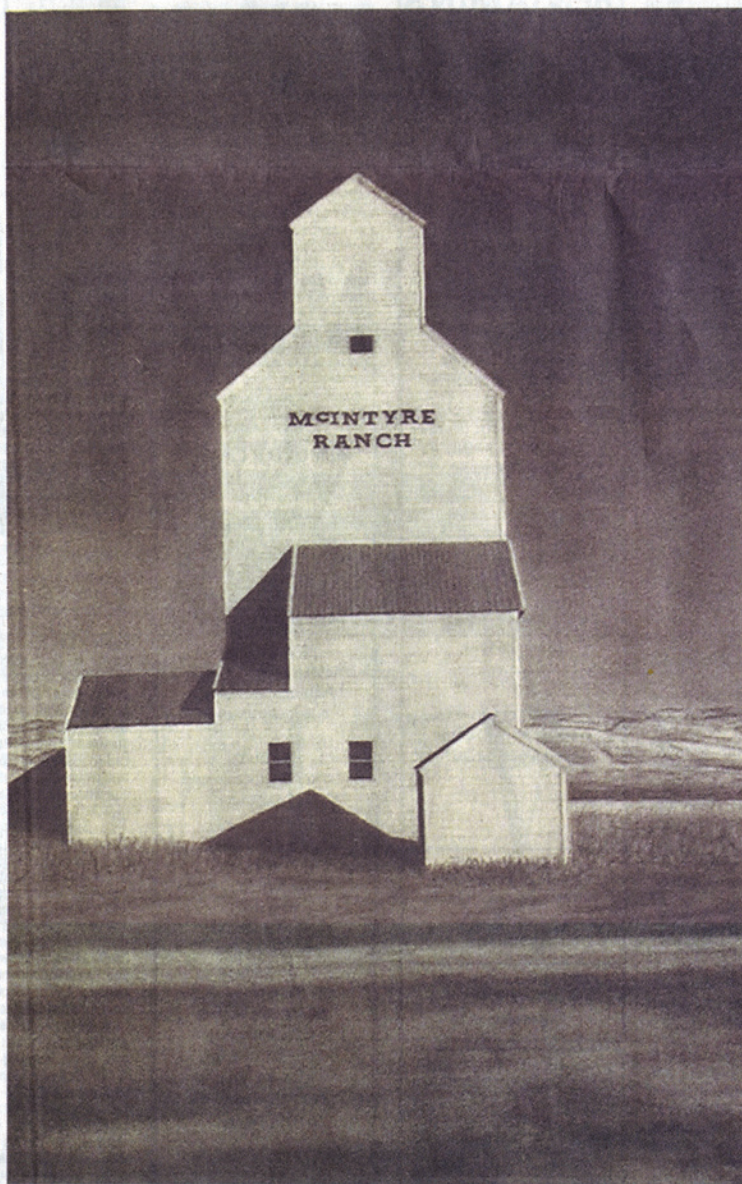
The ranch project came about in 1991, when a group of prominent Canadian artists toured the Oldman River by raft and canoe, spending some time at the ranch with the Thrall family. Organized by the now defunct Canadian Art Odysseys Society, the trip was so popular that a year later many of the artists returned to continue their exploration of the land. An exhibition, the first McIntyre Ranch Project, was held to celebrate the artists' prairie adventure.

Some 13 years later, a copycat expedition retraced the steps of the original group, taking to the historic cattle ranch, rising early, packing lunches and spreading out across the land — sometimes alone, other times in small groups — to paint, sketch, photograph and write, drawing inspiration from their surroundings. Like the first incarnation, this second group is exhibiting its work in what is also called The McIntyre Ranch Project, now at the Southern Alberta Art Gallery.

Included are works by Raymonde April (Montreal/New York), Chris Cran (Calgary), Gordon Ferguson (Calgary), Katherine Grovie (Toronto/Canmore), Angela Grauerholz (Montreal), Sandra Meigs (Victoria), Robert Youds (Victoria) and Tim Zuck (Calgary), among others. It's an impressive roster of talent, with each artist delivering extremely varied interpretations of the famed ranch.

Compare Sandra Meigs's *Girl Kissing Ducks* to Andrea Grauerholz's breathtaking black-and-white vista; try Chris Cran's faux-benday dots against Robert Murray's NO EXIT, a sculpture made from sienna red acrylic stained, cedar and steel plates. With so many artists participating in the same exercise — translating experiences of the natural world into art — the show becomes a near-treasure hunt, where the goal is to find reincarnated grasses, wandering cattle and uninterrupted vistas in gloops of paint, smatterings of poetry and etchings here and there.

Located at 601 3 Avenue South.  
Lethbridge, Alta. 403-327-8770.  
www.saag.ca Free public tours take place every Saturday at 3 p.m.



IMAGES COURTESY OF  
THE SOUTHERN ALBERTA ART GALLERY

Varied interpretations of the famed McIntyre Ranch, top: Angela Grauerholz, *Untitled 1*, ink jet on paper, 2005; above: Billy McCarroll, *Big Sky*, pastel on paper, 2004; left: Tim Zuck, *Grain Elevator*, Charcoal on wove paper, 2005.



Above: Robert Youds, *Southern Alberta Phantasm*, fluorescent light, aluminum, assorted materials, 2005; below: Robert Murray, *NO EXIT*, veneer painted with sienna red acrylic, stained cedar and steel plates, 2004; below left: Chris Cran, *king big!*, oil and acrylic on canvas, 2005.

