

LAURENCE MESSIER MOREAU

By Hannah Sutherland

Laurence Messier Moreau, a fourth year student in the photography department at Concordia University, considers herself to be primarily a landscape photographer.

Working mostly with serene, bucolic landscapes, Marisa Portolese's portrait class presented Laurence with a great challenge. The concept for her final project was initially going to be based on depictions of decaying children's playground infrastructure. The project then took a turn, and Laurence began experimenting with capturing spaces from her childhood - hiding spots, places that evoked memory or held personal significance. Through the process of exploring the nature of portrait photography, Laurence discovered that, at heart, she was a landscape photographer. There was no way around it. So her project was finalized when she made the decision to portray herself as the landscape itself. Personifying the natural environment, she would create a series of self-portraits. The images are stark and minimalist, with her body standing in for the physical topographic forms of a natural landscape. By choosing to blur out the background and keep her body in focus, Laurence manages to keep her photographic identity by creating a self-portrait in the tradition of her preferred subject matter.



Laurence Messier Moreau. *Cicatrice*. Cap St-Jacques. 42 x 52 inches. Ink jet print.

The marks of time and imperfection on the body, just as they are in nature, are the focus of this piece. Her body is but a small part of the larger landscape, a selected microcosm representing the condition of a much larger natural system. Nature is not perfect, not flawless, and neither are we. Natural imperfection and its beauty are brought, literally, to the forefront.