



Until the end of the world? Biocentrism and traces of human presence in the paintings of Josh Keyes.

Peter Bengtsen (Lund University, Sweden)¹

Abstract

This article considers the paintings of the contemporary American artist Josh Keyes from an ecocritical point of view and discusses the importance of biocentrism and the affinity between humans and nature in the artist's work. It argues that although Keyes' imagery almost never includes human beings, his paintings still relate a sense of human presence through the depiction of cultural artefacts and the use of an axonometric perspective. The latter creates connotations to scientific sampling and technical drawings and is thereby suggestive of the continued presence of human beings in the depicted post-apocalyptic future. The article proposes that Keyes' projections of the future, where cultural landscapes and artefacts have been reclaimed by nature, constitute a critique of an anthropocentric ethics and its related practices. Further, the article demonstrates the importance given by both the artist and his audience to the biocentric agenda of the artwork. This is evidenced by the mixed reception of some of Keyes' more recent works which neither contain cultural artefacts, nor make use of an axonometric perspective. The article argues, however, that these paintings also inscribe themselves in the central theme of biocentrism and advocate the affinity between humans and animals. They do so by invoking empathy in the viewer towards animals through the use of anthropomorphism.

Introduction

1999 was the year the Indian nuclear satellite went out of control. It soared above the ozone layer like a lethal bird of prey until it was shot down by American missiles and exploded above the Australian continent. We were cut off completely from the rest of the world, if indeed it still existed. We had no

¹ Peter Bengtsen is an art historian and sociologist working at the Department of Arts and Cultural Sciences at Lund University, Sweden. This article is a result of the research project Visual Ecocriticism which has been funded by The Erik Philip-Sørensen Foundation.

way of knowing if the catastrophe was local or global. (Eugene Fitzpatrick in *Bis ans Ende der Welt*).¹

Popular culture has long been marked by a fascination with the prospect of an impending apocalypse. Michael Haneke's film *Le temps du loup* (2003), Robert Kirkman's ongoing comic book series *The Walking Dead* (first issued 2003, adapted to television in 2009), Roland Emmerich's film *The Day After Tomorrow* (2004), Cormac McCarthy's novel *The Road* (2006, adapted to film by John Hillcoat in 2009), the video game *The Last of Us* (2013) and Christopher Nolan's film *Interstellar* (2014) are but a few recent examples of the numerous cultural products that in different ways deal with human life and the notion of humanity in an apocalyptic or post-apocalyptic world.

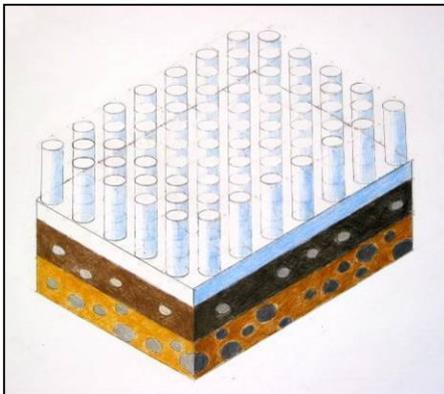
The cause of the apocalypse in fictional narratives like the ones mentioned above is often left ambiguous. However, it is commonly insinuated that human beings have played a central role in the events leading up to the presented scenario, whether the latter be a result of a nuclear war or accident, biological experimentation or overspending natural resources. While the fault of humans suggested in these recent cultural products is likely based on the idea of anthropogenic environmental problems like climate change, it is also a common trope in much older myths of the deluge. Here, the earth is flooded and civilisation destroyed, often by a deity as way of restoring balance by cleansing the world of the corrupt culture humans have developed.²

The fascination with the apocalypse found so abundantly in popular culture is also prevalent in the world of fine art. This article considers the paintings of the American contemporary artist Josh Keyes from an ecocritical perspective. A graduate of the School of the Art Institute of Chicago and Yale University School of Art, Keyes is best known for depicting post-apocalyptic scenarios of "animal subjects in [...] peril, displaced from their natural ecosystems into dioramic fantastical situations".³ Through the publication of prints of some of his paintings, the artist has in recent years found an audience in art print collecting communities, including collectors of so-called urban art.⁴

Even though the vast majority of Keyes' artistic output is completely devoid of explicit depictions of human beings, many of the paintings have – at least until recently – related to the viewer a sense of human presence in two ways. First, the artworks often incorporate artefacts of human civilisation, typically in the form of elements of urban infrastructure. Second, Keyes frequently uses an axonometric perspective in his work. This perspective is characterised by "the projection of objects on [a] drawing surface so that they appear inclined with three sides showing and with horizontal and vertical distances drawn to scale but diagonal and curved lines distorted".⁵ It is commonly used in technical drawings and also creates connotations to scientific sampling. A very early example of the artist's use of this perspective can be seen in the 2001 drawing *Snow* (Figure 1).

As will be argued in this article, the depiction of human artefacts and the particular use of perspective in many of Keyes' artworks reference human presence differently. On the one hand, the image content shows that humans have been present at one time, but their current absence also insinuates that this is longer the case. The axonometric perspective, on the other hand, may be seen as an indication that human beings are still present and are observing, sampling and analysing the post-apocalyptic world from the outside.

Anthropomorphism – the projection of human traits, interests and emotions on natural phenomena and non-human entities such as animals – is a prevalent phenomenon in Keyes’ work. While anthropomorphism is often seen as an expression of anthropocentrism, it can be construed differently.⁶ Drawing on Edmund Burke’s notions of the Sublime and the Beautiful, in a study of Joseph Mallard William Turner’s watercolour *Sunset at Sea, with Gurnets* from 1836-40, Mandy Swann (2014) argues that the artist’s anthropomorphic portrayal of two fish represents “a shift away from conceptions of marine animals as sublime alien entities towards the recognition of their fragile beauty and inherent connection with humanity” (1). Turner in this way breaks with the then governing “aesthetic and ideological framework of the sublime [which] sanctions the human domination and exploitation of the sea” (4), and which portrays marine animals “as sublimely monstrous, or as the raw materials for industry, study, sport or supper” (1). As can be seen in for example the work of Archibald Thorburn and Bruno Liljefors, since Turner created his artworks in the first half of the nineteenth century, the representation of animals in art has evolved in a more empathetic direction. Animals are now frequently portrayed less as being at odds with, or serving as resources for, humans and more in a way that corresponds with the biocentric notion that they are sentient beings with inherent value. An important point to take away from Swann’s analysis of *Sunset at Sea, with Gurnets*, and one that will be reiterated in the present article, is that while human interests and feelings are still being projected on animals, anthropomorphic portrayals may be used in a conscious manner by artists to promote a biocentric attitude in the viewer.⁷ In the following, I will conduct visual analyses of a selection of Keyes’ paintings to show how they can be construed as critical of an anthropocentric ethics and its related practices. I will also draw on statements from the artist and members of his audience to discuss both the biocentric agenda that can be read into the artworks and that agenda’s importance as perceived by members of the art world.



**Figure 1: Josh Keyes, *Snow* (2001).
Pencil on paper, 11x14 inches.**

The visual projection of ecological concerns

There is no doubt that Josh Keyes with his work is addressing the human place in – and responsibility towards – the ecosystem. This is obvious when considering for example *Guardian I*, a painting from 2008 of a partly open human hand facing palm up (Figure 2).

Rather than working with natural skin tones in his depiction of the hand, Keyes uses hues of blue and green. The green, predominantly found on the palm side, is combined with a texturing that gives the impression that there is grass growing on the skin. This interpretation is supported by the depiction of trees growing in the palm, on some fingers and on the wrist. Additionally, two

deer are grazing on the tip of the middle finger and four birds are soaring in the white space above the hand. Since the hand is not completely open, it forms a hilly terrain. The blue is used on the posterior side of the hand and the colour, along with the rugged appearance of the numerous skin folding lines, creates connotations to cold, hard bedrock.



Figure 2: Josh Keyes, *Guardian I* (2008). Acrylic on birch panel, 18x24 inches.

Guardian I can be related to the central ecocritical issue of biocentrism. As described above, the human hand here constitutes the soil and solid rock that make up the foundation of the life of the depicted plants and animals. The visual fusion of the human body with the natural landscape can be construed as a contention that humans do not stand outside – or, indeed, above – nature, but rather are a fundamental part of it. The fusion can be taken as an expression of the basic biocentric point of view that all living things have inherent value and that humans therefore have a responsibility to act in the interest of the entire ecosystem, rather than out of immediate and short term anthropocentric interests. From a slightly different perspective, it is significant that Keyes literally places animal and plant life in the palm of a human hand. By doing so, he alludes to the essentially anthropocentric notion of the privileged position of human beings and their potential role as protectors or destroyers of the ecosystem. The importance given by the artist to the former role is emphasised in the title of the artwork. Also, the imagery can be seen as a reference to the notion of the Anthropocene as the human hand fused with the bedrock of the landscape may be an indication of the deep impact that humans have had – and continue to have – on the biosphere.

In addition to what can be deduced by looking at the painting, Keyes has also discussed the purpose of the artwork. He stated the following about the *Guardian* series:

Some of the new paintings I am working on[,] titled “Guardian”, are branching along the idea of stewardship and conscious action. They are both a self portrait

[sic] and are also intended to be a portrait of human action. Each one of us can have a positive or negative indirect effect on preserving the worlds [sic] fragile ecology. We can do this by being mindful throughout our daily routine of shopping, eating, and choice of transportation. I wanted to express a sense of empowerment and also caution and fragility, [t]he basic idea being that the preservation of a sustainable future is in our hands.⁸

This statement discusses the responsibility of human beings to preserve the ecosystem based on the notion that many environmental problems are anthropogenic. From this it is clear that the artist wishes to influence the viewers of the painting. Not just so they become aware of the effects of their consumption of natural resources, but so they take “conscious action” in their everyday lives and work towards “a sustainable future”.

The theme of the relationship between humans and nature that is made so explicit in the *Guardian* series also lies as a strong undercurrent in much of Keyes’ other work. As mentioned previously, in some of his paintings this relationship is represented by the juxtaposition of wildlife and various cultural artefacts, frequently in what seem to be scenarios from a post-apocalyptic world. This way of representing humans was addressed in a letter accompanying the painting *Landscape Management* (2005). In the text, Keyes explains that he has abandoned the style of this painting and instead “turned [his] attention in the direction of using animals and elements of the urban or city landscape to signify human presence”.⁹ *Landscape Management* is one in an early series of paintings in which humans are represented as colourful amorphous blobs that resemble bacteria. This visual likeness can be seen as a comment on human beings as an infection in the ecosystem, a notion that is corroborated by the artist’s statement that the series was meant to “poke fun at the relationship and impact humans have had on the environment”.¹⁰ While the theme of possible anthropogenic effects on the environment is a common denominator for *Landscape Management* and *Guardian I*, the artworks address the issue differently. The former, despite arguably being the more humoristic of the two, takes a rather pessimistic view with its portrayal of humans as a pathogen.¹¹ The latter, conversely, has a more empowering message as it highlights the good humans can potentially do for the environment.

The above-mentioned artworks both portray human beings directly, though at different levels of abstraction. In this respect they are different from the vast majority of the paintings for which Keyes is most famous. These generally depict scenarios where human beings are no longer present. The following section will take a closer look at a selection of these paintings, some of which can be interpreted as visions of what the future holds if a more biocentric ethics is not achieved.

Biocentrism and traces of human presence

The axonometric perspective in Keyes’ work has previously been exemplified in this article with the drawing *Snow* from 2001. Since that drawing was created, the artist has refined his use of the perspective, as can be observed in for example the 2007 painting *Slice 2* (Figure 3).

In this painting, the boundaries created by the axonometric perspective are visible not only in the soil, revealing the roots of the sparse grass, but also in a running rabbit. Since it is not fully inside the confines of the outlined cross-section, the animal’s hind part is cut off and its insides are laid bare. The slicing of the rabbit, echoed in the title of the painting, creates connotations to the microtome sectioning of biological tissue, and gives emphasis to a scientific point of view which is

also inherent in the axonometric perspective: in addition to its previously mentioned common use in technical drawings, the areal delimitation achieved with the perspective is reminiscent of the area sampling used by biologists to count and determine populations of plants and slow-moving animals.¹² The visual sectioning of a living rabbit in *Slice 2* can be construed as a critique of the anthropocentric reduction of animals and other non-human beings to biological tissue. It can also be seen as a problematisation of the quality of the knowledge derived from a reductionist relation to nature as an object of study. The painting makes evident that such a relation may leave out something important and thereby impede a holistic understanding of the ecosystem, including an insight into the human being's place within it.



**Figure 3: Josh Keyes, *Slice 2* (2007).
Acrylic on birch panel, 12x12 inches.**

Another interesting use of the axonometric perspective can be found in the numerous artworks by Keyes that include depictions of water. Like the rabbit in *Slice 2*, the water is used to extend the cross-section's visible limits beyond the soil level, making them more tangible. This is further emphasised by the refraction of objects in the imagery, as if the scenario were seen through the glass sides of an aquarium. One example of this is the painting *Drifting* from 2009 (Figure 4).

Drifting is part of a series of paintings in which animals and cultural artefacts are juxtaposed. The artwork features a rabbit and a crow situated in a floating white boat that is partially overgrown with weeds. Immediately above the boat are two butterflies, and in the water below a seal and three fish are swimming. In addition, at the bottom of the water are standing a United States Postal Service mailbox and a stop sign. As explained previously, such cultural artefacts are commonly used by Keyes as signifiers of human presence. However, their submerged state in *Drifting*, along with the weeds growing in the boat, suggests that while humans have been present at one time, this may no longer be the case. The water washing over elements of civilisation may be a reference to anthropogenic global warming. On this background the stop sign, which appears quite frequently in Keyes' work, can be read as a warning against continuing down a path that will end in an apocalyptic deluge and the demise of human civilisation.



Figure 4: Josh Keyes, *Drifting* (2009). Acrylic on birch panel, 30x40 inches.

Although the mailbox and traffic sign are under water, their clean appearance might indicate that not much time has passed without maintenance. Such lack of biofouling and wear on the remnants of civilisation is a common feature in Keyes' paintings, although there are exceptions. In *Island* (2009), a partially inundated statue of three soldiers is to some extent covered not only in graffiti, but also green plants. The inscription on the base of the statue reads "United We Conquer". Given the context, this statement is suggestive of the hubris and inevitable downfall of the human race as a result of trying to master nature. This interpretation is substantiated by the fact that the head of one of the proud soldiers is now being used as a nesting spot by a predatory bird.

As discussed previously, while humans are absent from the image content, the axonometric perspective represents a decidedly human point of view. The use of this perspective could indicate that humans are still present in the depicted future and are observing and analysing samples of the post-apocalyptic world from an outsider's position. Alternatively, if the paintings are understood as contemporary projections of scenarios to come, the perspective used may not be an indication of a future human presence. Rather, it could be intended to lend a scientific air to the artistic rendition of the consequences of an anthropocentric ethics and its related practices in order to encourage a shift towards biocentrism. As Joe Leeson Schatz (2012) puts it, apocalyptic imagery "provides a self-motivating reason for people to change their behaviour to avert extinction even when confronting those who refuse to recognize the intrinsic value of non-human animals" (24). It is interesting to note that while Schatz here refers to the function of representations of omniscient scenarios of the future, Keyes' paintings often show non-human life thriving in the post-apocalyptic environment. Rather than detracting from the call to self-preservation, this emphasis on the long-term damaging effect of an anthropocentric ethics and its related practises specifically on human life actually strengthens the artworks' petition for change.

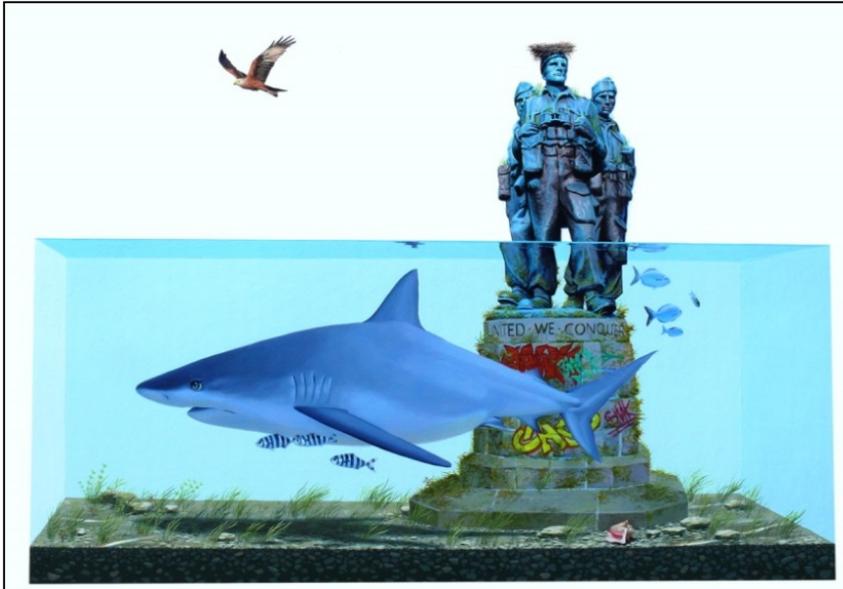


Figure 5: Josh Keyes, *Island* (2009). Acrylic on birch panel, 30x40 inches.

Expanding the landscape

As with the situation described by the fictional character Eugene Fitzpatrick at the beginning of the present text, the axonometric perspective used in paintings like *Drifting* and *Island* affords the viewer only limited contextual knowledge about what they are seeing. It is impossible to determine whether each depicted flood is local or part of a global deluge. Nevertheless, when taking into account the large number of paintings of flooded scenarios in Keyes oeuvre, it is easy to see them as individual representations of a global anthropogenic catastrophe.

Paintings that combine the use of an axonometric perspective with post-apocalyptic imagery are arguably the most popular among Keyes' artworks. In a recent series of paintings, however, the artist has moved away from this use of perspective and has also reduced his inclusion of human artefacts in the imagery. The 2014 painting *The Forest* (Figure 6) can be seen as a middle stage between Keyes' established style and this new direction. Here, references to human presence, through the inclusion of artefacts of civilisation, are retained: the painting contains an electric pole without wires as well as the familiar mailbox and stop sign (the latter seen from the back). At the top of the sign are two street names. Although the painting is of what looks like an old forest landscape, the street names actually pinpoint an intersection in contemporary suburban Portland, Oregon.¹³ The depiction of the sign, mailbox and electric pole in a forest landscape could suggest that the painting shows a future scenario. This idea is substantiated by the state of the cultural artefacts. Unlike in *Drifting*, these look weathered, which indicates that it has been a while without maintenance. The passing of time is also visible in the plant growth in general and the size of the trees in particular. The latter are clearly much older, and of a different kind, than the trees found at the present-day location.¹⁴



**Figure 6: Josh Keyes, *The Forest* (2014).
Acrylic on birch panel, 18x14 inches.**

While the juxtaposition of nature and cultural artefacts is still a prominent feature in *The Forest*, a major difference is that the axonometric perspective has been discarded in favour of a classic central perspective.¹⁵ This adds both depth and width to the depicted scenarios in the new series of paintings, although the vertical orientation of *The Forest* limits the expansive view of the landscape.

Keyes also uses a central perspective in another 2014 painting, entitled *The Sleeping Woods* (Figure 7). This perspective, along with the horizontal orientation of the painting, affords a much wider view than in the previously discussed works. The painting depicts a forest setting with a number of animals that, except for one, appear to be sleeping. Some have grown into the landscape and are partly covered in grass and moss. Unlike in *The Forest*, this imagery features no human artefacts.

The use of central perspective in Keyes' recent paintings means that they miss an important element that contributes to the implicit human point of view of his older axonometric works. This, often along with the lack of an explicit juxtaposition of nature and cultural artefacts, takes away part of the artworks' immediate ecocritical edge. It is a change that has been noted by Keyes' audience, as exemplified in the following excerpt from a post by a collector on the online art forum *Urban Art Association* in 2014:

I know it was discussed before but Keyes' new "direction" does nothing for me: it feels like he lost track completely. His older prints and canvases addressed the "clash" between wildlife/nature/environment/... and civilisation and/or its remains. They got their artistic tension (and message) from that contradiction.

These new pieces are just (pretentious) kitsch. Common [sic], it's sleeping animals in an idyllic green forest. What's the difference to 18th century landscape painters?¹⁶



Figure 7: Josh Keyes, *The Sleeping Woods* (2014). Acrylic on birch panel, 8x10 inches.

Leaving aside the fact that 18th century landscape paintings are imbued with their own ideologies, this passage indicates the important role the visual meeting of nature and culture in Keyes' artworks plays in the eyes of a significant part of his audience. It is a sentiment that is also found in a 2008 feature on the art blog *Arrested Motion*. The text, which was written in connection with the exhibition *Mist* at OKOK Gallery, observes that Keyes' latest shows at the time had "appeared less 'urban' and more 'environmental'", and it calls for the artist to "continue to explore the juxtapositions of urban living and nature that he has worked with in the past".¹⁷

The above reactions suggest the artist's audience may have little interest in depictions of nature as such. Rather, the allure of the artworks seems to more come down to an attraction to the fantasy about the impending destruction of civilisation, visually represented in the paintings by nature's reclamation of cultural landscapes and artefacts. In this respect, the consumption of Keyes' art resembles that of many other cultural products that deal with scenarios of the apocalypse. It serves as a way for the consumer to critique an anthropocentric ethics and its related practices that will eventually lead to the downfall of human civilisation. Owning and displaying a work by Keyes, whether a print or an original, can thus be seen as a symbolic demarcation of ecological awareness. At the same time, the art enables the consumer to indulge their fascination with doomsday scenarios and to play along and witness in a safe way the post-apocalyptic world from a decidedly human perspective. When an explicit human presence – provided in Keyes' paintings by image content and/or the axonometric perspective – is missing, it appears that at least part of the audience loses interest and dismisses the paintings as "kitsch".

Compared to works like *Drifting* and *Island*, the biocentric message in many of Keyes' recent paintings certainly is less spelled out. However, in contrast to parts of his audience, the artist sees a clear connection to his older work:

I think this [new] vision will compliment [sic] the diagrammatic [sic] cross-sectional work. If it helps, just think of the natural history museum content, there are specimens in boxes and white cubes and there are also dioramas, these are the dioramas. Same story different format.¹⁸

Perhaps to emphasise the lineage and continued ecocritical edge of his recent output, Keyes has experimented with bespoke frames for the new paintings (Figure 8). With their rivets and metallic surface, the frames resemble submarine portholes that, says Keyes, add “a contextual frame to the new imagery literally and conceptually”.¹⁹ He explains that he is “thinking of building these dystopian frames for all the new visionary paintings to come”.²⁰ Like the axonometric perspective, the frames can be seen as a visual suggestion that humans are observing the post-apocalyptic world from an isolated, protective environment to which they have been confined.²¹



Figure 8: Josh Keyes, *The Road I* (2014).
Acrylic on birch panel, 12x20 inches.

Even without the frames, however, those of Keyes’ recent paintings that do not contain explicit visual references to human presence can in more subtle ways be related to the importance of biocentrism. As mentioned previously, Mandy Swann has argued that Turner’s anthropomorphic depiction of fish in *Sunset at Sea, with Gurnets* creates empathy in humans towards animals and invokes the biocentric notion that they are sentient beings with inherent value. A similar use of anthropomorphism can be observed in some of Keyes’ paintings. As a case in point, in *The Sleeping Woods* the artist relates to the viewer a vision of a benevolent post-human environment, a veritable Garden of Eden, where predators and prey rest peacefully together. The scenario demonstrates a social grace among animals that is normally associated with the ideals of human civilisation. In spite of the criticism raised by parts of Keyes’ audience, this painting – along with other of the artist’s works where animals are portrayed in a similar way – underlines the affinity between humans and other animals and inscribes itself in the central theme of biocentrism that runs through the artist’s oeuvre.

Endnotes

¹ Opening voice-over from Wim Wenders (1996), *Bis ans Ende der Welt. Die Trilogie (3. Teil)*. A shorter cut of the film was originally released in 1991.

² A well-known deluge myth is the biblical story of Noah's ark (Genesis chapters 6-9). One of the latest representations of this story in popular culture is Darren Aronofsky's film *Noah* (2014).

³ <http://www.joshkeyes.com/about> (accessed 13 January 2015)

⁴ For a further discussion of urban art and street art, please see Peter Bengtson, *The Street Art World*. Lund: Almendros de Granada Press 2014.

⁵ <http://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/axonometric> (accessed 13 January 2015).

⁶ As Lawrence Buell (2005) points out, although "[a]nthropomorphism implies an anthropocentric frame of reference, [...] the two do not correlate precisely" (134). Anthropocentrism is here understood as the notion that "the interests of humans are of higher priority than those of nonhumans" (Ibid). From this point of view, then, human beings are privileged and stand above the rest of the ecosystem, which primarily exists as an object of categorization and resource for humans to exploit and control.

⁷ Biocentrism is here understood as the notion that human beings are part of an ecological context, which is not subordinate to humans, but rather must "constrain or direct or govern the human interest" (Buell 2005: 134).

⁸ Josh Keyes quoted in "Teaser: Josh Keyes @ OKOK". *Arrested Motion*, 24 September 2008 – <http://arrestedmotion.com/2008/09/teaser-josh-keyes-okok/> (accessed 17 December 2014).

⁹ Quote from letter to a collector accompanying the painting *Landscape Management* (2005).

¹⁰ Ibid.

¹¹ The use of humor to discuss the issue of anthropogenic climate change is also found in the work of American artist Bruce Conkle, who, like Keyes, is based in Portland, Oregon. In his on-going *Captive Snowman* series (started in 2002), Conkle displays snowmen in large-size freezers. These serve as substitute environments for the snowmen's shrinking natural outdoors habitat. Problematizing an anthropocentric ethics and its related practices, a press release for the artist's December 2014 show *The Wooden Carrot* at frosch&portmann in New York City described this keeping of snow men "on life support as a signifier of man's 'triumph over nature'."

¹² Area sampling entails demarcating one or more randomly chosen limited sample areas with a quadrat and counting the specimens found within. Subsequently, the population for the total habitat can be estimated using the following formula: Population = counted specimens in sample*(total area of the habitat/area sampled).

¹³ The same intersection is also featured in Keyes' painting *Mutation* (2011).

¹⁴ Google Street View was used to find the intersection SE 30th Ave and SE Division Street in Portland, Oregon.

¹⁵ Motivating this stylistic change, Keyes wrote on Facebook that the "animals asked to be set free from their earth and cement pedestals, and are now off having adventures!" – Post by Josh Keyes on 23 February 2014 on Facebook.

¹⁶ Post by "someonesbrain" on 27 August 2014 on *Urban Art Association* – <http://banksyforum.proboards.com/post/1249059/thread> (retrieved 25 October 2014). A similar critique was brought forward in a discussion in January 2014 on *Urban Art Association* – <http://banksyforum.proboards.com/thread/99539/various-josh-keyes-news?page=3> (retrieved 25 October 2014).

¹⁷ "Teaser: Josh Keyes @ OKOK". *Arrested Motion*, 24 September 2008 – <http://arrestedmotion.com/2008/09/teaser-josh-keyes-okok/> (accessed 26 November 2014).

¹⁸ Post by Josh Keyes on 31 August 2013 on Facebook. Keyes also referred to the use of the axonometric perspective as his "diagrammatic style" in an email to me on 31 October 2014. In addition, the artist makes reference to his "diagrammatic technique" in a letter to a collector accompanying the painting *Landscape Management* (2005).

¹⁹ Post by Josh Keyes on 30 August 2014 on Facebook.

²⁰ Ibid.

²¹ A further indication, albeit one that is often taken for granted, that even the newer depicted scenarios are experienced through human eyes is the fact that all of Keyes' artworks are rendered in colours that correspond to those perceivable by human vision.

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