

Tomiko Jones

For the “WE the exhibition” I selected image that reflect my lifelong consideration of imaging the land through a feminist lens, the landscape as a site of death and memorial, and the marriage of body and place. I specifically focused on images that relate to an Imagemaker Proposal with Elizabeth Claffey on our two-person exhibition “Thresholds” that presents an ongoing series of statements and questions: You can’t birth something without death. How does one visualize an invisible space? What stories could be told about the space between life and death, joy and pain, obsession and negotiation?

Statement

Every summer, my father would pile us into the car and take us to explore the treasures of the nation, our public lands. Many miles of open land lay between our excursions, and watching the American landscape pass by had a profound effect on me. I would want to stop and explore, but as we were always headed for a destination, there was never enough time. This created in me a longing to return that informs my practice today.

I investigate the Western construct of identifying land in terms of ownership and rights. Using the methodology of immersive experience—taking time to listen and experience rather than assume knowledge—asking: *How can we see differently? Who is welcome? Are we loving our public lands to death? What do we return?* Working in the landscape is instinctual, familial, cultural, memorial; the perception of belonging to a place as a visitor on the land, while being observant of other users and protectors.