Chapter 17 Case Study: Mississippi-Lungs

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ARTIST'S STATEMENT

Satellite imaging provides us with a unique way to study and appreciate the Earth. I use imagery to visually attract the viewer, and hopefully, stimulate some curiosity about the Earth and the imagery itself. As a professional geographer I have been working with satellite imagery for well over two decades. I have been using it to understand how the Earth's environment has been changing, with an emphasis on vegetation change. While doing my research I would often come across truly awe-inspiring images of the Earth. I would take those images, analyze them and turn them into a table on deforestation or hectares of biomass. Eventually, I started to save some of the images and I would hang them on my office wall, or in the hallway. The excitement these images created in my students made me realize the power they have to illustrate basic concepts in Earth science and geography. In 1998 I moved from school hallways to art galleries where I have been working on the visual power of the imagery, the power to catch the viewer's eye and elicit a sense of wonder and curiosity about the Earth.

I have created a project, *The Earth Exposed*, where I combine my love of academics and teaching with my love of the visual arts, where beauty can help us appreciate and develop inquisitiveness about the Earth (Young, 2011). On one level I create and alter the images to reveal the beauty of the Earth while on another level, each of the

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Figure 1. Mississippi-Lungs



images has a scientific or geographic story to tell. This project has been displayed in over a dozen places such as the Esther M. Klein Art Gallery in Philadelphia (Association of American Geographers, 2004), at the Headquarters of the National Science Foundation, at Salem State University in Salem, Massachusetts, as well as touring in Australia in 2006 and Tunisia in 2008. 1 more pages are available in the full version of this document, which may be purchased using the "Add to Cart" button on the publisher's webpage: www.igi-global.com/chapter/case-study-mississippi-lungs/68263

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