

Lynn Kilpatrick and Hikmet Loe

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Writers Lynn Kilpatrick and Hikmet Sidney Loe spent several days in 2022 in the vicinities of the former transcontinental railroad towns of Tecoma (NV) and Lucin (UT), exploring each region's cultural landscape. We were responding in part to artist Nancy Holt's statement, from her essay "Sun Tunnels": "In the surrounding area are old trails, crystal caves, disused turquoise, copper and tungsten mines, old oil wells and windmills, hidden springs, and ancient caves" ("Sun Tunnels," *Artforum* 15, no. 1 (April 1977): cover, 32-37). We scouted the land for evidence of each occurrence, from the site of the historic transcontinental railroad to the tops of regional mining hills.

We broadened our approach to the region once we learned about the arbitrary placement of longitudinal meridians, which were used to establish to designate each state.



GREAT BASIN SONNET

I am trying to get out of this poem
and I've only just begun. Writing means
staring out the window, watching sagebrush
interpret wind. Daily the breeze begins
gently, then gusts, gale force. Monday, noon
the monsoon mirrors my gray mood, stormy
brain. My struggle to write reveals the ruse
of representation: mere words won't stop
these angry black clouds, violent orange dusk
from fading. The dark descends, blotting out
any human try. No bother. Tonight,
Cassiopeia will still invite me
to comfort myself in the Milky Way,
insisting: tomorrow, tomorrow, now.

Lynn Kilpatrick

Our interest in again collaborating with each other in 2023 with a joint residency at the Montello Foundation's residency site was to consider the impact of colonialist dividing lines, which we call "False Meridians." We posited the following questions: In a region such as NE Nevada, how do we come to know the landscape if we only rely on published maps, which often leave unpopulated areas featureless? What can we learn by studying and responded to the residency's landscape, which ripples out through the sagebrush ocean to encompass spaces designated with arbitrary names? How can nature be preserved through the identification of past cultural actions, and its re-envisioning through our future publications?

Hikmet

We drove, walked, talked, and spent hours in silence. The landscape in Nevada was green and lush in contract to Utah's flatter, alkaline passages. Retaining the memories and the words shared, which will make their way into my upcoming book "The *Sun Tunnels* Encyclo: Exploring Nancy Holt's Earthwork through Perception and Site" (The University of Utah Press, 2026). One night, falling stars.

Lynn

The work, like an old trail, meandered, taking me on unplanned routes, digressions, and side trips that led to meditations on clouds, plant names, and inquiries into Emily Dickinson.

I let the view, and the weather, inspire me, along with the nightly conversations with Hikmet. The quiet led to long bouts of introspection, within which a poem or two could be found.