

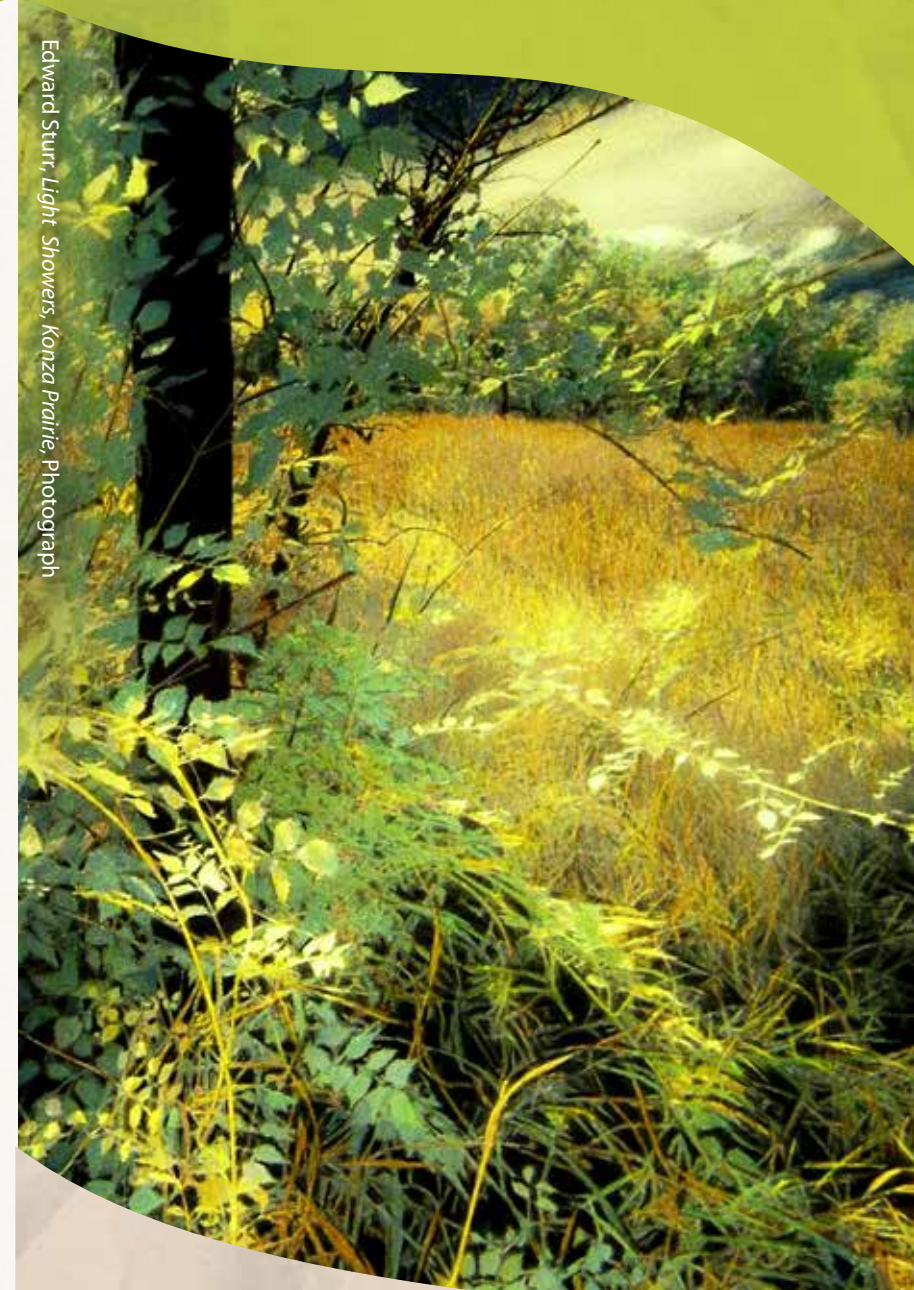
PRAIRIE TOUCHED BY LIGHT



KANSAS STATE
UNIVERSITY
Department of English

K-STATE
Research and Extension

Edward Sturr, Light Showers, Konza Prairie, Photograph



Lisa J. Grossman, April Burning, Oil on canvas





PRAIRIE TOUCHED BY LIGHT

INTRODUCTION

Prairie Touched by Light explores and celebrates the vibrant complexity of tallgrass ecosystems. Fire is essential to the development and stability of grasslands, and it supplies both people and prairies with necessities for life. The elemental power of flame and regrowth speaks to us, if we pay attention, through its awe-inspiring beauty. The photographs, paintings and poems gathered in this exhibition follow the emotional pull of flourishing prairie landscapes.

These artists and poets record the color transformations from brown, to orange, to velvety black, to the green that follows. They trace the textured variety of the spare silhouettes of horizon lines to the tangled stream banks. While registering the nuanced scents and sounds that characterize grasslands in various seasons, they give voice to the deep-felt kinship and meaning to be found in the cyclical rhythms of the tallgrass prairie.

CAROL BLOCKSOME, CO-CURATOR

Carol Blocksome is a range management specialist at Kansas State University. She engages with ecological and environmental range management issues, including the use of prescribed fire for maintaining and enhancing the prairie ecosystem. She believes the beauty and complexity of the prairies are constant, inspiring and entrancing.

ELIZABETH DODD, POET, CO-CURATOR

Elizabeth Dodd is a university distinguished professor at Kansas State University, teaching creative writing and environmental literature. Her work explores the way art and language express inhabitation in landscape. Learn more at elizabethdodd.com.

EDWARD STURR, PHOTOGRAPHER, CO-CURATOR

Edward Sturr is a professor emeritus at Kansas State University. He was awarded a Mid-America/National Endowment for the Arts Fellowship in Photography for his work on Konza Prairie. His book of photographs, *Fire and Form on the Konza Prairie*, was published in 2012. His work is available through his website, prairielight.com.

JULIE DENESHA, PHOTOGRAPHER

Julie Denesha is a documentary photographer based in Kansas City. Her work reflects her strong interest in people and the environment and has appeared in *The New York Times* and *Time* magazine. In 2007 she received a Fulbright Scholarship and a Milena Jesenska Fellowship. See more at juliedenasha.com.

DENNIS ETZEL JR., POET

Dennis Etzel Jr. lives with his wife and sons in Topeka, Kan., where he teaches English at Washburn University. His work navigates social awareness and the struggle for equality, exploring issues of gender, ecofeminism and mask-ularity. His poems have appeared widely in publications.

TOM GROSS, PHOTOGRAPHER

Tom Gross is a biologist employed with the Kansas Department of Health and Environment's air quality program. His Flint Hills photography, aiming to draw viewers into the depicted landscapes, is widely available for environmental education endeavors.

LISA J. GROSSMAN, PAINTER

Lisa J. Grossman is a painter and printmaker based in Lawrence, Kan., whose work focuses on the open spaces and prairies of eastern Kansas and the Kansas River Valley. She has degrees from the Art Institute of Pittsburgh, Pa., and the University of Kansas. Her work has appeared in galleries in Kansas, Missouri, New Mexico and California. View her work at lisagrossmanart.com or find her on Facebook.

JILL HAUKOS, PHOTOGRAPHER

With more than 25 years in science education and degrees from South Dakota State and Texas Tech Universities, Jill Haukos is a strong advocate for prairie ecosystems. She is the director of education at Konza Prairie Biological Station. Learn more at keep.konza@k-state.edu.

EVA HORNE, PHOTOGRAPHER

Eva Horne is a behavioral ecologist and herpetologist who enjoys photographing fire, flora and fauna (and her dogs). She teaches biology at Kansas State University and is the assistant director of Konza Prairie Biological Station.

DENISE LOW, POET

Denise Low grew up in Emporia, Kan., and daily saw the magical Flint Hills skyline in the distance. She is the 2009-2011 Kansas Poet Laureate, author of more than 20 books and a blogger at deniselow.blogspot.com. Low directs four Cheyenne ledger art books at the University of California, San Diego.

RAMONA MCCALLUM, POET

Ramona McCallum earned a B.A. from Kansas State University and is recipient of the Durwood Fellowship in the M.F.A. program at the University of Missouri, Kansas City. She draws inspiration from her brood of six kids, coauthored with husband and artist Brian McCallum. Her book, *Still Life With Dirty Dishes*, was recently published.

CARYN MIRRIAM-GOLDBERG, POET

Caryn Mirriam-Goldberg is a 2009-2013 Kansas Poet Laureate and author of books of poetry, fiction and nonfiction, exploring how human language connects us while brightening lives with context, beauty and clarity. She founded and teaches in Goddard College's Transformative Language Arts Program. View her work at carynmirriamgoldberg.com.

KEVIN RABAS, POET

A lifelong Kansan, Kevin Rabas co-directs the creative writing program at Emporia State University and edits *Flint Hills Review*. His writing reveals the lives of ordinary and extraordinary Kansans. His books include *Bird's Horn* and *Lisa's Flying Electric Piano*, a Kansas Notable Book and Nelson Poetry Award winner.

DAVID RINTOUL, PHOTOGRAPHER

David Rintoul is a biologist and photographer in Manhattan, Kan. He is a native Kansan and has always appreciated the interplay of light and texture in the wide-open spaces of his home state. He is currently the associate director of the Division of Biology at Kansas State University.

