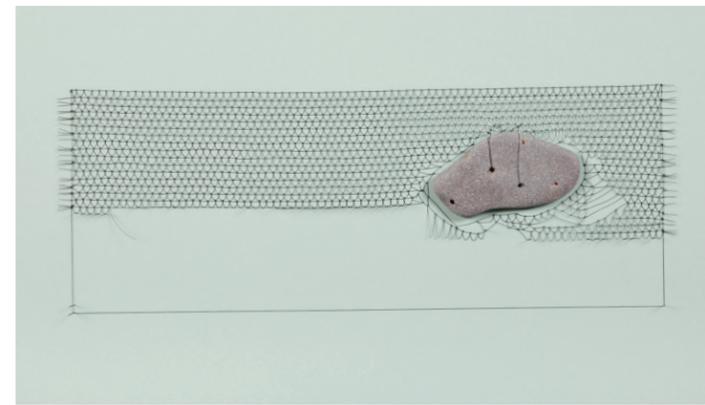
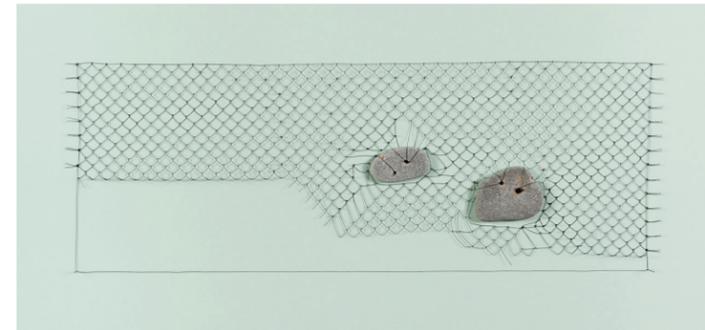




Part Time Deep Time, Installation view at the Art Gallery of Southwestern Manitoba, photograph by Kevin Bertram



Meghan Price, *Erratic 1*, Enameled copper wire with stone, 2015



Meghan Price, *Erratic 2*, Enameled copper wire with stone, 2015



Meghan Price, *Metamorphic*, Waxed cotton yarn, paper, wood, leather, 2015



Meghan Price, *Plate 4*, *Plate 3*, Enameled copper wire, 2015



Meghan Price, *Plate 1*, Enameled copper wire, 2015



Meghan Price, *Stratigraphy (east and west)* each 8 prints, vertically aligned / varied edition: 2, 2015



Meghan Price, *Collision 1*, superimposed print, varied edition: 5, 2015, & *Collision 2*, superimposed print, varied edition: 2, 2015

PART TIME DEEP TIME MEGHAN PRICE

CURATED BY NATALIA LEBEDINSKAIA
JUNE 16 – AUGUST 12, 2016

ART GALLERY OF SOUTHWESTERN MANITOBA
710 ROSSER AVENUE, UNIT 2
BRANDON, MANITOBA. R7A 0K9

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MEGHAN PRICE

Meghan Price is an interdisciplinary artist based in Toronto. She holds a degree in Textile Construction from The Montreal Centre for Contemporary Textiles (2003) and an MFA from Concordia University (2009). Her work has been exhibited in Canada and the U.S., Turkey, Ukraine, Italy, Cuba, Sweden, Argentina and Australia and she has been the recipient of awards and grants from the Canada Council for the Arts, the Conseil des arts et des lettres du Québec, the Ontario Arts Council and the Toronto Arts Council. Price has held residencies at Artspace, Sydney, Open Studio, Toronto, the Scottish Sculpture Workshop and the Banff Centre. Meghan Price is represented by Katzman Contemporary, Toronto.

“Rock marks the point at which understanding fails.

To run up against a stone wall is to encounter the lithic propensity to endure foundering, to provoke loss of certainty.”

- Jeffrey Jerome Cohen

In *Part Time Deep Time*, Meghan Price strives to take part in activity that would slow one down to a place where movement becomes nearly imperceptible, rooted in a desire to understand the immense depth of the geological timescale. Price works in laborious processes to create sculpture, prints, and video that foster moments of connection between the human and the geological. Her work borrows and modifies scientific language to create alternative diagrams and models, ones that address the relationship between the near stillness of deep time and our human time scale. Price wonders what is lost within the synthesis and reduction at the core of the the scientific process. By referencing its patterns and concepts through the language of textile, she investigates what happens when the process of synthesis and representation is reversed through the use of tactile materials. Working with traditionally craft processes becomes a way to bring out the sensorial and poetic into the language of science, connecting it to the body and to the everyday experience of the world.

In *Metamorphic*, a pattern used in geological mapping is stitched into paper over the course of a year to slowly transform illustration into object. The pattern of dashes reads as a tally, a language, or a measure of time when translated through stitching. In *Watching Rocks*, a boulder is live-streamed over the Internet from sunset to sundown; a pixelated webcam connection conflates our timescale with that of the stone, raising questions about performance of geological time. In four pieces titled *Erratic*, geometric patterns built in fine wire are disrupted and adapt around small stones that break down the expectations of a consistent pattern, shaping the creation of a series of maps.

There is a lightness to Price’s work that appears to be at odds with the weight of stone. Layers of rock float on a wall in *Stratigraphy*; *Watching Rocks* exists in the ether of the Internet; the embroidered paper of *Metamorphic* rests on a support that would not hold up even the smallest boulder. This wooden scaffold suggests legs, and the paper is tethered to it with tiny buckles. Leaning gently against the wall, there is a sartorial element to the boulder sewn together like a garment – it is anthropomorphized, suspended between being a human body and a rock body. The materials throughout Price’s work are airy: lace, fabric, thread. Price explains the paradox of the weightless rocks by referring to them as objects that carry ideas and thoughts. These objects are explorations of slippery concepts — their meaning is often unfixed, moving between thoughts on time and materiality that exist on the boundary of human understanding. Price’s works suggests weightlessness because the ideas they contain are almost unimaginable heavy. Rock is slippery, unfixed, and liquid too, when viewed in its geological timescale.

In *Erratic*, small stones are pinned down like butterflies, while delicate geometric patterns weave around them in black copper wire. Brought to the prairies from the Canadian Shield thousands of miles away by the Laurentide Ice Sheet, erratics

make glacial history feel recent, while serving as mnemonic markers for its continuous retelling. In the landscape, glacial erratics shape human and animal relationships with the land. They function as landmarks for navigators, as rubbing stones for animals, and as perches for birds. Smooth stones, collected by Price on the shore of Lake Ontario, reference these geological migrants. As erratics are shaped by being dragged by the glacier, Price’s stones have been shaped by water. The lines of lace that Price constructs around and through them are indirectly guided by the landscape and its constant transformation, creating a pattern that reads as a map or a scale model of the landscape, while also creating a map or a record of the process through which the piece was created.

Price strategically uses pattern to connect the geological with the everyday, opening it to projection and therefore an intuitively personal and haptic understanding. Craft processes have an uncanny ability to inspire a tactile imagination: running one’s hand over blankets or touching embroidery feels paramount to the experience of these ubiquitous objects. In *Stratigraphy*, a stack of blankets is suspended on a column. Patterns on each blanket correspond to scientific shorthand for layers of the Earth’s crust — a vertical geological timeline. The piece evokes a family linen closet, making the unlikely parallel between the strata of the earth’s crust and a stack of neatly folded quilts. Both carry history, both record time, both are sometimes rearranged through upheavals and moves. In a linen closet, blankets, quilts, and sheets trace family histories that shape them: personal narratives, intimacy, economic shifts, design trends, moves, breaks, and lineage. Likewise, the pattern of the rocks, written in shorthand of geology textbooks, tells stories. The presumed scientific neutrality of textbooks and their language makes these patterns feel hard, abstracted, whereas Price’s use of soft materials warms them. It is difficult not to insert one’s hand between the blankets in the stack, feel their weight and texture - an unlikely parallel to the undeniable pleasure of picking up stones and running one’s fingers across their surface.

In Price’s series, *Watching Rocks*, a boulder is live-streamed from sunset to sunrise with the use of a web camera. Appearing on YouTube alongside videos of home cooking, playful animals, and music videos, there is humour in the act of watching something so immobile. During the setup of the piece, there is a recurring question, “What is it that you hope it will do?” In our time, human time, not very much at all.

Partly durational performance, *Watching Rocks* is Meghan Price’s way of conflating time scales: our digital world with that of geologic time. Price stays with the boulder while filming, making sure the Internet connection is smooth, checking in with viewers around the world who have tuned in to see the boulder. They send her photographs of themselves watching, an ephemeral community observing a rock for a day.

The boulder in Brandon, Manitoba has been deposited in its location by a receding glacier. It was unearthed while constructing a foundation for a house, becoming a lawn ornament through the inconvenience and expense of moving it too far out of the way. The stone is a marker of how geological time affects human time, a record of how the valley which the property overlooks has been formed through processes that far predate our presence here. The absurdity of watching an

immovable rock meets the impossibility of accessing measures of time in which the rock is a fluid object tied up in the immense shifts that shape our world. Despite this impossibility, the act of slowing down to watch a stone from sunset to sunrise on the longest day of the year, is profoundly engaging. As the light shifts, the pixelated image of the stone on the YouTube screen morphs; animals visit; reflections of leaves dance on its surface; the house owner recalls his children climbing on the rock; the video cuts in and out at times at the whim of the Internet connection. The streaming technology feels fragile and ephemeral, deeply unreliable in comparison to the stability and stoicism of its subject.

In a nod to the practices of meditation rock gardens, *Watching Rocks* lightheartedly raises questions about what we would notice if we were more attune to objects we presume to be still. Shaped by the expectations that come with contemporary technology, the piece directs attention to the grey area between animate and inanimate objects, leading us to contemplate the complexity of our everyday relationships with geological realities.

Spread throughout the exhibition, a series of flat net-like objects are created using lacemaking techniques; they are plates for a series of prints that accompany them. For the plates, Price uses the same copper wire as in *Erratic* to create the borderline three-dimensional drawings which take the pattern off the printed page and into the world, without quite turning them into objects — they are folded and pressed, crumpled, and entangled, while kept relatively flat. The process of folding creates new patterns, while the wire resembles fishing nets. The process of folding and printing echoes geological phenomena of heaving and shifting plates of the Earth’s crust that disrupt the neatly layered structure referenced by *Stratigraphy*. These drawings are a way of working through ideas, while using the three-dimensional nature of the wire to bring these ideas out into the world and off the page. The prints, therefore, become a record of the shifts and folds of the plate, reproducible but only to a limit. Paper takes on the quality of earth’s sediment, taking in information much like fossilized remains of a distant geological past.

By bringing together these two processes — pattern and imprint — Price foregrounds the relationship between deep time and indexicality. Much of what we know of the earth’s past comes to us through imprints: of past organisms turning to stone in the soft sedimentary clay; glaciers scraping bedrock; mountain ranges rising out of the sea when tectonic plates collide. The monumentality of these events exists in seeming contrast with their representation in textbooks as small dashes and arrows, diagrams that make sense of the opaque but physically tangible signs of the earth’s shifting surface. These diagrams and the accompanying maps are static representations of a fluid state, marking moments in time. Price’s wire plates and the resulting prints reference this tension between static representation and its continuously shifting referent.

Price works within a continuum between the shorthand language of pattern and the indexical traces of time that lies outside the limits of our comprehension. An encounter with an indexical object is often tactile, inspiring exercises in imaginative time travel — one is tempted to recreate the

motion that had made the mark, to imagine the weight and movement of the glacier that would leave behind scrape marks in stone. The dashes and arrows of scientific patterns could be read as mnemonic devices for this imaginative retelling. By taking the gestures and labour of pattern-making into traditionally craft practices, Price strengthens the connection between abstracted pattern and its referent, creating a shifting meeting point between the human and the geological.

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Natalia Lebedinskaia
Curator of Contemporary Art
Art Gallery of Southwestern Manitoba
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LIST OF WORKS

Erratic 1

Enamelled copper wire with stone, 2015

Erratic 2

Enamelled copper wire with stone, 2015

Erratic 3

Enamelled copper wire with stone, 2015

Erratic 4

Enamelled copper wire with stone, 2015

x18

Single print / edition: unique , 2015

Trace 1

Single print varied edition: 3, 2015

Trace 2

Single print varied edition: 4, 2015

Collision 1

2 prints superimposed varied edition: 5, 2015

Collision 2

2 prints superimposed, 1 horiz., 1 at 45deg / varied edition: 2, 2015

Stratigraphy (east)

8 prints @ 12 3/8W x 9.75H, vertically alligned / varied edition: 2

(east & west), 2015

Stratigraphy (west)

8 prints @ 12 3/8W x 9.75H, vertically alligned / varied edition: 2

(east & west), 2015

Plate 1

Enamelled copper wire, 2015

Plate 2

Enamelled copper wire, 2015

Plate 3

Enamelled copper wire, 2015

Plate 4

Enamelled copper wire, 2015

Metamorphic

Waxed cotton yarn, paper, wood, leather, 2015

Stratigraphy

Digital print on cotton, linen, wool, polyester, 2015