

LONG MOTEL NIGHT

2008, VIDEO, 2:46'

CLINT ENNS

If county and western music were to be interpreted by a politically engaged Canadian video artist, the result would be similar to *Long Motel Night* (2008). The freedom that is often associated with the open road feels different while traversing the landscape of Northern Canada in the dead of winter. The loneliness and isolation that often accompanies a night spent alone in a motel room located near a truck stop is amplified when the long haul trucks are replaced by pickup trucks and skidoos. In *Long Motel Night*, time-lapsed images shot from a motel room window showing a small town gas station/grocery store are juxtaposed with text that lies somewhere between poetry and the sorrowful lyrics of heartbreak found in country music. In the background we hear a television or radio, broken up in rhythm to the time-lapsed video, signalling an equally restless night of channel surfing.

I drift like a ghost
through what was once my life

Living in the space between two worlds, a small town in the middle of the Dehcho Region in the Northwest Territories.

listen to what you don't know
to the sound you can hear
only in your sleep

Embracing the unknown or the unfamiliar, allowing for perspectives that are different or beyond our current subjectivity. This is a space inhabited by empathy and personal growth. The video ends with a point-of-view shot of the artist walking through the middle of a snow-covered field in the middle of night. A simple question is posed.

“So, what's out there then?”

And, perhaps more importantly: are we ready to listen?

