DIALOGUES IN PUBLIC PLACES:

A CONVERSATION BETWEEN LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE AND PUBLIC ART

by

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(Under the Direction of MaryCarol Hunter)

ABSTRACT

Artists and landscape architects share an intertwined history of inspiration and influence. A 1976 thesis written by landscape architect and historian, Catherine Howett, "Vanguard Landscapes: The Environmental Art Movement and Its Significance for Landscape Architecture", provided a snapshot of an era in this interdisciplinary relationship. The following investigation evaluates the exchange of ideas between environmental art and design resulting in the past thirty years. As landscape architects push the pendulum toward a more balanced integration of art and science within the profession, renewed interest in this dialogue propels collaborative exploration to better address the diversity of aesthetic, environmental, and social conditions of place. The creative potential recognized by Howett has begun to be realized in the last quarter century, evidenced by a dynamic body of work derived from ongoing conversations between the disciplines, along with interesting new discussions relevant to the future design of multidimensional public places.

INDEX WORDS: Artists, Collaboration, Environmental Art, Design, Interdisciplinary, Landscape Architects, Place, Public Art

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Bachelor of Fine Arts, Florida State University, 1993

A Thesis Submitted to the Graduate Faculty of The University of Georgia in Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree

MASTER OF LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE

ATHENS, GEORGIA

2005

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December 2005

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Of the many conversations that have inspired the ideas presented on the following pages, a few inquiries have continued to evolve into thought provoking explorations, which have broadened my interest in landscape as a preoccupation and profession. To those who have generously given their time and thoughtful consideration to the discussion of this thesis, I wish to express my appreciation.

Eric MacDonald and Michael Oliveri each shared a unique perspective that has contributed to my understanding of the profession of landscape architecture and the creative directions initiated by artists. From ‘Landscapes’ Studio to Landscape Management, Ian Firth’s intellectual curiosity and expertise has revealed an expansive view of landscape design and interpretation and provides a scale by which I measure my own contribution. MaryCarol Hunter has shared her capacity for creative, dimensional thinking throughout the process of my investigation; her trusted advice and constant encouragement have been an invaluable gift. Thanks to each of you.

To my academic colleagues, I would like to thank those ‘usual suspects’ for a fantastic trip, and for always expanding the limits of possibility and expectation.

Finally, to Keith and to my family, without whom this distance would have seemed too far to travel, thank you for steering me through the worst and reminding me to take a few vital detours now and again.

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INTRODUCTION

Artists, architects and landscape architects share an intertwined history of inspiration and influence - a narrative that reveals an exchange of ideas and responses to past, present and future. In the late 1960s an ideological shift in the practice of contemporary artists aligned art with landscape architecture more closely than the disciplines had coexisted in decades. Conceptual artists working outdoors interpreted the experience of place by extending themselves into the landscape and by creating artworks inspired by the dynamics of its forms and processes. Their investigations engaged landscape architects in a new discussion of the landscape – challenging designers to respond to place in a personal way – more sensitive to cultural exchanges with ecological process.

Given the benefit of perspective that accompanies time, it is easier to identify works of landscape design inspired by the contemporary artists who have pushed this dialogue of place into a public forum. Tracing the correlative history of the work of public artists and landscape architects engaged in the translation of place over the past quarter of the twentieth century reveals that the expansion of artists' roles into the design of outdoor public spaces has had a significant effect on the practice of landscape architecture. Artists and designers still have much to gain from each other as continued inquiry has resulted in collaborative partnerships that blur the boundaries of distinction between the disciplines, simultaneously creating new forms that address the complexity of aesthetic, environmental and social conditions of place.

Landscape architecture history classes continue to make examples of environmental artists' early experiments in the landscape. Images of *Spiral Jetty* and *Double Negative* are stored

in students' mental databases in the same archive as Gasworks Park and the Vietnam Veterans Memorial. Although these examples are worthy of consideration for the questions they pose to our social/cultural relationship to environment/landscape; recent works of landscape design by artists and landscape architects working singly or in collaboration must be examined to better understand landscape architecture's relationship with contemporary art in the twenty-first century. Revisiting the legacy of this interaction will provide some navigational direction toward an integrated, collaborative design aesthetic rooted in interpretations of place.

As a point of departure, "Vanguard Landscapes: The Environmental Art Movement and Its Significance for Landscape Architecture", a thesis written by landscape architect and historian, Catherine Howett, will serve to orient this research which begins after the time period of Howett's evaluation (1950s – 1975). One of the important conclusions drawn by Howett was that the dialogue between artists and landscape architects is fertile ground for creative discovery and collaborative inspiration. Howett did not advocate that landscape architects replicate environmental artworks, instead, she pointed out "that something of what these artists are attempting to discover or reveal by their imaginative structuring of the experience of place and process has continuing relevance for landscape architecture."[1] This statement is as true today as it was then. She did not speculate about the forms that the resulting expressions would take; rather, her thesis demonstrated that environmental artists and landscape architects share overlapping concerns and she predicted that continued exchange would influence a transformation in the practice of landscape architecture.

Catherine Howett's 1976 thesis provided a starting point to begin the research for this thesis and from which to work forward in time. The structural outline and conclusions of her

[1] Catherine M. Howett, "Vanguard Landscapes: The Environmental Art Movement and Its Significance for Landscape Architecture" (MLA thesis, University of Georgia, 1976), 43.

thesis form the basis for the following investigation of significant developments in the creative relationship between artists and landscape architects during the past thirty years.

The body of information assembled to address this topic was gathered in a variety of ways. Scanning through Howett's references, especially Robert Smithson's body of work, provided evidence that some of the most interesting place design resulting since her evaluation has a direct connection to the ideas and motivations of the land artists of the 1970s. The review of literature on the subjects of contemporary public art and landscape design began to complete the picture by filling in some historical developments within the profession of landscape architecture and among the collaborative partnerships between the disciplines. Recent publications in relative journals and several catalogues produced in association with museum exhibitions on the subject offered contemporary examples of landscape design derived from traditions in conceptual art.

Samplings of representative projects and practitioners were selected to serve as illustrative examples. From these examples, a plethora of current and ongoing work was culled from online sources via database searches and lists of parallel links to similar work. Websites such as those maintained by organizations like Americans for the Arts or Community Arts Network contain copious resources organized in searchable databases. Online databases and adjacent website links provided access to digital copies of not only scholarly journal articles, but more ephemeral or artist-specific resources that may not have been accessible or available through traditional research channels such as library catalog searching or interlibrary loan. Aside from traditional and online research, several individuals, including artists, public art administrators and landscape architects, were contacted to help narrow the broadening field of

available information and to gain a personal perspective on the experience of creating innovative public space designs and building interdisciplinary relationships.

By revisiting Howett's prescient suggestions for future dialogues amongst artists and designers of the landscape, comparisons can be made with contemporary perspectives. Highlighting recent examples of built projects and some still on the drawing board, this thesis will map the course of exploration in multidimensional outdoor space design in the United States and evaluate the interchange of ideas between environmental art and design resulting in the past thirty years. The first section will provide landscape designers with an understanding of the historical background that moved contemporary art from its estranged position in the gallery to remote locales of American West, then into public and urban contexts in cities throughout the country. Next, a compendium of works situated in this space between art and landscape will be evaluated in terms of some recurring approaches utilized by artists and designers who layer aesthetic, environmental and social conditions in the design of place. A specific focus on urban settings and artist/landscape architect collaborations will guide the selection of examples. These examples will provide a framework upon which conclusions are developed, hopefully shifting the dialogue among those engaged in the design and interpretation of landscape into new directions.

CHAPTER 2

HISTORY AND INFLUENCES

Since the mid 1960s the impact of the environmental art[2] movement sent shock waves through the art world, and landscape architects took notice. Why do works such as Smithson's *Spiral Jetty* and Michael Heizer's *Double Negative* hold such fascination for landscape architecture? Catherine Howett posited an early response to this question in her contemporaneous thesis:

> This movement is of significance for landscape architecture because the design of exterior environments at any scale has relevance to their own work. Historically, of course, the design of landscape has been inseparably associated with developments in other arts…three modern masters of landscape design were nurtured in allied arts: Roberto Burle-Marx in painting, Isamu Noguchi in sculpture, Luis Barragan in architecture. Because this dialogue and cross-fertilization within the arts is mutually enriching, contemporary practitioners of landscape architecture will have a natural interest in the work of artists who involve themselves with the creation of outdoor spaces.[3]

Earth artists were challenging the tenants of an established tradition in art and art criticism while advancing dialogues amongst practitioners of landscape design and interpretation. Concurrently, a new generation of landscape architects recognized an emerging art that took place in the same field of vision that they had staked as their own professional territory. They responded to the charge issued by Smithson, in particular, by reviving traditions in landscape design that had defined the practice of Frederick Law Olmsted.

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[2] For the purpose of continuity, Catherine Howett's definition of environmental art is borrowed here. Her use describes "a wide range of styles and intentions which share a common commitment to specificity of site as the determinant of form, and an interest in the dynamics of environmental perception, the ways in which people experience places."
Ibid., 2.

[3] Ibid.

Smithson called for a return to Olmsted's attention to site considerations and an artistry that recognized change as integral to the narrative of landscape - though Smithson's view was through a lens forever altered by the new ecological paradigm.[4] In his essay, "Frederick Law Olmsted and the Dialectical Landscape", Smithson traced history in reverse by returning to Olmsted's 'professional touchstones' Uvedale Price and William Gilpin, then etching back further to 1757 when Edmund Burke published *Inquiry into the Origin of our ideas of the Sublime and the Beautiful*. Smithson was keenly aware of the aesthetic traditions of the Sublime and the Beautiful and the development of the Picturesque as a synthesis of two. He identified with the 18th century theorists' attempts to translate experience into language, and developed his own variation on the Picturesque as defined by Price and Gilpin. Smithson's notion of picturesque "is based on real land", a meaning that expands the dimensions of landscape to encompass "a process of ongoing relationships existing in a physical region"[5]. His definition also contains a rejection of "the one-sided idealism of those who appropriate the standard of ecological awareness to 'save' the landscape from art as well as industry."[6] A play on Gilpin's contrast between the 'real' and the 'ideal'[7], Smithson's work used a visual language to contrast the realities of a physical place with the mental constructs of idealized nature.

Smithson's diversity of interests allowed him to combine the concept of entropy, as well as socialist theory into his understanding of systems and nature. His vast and fluid thought on

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[4] For a in-depth account of the influence of environmentalism on the profession of landscape architecture see: Elizabeth K. Meyer, "The Post–Earth Day Conundrum: Translating Environmental Values into Landscape Design," in *Dumbarton Oaks Colloquium on the History of Landscape Architecture* (Washington, D.C.: Dumbarton Oaks Research Library and Collection, 2000), 187-244.

[5] Robert Smithson and Nancy Holt, *The Writings of Robert Smithson: Essays with Illustrations* (New York: New York University Press, 1979), 119.

[6] Howett, 22.

[7] Laura Smith, "Beautiful, Sublime", [online database] (University of Chicago) http://humanities.uchicago.edu/faculty/mitchell/glossary2004/navigation.htm. (accessed September 10, 2005).

these subjects were distilled in works such as *Spiral Jetty* and in his concept of dialectics – particularly those inquiries juxtaposing place/displacement and nature/culture. In his writing about Olmsted, Smithson expounded upon his "dialectic of the landscape" concept using Central Park as an exemplar masterwork:

> Dialectics of this type are a way of seeing things in a manifold of relations, not as isolated objects.…In another sense Olmsted's parks exist before they are finished, which means in fact they are never finished; they remain as carriers of the unexpected and of contradiction on all levels of human activity, be it social, political, or natural.[8]

For a new generation of landscape designers, it was Smithson who revived Olmsted's understanding of landscape architecture as "an entirely unique form of art in which the aim was to bring about a delicate balance, a synthesis of aesthetic, environmental, and social goods."[9] These three aspects of Olmsted's philosophy were elements Smithson began to invoke in his later work, especially as he became increasingly interested in the potential of degraded urban and industrial sites to engage the nature/culture dialectic.

New York City: Studio Moves to the Sidewalk

As site specific art migrated from remote to urban, New York City became testing grounds for ideas that would inspire artists across the country to address environmental and social issues in a public context. Perhaps because New York had become the archetypical metropolis, and by extension was the cultural capital and center of the art world at this time, it was an obvious choice for artists who wanted to magnify the juxtaposition of culture and nature. The following examples are meant to familiarize designers with the origins of more recent explorations in public space design.

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[8] Robert Smithson, "Frederick Law Olmsted and the Dialectical Landscape," in *The Writings of Robert Smithson*, ed. Nancy Holt (New York: New York University Press, 1979), 118-119.
[9] Catherine M. Howett, "Ecological Values in Twentieth Century Landscape Design: A History and Hermeneutics," *Landscape Journal* Special Issue (1998): 84.

Set against the backdrop of Greenwich Village, Alan Sonfist's *Time Landscape* [**Figure 1**] proposed an early conceptual model for an urban environmental work that predates *Spiral Jetty*. Sonfist conceived the idea of creating a living landscape to remember pre-colonial forests existing in sixteenth century Manhattan as a means of illustrating his idea of memorials to natural history. An abstraction of three idealized native plant communities, Sonfist's work serves as a reminder of what was once. Though Smithson would not likely have approved of memorialized nature, *Time Landscape* is significant in its representation of human interaction with environment because it both aligns with and opposes Smithson's view.

> Public monuments traditionally have celebrated events in human history – acts or humans of importance to the whole community. In the twentieth century, as we perceive our dependence on nature, the concept of community expands to include nonhuman elements, and civic monuments should honor and celebrate life and acts of another part of the community: natural phenomena. Within the city, public monuments should recapture and revitalize the history of the environment natural to that location.[10]

Now forty years old, *Time Landscape* is city-owned and in the care of the Parks Department of New York. The 45' x 200' plot has been folded it into the Greenstreets program - a citywide effort to reclaim paved areas along the street for greenspace. Like a one to one scaled terrarium, *Time Landscape* exists as an isolated sliver amongst the dense urban geometry, distinct from the accessible conglomerations of green jigsaw pieces [**Figure 2**]. Sonfist's ongoing conversation is rooted in its place, but its subject addresses environmental concerns at a global scale. His body of work makes a convincing case for participatory art, "public art as public dialogue, a dialogue in which both the creator and the viewer take part, a dialogue addressing the most critical issue of our time, the survival of our land."[11]

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[10] Alan Sonfist, Wolfgang Becker, and Robert Rosenblum, *Nature, the End of Art: Environmental Landscapes* (Florence, Italy: Gli Ori, 2004), 21.

[11] Alan Sonfist quoted in Suzanne Lacy, ed., *Mapping the Terrain: New Genre Public Art* (Seattle, Wash.: Bay Press, 1995), 280.

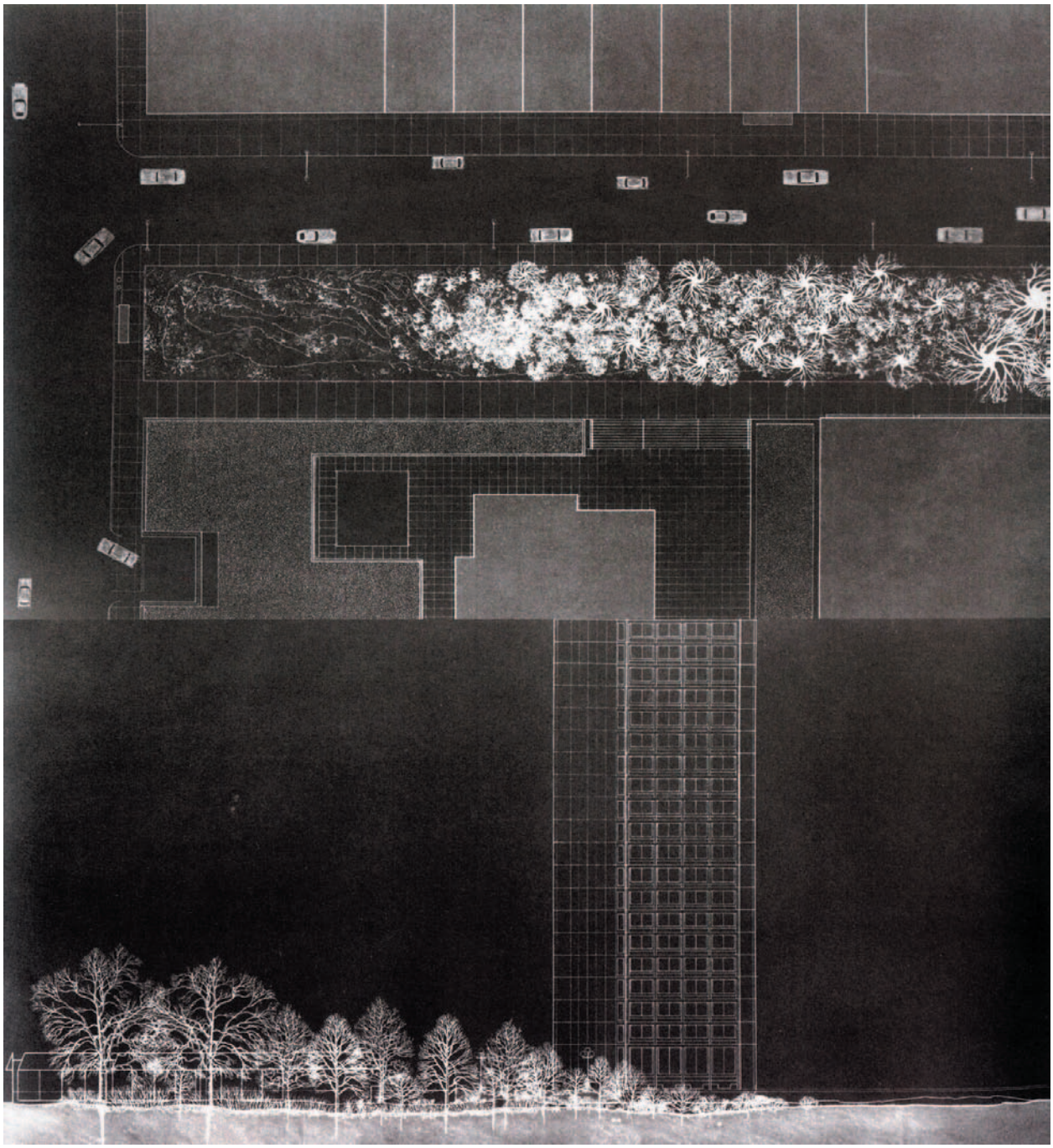

Figure 1
Alan Sonfist, Drawing, *Time Landscape of New York*, 1969.
Source: Alan Sonfist, Wolfgang Becker, and Robert Rosenblum, Nature, the End of Art: Environmental Landscapes (Florence, Italy: Gli Ori, 2004), 234.

Figure 2
Alan Sonfist, Installation view, *Time Landscape of New York*, Greenwich Village, 1965-present. Source: Jeffrey Kastner and Brian Wallis, Land and Environmental Art, Themes and Movements (London: Phaidon Press, 1998), 150.

Influential German artist, Joseph Beuys, made his only visit to the United States in an attempt to demonstrate the power of communication. *Coyote, 'I like America and America likes me'* was a weeklong performance by the artist, which took place in a New York gallery in 1974. For three days, the artist lived in the gallery with a coyote - engaged in a dialogue with the threatened North American species [**Figure 3**]. Beuys connected its plight with that of the American Indian. As an interpreter of cultural trauma, Beuys used the coyote metaphor - the energy of freedom bound by the trauma of persecution and extinction to diagnose the American condition. [12] His 'action' was meant to release this trauma through engagement and acknowledgement. Transformation was a central theme in the artist's work – important to understanding his best-known mantra, "everyone is an artist".

> My objects are to be seen as stimulants for the transformation of the idea of sculpture, or of art in general. They should provoke thoughts about what sculpture can be and how the concept of sculpting **can** be extended to the invisible materials used by everyone:
>
> > Thinking Forms – how we mould our thoughts or
> > Spoken Forms – how we shape our thoughts or words or
> > SOCIAL SCULPTURE – how we mould and shape the world in which we live:
> > **Sculpture as an evolutionary process; everyone as an artist.**
>
> That is why the nature of my sculpture is not fixed and finished. Processes continue in most of them: chemical reactions, fermentations, colour changes, decay, drying up. Everything is in a **state of change**.[13]

Beuys's work is often misunderstood today, though to place it in its historical context, one realizes that his ideas were well ahead of others attempting to express the expanding role of art. His belief in creativity as the most powerful tool for societal change and his ability to "move freely from performance, installation, sculpture to politics, which he saw as inseparable from

[12] Caroline Tisdall, *Joseph Beuys* (New York: Thames and Hudson, 1979), 228-235.
[13] Joseph Beuys introduction in Caroline Tisdall, Joseph Beuys, and Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum., *Joseph Beuys* (New York: Thames and Hudson, 1979), 6.

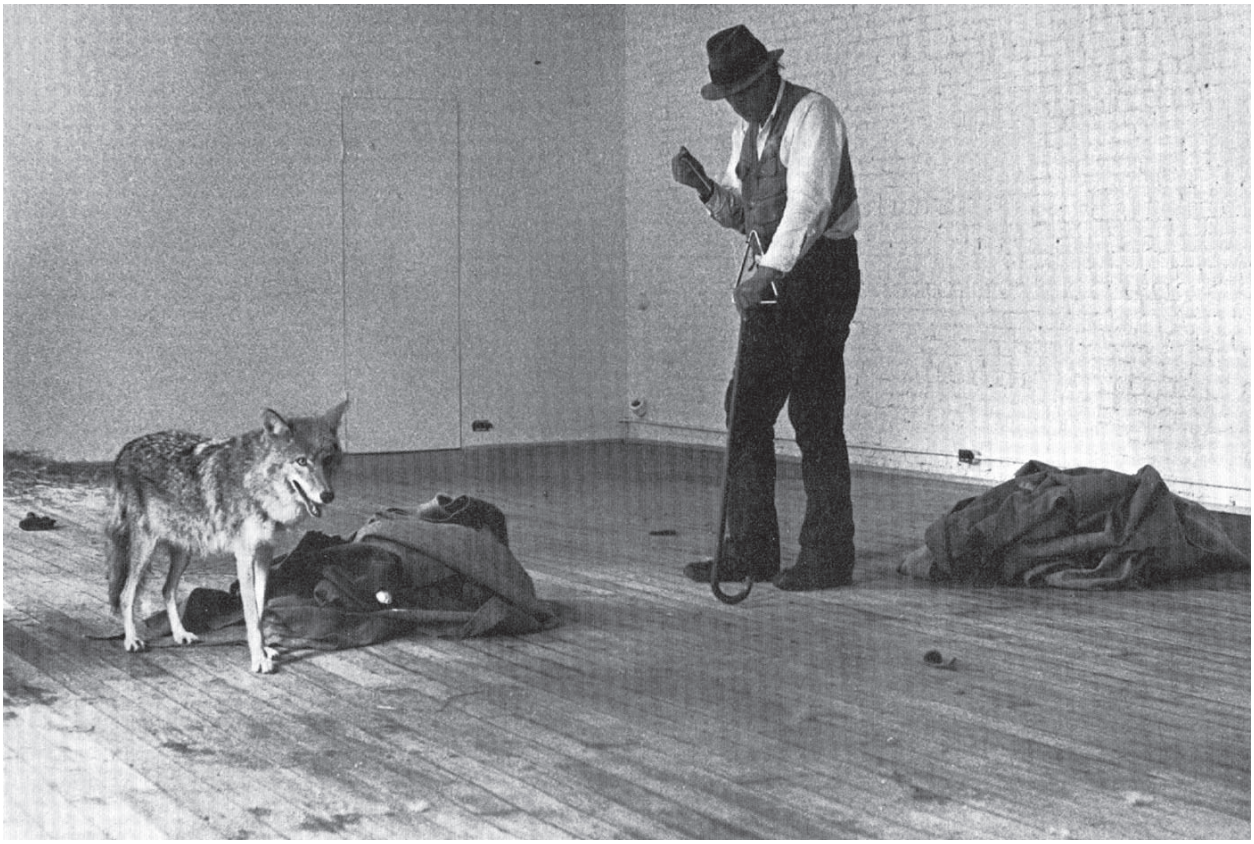

Figure 3
Joseph Beuys, Action, *Coyote 'I like America and America likes me'*, Rene Block Gallery, New York, NY, 1974.
Source: Caroline Tisdall, Joseph Beuys (New York: Thames and Hudson, 1979), 229.

art"[14] helped to create an atmosphere in which expressions of cultural values could take shape in the public realm. His cumulative actions, objects, and site-specific works are representative of an era and an allusion to future directions in an art that mediates the aesthetic and environmental by presenting a social perspective.

Cultural values that affect place posed opportunities for artists to challenge the detrimental consequences of our attitudes and beliefs by making them visible. Agnes Denes has directly confronted cultural values in her public work; while she continues to create landscapes that people enjoy aesthetically as well as conceptually. Denes, a recognized pioneer of environmental art, has created large-scale works that attend to ecological and social issues. Her work, *Wheatfield – A Confrontation*, was a two-acre performance/installation in Battery Park Landfill done in 1982 [**Figure 4**]. She planted a portion of the transitioning landfill with wheat; preparation of the soil, tending and harvesting of the crop became a performative aspect of the work. At the time of its installation, the New York real estate was worth 4.5 billion dollars. With this work Denes hoped to "inspire people to rethink personal values, to consider misplaced priorities, and to realize that life itself is in danger."[15] It was an environmental work with activist overtones that confronted deep cultural values related to American economics, capitalism, property values and the human rights. Denes fulfills her definition of the role an artist plays as a communicator of cultural values, "I believe that artistic vision, image and metaphor are powerful tools of communication that can become expressions of human values with profound impact on our consciousness and collective destiny."[16]

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[14] Lacy, ed., 203.
[15] Sue Spaid, *Ecovention: Current Art to Transform Ecologies* (Cincinnati: Contemporary Arts Center, 2002).
[16] Agnes Denes, "Artist Portfolio: Agnes Denes", [webpage] (Pace Editions, Inc.) http://www.paceprints.com/artistportfolio/artistportfolio.asp?aID=23#. (accessed November 19, 2004).

Figure 4
Agnes Denes, *Wheatfield-A Confrontation*, Battery Park Landfill, Downtown Manhattan, Summer 1982.
Source: Jeffrey Kastner and Brian Wallis, Land and Environmental Art, Themes and Movements (London: Phaidon Press, 1998). 160.

Artists who had stepped outside the galleries and museums to address issues of social context and site-specificity found the urban environment rich in its associations. Mierle Laderman Ukeles began an artist residency with the New York Sanitation Department in 1978. Since then, she has continued to produce both performance and installation works that make visible the people and processes involved in managing the city's garbage [**Figure 5**].

Creating her artwork on the sidewalks of New York, and at the sanitation department, she has been able to draw attention to previously hidden social and environmental issues. In 1989, Ukeles was awarded a Percent for Art commission for the creation of public art that would be integrated into the design for the conversion of Fresh Kills landfill into a park. Landscape architect, James Corner, founder of Field Operations, has led the multidisciplinary team through the masterplanning and design process. Now well underway, the park – renamed Fresh Kills: Lifescape – is scheduled to open between 2008-2010. In fulfillment of her role as Percent for Art artist, Ukeles continues to make work about and for the site, including extensive research, reconnaissance and documentation that attempts to translate the complex layers of meaning buried in this place. Her work serves a dual purpose for the future park in the way that it educates by exposing contradictions in our cultural perceptions of waste, while also serving to mediate public concern about the project. Utilizing television and the internet[17] [**Figure 6**], her research becomes outreach – helping the neighboring community to understand the site's long, complex planning process and the value of its transformation.

Proliferation of Percent for Art requirements has significantly contributed to the expanded role of public artists and increased opportunities for collaboration. In the past twenty years, New York City's Percent for Art program has funded and installed over two hundred site-

[17] New York Department of City Planning, "New York's New Parkland Fresh Kills: Lifescape", [online multimedia] (New York Department of State) http://69.20.65.248:8082/home.html. (accessed October 11, 2005).

Figure 5
Mierle Laderman Ukeles, Hartford Wash, New York, NY, 1973.
Source: Jeffrey Kastner and Brian Wallis, Land and Environmental Art, Themes and Movements (London: Phaidon Press, 1998), 152.

Fresh Kills lifescape | what is fresh kills? the site | where is it? | blue tour | flow 1 | the plan landfill systems | what's next? what lives there? | contact us | faq | site map

'MOVEMENT ACROSS ALL SYSTEMS KEEP THIS SITE - SEEMINGLY QUIET AND STATIC - ALIVE AND DYNAMIC'
-MIERLE LADERMAN UKELES, PERCENT FOR ART ARTIST

Opened in 1948, Fresh Kills Landfill received its last barge of garbage on March 22, 2001, marking the beginning of a new era.

"PENETRATION AND TRANSPARENCY: MORPHED"
© 2001-2002, by Mierle Laderman Ukeles, commissioned by the Percent for Art Program, NYC Department of Cultural Affairs and the NYC Department of Sanitation.

see and hear the site as it is now (4MB)

see and hear landfill systems at work (2MB)

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Figure 6
Mierle Laderman Ukeles, *Penetration and Transparency: Morphed*, Fresh Kills Landfill, New York, 2000-2001.
Source: New York Department of City Planning, "New York's New Parkland Fresh Kills: Lifescape", [online multimedia].

specific works of public art throughout the city.[18] Nationally, Percent for Arts programs began to be initiated at the state and local level, coinciding with the initiation of the federal program, which was reintroduced in 1973 after a hiatus lasting through most of the 1960s due to budgetary demands of war and general apathy.[19] Now, there are twenty-seven states with Percent for Art legislation guiding the inclusion of artwork in new public construction.

When a public capital construction project is planned, a defined percentage of the budget is set aside for the purchase of art. Traditionally, the commissioned works would often have been murals, paintings, or sculptures meant to reflect some unique aspect of the city's history or the building's function. During the last quarter century, the definition of public art has expanded to include projects that address the overall design of an environment and the artists' mediums include community dialogue, as well as all types of technological media and physical material.

Also important to the emergence of artist-designer collaborations were two programs developed by the National Endowment for the Arts. The Art in Public Places program funded its first sculpture in 1969 as a grant made to the city of Grand Rapids to commission Alexander Calder's *La Grande Vitesse* for the new city hall. A later program, Design Arts/Visual Arts, tried in the late 1980s had the primary objective of increasing opportunities for collaboration amongst artists and designers who would drive the exploration of new models of public space design. This new emphasis placed upon integrative, collaborative public work should have encouraged landscape architects, but conflicting expectations and ill-defined roles often added more tension to an already turbulent phase in the history of the practice.

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[18] Center for Architecture, "City Art: New York's Percent for Art Program", (American Institute of Architects New York Chapter) http://www.aiany.org/centerforarchitecture/cityart/index.php. (accessed September 7, 2005).

[19] John Wetenhall, "A Brief History of Percent-for-Art in America," *Public Art Review* no. 9 (1993): 6-7, http://www.publicartreview.org/. (accessed July 3, 2005).

Throughout the eighties, there was a division between landscape architects who wanted to return to art as a source of inspiration after having been schooled in the predominant McHargian method. Some began to respond to postmodern ideas such as context, place, and regionalism and followed expressions of phenomenological theory as translated visually by artists such as Smithson and Robert Irwin. Others chose to align themselves with Modernist aesthetics and theory by applying minimalist formalism and universal symbolism to landscape interpretations.[20]

Design of the second half of the twentieth century had revealed the conundrum faced by the practice of contemporary landscape architecture. The return of landscape architecture to the principles of late 1920s and '30s modernism may have indicated the necessity to repeat a lesson not fully understood the first time around. Steven R. Krog, in his 1991 essay "Whither the Garden", contended that without a theoretical backbone and a skeleton of criticism to support the designer's intent, landscape architects would remain caught in a cycle of period iterations that failed to represent the depth of human relationship with the land.[21] Krog modeled art critic Arthur Danto's reductive characteristics of early Modernism as evidence that landscape architecture returned to the ideologies of the modernist period in the late 1970s and early '80s. The two characteristics upon which he based this observation were the tendency of its advocates to zealously "define landscape architecture *as* art...contending that they could distinguish between landscapes that were 'art' and those that were not. Second, landscape architecture began

[20] Meyer, 189-190.
[21] Steven S. Krog, "Whither the Garden," in *Denatured Visions: Landscape and Culture in the Twentieth Century*, ed. Stuart Wrede, William Howard Adams, and Museum of Modern Art (New York N.Y.) (New York: Museum of Modern Art: Distributed by Harry N. Adams, 1991), 95-105.

to exhibit a self-consciousness whereby it became the subject of its own work: gardens about gardens."[22]

This reflexive period in contemporary practice also represents a change in direction of the conversation with artists. Incongruent with directions in environmental art, much landscape design at this time responded more to minimalist and pop art influences, as well as architectural Modernism. This fracture created confusion; as noted by Lucy Lippard and others, collaborations during this time were fraught with complications that hindered the progress of an integrated approach to environmental design. Both artists and landscape architects were grappling with postmodern conceptions of nature and place, while squabbling over professional territories.

Concurrently, the increasing negativity toward the rapid growth of urban areas and its associated environmental degradation prompted a faction of young artists, designers and academics to explore the territory in between the formal and the experiential. Urban renewal projects and public parks, obvious settings for questioning and interpreting cultural perceptions of landscape, provided additional opportunities for collaborative experimentation.

The successes of a few built examples of artist/landscape architect collaborations had roused the interest of civic leaders and arts organizations resulting in public commissions to satisfy Percent for the Arts requirements on capital projects. Favoring a more diverse audience and greater opportunity for participatory interaction, artists sought access to the new funding sources available for public art. Some progressive administrators were learning how to manipulate the various funding sources and requests for proposals in order to involve artists earlier in the design process to better integrate their contributions into the projects. Redevelopment projects like Battery City Park, initiated in the late 1970s on the site of a 92 acre

[22] Krog, Steven R. "Whither the Garden?" Stuart Wrede, William Howard Adams, and Museum of Modern Art (New York N.Y.), *Denatured Visions: Landscape and Culture in the Twentieth Century* (New York: Museum of Modern Art: Distributed by Harry N. Adams, 1991), 101.

landfill, were evidence that collaborative teams were well suited to address complex issues of public space design associated with government-sponsored development projects.

South Cove, designed by artist Mary Miss, landscape architect Susan Child, and architect Stan Eckstut, is often cited as an exemplary collaborative model. This work uniquely confronts the site's present with a vision of the past by combining the layers of a previous riverfront landscape with the new layer of urban redevelopment. Boulders and plantings of a former ecosystem seem to push through the walkways near the water's edge creating a clash of elemental and fabricated materials [**Figure 7**]. In a recent article, Mary Miss described her intention:

> You hear it. Smell it. Get your feet wet if you sit on the north end. I really wanted to make a place that is very much a relief from the interior of the island. You come to the edge and get a sense of the edge. I'm always interested in how the built environment and the natural environment contact.
>
> This place of the senses, we haven't had access to it for years. We've lived in Manhattan but haven't been able to get to the water. We're re-establishing contact.[23]

In a way, this approach could be looked at as an extension of Sonfist's *Time Landscape* in its juxtaposition of historic time, although South Cove does not memorialize. It is a place meant for active use as well as a critique of the surrounding built environment [**Figure 8**].

New York City, a place of contrast and transformation, has provided a setting for investigating some of many forms and expressions that artists have developed while expanding the definition of public art. The preceding examples were selected to represent the diversity of approaches used by artists to mediate the relationship between culture and nature as they moved into the public realm and toward more effective cross-disciplinary collaboration.

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[23] Mary Jasch, "Walk on the Water," *Dig-it! Magazine* no. February (2004), http://www.dig-itmag.com/features/grounds_story/109_0_4_10_M/. (accessed October 17, 2005).

Figure 7
Mary Miss, Susan Child, Stan Eckstut, South Cove, Battery Park City, NY, 1984-1987.
Source: Kristina Hill and Jeff Hou, "Urban Sites/Making Landscapes", [website].

Figure 8
Mary Miss, Susan Child, Stan Eckstut, Viewing platform, pier/loggia, South Cove, Battery Park City, NY, 1984-1987.
Source: Mary Jasch, "Walk on the Water," Dig-it! Magazine no. February (2004). Mary Miss, "Artist's Website", [online multimedia] © Mary Miss.

Characteristics of a New Public Landscape

Throughout the 1980s and into the 90s, currents in the allied arts and social sciences had spawned a dizzying array of literature on the subject of place and the *genius loci*. Several influential books written by art critic Lucy R. Lippard, such as *Overlay*, *The Lure of the Local* and *On the Beaten Track,* created a collage of multidisciplinary writings on the subjects of contemporary public art and place. Lippard had found herself inundated with perceptions of place. "There is a huge literature on 'place' - far more than I had suspected when I embarked on a seminar on the subject in 1992. But I am always struck by the neglect and miscomprehension of contributions made by artists, who read, think, and see from angles not often found by scholars."[24] Though Lippard admitted that much collaboration between artists and designers working during the 1980s and into the 1990s were lacking, she remained hopeful.

In an essay for Suzanne Lacy's overview of the socially engaged New Genre public art, Lippard specified a list of nine categories of "'outlooking' art about place".[25] The list organized contemporary public artwork by medium, exhibition type, or intent with a recognition that some categories may overlap.[26] Her thoughtful typology interweaves threads of the traditions of performance, conceptual, and environmental art into a rich tapestry of an art grounded in community engagement [**Appendice A**]. Rather than imposing limitations, the categorization was meant to broaden the accepted definition of public art to include alternative media such as performance, signage, mass media, and action/interaction.

Throughout the 1990s artists had begun to accept their roles as project managers by coordinating and collaborating on a larger scale than was done previously by the first generation

[24] Lucy R. Lippard, *The Lure of the Local: Senses of Place in a Multicentered Society* (New York: New Press, 1997), 6.
[25] Lucy R. Lippard, "Looking Around: Where We Are, Where We Could Be," in *Mapping the Terrain: New Genre Public Art*, ed. Suzanne Lacy (Seattle, Wash.: Bay Press, 1995), 120-123.
[26] Lacy, ed., *Mapping the Terrain: New Genre Public Art*, 120.

Land artists. Some would continue to form partnerships with other design professionals, while others entered into architecture and landscape architecture programs in order to educate themselves on the myriad environmental, technical, and political facets of public and urban projects. Claire Bishop, art critic and historian, speculated on the new directions taken by contemporary artists in a recent article for *Artforum*:

> To generalize perhaps too wildly, I think the main differences between Land artists of the late '60s and '70s and artists today can be characterized in terms of the medium with which they're engaged. If the precursors can be framed within an expanded field of sculpture, today's artists are working within an expanded cross-disciplinary field more likely to involve research as a geographer, social worker, anthropologist, activist, or experimental architect.[27]

Process and engagement with both ecological and social systems has proven to be a fruitful discussion for the vanguard artists and designers working in the public realm. The emergent group of landscape architects who had taken cues from Smithson's and Sonfist's legacies by entering into the dialectic between nature and culture as revealed in the landscape had begun to shift the course of landscape design and interpretation. Elizabeth K. Meyer, landscape architect and theorist, adeptly illustrates the significance of work generated by designers engaged in this dialectic:

> The practices of several landscape architects bridged the "great divide" between ecology and design and between science and art that characterized the profession in the 1970s. In constructing this bridge, a body of work has emerged that not only applies ecological environmental values to a design language, but also suggests a strategy for breaking out of the restrictive tenets of modern art that so marginalized the landscape as a medium and subject. [28]

Artists and designers working on their own and in collaboration with other design professionals have continued to produce inspired works descendant of these traditions in

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[27] Claire Bishop as quoted by Tim Griffin, "Remote Possibilities: A Roundtable Discussion on Land Art's Changing Terrain," *Artforum International* 43, no. 10 (2005): 289.
[28] Meyer, "The Post–Earth Day Conundrum: Translating Environmental Values into Landscape Design," 187.

conceptual art. Representative works have preserved something of the dialogue between the disciplines and, in turn, have helped to sustain interest in the practice of an engaged landscape design existing between formal and experiential, the ecological and the social, and that which reflects an encompassing definition of community in our experience of place.

A 1992 traveling exhibition, "Fragile Ecologies", which originated at the Queens Art Museum in New York, served as an update on the state of environmental art. Among the artists included in the exhibition were Mel Chin, Helen Mayer Harrison and Newton Harrison, Buster Simpson, and Mierle Laderman Ukeles.

In response to "Fragile Ecologies", landscape architects contributed to a 1997 exhibition, "Ecorevelatory Design: Nature Constructed/Nature Revealed". An accompanying issue of *Landscape Journal* offered contemporary critical and theoretical perspectives on the nascent ecological aesthetic in landscape architecture highlighting illustrative designs. Catherine Howett, in her essay for the special issue, merged the interests of environmental art and design by doing away with typologies – advocating for a comprehensive philosophy of shared knowledge and values.

> Art evolves, of course, just as ideas do, and little is served by struggling toward ideal typologies that may distort, exclude, or render sterile what we seek to design or understand. It may be fairer and more useful to consider any conscientious effort to ground a designed landscape in sound ecological knowledge, thinking, and values as evolutionary, like nature itself, part of a process of continuing experimentation with ideas and materials, with creative and essential play – play of mind, play of heart, play of hand.[29]

Several of the innovative projects featured in the exhibition proposed mitigation of forsaken cultural landscapes. *Testing the Waters*, a proposal for Acid Mine Drainage and Art (AMD & ART in Vintondale, PA), submitted by artist, Stacy Levy and landscape architect, Julie

[29] Howett, "Ecological Values in Twentieth Century Landscape Design: A History and Hermeneutics," 96.

Bargmann has recently garnered much attention upon the celebrated opening of the public park in 2004.

A subsequent show at San Francisco's Museum of Modern Art in 2001 entitled "Revelatory Landscapes", brought landscape architects into the gallery to represent their concurrent installations in several neighborhoods throughout the city. A map was given to visitors of the museum to direct them to site-specific installations in the field. Leah Levy curated the exhibition, which brought together designers ADOBE LA, Kathryn Gustafson, George Hargreaves, Walter Hood and Tom Leader. The locations selected for the works were considered 'voids' in the fabric of each community – hidden or degraded sites needing resuscitation. A passage from the exhibition catalog provides a good summary of the show's intent:

> With projects that uncover vestiges of a hidden history, culture, physical peculiarity, or social structure--the stuff of collective memory--the exhibition frames the ordinary for reconsideration and wonder. It brings together three elements: the unique qualities of the sites; the work produced by the interventions of the design teams; and the heightened consciousness of the environment that comes from experiencing the project. Each installation offers, in subtle and memorable ways, a vision of a particular landscape, awakening a new perspective on the world.[30]

In the spring of 2005, the Museum of Modern Art in New York showcased works of landscape design in the museum's first exhibit of contemporary outdoor space design, "Groundswell: Constructing the Contemporary Landscape". The show and catalog reveal the diversity of international approaches to landscape interpretation; while the exhibition, itself, is telling of the renewed connections between art and landscape.

In the past thirty years, artists have established their role in the design of outdoor spaces, effectively making the move from the gallery into the public realm. Interestingly, the work of landscape architects has appeared in museum exhibitions more frequently within the past ten

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[30] SFMOMA, "Revelatory Landscapes", [online multimedia archive] (San Francisco Museum of Modern Art) http://www.sfmoma.org/exhibitions/exhib_detail/00_exhib_revelatory_land.html (accessed October 5, 2005).

years than ever before. This observation, combined with a rise in the number of landscape architects and collaborative teams entering (and winning) public art and memorial competitions, demonstrates "the surge of creative activity in contemporary landscape design".[31] Perhaps it will also mark the beginning of a new era in the creative relationship between artists and landscape architects – one that is less concerned by the blurring of boundaries, and more focused on the combined potential to effect physical and psychological transformation upon our cultural perceptions of public space.

[31] Glenn D. Lowry, "Introduction," in *Groundswell: Constructing the Contemporary Landscape*, ed. Peter Reed (New York: Museum of Modern Art, 2005), 11.

CHAPTER 3

CONCEPTUAL APPROACHES

Transformation

The following projects illustrate a variety of methods used to encourage both physical and psychological transformation in perception and understanding of each respective landscape. Processes of transformation are revealed to highlight the ongoing work of systems that surround us, and of which we are a part. In some instances, visualization of a system, or a network of systems, intends to affect mental transformation in order to provide alternative experiences or understandings of our relationship to a place.

The Gates New York, NY 2005

Traces from the intertwined history between the relative disciplines of art and landscape continue to reemerge in new contexts. Like *Spiral Jetty's* reappearance from the waters of Great Salt Lake in 2002, *The Gates* arose from Central Park, finally realized after twenty-six years. Christo's concept sketches from 1979 [**Figure 9**] changed very little in translation once installed in Central Park as the first large-scale public artwork in its history. The artists' intention to add an ephemeral layer to the park that would heighten the human experience of movement and perception of place, while imbedding a fanciful memory in our consciousness, makes an easy connection to the goals of 1960s Land Art. Though, in this instance, a significant time shift from conceptualization to completion has had an influence upon the work's interpretation, which raises interesting questions about context and process.

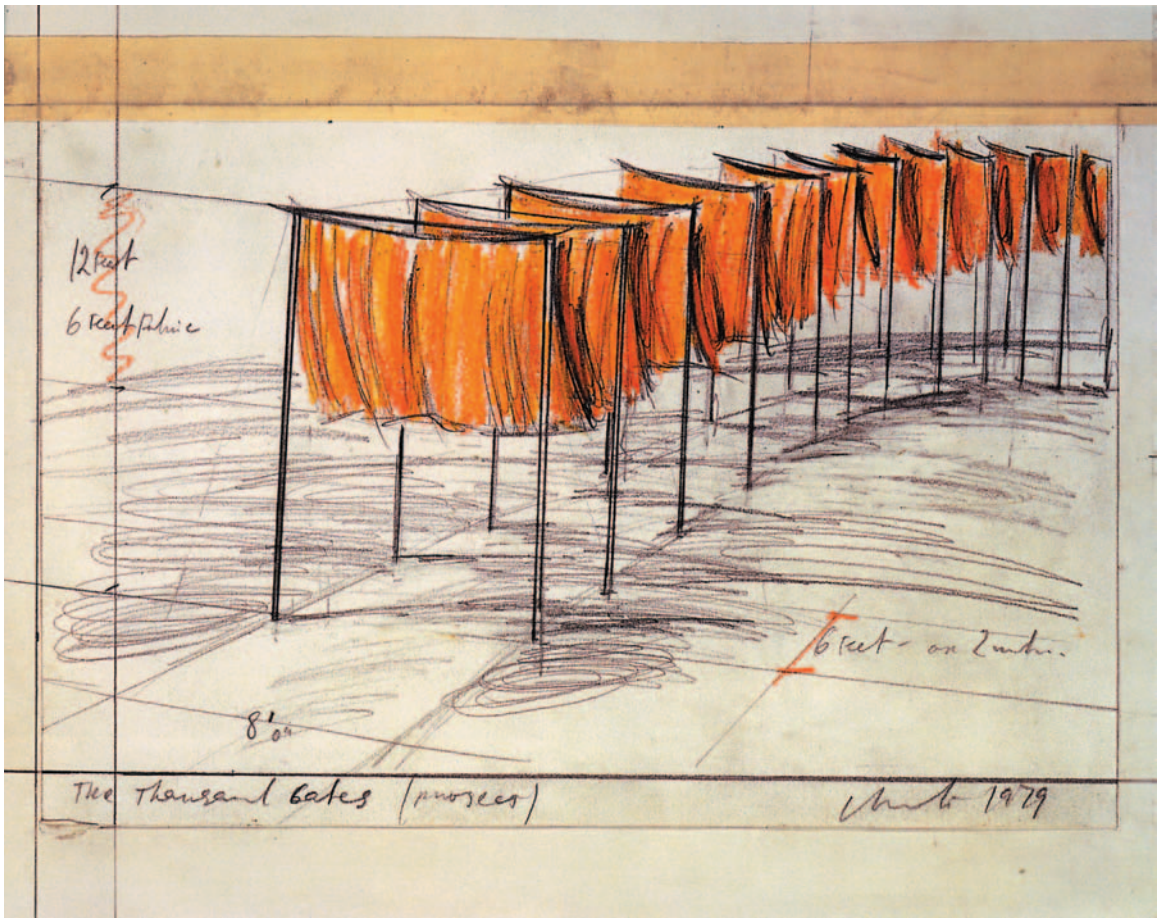

Figure 9
Christo and Jeanne-Claude, Drawing, *The Gates*, 1979.
Source: Jonathan David Fineberg, On the Way to the Gates, Central Park, New York City (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2004), 59.

What remains of The Gates after its saffron banners have faded from our minds? Would Smithson have appreciated the way in which the artists' have subverted the traditional economics of the gallery system to fund their own projects? Would Beuys have enjoyed the artists' engagement of their audience – transforming spectators into participants? Is the artists' work represented by the temporary structures that once stood in the park or, as Christo asserts - in the audience's memory of them? Art critics and historians have suggested that the dual nature of The Gates existence will not be as significant a contribution to history as the artists' savvy coordination of the cultural, political and economic systems underlying each of their projects. As The Gates raises more questions than it provides answers, it also illustrates that a new critical model may be necessary to fully evaluate the complexity of multidimensional works of public art and place design.

Christo and his wife and creative collaborator, Jeanne-Claude, maintained their vision of The Gates while acting as liaisons between public and private interests in the coordination and implementation of the installation. Engineer, Vince Davenport, was consulted for the structural design of the gates from which the pleated nylon fabric was suspended. Other important collaborators included the various intermingling communities that became a part of the project's execution. The artists employed approximately 1,200 workers to assist throughout all stages of the event; volunteers donated their time to assemble the work onsite and many remained throughout the installation to supervise and maintain the work. Additionally, the community surrounding Central Park, as well as citizens, business owners and administrators of greater New York City shared the benefits and frustrations of hosting The Gates.

Developing an understanding of the way in which the artists' projects build support for their projects and navigate economic and political spheres adds an unseen dimension to their

work. Several significant elements, encapsulated in reviews and criticisms, are important to understanding The Gates. Reviews of the work revealed two encompassing perspectives, which are representative of overarching values associated with art criticism- the instrumental value versus the intrinsic aesthetic merit as a means of evaluating a work of art. Instrumental value upholds that the ideology of the work must be considered in order to determine its cultural significance, and that the value of the work depends on something extrinsic to the work itself. In other words, a good work of art has instrumental value if it offers a new perspective on some widely held truth to which it is compared. Intrinsic aesthetic merit looks at the work from within, judging the work against accepted formal criteria.[32] This type of responsive description is often found under the sprawling heading of popular cultural criticism.

Generally, response to The Gates was positive and it received an unusual amount of media attention due to its location and scale, and the notoriety of the artists. Reactions to the work ranged across disciplines, the mass media, and also included online blogs intended to capture first hand experiences of the work throughout the duration of the installation. The form and color of The Gates became a broadly recognized symbol for the project due to extensive publicity and accessibility of the artwork.

Upon approach to Central Park, a widespread feeling of anticipation was perceptible as visitors glimpsed sight of The Gates. Then, falling into line, the parade of pedestrians moved through the landscape like a massive conga line, captivated by the rhythm and forward movement, but without any particular destination. Though The Gates received plenty of criticism of its formal qualities, millions of visitors and residents enjoyed the ephemeral festivity that the work brought to a New York City still weighted with the solemn burden of tragedy four years after September 11, 2001.

[32] Sylvan Barnet, *A Short Guide to Writing About Art*, 7th ed. (New York: Longman, 2003), 215.

Critical approaches opted to place The Gates in the contexts of the artists' previous projects and within the history of Central Park. Art critics and historians, as well as landscape architects layered an academic perspective containing worthwhile speculation about the future value of the work. Those evaluating the work's sensitivity to the design of Olmsted and Vaux were disappointed that such a massive effort produced a rather weak instrument of interpretation.[33] The contrast of the 'saffron' hue and geometric forms did little to reference the depth of the Park's landscape tradition – serving mainly as a self-referential folly. Many felt that the project was a missed opportunity for public art to assert itself as an interactive forum of exchange between the past, present and future. Experience of Central Park through this work was animated by the participants and focused on the phenomenon of the spectacle, over consciousness of place [**Figure 10**].

On one hand, The Gates in its physical form was a fleeting moment in the life of the Park. On the other hand, the work represents the myriad economic, environmental, and political exchanges necessary to its creation. Perhaps, then, the true presence of this work is in the unseen.

Allegheny Riverfront Park Pittsburgh, PA

Landscape architect Michael Van Valkenburgh and artist team Ann Hamilton and Michael Mercil have completed two major commissions together - most recently, Teardrop Park in Battery Park City in New York and Allegheny Riverfront Park in downtown Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. Their acclaimed work has received many awards, including recognitions from the American Society of Landscape Architects, Environmental Design Research Association and the Project for Public Spaces. Allegheny Riverfront Park, was cited by the ASLA as a "new model for conceiving urban parks" for the way the design incorporated existing infrastructure within the

[33] See Ethan Carr's critique in Kenneth I. Helphand and others, "Flags over the Greensward: In New York City, an Ephemeral Work of Public Art Meets One That Has Stood the Test of Time [the Gates]," *Landscape architecture* 95, no. 5 (2005).

Figure 10
Christo and Jeanne-Claude, *The Gates*, Central Park, NYC, 2005.
Source: Kenneth I. Helphand and others, "Flags over the Greensward: In New York City, an Ephemeral Work of Public Art Meets One That Has Stood the Test of Time [the Gates]," Landscape architecture 95, no. 5 (2005).

park's new uses, while restoring accessibility to the riverfront from a rehabilitating cultural district [**Figure 11**].[34] The voices of the river and the urban downtown, along with their associated communities, blend in this design - creating a synthesis of interactive systems.

In an article entitled "Working with Artists" published in the June 2005 issue of Landscape Architecture, Regina Flanagan, artist and landscape architect, interviewed the collaborators. Van Valkenburgh, who had followed Hamilton's work and felt an affinity with her interpretations of place, approached the artist and her husband/collaborator, Mercil. In the ten years that their working relationship has evolved, the team has developed a design process that allows both parties to exercise creative expression while contributing to a mutually conceived concept for the form of the place as a whole [**Figure 12]**. Practically, their process works due to the definition of roles as established early in the negotiation phase with the client. In the case of Allegheny Riverfront Park, the artists were commissioned by the Pittsburgh Cultural Trust, while Van Valkenburgh's project budget covered the construction drawings and installation with all fees negotiated by Van Valkenburgh's office.[35] Economically, this set up works well to protect the artists' role in the collaboration.

The artists and landscape architects developed a common language of materials for the park to express the integral relationship of river and city [**Figure 13**]. The strength of their partnership transforms a derelict industrial riverfront into a beautiful public space superimposed on a variety of integrated systems. By providing a link from the urban core to the river, the park merges a city's past and present at the riverfront – creating a vision for the future of place design.

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[34] American Society of Landscape Architects, "2002 Award Winners: Allegheny Riverfront Park Pittsburgh, Pa", [online archive] (American Society of Landscape Architects) http://www.asla.org/meetings/awards/awds02/alleghenyriver.html. (accessed October 2, 2005).
[35] Regina M. Flanagan, "Working with Artists," *Landscape Architecture* 95, no. 6 (2005): 93-94.

Figure 11
Ann Hamilton, Michael Mercil and Michael Van Valkenburgh, Before and after, Allegheny Riverfront Park, Pittsburgh, PA, 1994-1998.
Source: Michael Van Valkenburgh Associates, "Allegheny Riverfront Park", [online multimedia].

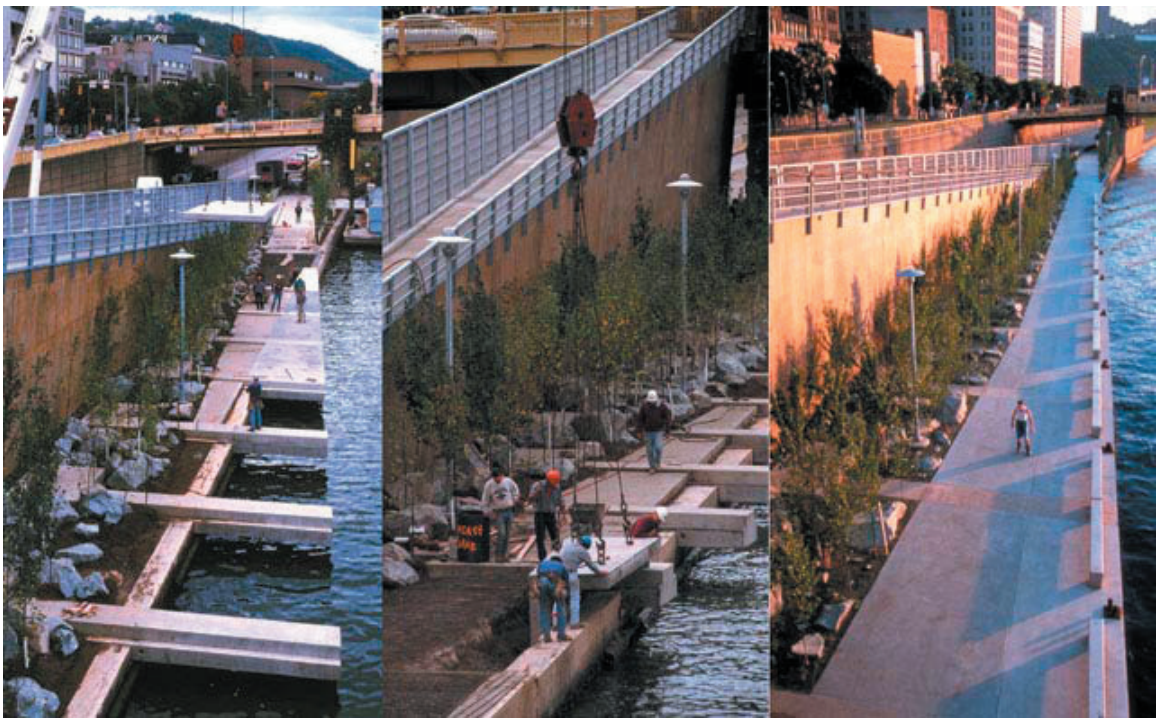

Figure 12
Ann Hamilton, Michael Mercil and Michael Van Valkenburgh, 3 views, Allegheny Riverfront Park, Pittsburgh, PA, 1994-1998.
Source: Michael Van Valkenburgh Associates, "Allegheny Riverfront Park", [online multimedia].

Figure 13
Ann Hamilton, Michael Mercil and Michael Van Valkenburgh, Construction, Allegheny Riverfront Park, Pittsburg, PA, 1994-1998.
Source: Regina M. Flanagan, "Working with Artists," Landscape Architecture 95, no. 6 (2005).

Community

Artists and designers committed to multidimensional place design can draw connections to engage community in the interpretation of landscape, thus extending the contribution of their work to include a shared point of view. Artist and Georgia State professor of art, Pam Longobardi, summarizes this approach as an important function of public art, "I think what public art does, and what all art does, is to enable you to see something through someone else's eyes – and therefore to expand your view of the world. Ultimately, I think it defines its community by creating a vision of that community in a tangible form."[36] The examples selected in this section are based on approaches to problem solving that address the concerns of a community by contributing interpretations of cultural relationships as a reflection of the values and attitudes of those involved in generating ideas for the work.

Landscape in Blue Oakland, CA

Walter Hood is a landscape architect who also uses an artistic approach to inspire designs for public spaces within communities. His method of involving community residents in the design process is through interaction with the place and discussion with its residents. He also works with artists and musicians to layer places with multisensory experience. For instance, sound was used to animate his design for an Oakland African-American community. "I'm interested in how the everyday mundane practices of life get played out in cities, the unheralded patterns that take place without celebration. There's a structure to cities, a 4/4 beat. Designing is like *improvisation*, finding a sound for each place." [37]

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[36] Beth Flannigan, "Everyday Art," *Georgia State Magazine*, Fall 2004, 26.

[37] Patricia Leigh Brown, "He Measures Oakland's Beat, and Parks Bloom", [internet archive] (The New York Times) http://www.nytimes.com/2004/03/21/national/21PARK.html?ei=5007&en=92e022b731e28f95&ex=1395205200&partner=USERLAND&pagewanted=all&position=. (accessed September 13, 2004).

San Francisco Museum of Modern Art issued Hood an invitation to create a work locally that would be part of a 2001 exhibit, "Revelatory Landscapes". Hood, along with artist Douglas Hollis and a few of Hood's graduate students took the opportunity to create a temporary art installation to spotlight the cultural history of the West Oakland neighborhood known for its once vital jazz and blues scene. *Landscape in Blue*, used historical documentation to interpret the site of a church that was demolished to make way for a public transport track. After interviewing community members and researching old maps of the district, Hood restored a portion of the building foundations underneath the BART tracks, creating a functional area in a former void beneath the tracks. Twelve temporary benches to represent the twelve bar pattern of blues music were constructed and placed inside the foundation of the old church [**Figure 14**]. Composer and artist added sound played through small speakers hidden in the blue painted benches to reference the historical significance of blues music in this neighborhood.

Poplar Street Macon, GA

In the creation of public space, designers create places that serve the public by reinforcing egalitarian values, but also to contribute variety to the design of our communities. Walter Hood's design for the Poplar Street corridor in Macon, Georgia was completed in May 2005, and heralded by the ASLA for the success of his "notion of hybridization". His scheme divides the length of the former vehicular thoroughfare into sections for traffic, parking and recreation. His design maintains the functional aspects of the street and parking, while also adding a social element. Within the space, Hood carved out four 650-foot wide 'yards' for use as small street-side parks, his idea was to encourage people to slow down and get out of their cars. Subtle touches, such as the furnishings made to resemble cotton bales, refer to Macon's history, simultaneously providing a park-like amenity in an unexpected place [**Figure 15**]. Such

Figure 14
Walter Hood, *Landscape in Blue*, Oakland, CA, 2001.
Source: Paula Deitz, "Revelatory Landscapes," Architectural Review 220, no. 1256 (2001).

Figure 15
Walter Hood, Poplar Street, Macon, GA, 2005.
Source: American Society of Landscape Architects, "The Hybrid Spaces of Walter Hood," LAND online no. May 2, 2005 (2005), http://www.asla.org/land/050205/walterhood.html. (accessed October 30, 2005).

combinations of history, functionality and visual appeal are the basis of Hood's idea to reflect community while adapting to the landscape.[38]

Storyscape Atlanta, GA

Storyscape began as a student project developed by group of graduate students in the Information Design & Technology and Digital Media programs at Georgia Institute of Technology and also as a part of the Mobile Technologies Group, a research group focusing on the social impacts of wireless technologies. Their participation in a larger temporary outdoor public art exhibition, "Art in Freedom Park"[39], was designed as an experiment to make use of cellular phone technology as a means of collecting personal narratives about the site. Description from the project website:

> The Storyscape project seeks to leverage a mobile device that everyone already has access to - cell phones - and to utilize them differently in order to engage the public, for both narrative and historical purposes, illuminating the rich tapestry of stories behind Freedom Park.
>
> At 13 locations throughout the park, dark blue displays, just like the one pictured [**Figure 16**], list the Storyscape phone number and a four-digit location tag. Park visitors can call the number on their cell phone and by entering the location tag will be able to access previous audio stories pertaining to that location, as well as have the option to leave their own. [40]

Potential exists for this work to become an interesting and participatory model for onsite data collection and documentation. Used during site inventory and analysis, could be customized for the project to collect specific information from residents and visitors. Contributions could help designers to understand the intricacies of the site as known by those most familiar with it.

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[38] American Society of Landscape Architects, "The Hybrid Spaces of Walter Hood," *LAND online* no. May 2, 2005 (2005), http://www.asla.org/land/050205/walterhood.html. (accessed October 30, 2005).
[39] Art in Freedom Park, "Art in Freedom Park Homepage", [website] (Art in Freedom Park) http://www.artinfreedompark.org. (accessed October 30, 2005).
[40] David Jimison, John Goetzinger, and Karyn Lu, "Storyscape", [website] (www.storyscape.org. (accessed June 28, 2005).

Figure 16
David Jimison, John Goetzinger, Karyn Lu, Storyscape, Temporary installation, Atlanta, GA, May-September 2005.
Source: John Goetzinger David Jimison, Karyn Lu, "Storyscape", [website] (accessed June 28).

Collection of special information such as historical narratives, for example, could inform the design program at an early phase. In this way, participation from community members throughout the development of the project can allow more diversity than is possible at community meetings or charrettes while building support for the project amongst participants. Though, little aesthetic or environmental contributions were evident in this initial experiment, the idea could be customized to address specific aspects of a design project.

Metaphor

The examples in this section make use of metaphor, by creating a poetic language of conceptual and visual elements to unify predominant themes specific to the locale. Both Maya Lin and Kathryn Gustafson have built bodies of work representative of this style of interpretation through their unique combinations of elemental materials and symbols that interact with or confront the visitor. The gut reaction experienced when one sees themselves reflected in the engraved, black granite of the Vietnam Veterans Memorial is already a condition of that place, an anticipated emotional affront one expects upon visiting a memorial. A reason that people react so strongly to it is the way in which it meets those established conditions. Through its simple poetry, depth of human experience and understanding is conveyed. As Lin began to make a break from memorial design, she accepted commissions to create public art as a way of exploring ideas she felt were in between art and architecture.

> I realize that the memorials that I designed will be my best-known works, and that's fine….Though my working process started there, I have really been much more involved in other issues since that time. I have concentrated on the differences and similarities between the making of art and architecture in this public realm, which I would call public art.[41]

[41] Tom Finkelpearl, "The Anti-Monumental Work of Maya Lin," *Public Art Review* no. 15 (1996), http://www.publicartreview.org/index.php. (accessed July 20 2005).

Ecliptic at Rosa Parks Circle Grand Rapids, MI

No less poetic, though much more lighthearted, is Maya Lin's design for an urban park in Grand Rapids, Michigan. Taking into account the city's association with water and also its history of public art beginning with Calder's *La Grande Vitesse*, Lin wanted to design a sculptural public park that featured the three stages of water – ice, liquid, and vapor [**Figure 17**].

The elements she uses become functional follies – an ice skating rink that converts to an outdoor amphitheater in the summer months, a tactile water fountain and an ephemeral vapor cloud. She worked with Linnaea Tillett, a lighting designer, to reproduce a glowing constellation under the surface of the skating rink [**Figure 18**]. Landscape architectural firm, Quennell Rothschild & Partners, assisted with the subtle grading and planting design to extend Lin's water theme throughout the landscape. Like the Vietnam Veterans Memorial, the effect of Lin's work is in the totality of the design, and especially in the experiential qualities of movement through the spaces, and the more personal interactions of touch and sound. One can experience a range of emotions from private to public and understand the works through varying associations with history and place.

Maya Lin describes her philosophy, "I do not try to compete with the landscape, but really work with it. This reflects a belief system which I think will color my whole life, wanting to work with the environment. I want to examine the relationship man has to nature, promoting sensitivity."

Lurie Garden Chicago, IL

Kathryn Gustafson, landscape architect, was described by Leah Levy in *Kathryn Gustafson: Sculpting the Land* as "a thoughtful artist who mines the psychology, sociology, and

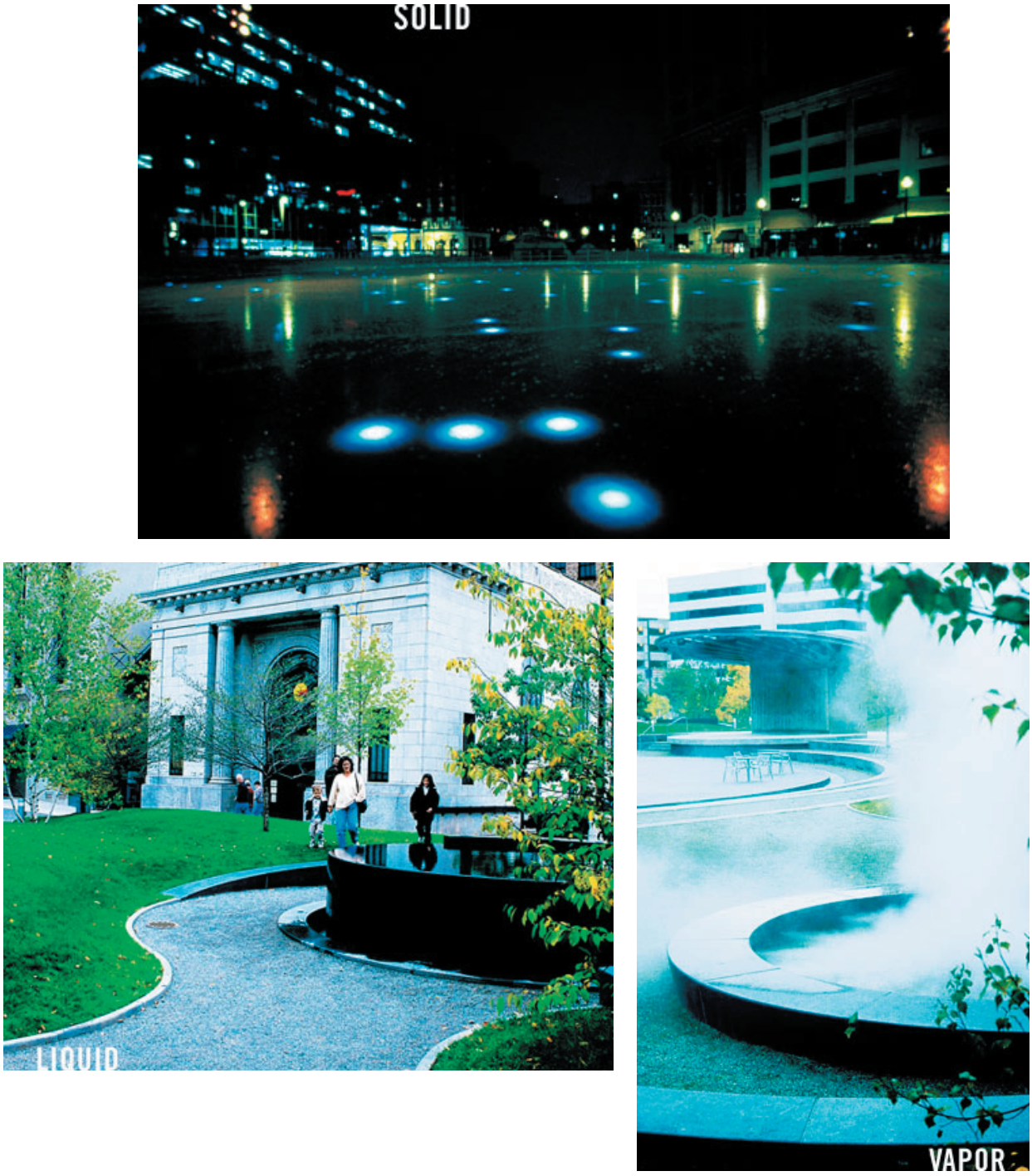

Figure 17
Maya Lin, Forms of water at Ecliptic at Rosa Parks Circle, Grand Rapids, MI, 2001.
Source:Christopher Hawthorne, "Water Works: For a Park in Downtown
Grand Rapids, Maya Lin Sculpts an Urban Space," Metropolis 21, no. 7 (2002).

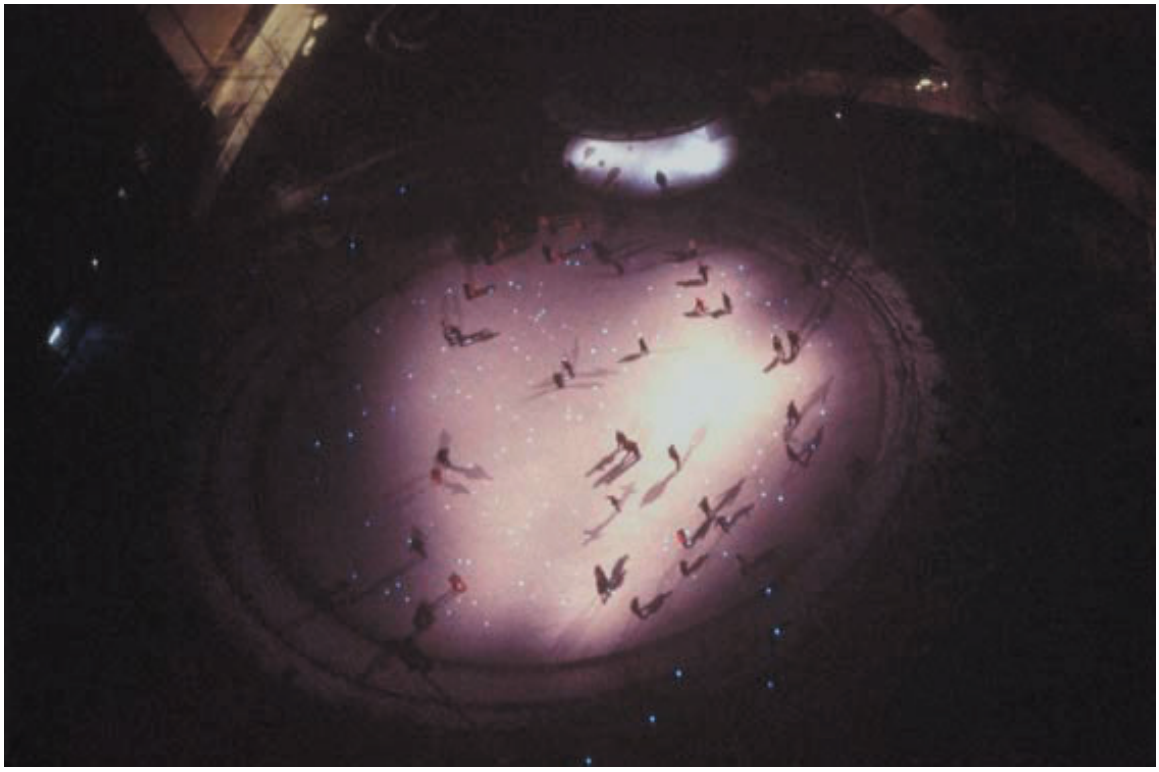

Figure 18
Maya Lin, Skating rink at Ecliptic at Rosa Parks Circle, Grand Rapids, MI, 2001.
Source: Alex Ross, “Maya Lin”, [webpage] (Stanford Univ.) (accessed October 7).

history of sites to produce startlingly beautiful places".[42] A former textile designer, Gustafson's designs show her skill in the creation of landscape fabric that at once becomes the unifying backdrop for a variety of cultural uses while weaving together a fragmented history that illustrates a unique narrative of place.

In her own words, Gustafson expresses her values as a designer: serenity and clarity, memory, meaning, community, and harmony. Her work is often an investigation of the relationship between land and user both past and present. Her firm takes a sculptural approach – creating places that are functional, and reinforce cultural ideas of beauty and tradition.[43] She often works with designers, artists, and engineers to produce powerfully scaled landscapes that are rich in detail.

Recently completed designs Westergasfabriek in Amsterdam and The Lurie Garden at Millennium Park in Chicago both take defunct industrial sites and imbue each with its own history and meaning. The former gasworks maintains many of the existing buildings that defined its use, and a soil remediation project serves as a revelatory narrative of the process of reclamation. Both become places offering a reprieve from the density and pace of each respective city and both relate well with the music, performance and art venues contained within the designs or in the surrounding park [**Figure 19**].

In Chicago, Gustafson's team layers multiple metaphors to describe the city as a balance between the strength of its industry and the power behind its reemerging ecosystem.[44] The landscape architect's selection of collaborators included Piet Oudolf, plantsman, and Robert Israel, theater set designer. Several metaphors were developed to structure the design: 'the light

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[42] Leah Levy, *Kathryn Gustafson: Sculpting the Land* (Washington, D.C.: Spacemaker Press, 1998), 9.
[43] Ibid.
[44] Kathryn Gustafson, "Project: Lurie Garden", [website] (Gustafson Guthrie Nichol Ltd) http://www.ggnltd.com/index.htm. (accessed September 15, 2005).

Figure 19
Kathryn Gustafson, Gustafson Guthrie Nichols, Piet Oudolf and Robert Israel, Before and after, Lurie Garden, Millenium Park, Chicago, IL, completed 2004.
Source: Kathryn Gustafson, "Project: Lurie Garden", [website] (Gustafson Guthrie Nichol Ltd.

plate', 'the dark plate', 'the seam' and the 'shoulder hedge'. Guiding the planting and lighting schemes, the 'dark and light plate' comparison, was based upon the amount of daylight that would be shed on each area as allowed by topography. The 'seam' is the unifying feature of the design, joining the contrasting gardens with a fissure that contains a linear pool [**Figure 20**]**.** It also refers to the previous history of the site as a landfill, by tracing the remnant of a former retaining wall. The space containing the garden is defined by its perimeter 'shoulder hedge', which plays upon the topiary and labyrinth traditions, while relating to the curving forms of the bandshell design by architect, Frank Gehry.

A garden of complementary contrasts, the design is filled with poetry and meaning, but perhaps what most attracts people to the place is the prairie meadow [**Figure 21**]. The designers' careful selection of plants conjures a dreamy meadow, a gardenesque version of the variable Midwestern prairie that lies beyond the limits of the city. Placement of this idealized wildness within the urban collage, and on top of the concrete of a decrepit landfill, adds an enjoyable dimension of surreal incongruity to the lives of urban dwellers.

Variety

Variety, diversity, multiplicity – all terms defined by a large number of variables, options, interactions, or conditions. Encompassing as many of such elements as possible into a design often requires devising a strategy that allows for change. By acknowledging variety as the unifying principle in the development of a design scheme, a common ground can be reserved to establish a basis for communication and exploration.

Santa Fe Railyard Park Santa Fe, NM

The Trust for Public Land has taken a highly innovative approach to the transition of a former railyard property into a community amenity that intends to serve a multiplicity of

Figure 20
Kathryn Gustafson, Gustafson Guthrie Nichols, Piet Oudolf and Robert Israel, 'The Seam', Lurie Garden, Millenium Park, Chicago, IL, completed 2004.
Source: Kathryn Gustafson, "Project: Lurie Garden", [website] (Gustafson Guthrie Nichol Ltd.

Figure 21
Kathryn Gustafson, Gustafson Guthrie Nichols, Piet Oudolf and Robert Israel, Seasonal color change - 'the light plate', Lurie Garden, Millenium Park, Chicago, IL, completed 2004.
Sources: Peter Reed, Groundswell: Constructing the Contemporary Landscape (New York: The Museum of Modern Art, 2005), 98-99.
City of Chicago, "Lurie Garden," From photo archives by request.

functions, first and foremost, a place that will represent the Southwest region's rich heritage. Of the many programmatic elements desired by competition entries, some important requirements were: development of a crossroads to connect a network of trails, design of a functional public plaza, demonstration of best practices for water use and plantings specific to the high desert and interpretation of the site's cultural significance as a working landscape that explores the layers of its history as a rail hub.[45] The intent of the design is to showcase the diversity of landscape and community that has defined Santa Fe as a cultural mecca for decades.

An eleven-member team guided by Ken Smith, landscape architect, Mary Miss, public artist, and Frederic Schwartz, architect, created the winning design scheme selected by the competition jury. By including such specialized consultants as anthropologist, ecologist, engineer, and transportation planner, the team was able to thoroughly address a majority of community's concerns as reiterated by the Trust for Public Land. Currently, the designs and construction documents have been completed and groundbreaking is scheduled to occur in winter of 2006.

In addition to the railyard warehouses and infrastructure, portions of the Acequia Madre, a 400-year old irrigation ditch integral to the development of agriculture and community in the area, are highlighted as a focal point of the cultural landscape. Smith, Miss, and Schwartz parlay this channel into a prominent feature in the park's plan [**Figure 22**] and an instrument for interpretation. A crossroads of natural and cultural history in the desert, Santa Fe Railyard Park promises to revive the landscape's history as a central hub in the community. New layers will add the depth of contemporary understanding of landscape by providing spaces for diverse activities, technologies, and inquiries.

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[45] The Trust for Public Land, "Santa Fe Railyard Park and Plaza", [website] (The Trust for Public Land) http://www.tpl.org/tier3_cdl.cfm?content_item_id=19976&folder_id=3128. (accessed October 29, 2005).

Figure 22
Ken Smith, Mary Miss, Frederic Schwartz, Arroyo section (top) and perspective (bottom), Santa Fe Railyard Park, Santa Fe, NM, 2005.
Source: The Trust for Public Land, "Santa Fe Railyard Park and Plaza", [website] (accessed October 29).

Action/Interaction

Works represented in this section exemplify the artist/designer's process as a form of engagement. The work *is* the action or interaction, and can occur between maker, audience and environment, or any combination of the three. Documentation of the interaction takes a variety of forms: performances, multimedia collages, proposals, plan documents, narratives, images, objects and site installations. All serve to represent the inquiry or experiment undertaken and each points in the direction of the next question or exploration.

A-Z Land Brand and *High Desert Test Sites* Joshua Tree, CA

Andrea Zittel is a visual/performance artist who works with ideas of private vs. public space. She transforms her living spaces into installations that challenge cultural notions of home, property and habitation. Zittel is interested in representing our fascination with creating ideal living spaces - whether high density apartments in the city or landscaped suburban plots. By developing a fictitious corporation, A-Z Enterprises and New York Office, she has been able to build a cohesive body of work to test her ideas as design prototypes while the masquerade served to establish credibility with companies contracted to produce some her models.

She often describes her work as experimental; based on observation, she constructs 'living experiments' within which she becomes her own test subject. Her recent work, *A-Z Pocket Property*, began with the design and construction of a concrete fabricated island and ended with her occupation of it for one month while anchored off the coast of Denmark. Zittel compared the experience to living on the edges of a city, "Almost like a suburbia floating out in the ocean, so you're completely alone, you're completely autonomous, but you have also this sense of community within that. It's like I have this fantasy of being completely autonomous and

independent and at peace, not having any of the day to day problems, but then there's also this sense of isolation that comes along with it."[46]

In *Point of Interest,* a temporary installation commissioned by the Public Art Fund, Zittel conducted an experiment in public place making - comparing Central Park's design history and associated landscape ideals with those of today. By fabricating a picturesque rock outcropping using concrete over steel, the artist references formations incorporated into Olmsted's and Vaux's perception of an artistic landscape [**Figure 23]**. A press release from the Public Art Fund describes the ideas Zittel conjured in the work:

> Point of Interest serves as a reminder that Central Park itself is a meticulously planned natural environment built for the enjoyment of city-dwellers. Andrea Zittel's sculpture is a playful critique of late-20th century society's "action adventure" uses of nature (from extreme mountain climbing to the increasingly popular "Eco-Challenge"), as she compares this newer ideal to the more leisurely and contemplative attitudes towards nature during the 19th century when Central Park was designed and built. In contrast to the seemingly "natural" park landscape, Point of Interest serves as a reminder that our perceptions of nature are constantly being reinvented and often reflect the values and ideals of society itself. [47]

Zittel has acknowledged the sometimes hypocritical nature of her artwork, "As with many of my works, there are layers of both my own faith and optimism that these structures will truly create a beneficial environment, as well as a small dose of ironic self-incrimination in the knowledge that this sculpture will draw on the concept of nature as a consumable experience."[48]

Her recent explorations have taken her back to the West, where she has initiated an ongoing project called *High Desert Test Sites*. Here, in the California desert, she has settled a former 1930s homestead site and developed an artists' residency program in which the artists

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[46] Art:21, "Program 4: Consumption", [online multimedia] (Public Broadcasting System) http://www.pbs.org/art21/artists/zittel/. (accessed October 27, 2004).
[47] Public Art Fund, "Point of Interest: An a-Z Land Brand", [web page] (Public Art Fund) http://www.publicartfund.org/pafweb/projects/99/zittel_a_99.html. (accessed September 8, 2005).
[48] Andrea Zittel, "A-Z Point of Interest", [artist's website] (http://www.zittel.org/index.html. (accessed 27 August, 2005).

Figure 23
Andrea Zittel, Installation view, *Point of Interest: An A-Z Land Brand*, Central Park, NY, 1999-2000.
Source: Paola Morsiani and Trevor Smith, Andrea Zittel: Critical Space (Munich; London: Prestel, 2005), 175.

stay on her property to complete their own experiments [**Figure 24]**. A Hiking Club has developed among the group and the idea has captured Zittel's imagination.

In October 2005, as an invited guest to the Frieze Art Fair in London, Zittel will wear her specially designed *A-Z uniform* and set up a tent in the exhibition hall, as a starting point for a hike. Her latest preoccupation can be seen as an extension of the environmental action artists, like Joseph Beuys – who with his creation of 'multiples' and dialogue oriented performance wanted to convey a sort of experimentation with the artists' role in society.

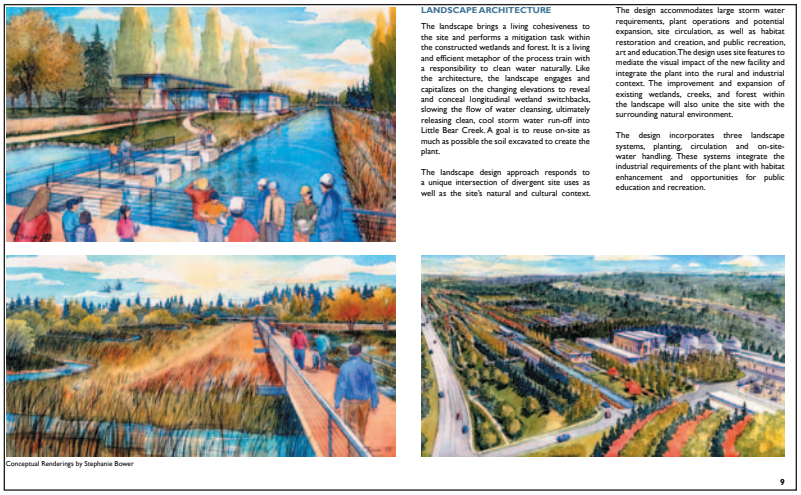
For Zittel, the line between art and life has melted away. With the accuracy of an industrial designer and the inquisitiveness of a genetic scientist, she continues to construct her vision of the world. When asked if she would like to see her designs mass produced, she responded, " I am not a designer – designers have a social responsibility to provide solutions. Art is more about asking the questions."

Public Art Masterplan for Brightwater Treatment Plant King County, WA

Buster Simpson is an artist who has developed a significant body of public work in both urban and industrial settings, placing him in an arena that has provided opportunities to collaborate with communities and professional specialists. Like Joseph Beuys and Mierle Laderman Ukeles, he has used interactions and performance to initiate discussion about cultural attitudes. Project proposals and documentation available on his website show a flexible range from sculptural objects that add a layer of social interactivity to detailed master plans for a recreational art park on the grounds of a former industrial site in King County, WA [**Figure 25**].

Recent collaborations have involved master planning projects; though the work with which Simpson is most often associated is object and performance oriented. He describes his philosophy of the role of artists in society.

Figure 24
Andrea Zittel, Installation view, *The Regenerating Field*, A-Z West, Joshua Tree, CA, 2002. Source: Paola Morsiani and Trevor Smith, Andrea Zittel: Critical Space (Munich; London: Prestel, 2005), 163.



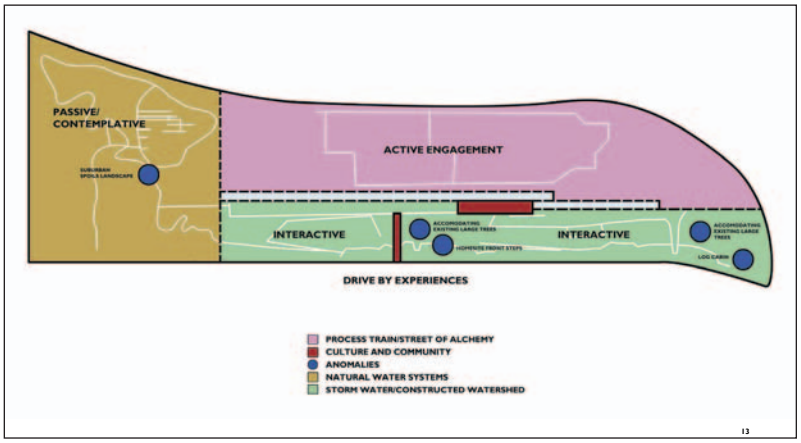


Figure 25
S2RQ - Ellen Sollod, Jann Rosen-Queralt, and Buster Simpson, Pages from the Brightwater Art Master Plan, Brightwater Treatment Facility, King County, WA, 2003.
Source: Buster Simpson, "Projects", [artist's website] (accessed June 18).

> I prefer working in public domains. The complexity of any site is its asset, to build upon, to distill, to reveal its layers of meaning. Process becomes part and parcel. Site conditions, social and political realities, history, existing phenomena, and ecology are the armature. The challenge is to navigate along the edge between provocateur and pedestrian, art as gift and poetic utility.[49]

For the masterplanning project, the collaborative team developed an open-ended system for guiding the contributions of artists and designers so that the resulting work serves as an interpretive amenity for the water treatment facility. In this way, utilities that serve an important function can become better integrated into the fabric of community, at the same time, educating and adding value.

California Wash: *A Memorial* Santa Monica, CA

Artist team Helen Mayer Harrison and Newton Harrison have developed a niche within the genre of reclaimed landscapes, which has evolved into a conversation lasting over forty years. Their tenure as founding faculty of the Department of Visual Arts at the University of California, San Diego, in addition to their established role as environmental communicators, has provided a means of sharing insights arising out of their participatory projects. The Harrisons' approach is one of humble, open discourse between community and environment. Drawings, maps, writings, photographs, installation and performance are remnant documentation of their investigations [**Figure 26]**. In their own words the Harrisons describe their objectives and process:

> Over many years our work has addressed the co-evolution of biodiversity and cultural diversity most often, though not always, at watershed scale. Work often begins when we perceive an anomaly in the environment that is the result of opposing beliefs or contradictory metaphors. These moments, in which reality no longer appears seamless and the cost of belief has become outrageous, offer the opportunity to create new spaces, first in the mind and thereafter in everyday life.

[49] Buster Simpson, "Statement", [artist's website] (Buster Simpson) http://www.bustersimpson.net/. (accessed June 18, 2005).

Figure 26
Helen Mayer Harrison and Newton Harrison, Mural installations, *The Lagoon Cycle*, Santa Monica, CA, 1972-1982.
Source: Jeffrey Kastner and Brian Wallis, Land and Environmental Art, Themes and Movements (London: Phaidon Press, 1998), 144-145.

> Our methodology for problem solving takes a variety of forms, it is designed to address, infect, transform and expand planning processes. The basic terms of our work are quite simple: to be invited, to be networked, to let a vision emerge for transformation of place if it wishes to, to be non-possessive, and to always insist that whoever pays us or engages with us understands that our fundamental client is the cultural landscape itself, as best we, with the help of many, can perceive it.[50]

The Harrisons regularly make use of all of the conceptual possibilities mentioned in this chapter, and many of their projects combine two or more approaches to understanding the difficult concepts that their work conveys. Interaction is emphasized in the context of this thesis to highlight the remarkable effect their work has had in educating communities about the threat of local environmental degradation. Their approach has always been one of participatory interaction through conversation and active engagement; this open-ended, non-confrontational approach has gained them an international reputation as creative problem solvers.

Much of the Harrisons' work has taken place in Europe; they have traced watersheds through Germany and the Czech Republic, Poland, France. They have been invited to submit proposals funded by arts organizations, and some of their community and government-supported projects have been realized, in part or whole. Though, most of their work in the United States has occurred in California, where they maintain a studio; they also exhibit and lecture throughout the country and have worked on projects in Florida, Colorado, and recently, New Mexico.

One of their few built projects in the U.S., *California Wash* originated in 1989 and was completed in 1996 in Santa Monica, California with the help of landscape architects Andrew Spurlock/Martin Poirier, Leslie Ryan, and Robert Perry. Considered as a precedent – it was landmark project in Santa Monica that ushered in an era of public art generated from artist/landscape architect or architect collaboration. The idea was to make visible the former

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[50] Helen Mayer and Newton Harrison, "The Harrison Studio: Helen Mayer Harrison, Newton Harrison & Associates", [online document] (Carnegie Mellon University) http://3r2n.cfa.cmu.edu/groundworks/statements/harrision.pdf. (accessed September 9, 2005).

watercourse from nearby Mandeville Canyon to the beach, which had been rendered invisible by a system of stormdrains [**Figure 27]**. The work is an abstraction of the elements that comprised this ecosystem, the team utilized textured and colored concrete, and indigenous rocks and plants to represent the variety of the once diverse ecological community **[Figure 28]**. The artists also contributed a poem, excerpted below, to help the visitor experience a time shift that harks back to another era in the life of the land and its relationship with water:

> Standing at the top of Pico
> in a rare heavy rain
> looking toward the ocean and the sand
> we flashed back
> to a moment before history
> before the building of cities and towns
> when waters
> flowing down from the mountains
> and mesas above
> cut a course to the ocean. [51]

In philosophy, the work is reminiscent of Sonfist's *Time Landscape* in the way that it conjures another time for this place. Though, interaction is the key to experiencing this work. It is a functional public space that serves its purpose as an access point to the beach, upon which the Harrisons have collaged maps, images, and poetry to engage a thought process intended to lead to an enriched understanding of place.

[51] Quoted in ArtScene, "*California Wash*: A Memorial to Past and Present", [website] (ArtSceneCal) http://artscenecal.com/ArticlesFile/Archive/Articles1996/Articles0996/CaliforniaWash.html (accessed September 19, 2005).

Figure 27
Helen Mayer Harrison and Newton Harrison, *California Wash*, Santa Monica, CA, 1989-1996.
Source: ArtScene, "California Wash: A Memorial to Past and Present", [website] (ArtSceneCal) (accessed September 19).

Figure 28
Helen Mayer Harrison and Newton Harrison, Descriptive paving, *California Wash*, Santa Monica, CA, 1989-1996.
Source: ArtScene, "California Wash: A Memorial to Past and Present", [website] (ArtSceneCal) (accessed September 19).

CHAPTER 4

CONCLUSION

Hopefully, the preceding history and examples have provided a sketch of the origins, as well as the variety of forms and approaches developed by environmental artists and designers who continue to explore the vast subject areas of context, process and audience initiated by the Land Artists. As this innovative work has become established in the public realm, interdisciplinary dialogue has expanded to address issues specific to the methods and dynamics of the mercurial context. In the past three decades, a few topics have consistently resurfaced and can be classified under the following headings. Of course, the first has to do with development of approach - the way in which a design expresses or activates an intrinsic experience of place. A second subject area regards the definition of the roles of artist and landscape architect in the creative process of public space design. The last topic addresses the identification of audience and its response to various interpretations of place. Thoughtful consideration of all three subject areas is significant factors in successful design projects.

Approaching Multilayered Design Interpretation

Transformation, community, metaphor, interaction and cultural values can serve as principles upon which to develop flexible design schemes that will accommodate numerous conceptual approaches to placemaking. Such a practice demonstrates the potential for the development of a shared language amongst collaborative teams by providing a common starting point from which to explore design ideas. Of course, the concepts represented are not a comprehensive inventory of the many philosophies used to guide a design, rather, the list shows

a spectrum of ideas artists and designers have used to combine an ecological aesthetic with cultural perceptions.

Like Lippard's categories for a place-based public art, these principles often overlap to become conceptual hybrids that are well suited to evoke the intricate collage of public space. Therefore, a project might explore the idea of transformation using metaphor - Maya Lin's design, Ecliptic, can serve as an illustration of this combination in the way that the various properties of water are transformed for a multitude of uses; water, itself, becomes a metaphor for change. Her metaphor then served as a basis for collaborators to communicate and conceive solutions to some of the more technical aspects of the project.

Public artists and landscape architects are attuned to similar issues of visual quality and efficacy in their work. Independent art critic, Patricia C. Phillips asserts, "Public art's deliberate alignment of the creative process and concept of the audience has the potential to provide new insights on the relationship of aesthetic ideas to an ongoing renewal of public life."[52] Urban designer and land-based artist, Kelty McKinnon, expands this statement as a challenge to environmental designers, "Rather than regurgitated answers and experiences, landscapes that provoke questions and draw connections place the onus back on the user to create a dialogue, to think and to become actively engaged, rather than passively entertained."[53] Artists and designers who succeed in making such connections in their work acknowledge the potential of landscape design and interpretation to provide access to scenic, ecological, social, economic, recreational and educational opportunities, helping us to understand ourselves as individuals, communities, and as a culture.

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[52] Patricia C. Phillips, "Dynamic Exchange: Public Art at This Time," *Public Art Review*, no. 21 (1999).

[53] Kelty Miyoshi McKinnon, "The Urban Bestiary," *Terrain.org: A Journal of the Built & Natural Environment* no. 13 (2003), http://www.terrain.org/essays/13/mckinnon.htm (accessed 1 October 2005).

Defining Roles in Design Collaboration

The choice of a partner or team has proven to be a critical element in determining the success of a collaborative project. Professors, Christine Dianni and Hala Nassar, conducted a survey of artists and landscape architects to assess their opinions of collaborative partnerships, and also, to develop an understanding of the perceived benefits and challenges of interdisciplinary design. Their study generated two useful tools to convey qualities of effective collaborations. One is the analogy made between a collaborative design team and a jazz ensemble or sports team in which, "each member supports the others without propriety, but team members are recognized for their individual contributions."[54] Another device is the concept of a 'place-making continuum' that describes the roles of each team member, in terms of problem-solving contributions and approaches, between the extremes of physical/technical and metaphysical/philosophical. So, as represented in widely held stereotypes, the landscape architect's contributions to a project would be at the technical end of the spectrum, while the artist's enrichment of the project is through more philosophical and conceptual approaches. These stereotypes construct an inhospitable environment for open collaboration. Dianni and Nassar concluded that the most successful collaborations occur when all team members "participate and contribute ideas and techniques along the entire continuum and throughout the duration of the project."[55]

Collaborations among those who have a common understanding of creative problem solving increase their potential to develop multilayered landscape interpretations through the pooling of individual skills and knowledge. Such relationships take time to evolve into

[54] Christine M. Dianni and Hala F. Nassar, "Place-Making and Art: Examining Collaboration between Landscape Architects and Artists," in *CELA 2005 A Time for Place* (Athens, GA: 2005), 65.
[55] Ibid.

productive working relationships; this is likely to be the reason effective teams tend to collaborate on subsequent projects. After winning the competition to design Santa Fe Railyard Park, Ken Smith and Mary Miss have teamed up again, with the contributions of local designers, their design has been selected as one of three finalists in a design competition for California's Orange County Great Park. Ann Hamilton, Michael Mercil and Michael Van Valkenburgh Associates recently collaborated on Teardrop Park in New York, their second co-designed park to be completed. Van Valkenburgh commented, "As landscape architects become more established, mature, and confident, they enjoy seeing where these kinds of conversations can go. You react to works by artists and other designers from the essence of who you are, and the collaboration gets deeper and more honest over time." As in the Allegheny Riverfront Park example, structuring the relationship to manage anticipated inequality in the definition of roles was deemed critical to the team's success. Also, in their survey, Dianni and Nassar found that by finding ways to reduce competitiveness in the relationship, by clearly defining expectations from the outset, for instance, can alleviate problems later. [56]

Public arts administrators who are familiar with various avenues of approach to publicly funded projects have become skilled in the coordination of teams. Therefore, they have become knowledgeable resources for information on the selection of partners and strong advocates for new methods of team development in the early planning of a project. Now, many online databases post requests for public art proposals and calls for artists and designers to submit their work. Also a number of cities and arts organizations have catalogued the resumes of artists with experience working on public commissions. These are good resources for landscape architects who wish to submit proposals or familiarize themselves with artists' work in order to make an informed selection of a collaborator.

[56] Ibid.

Multiple perspectives better address the diversity of aesthetic, environmental, and social conditions of place. As people have increased their understanding of the quality and value ascribed to thoughtfully designed places, the intricacy of these projects demands more effective cross-disciplinary collaboration. Evaluating the increase in artists' involvement with transitioning former landfill sites to parklands, the following passage from a 2004 article published in *ARTnews* supports this assertion:

> Niall Kirkwood, a professor of landscape architecture at the Harvard Graduate School of Design, points out that since the 1970s, landscape architects have had "more involvement with the artistic community because the needs and desires for parks and their placement have become increasingly complex. [57]

In order to address this level of complexity, both artists and landscape architects have sought specialized experience to become better-informed generalists. Artists who have been successful in combining their work with other disciplines usually have a related background or pair with collaborators such as biological scientists, anthropologists, and engineers to act as specialized consultants. Artist Stacy Levy, known for her contributions to AMD & ART, speculated about the current shift in collaborative roles:

> Artists have more flights of fancy and freedom in thinking, the others have been more constricted in thinking due to real limitations of space, money, and functional practicality. …I think artists now feel more responsible to the workings of the land, while landscape architects feel freer, more like sculptors, and are making designs on the ground. It is almost like we are trading responsibilities.[58]

Among the reasons cited for the success of landscape architects moving into the arena of memorials and collaborative public art are the acquired skills possessed by landscape architects such as their experience in making presentations and steering projects through the construction phase. Clients often rely upon landscape architects' diverse set of skills and knowledge ranging

[57] Carly Berwick, "What a Dump!" *Art News* 103, no. 6 (2004).
[58] Kathy Bruce, "Sculptors Vs. Landscape Architects," *Sculpture* 24, no. 7 (2005): 80.

from ecology, hydrology, engineering, construction, horticulture and history of the built environment, in addition to a foundation in design concepts and principles. As generalists with several perspectives, their diversity of experience multiplies when well-chosen collaborative partners complement each other's experience with the mutual goal of creating diverse experiences of place.

Audience: Response and Involvement

Recent media coverage of the exhibitions, conferences and unveilings of contemporary landscape design seems to be focused on the spreading impact the multidimensional aesthetic is generating. Publications in art, landscape architecture, architecture, and comprehensive design are featuring landscape design projects influenced by a new understanding of art as creative problem solving. Also, coverage in major newspapers and lifestyle magazines show an increased public awareness of the value of well-designed outdoor spaces, especially in urban cities.

As the number of museum exhibits, conferences and built projects has generally raised curiosity about contemporary landscape design, the trend has also produced more critical thought on the subject. The profession of landscape architecture in the United States has long sought effective critical and theoretical frameworks on which to support its practice.[59] As the lines between the disciplines blur, and art critics lament their own professional crisis[60] - upon whom will fall the responsibility of deciphering public space design? Since the 1960s, art critics and historians have struggled with the challenge of writing about an art that has become place, it is no wonder that many are turning toward the past to examine the point where two began to coalesce. Ann M. Wagner, professor of modern art at the University of California, Berkeley, reflected upon the significance of revisiting the past, "One reason to turn back to Holt and

[59] Krog, "Whither the Garden."
[60] James Elkins, *What Happened to Art Criticism?* (Chicago, Ill.: Prickly Paradigm, 2003).

Heizer, Oppenheim and Smithson is because their testimony registers the emergence of a set problems and issues that have not gone away."[61] Here, she speaks of the way in which art has morphed into place making and problem solving, and the confusion that has resulted.

Within the profession of landscape architecture in the past century, the overarching tendencies toward an emphasis on either aesthetic or environmental alliances may be seen as concern over perceived deficiencies in method or education. While there is an ongoing debate about the deteriorating health of the profession today, opponents argue that this is more a sign of a profession experiencing change and attempting to discuss and adapt to the emerging interests of practitioners, collaborators and clients. Perhaps this discussion of roles is a side effect of dissolving professional boundaries that may ultimately help to return landscape architecture to its creative roots.

New interest within, as well as outside, the field of public space design reinforces the need for a more effective and encompassing critique – one that takes into consideration the elements of process and change. Unfortunately, critical review is often held at distance due to general misunderstanding of the useful role criticism can play in public discourse. From a historical standpoint the critic's work becomes intertwined with the artwork they critique. Historians use these written secondary source accounts to interpret the work in the absence of documentation written by the artist. Even when artists do write about their own work - as now, in the expected practice of artists' statements, these first person descriptions of intent should, in most cases, be read as an extension of the work and not an interpretation of it.

Good criticism should not be inherently elitist or attempt to chase trends in order to claim 'new territory'; it should take into account whether or not a work connects with people on a

[61] Anne M. Wagner, "Being There: Art and the Politics of Place," *Artforum International* 43, no. 10 (2005).

universal level – that it moves people by providing them with some familiar or common understanding. Criticism should also *critique*. Not in a superficial way - primarily focused on formal aspects, but such that the critique becomes an interpretation of what and how well a work communicates – and especially when it does not. In this way, criticism can serve as important feedback for landscape designers to assess the efficacy of their work, and not only the visual quality. The critique then becomes useful as a tool for people who live with the work.

In 1995, artists Alex Melamid and Vitaly Komar created a work that included conducting a poll on the function of public art in the United States, and then attempted to make art based on the results. One of the findings in their survey described attitudes about societal approval of public art:

> Those who make less than $30,000 a year and those in the smallest minority groups score the highest (about 74%) on the question of whether people should have a say in public art.
>
> Those who make over $75,000 a year score lowest (54%) on this question and highest among those who think the public should have no say in such matters (42%).[62]

This response raises additional questions regarding differences in race and class perceptions of art's function in society, which would be too difficult to address in any depth in this paper, but it is important to note, that artists who can bring a cultural perspective to outdoor space design contribute to the fulfillment of social objectives of multidimensional design.

Frequency of use is another determinant of the success of a public place. Art can be a reflection of the philosophy of a culture contained both within the expressions of the artist and in the audience's response to the work. Public art, however, is unique amongst other forms of art because it carries the additional contemporary perspective that it should serve a civic function due to its placement in the public realm.

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[62] Victor Navasky and Peter Meyer, "The Search for a People's Art," *Nation* 258, no. 10 (1994).

Administrators report difficulty in gaining support and funding for interdisciplinary projects because the methods are often unproven. A widespread perception persists that projects of this type do not fit into an easy category (art, ecological restoration, or public works) of project that can be supported by entities specific to each. Turn this obstacle over, and realize the unique opportunity that many projects have to develop multiple funding sources due to the trans-disciplinary interests in the work.

Opponents of Percent for Arts or other publicly funded projects argue that capital infrastructure projects should not use public tax revenues for art. Public art in a traditional sense may not be the answer for these projects, as people would not have the opportunity to enjoy paintings or traditional sculptures at these facilities. However, integrated design solutions at a master plan level can be considered a wise use of available funds for public art commissions for this type of project. Buster Simpson's work on the Brightwater Treatment Plant is a good example. Including artists and landscape architects in the early conceptual phases of the design of such sites can help to develop a visual integrity – so something as seemingly mundane as a public utility becomes an asset, rather than future blight. Our cities need these projects as landmarks from which to map the territory ahead. All considered, the design of public places *must* connect with the community or audience; otherwise, it will not meet anyone's criteria for creating meaningful places.

As landscape architects push the pendulum toward a more balanced integration of science and art within the discipline, renewed interest in the dialogue that has engaged artists and landscape architects since the 1970s propels further collaborative exploration. The potential that Catherine Howett recognized in her early work on the subject has truly begun to be realized outside of creative and academic circles. Asserting new presence in the public realm, the

transformation, community, metaphor, variety and interaction, which inspired the work, are returned to the place where each belongs. As multidimensional public space design transitions into an expected standard of visual quality, which coevolves with our increasingly dense built environment, a favorable climate for more frequent and dynamic interactions encourages the creation of landscapes that are less a collection of objects and more a reflection of the dynamics of place – and truly, an expression of life, itself.

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APPENDICE A

List of Public Art Genres Lucy R. Lippard

1. Works prepared for conventional indoor exhibition (installations, photographs, conceptual art, and project proposals) that refer to local communities, history, or environmental issues. Examples are Deborah Bright and Nancy Gonchar's *Chicago Stories,* Newton and Helen Mayer Harrison's proposed Boulder Creek Project, and Richard Misrach's *Bravo 20: The Bombing of the American West.*

2. Traditional outdoor public art (not "plunk art," which has simply been enlarged and dropped on the site) that draws attention to the specific characteristics or functions of the places where it intervenes, either in predictable locations such as parks, bank plazas, museum gardens, and college campuses (such as Andrew Leicester's mining memorial in Frostburg, Maryland; Athena Tacha's *Memory Path* in Sarasota, Florida; and Barbara Jo Revelle's *People's History of Colorado*, in Denver), or in unexpected and sometimes inaccessible locations, such as streets, store windows, a cabin in the woods, a laundromat, a golf course, an office, a supermarket, a crater in the desert, a residential neighborhood (such as Charles Simonds's imaginary landscapes and civilizations for "Little People" and David Hammons's *House of the Future* in Charleston, South Carolina). This group would also include innovative and officially funded public art and memorials with social agendas and local references, such as Maya Lin's VietnamVeterans Memorial and Barbara Kruger's Little Tokyo mural at the Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles.

3. Site-specific outdoor artworks, often collaborative or collective, that significantly involve the community in execution, background information, or ongoing function. Examples are officially condoned graffiti walls; Joel Sisson's *Green Chair Project* in Minneapolis; Olivia Gude and Jon Pounds's *Pullman Projects* in Chicago; the Border Art Workshop in San Diego and Tijuana; Dr. Charles Smith's African American Heritage Museum in Aurora, Illinois; and works by many progressive muralists.

4. Permanent indoor public installations, often with some function in regard to the community's history, such as post office murals across the country and Houston Conwill, Estella Conwill Májozo, and Joseph De Pace's *The Rivers* at the Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture in New York City. This group also includes history-specific community projects that focus on ongoing educational processes, such as the Chinatown History Project in New York City and the Lowell, Massachusetts, national industrial park.

5. Performances or rituals outside of traditional art spaces that call attention to places and their histories and problems, or to a larger community of identity and experience. Like street posters, stencils, or stickers, these works often function as "wake-up art," a catalyst to collective action. Examples are Suzanne Lacy's *Three Weeks in May* in Los Angeles, and Guillermo Gómez-Peña and Coco Fusco's *The Year of the White Bear* at several sites in the United States and Europe.

6. Art that functions for environmental awareness, improvement, or reclamation by transforming wastelands, focusing on natural history, operating utilitarian sites, making parks, and cleaning up pollution. An example is Alan Sonfist's *Time Landscape of New York City.*

7. Direct, didactic political art that comments publicly on local or national issues, especially in the form of signage on transportation, in parks, on buildings, or by the road, which marks sites, events, and invisible histories. Examples are REPOhistory's sign project in Lower Manhattan, David Avalos, Louis Hock, and Elizabeth Sisco's San Diego bus project, and Hachivi Edgar Heap of Birds's Host projects at multiple sites.

8. Portable public-access radio, television, or print media, such as audio-and videotapes, postcards, comics, guides, manuals, artists' books, and posters. Examples are Carole Condé and Karl Beveridge's book and poster work with Canadian unions and Paper Tiger public-access television, demonstration art such as the AIDS quilt, and the *Spectacle of Transformation* in Washington, D.C.

9. Actions and chain actions that travel, permeate whole towns, or appear all over the country simultaneously to highlight or link current issues. Examples are John Fekner's stencils in the Bronx, New York; the Shadow Project, a nationwide commemoration of Hiroshima Day; and Lee Nading's highway ideograms.