

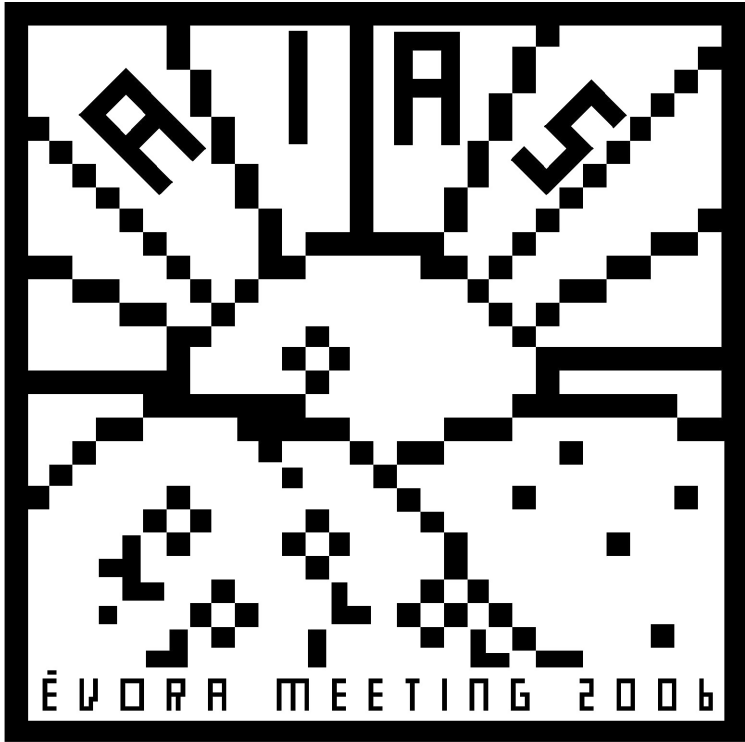
NEO-LAND

SCAPE

EVORA MEETINGS 2006

ACTAS

TRANSCRIPT



NEOLANDSCAPE

NEO-LAND

SCAPE

ÉVORA MEETINGS 2006

ACTAS

TRANSCRIPT

Neo-Landscape, Évora Meetings 2006, Actas | Transcript

Edições Eu é que sei

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NEO-LANDSCAPE

Um debate em Novembro de 2006 na Fundação Eugénio de Almeida em Évora, integrado no Encontro da AIAS - Association of Independent Art and Design Schools.

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Organizado pelo Departamento de Artes Visuais, com o apoio do Centro de História de Arte e Investigação Artística da Universidade de Évora, da Fundação Eugénio de Almeida.

Nota do editor

Este conjunto de textos corresponde a comunicações apresentadas no Encontro “Neo-Landscape”, que decorreu na Fundação Eugénio de Almeida em Évora em Novembro de 2006. Pretende ser apenas isto mesmo: Um conjunto de textos que têm uma densidade e uma importância futura que podemos julgar grande mas que, nos seus contornos precisos, é imprevisível. Aqui fica congelado, no estado em que nos foi transmitido, para memória futura.

Optamos assim por simplificar o mais possível o trabalho editorial, recorrendo a uma série de opções facilitadoras:

1. Mantivemos as comunicações na língua original em que foram apresentadas, incluindo assim textos sobretudo em inglês mas também em português e em francês (o colóquio contou com tradução simultânea).
2. Algumas das comunicações têm um tom coloquial, que não corrigimos.
3. Não incluímos as imagens que acompanhavam as apresentações. Alguns dos conferencistas mostraram excelentes imagens estáticas ou vídeos, que no entanto omitimos.

Temos aqui portanto uma obra bastante técnica e talvez sem demasiados atractivos para o grande público, mas que consubstancia uma variedade de abordagens sobre a paisagem só possível de encontrar numa convenção de escolas de arte onde reina um tipo de saber que, sendo geral, não deixa de ser profundo.

Agradecimentos são devidos sobretudo a Aurora Carapinha, pelo seu apoio e dedicação, aos Vice – Reitores da Universidade de Évora Afonso de Almeida e depois A. Heitor Reis, pelo adesão indefectível, ao *Board of Directors* da AIAS, que logo abraçou a ideia, Maria do Céu Ramos, Directora Executiva da Fundação Eugénio de Almeida e finalmente Fernando Teixeira, da Fundação Luis de Molina. Agradecimentos cordiais também aos docentes de Artes Visuais e aos funcionários do GRI (Gabinete Internacional) da U.E., que colocaram esta iniciativa acima das expectativas.

Eu é que sei!

Publisher's Note

These texts have been delivered at the “Neo –Landscape” meeting, coordinated by Aurora Carapinha and Petran Kockelkoren, that took place in the Eugénio de Almeida Foundation in Évora, November 2006,.

They intend to be the vehicle for ideas having potential present and future relevance, which we still cannot exactly predict or measure.

We have chosen a maximum simplification in editorial procedures, through a few basic decisions:

1. We kept the texts in the original language in which the lectures were delivered.
2. Some texts have a colloquial language, which we respected.
3. We didn't include any images, for the sake of coherence and a greater degree of minimalism in the whole. We sincerely apologize to authors who have sent us with their texts magnificent slides or videos.

The final result is a quite technical opus, maybe not too attractive to the general public, but which includes a variety of very rich approaches to the landscape issue, only possible in the context of a gathering of art schools where, as everyone knows, prevails a specific kind of knowledge that, despite of being open and general, is also profound.

We sincerely thank, foremost Aurora Carapinha, for her enthusiasm and dedication, but also the deputy – principals of Universidade de Évora, Afonso de Almeida and A. Heitor Reis, the Board of Directors of AIAS, who immediately embraced the idea, Maria do Céu Ramos, Executive Manager of Fundação Eugénio de Almeida and, last but not the least, Fernando Teixeira, from Fundação Luis de Molina.

Hearty thanks also to teachers and staff from the Visual Arts Department and the GRI (International Office) of Universidade de Évora, whose work put this event high above expectations.

Eu é que sei!

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Prefácio

NEO-LANDSCAPE

The Évora meeting has reflected about diverse aspects of Landscape, on which are deposited successive layers of history and art.

A wide range of contributions from AIAS – Association of Independent Art Schools members (belonging to four continents), and other invited participants, discussed the concept of landscape and, simultaneously, how to fully defend and enjoy it. In the XXI century we will use the tools provided by art and technology to build a better landscape,

The important aspect to point out after this meeting is how significant landscape is to the survival of humanity and how art can contribute to a better landscape, improving on what existed previously (using creative thought completed by action), and defending what was inherited and represents a positive contribution to the present, and hopefully to the future.

Art school in the XXI century cannot be only a fictional space, an enclosed reality that is irrelevant in the overall landscape. Instead, it should decisively contribute to its change or maintenance, according to debated and prevailing aesthetic goals.

Several important case studies have been pointed out, from the change of urban landscape in Chorea and its historic transportation infra structures, to the pleasure of living and using what the culture in the past has left almost untouched in Europe for many centuries, or even the new virtual landscapes created by interactive artists.

A very brief but important contribution from Australia has even pointed out that fortunately, in this country, man has never set feet on a part of the existing land. Consequently, like in most planets from our solar system, we cannot refer to landscape as a subjective concept, because it has never been experienced.

All this leads to the philosophic and linguistic discussion on what landscape really is and what it is not, a conceptual discussion that art has engaged in the last decades. There is a consensus that Art and Landscape should not be seen as opposite realities, the Transformed (human hand) versus the Untouched (pure nature and cultural heritage). They are really one and the same thing, materialisations of aesthetic and cultural ideals that groups of people all around the world defend, in the context of disorganised, chaotic and sometimes seemingly blind human societies.

The role of Utopia in the salvation or construction of new landscape is very important. The almost invisible daily research by teachers and students in art and landscape architecture schools all around the world is equally urgent. The fifteen schools affiliated to AIAS, who attended the Évora Neo - Landscape meeting, November 2006, represented these.

Here is the neo-landscape that art sees, hears, reads, films, records, *et caetera...*

Filipe Rocha da Silva

Coordinator of AIAS meeting - Évora 2006

Peter Sonderen

President AIAS

Director ArtEZ AKI, The Enschede Academy of Visual Arts

Speech for the Symposium/General Assembly of the *Association of Independent Art and Design Schools*, 8 November 2006, Évora, Universidade de Évora.

It is a great pleasure to welcome you at this special assembly of AIAS. The last time we met was in Baltimore, at MICA, the Maryland Institute College of Art, in 2005. This year's assembly is again in the old world -- if that still exists -- at the University of Évora in Portugal. Évora hosts our annual meeting with different art schools from all over the world, Japan, South Korea, Australia, Switzerland, the Netherlands, Spain, Turkey and so forth. The meeting consists of a symposium with a special theme that sets off today, and of three different workshops that started already yesterday. Tonight we'll have the general assembly. We are very grateful that Évora was so kind to organise this whole complex event.

Interdependence

In my Baltimore speech I referred to the fact that the AIAS association was set up in 1990 to find means to avoid an increasing limitation of the freedom of art and design schools in the world. Everywhere we have to fight to ensure good and independent art education. To reach this goal AIAS had chosen to operate as an

informal structured organisation that explicitly reserves place and time for the familiar and the informal. As we still read in its name the starting-point of AIAS was *independence*: the Association of Independent Art and Design Schools. In Baltimore we have concluded that it is not independency of organisation that counts, but the independency of thought, of ideas. Moreover, independency should be read as *interdependency*. Interdependency should be reached by working together with the other. Because AIAS is one of the few international networks of art schools that acts and thinks global, this interdependency is a worldwide activity. AIAS is developing itself into a global *platform* for making of and thinking about art and art education. Only by connecting worldwide our art academies we can experience the differences and the similarities in the global development of art. If not, we will remain an other for the other. My suggestion was therefore to call AIAS not anymore association of independent art and design schools but association of *interdependent art and design schools*. The best way to acquire or guarantee independence of mind is to embrace our interdependence.

Neo

Today the symposium will concentrate on an issue that sounds as a real out-of-date avant-garde concept: *neo landscape*. Neo was used as a prefix, at least in art history, to accentuate that something new in art was invented. It started in the 19th century with the neologisms ‘neo classicism’, ‘neo baroque’, ‘neo gothic’, and later with ‘neo expressionism’, ‘neo impressionism’ and even ‘neo avant-garde’. All these neo’s were associated with the modernistic, avant-garde idea of progress in the arts. Neo implied the ongoing purification of what art should be. This idea of progress is now obsolete, at least in the arts. We still come across the word, but mostly in the context of some nostalgic or otherwise regressive motivated idea of a resurrection of – mostly – a style.

The neo in neo landscape seems therefore to point at something else. Landscape as a word or concept was never a style nor a movement nor a manifesto, although the set off of modern art was an exception¹. Modern art started its course as a dei-

¹ The early romanticist German painter Philipp Otto Runge declared in one of his letters in 1802: ‘Wie können wir nur denken, die alte Kunst wieder zu erlangen? Die Griechen haben die Schönheit der Formen und Gestalten auf’s höchste gebracht in der Zeit, da ihre Götter zu Grunde gingen; die neuern Römer brachten die historische Darstellung am weitesten, als die katholische Religion zu Grunde ging; bey uns geht wieder etwas zu Grunde, **wir stehen am Rande aller Religionen**, die aus der Katholischen entspringen, die Abstractionen ge-

fied landscape, a landscape with new meanings, full of potential ideologies. Neo landscape is therefore perhaps the result of what we might call ‘neo ideology’; the resurrection of the belief in an all over concept of the world.

Neo landscape seems thus an exciting, promising or at least stimulating concept. For what does neo mean in the context of landscape? What does landscape still mean? Is it that familiar green environment that touches our eyes when we walk for instance in the woods, or are landscapes our (urban) daily surroundings? Or is landscape something that originated in the circumscribing act of painting and drawing, or to put it short, is landscape mainly an aesthetic matter? Is landscape the result of the visual conceptualisation of something outdoors that started of in its most known form in paintings by, for instance, Ruijsdael, the famous Dutch landscape painter? Every time I traverse the bridge of the river IJssel in the Netherlands I see the magnificent landscape through seventeenth century eyes. It is hardly possible to see it otherwise, for instance as a pattern of uncontaminated ‘raw’ data of trees, grass et cetera. The landscape shows itself as a picture. The theme of neo landscape seems therefore certainly related to art. Neo landscape can also point at a connection with new media that bring new relations with our environment. Landscape(s) can be excavated – not to say ‘neo archeologised’ – by all kinds of new digital means. The surroundings of Évora for instance exist of diverse layers of history and the most recent present. With the help of special digital tools the hidden past could become visible. Landscape is not any longer restricted to the visual data of its outer envelop. Our eyes meet more layers than ever before. (Past) Time becomes therefore an element that gets a different form through new media. The

hen zu Grunde, alles ist luftiger und leichter, als das bisherige, **es drängt sich alles zur Landschaft**, sucht etwas bestimmtes in dieser Unbestimmtheit und weiss nicht, wie es anzufangen? Sie greifen falsch wieder zur Historie, und verwirren sich. **Ist denn in dieser neuen Kunst – der Landschafterey, wenn man so will, -- nicht auch ein höchster Punct zu erreichen?** Der vielleicht noch schöner wird wie die vorigen? Ich will mein Leben in einer Reihe Kunstwerke darstellen; wenn die Sonne sinkt und wenn der Mond die Wolken vergoldet, will ich die fliehenden Geister festhalten...’

Runge uses nature/landscape as a new means to express his own being in a world that has lost its self evidence. Greek art reached its climax at the moment that their gods died. Renaissance art was at its best when the catholic faith lost its power. In his own days also something vanishes: ‘we are standing at the borders of all religions that came forth out of Catholicism’. Landscape (neo landscape/ ‘...this new art – the landscapism’ instead of the historicized landscape of the olds) is perhaps the new means that could bring to life contemporary art. With Runge the first signs of our modern notion of art – art as the ‘healing’ of a permanent loss – comes to the fore. Art in its emblematic, allegorical appearance gives way to a personal one. Art has started its course to replace religion.

traditional (pictorial) frame or *passe partout* that gave our view towards our environment stability and peace, is being replaced by new experiences. All these neo's together are probably what the symposium is about.

Thanks

I should like to thank the organisers of this meeting for their input and enthusiasm, especially Aurora Carapinha of the Centro Historia de Arte of Évora and Petran Kockelkoren, the lector of ArtEZ/AKI in the Netherlands. I hope that the organisers of this and last year will continue to assist their colleagues in Zürich where we will meet in 2007.

Last year Saboro Nagakome, president of the Toyo Institute in Tokyo, had to decide to withdraw from the Board due to his educational advisory duties for the Japanese government. They took too much time to combine with the work for AIAS. Saburo started as treasurer and later became Vice President of the board. The board is very grateful for his contribution to the association, especially for his work as AIAS ambassador in the Asian countries. On February 25th 2006 the board appointed Rod Bugg as Vice President ad interim. The Toyo Institute remains of course member of AIAS. I also have to thank one of my own professors who worked for AIAS from the very beginning, Uwe Poth. He was professor at the AKI till September 2006, but he decided to make use of the possibility to resign earlier. He did a lot for AIAS, not in the last place the interesting and stimulating workshops in Bentlage, Germany. One of his colleagues, Margret Wibmer, will replace him this year and organises one of the workshops in Évora.

I hope that this AIAS-meeting will be again as dynamic as art itself. The informal and wonderful environment of Évora will help us to work and think together. I want to thank you all very much for your coming here and I hope that you will have a fruitful assembly and that new connections can be made or strengthened.

Petran Kockelkoren

ArtEZ AKI, The Enschede Academy of Visual Arts

I See Nothing But Neolandscapes

Introduction

Firstly I want to express my gratitude for being invited as a co-organiser of the AIAS-conference 'Neolandscapes', here in Evora. This invitation bears witness to the fact that the title 'AIAS' or 'Association of Independent Art&Design Schools' shouldn't be taken too literally. 'Independence' must not be construed as avoiding dependence. Rather it should be interpreted in a positive sense as 'interdependence'. For some years now the associated art & design schools are building up a common universe of discourse regarding the multicultural art & design practices. We aim at a shared corpus of knowledge in which one of the dominant themes consists in the tension between the globalization process and the differentiation and affirmation of cultural identities. The representatives of art&design schools that are scattered over the globe don't want to submit to a uniform ideal of world-culture, yet they want to exchange their ideas and artworks stemming from different cultural backgrounds and coin new common terms in which they may reflect on each others contributions.

What is at stake in these discussions with so many different partners is the cultural role of the artist & designer. Seen from the standpoint of the dominant western tradition of art-critique culture is mainly identified with the symbolic or discursive order. Artists give expression to shared narratives from their own unique positions.

Their works are validated in the context of their 'oeuvre' but whether they gain universal recognition depends on their ability to transcend cultural boundaries. Embarking on global modernisation processes seems to be very rewarding in that respect. During the last few years however many international exhibitions and biennials have focused on globalisation and multiculturalism, such as Kassel 2002, Venice 2003, and Shanghai 2004. Each time we see artists tossed back and forth between a folkloristic reappraisal of their own cultural heritage, on the one hand, or forced modernisation, on the other hand. In the case of modernisation, they sign up for a global culture of images and meanings that is artificially kept in the air by the globalising art institutions of today. A third way – what the philosopher of technology Feenberg has called that of the 'alternative modernities' – is seldom taken (see: Andrew Feenberg, 'Alternative Modernity', University of California Press, 1995). I take alternative modernities to refer to the artistic mobilisation of heterogeneous cultural sources for the construction of current cultural identities.

Instead of merely offering a culturally conditioned self-expression, artists can also actively enter the arena of artistic research on the media and technologies that help them to form and articulate their cultural identity dynamically. This requires more or less self-reflexive research on the role that technology and architecture play in constituting culture in specific contexts. Such artistic research can therefore be characterised as cultural contextual art practice. That contextual art practice results in the adoption of artistic positions on an intercultural world scale, because that is where cultural identities are forged and contested. The conferences that AIAS organizes want to offer such contestation grounds in an amiable atmosphere. The common body of knowledge that will be produced progressively in texts and images will contribute to rewarding exchanges between the associated art&design schools.

AIAS explorations

We started our endeavours in Enschede 2004 with the AIAS conference 'Mediated Vision' in the context of the AKI-conference

Eye-Wonder (see: Petran Kockelkoren, 'Mediated Vision', ArtEZ Press / Veenman Publishers, Rotterdam 2007). Mediated vision explored the idea that humans have been denied a 'natural' outlook on the world. Man is 'naturally artificial', as the German anthropologist Helmuth Plessner proclaimed in 1928. All our perceptions

are always mediated by language, images and instruments. There is no natural anchor point to go back to. We are alienated by nature. So instead of resisting the so called technological alienation we better get good at it. Artists and designers form the vanguard of the exploration of new mediations.

In 2005 we were guests at Maryland Institute College of Art in Baltimore U.S.A. The theme of the conference was 'technocultures in art'. This conference shifted the theme of Mediated Vision into intercultural realms. Does mediation cause the same effects in all cultures everywhere or does it allow for cultural differentiation? Most philosophers of technology of the twentieth century were convinced that wherever technology is disseminated cultural diversity will vanish. What will be left to us is one global technological culture in which the same media spread the same images everywhere. This will not be the last word however. The word 'techno-cultures' has been deliberately spelled in plural over and against pessimists of globalization. Different cultural aesthetics give rise to different embodiments of technologies and their subsequent mediations of perception and action. If the signs do not betray us, we may gather new confidence from the uprising of a multitude of exciting technocultures.

In 2006 Aias was invited to Evora. The theme chosen was 'neolandscapes'. The convocation and the call for papers made the following connection to the two earlier conferences: "We never perceive nature or a landscape in a totally 'natural' way since our perceptions are always mediated by language, images and the technological apparatuses that generate these images. How can we make a landscape 'legible' by means of such intervening technologies? Holland reached its greatest ecological diversity under influence of archaic cultivation techniques. Left to itself for a few centuries Holland would become quite homogeneously dull. Neolandscapes derived from cultural exploitation is what we had all along, for millennia. Every landscape is 'layered' or consists of different historical strata. Older layers still show through younger ones and present inconsistencies in design. Instead of accusing technology of the alienation from our so-called natural roots we better make the best of technological mediation. How can we integrate nature development with the infrastructure of high speed mobility? How can we make our landscape legible by means of artistic applications of technologies like GPS and Google Earth?"

We started from the assumption that due to our ‘natural artificiality’ we humans do not live in pure nature. Unavoidably we encounter everywhere our own technotopes. The only choice we have in the matter is to design our technotopes in such a way that nature is invited to flower within them. This enterprise too gives rise to a multitude of different cultural solutions. From the very start of humanity neolandscapes are the norm rather than the exception. And cultural identities thrive on them. In order to support such a strong claim with arguments I will address the topics of technology and cultural identity in relation to the role of the artist/designer before I return to the issue of neolandscapes.

Technology

The main material forces behind the process of globalisation are the technologies of mobility and communication: airplane, mobile telephone, internet. Nevertheless, the cultural influence of technology was viewed in an extremely negative light throughout the twentieth century. Everywhere where technology was introduced, it was assumed, cultural differences would be abolished and would disappear. Multinationals such as Coca-Cola, Nike, or Philips would create the same consumer culture everywhere. Time-hallowed cultural traditions would then only be performed on the stage of self-conscious folklore. In spite of major methodological differences, the great philosophers of technology of the twentieth century – Mumford, Heidegger, Ellul – were agreed that technology was by definition an uprooting and alienating phenomenon.

On the other hand, during the last few decades philosophical attempts have been made to chart and conceptualise the cultural diversity of the incorporation of technology. Philosophers such as Don Ihde and Bruno Latour refer to the ‘mediatory’ role that specific technologies play in sensory perception and social activity. It is no longer possible to speak in generalising terms about Technology with a capital T and its levelling influence on cultural differences. Instead, it is necessary to view the context and to chart how different technologies are incorporated in culturally different ways. For instance, the genres of Indian Bollywood films and Japanese Manga have been developed alongside Hollywood films, each with its own specific cultural visual idiom and narrative conventions. Different cultural traditions adopt new technologies in different ways and adapt them to their own standards.

Such cultural adaptations and transformations of technologies are not confined to superficial visual idiom, which can be studied by semioticians. It is not the case that the technology in question remains functionally the same and is just given an external appearance with cultural life-style characteristics. The new media of the mobile telephone and internet transform the nature of the communication itself. New technologies, moreover, often open up new registers of perceptions, and therefore call for a new visual and audio language to make such perceptions culturally manageable. Artists play an important role in such processes of adaptation, but there are very different ways of filling in that role depending on the cultural traditions on which they draw. The technologies in question therefore also attract culturally different fields of perception and signification around them.

The mediatory role of technology in the generation of new cultural images and experiences can best be investigated by the artists who – sometimes in spite of themselves – operate in such processes. That task was already assigned them in 1936 by the philosopher Walter Benjamin (who spoke about media that were new at the time such as film), but Romantic notions still dominate the discussion of the social role of the artist. Artists are taken to engage in self-expression. Artists must stand up to the levelling consumer society as non-conformists. We, to the contrary, see a new task for artists in terms of artistic inquiry and cultural diagnosis.

Artistic Research

Apart from self-expression, what do artists contribute to society at large? For an incisive response to this question I would like to delve somewhat deeper into the influential essay by Walter Benjamin: 'The Work of art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction' (1936). Benjamin wrote this text at the time when assembly line production was being introduced in factories at a large scale. For the first time, works of art became endlessly reproducible. Printing, casting and other technologies made mass production possible. Benjamin asked himself whether this means a change in the significance of the individual work of art and the role of the artist in society. According to Benjamin the significance of the work of art can no longer be derived from Romantic notions such as the eternal value of the work or the unique genius of the artist. But what is the task of the artist under the historical conditions of a technological culture if it is no longer unique self-expression?

Benjamin points out that human perception – the way in which we see, taste, smell, hear, touch – is historically changeable and is influenced by technological apparatuses and devices of perception.

‘During long periods of history, the mode of human sense perception changes with humanity’s entire mode of existence’, he observes. Benjamin confers a special task on artists: to explore new forms of perception and to define the corresponding new visual idiom. He goes into detail on the changes that photography and film – the new media of his day – have brought about in the cultural visual idiom. Artists do not just explore such new media, but in doing so they also reflect on the cultural conditions of perception. That is why the artist becomes first and foremost a researcher of cultural conditionings as well as an agent of a much wider cultural self-inquiry shaping new forms of cultural identity.

The changing role of the artist has necessary consequences for the structure of art education. If you assume that you are already a unique individual partaking in a steady cultural identity when you enter the academy, then it is best for the academy to be a nursery in which you are protected as you search for your innate artistic idiom. But if you assume that you only become somebody through interaction with the mediations of language, images and technologies, then it is never too early to start on critical media research in mutual collaboration with fellow researchers preferably from different cultural backgrounds. A key concept in this kind of artistic research is cultural identity.

Cultural identity

The contradiction between a generalising view of technology, on the one hand, and a contextual perspective that targets the cultural processes of technological mediation, on the other hand, is also reflected in views of cultural identity. Those who start from the generalising view of technology see cultural identity in essentialist terms, as almost innate. Cultural identity then appears as a kind of threatened species that is in need of protection against technology. Cultures are therefore only to be found in their so-called authentic form on cultural heritage reservations.

When seen from the contextual perspective on processes of technological mediation, however, cultural identity appears as a dynamic construct. Cultural identity is never finished and is also never previous. Cultures are hybrid entities in a dy-

dynamic interaction. Artists, designers and architects in particular mobilize at all times the cultural sources available to them to construct cultural identity. Technology or broader media (including artifacts, devices, and buildings) are the driving forces of cultural dynamism. Cultural consumption of artifacts and apparatuses is never passive. It is rather an engaging kind of consumption, forging new circles of bonding between users and by that way opening up new enabling forms of cultural identity on the global market. Being aware of that, artists will not merely use the media in a purely instrumental fashion to express pre-defined identities, but they allow for being shaped by the media as well. The media are cultural agents on their own terms. Artists are in touch with artifacts and apparatuses that shape culture, they surf on them, and they are as much shaped by them as they shape them through their interventions. Research on the processes of change of cultural identity under the influence of – but also with the simultaneous mobilization of – media is the task for artists par excellence.

Keeping these philosophical excursions in mind we may now return to the topic of neolandscapes. It is not difficult to imagine the impact of mediating technologies on the perception of our immediate surroundings. And the variously mediated environments form the solid underpinnings of different cultural identities. Nevertheless our perceptions of the surroundings are comprised in a dynamic historical flux of ongoing remediations. Our landscapes – wherein culture and nature meet more or less felicitously – show a certain carrying capacity for cultural identity but are simultaneously ever changing under the pressure of new technological and artistic disclosures. The artist/designer/architect may experience his or her finest hour diagnosing and reshaping the material substratum and the landscapes we live in.

Historical neolandscapes

The term ‘landscape’ is a Dutch word that was adopted in many foreign languages world-wide (Simon Schama, ‘Landscape and Memory’, 1995). What the term means is not discursively defined in the first place but was rather imprinted on our imagination by means of the many famous paintings of the Dutch landscape-painters, like Pieter van Santvoort, Salomon van Ruysdael, Pieter de Molijn and Jan van Goyen, all living and working in the twenties and thirties of the 17th century. The paintings show dunes, sandy paths, solitary trees, meadows, windmills and city-spires on the horizon. These paintings earned in retrospection in the 19th cen-

tury the reputation of being specimens of early Dutch realism, but with renewed hindsight we may well place some question marks to that interpretation. Although the paintings may seem realistic on first sight, on closer inspection they are hardly realistic at all. We have to look into the social and economic circumstances of 17th century Holland to understand that bold assertion.

Between 1590 and 1650 the land area of Holland was augmented by one third; 11.000 hectares new land were added by impoldering and reclaiming land from the water. The ensuing landscape was riddled with traces of the new technologies involved. Windmills pumped the land dry, 658 km of ship-canals were dug to create a network of transport, and sluices build to regulate the water flow. At the same time 245.000 hectares of turf land were dug off for fuel. Yet you won't see any of that in the paintings of the time. Why? Instead of the dreaded water a large labour force flooded in. The workers colonized the polders. The population grew into a threefold. Behind these developments stood the rich families of merchants who invested in the polders and the transport sector.

For the new city elite the Dutch masters painted their landscapes. The painters did what was expected: they rallied their resources and created a vision of Holland that could bolster the newly emerging cultural identity of Dutch trade. The new identity found its trademark in the Dutch landscape. This required not a realistic rendering of the landscape though. The landscape paintings showed a rural idyll out of which all marks of industry were erased. The famous Dutch landscape was the product of resourceful propaganda. Underneath all that the idyllic landscape was an exponent of urbanisation and early industrialisation. The painted landscape represented an urban view idealizing formerly rural surroundings. At the very same time the paintings immortalized an imaginary lost world (see: Irene Klaver, 'Het wonder van het Hollandse landschap', *Kennis en Methode*, 1998-1, pp. 53-65).

The Dutch landscape painters created a new image of Holland and of the Dutch cultural identity. Of course it was an artificial image, but then, isn't it impossible to make a clean cut between the artificial and the natural anyway? Our images of the world are artificially natural in all cases. So is the landscape itself. There is a fine dialectic at play between natural self organisation and cultural exploitation, between artistic idealisation and the technological reshaping of the environment

accordingly. We will now turn to contemporary forms of this human predicament and to the role of the artist therein.

Making ‘legible’ contemporary neolandscapes

In 1996 the artist Jeroen van Westen, specializing in land-art, received an invitation from the Bruggelings Foundation in Almere, which wanted to stimulate artists to create work that would help the colonists in the relatively new Flevo-polder to put down roots. All kinds of information were made available as working material: excavations in which the pole holes of prehistoric settlements were exposed, a map showing the points where shipwrecks were hidden here and there beneath the land. Creating a relation with the polder landscape was apparently taken to be an archaising activity.

Van Westen started from the presupposition that every landscape forms a ‘palimpsest’. A palimpsest is a role of parchment on which people wrote in the middle ages. Since making one was an expensive procedure the text was often rubbed out to give way for new inscriptions. Unavoidably partly erased older scriptures occasionally shimmered through newer ones. This offers an apt metaphor for reading landscapes. There too older interventions shimmer through or occasionally conflict with new plans. How do you make such a layered landscape with its historical conflicts legible?

The naked eye won’t do. There was nothing to be seen by the naked eye on the surface of the polder, but plenty for the mediated gaze. Cartographic photographs taken from the air reveal the meanders of former rivers and creeks from their different colour in the fields of grain. And once you know it, it also becomes visible at ground level. Where rivers once flowed, inversion ridges are now found: the former river beds that drivers experience as bumps in the road surface. Still, they have to learn to read the landscape around them via the shock absorbers of their car. The very car which has the reputation of being a technology that alienates you from a lived experience of your surroundings can thus be the instrument through which you put down roots in the history of the site (see: Petran Kockelkoren, ‘Towards a technological intimacy with things’, *Research in Philosophy and technology*, Vol. 17, 1998, pp. 45-57).

Van Westen's concluding presentation of his project was a presentation in the Paviljoens in Almere of an Orientarium centred not on the so-called 'natural' experience, but on the mediated one. This approach need not be confined to rural environments. Jeroen van Westen has extended his artistic method to urban landscapes, complete with intersecting motorways, canals, electricity pylons and residual areas that become reintegrated in a legible fashion through artistic interventions. Socially opening up processes of mediations become the profession of the artist par excellence. This is not confined to exploring and visualising the mediation of perception, but is also expressed in guiding the process of its social embedding by means of art.

The artistic socialization of mediated perceptions

The Dutch artist Esther Polak organises the appropriation of and involvement with new mediations on the spot as an essential component of her work. Esther Polak focuses on our orientation in the world. In 2002 she implemented the project *Amsterdam REALTIME* in the Amsterdam Municipal Archive. That project issued an arbitrarily selected number of residents of Amsterdam with a GPS (global positioning system), an instrument that uses satellite transmission to determine a precise position on the earth at any point in time, accurate to within a few metres. The routes taken by the participants through the city in their daily activities could be followed in real time on screen. They left ribbons of light behind them, and together they drew the map of Amsterdam during the day. This project achieved its apotheosis when a participant managed to retrace his steps and to draw a gigantic dove by walking through selected streets. He saw himself as the point of a pencil that he guided by changing his position as seen by the satellite.

The sequel to *Amsterdam REALTIME* was *MILK*. In this project, the GPS tracking device was tried out on milk producers in Lithuania. The idea was to follow the milk from the individual cow belonging to a small farmer in Lithuania to the churn, via the milk collection and milk transport to the milk factory, and from there through Europe, including the Netherlands, where it is sold as cheese on the market. But the preliminary trajectory of the project was already enough to change the perceptions of the participants considerably, and these were food for thought. When they were confronted with the recorded images of their own piece of the milk route, this new form of visualisation turned out to provoke emotional

memories and reactions on the part of the producers. People are used to collecting photographs that present their holiday chronologically, for example. But the confrontation with a projected GPS route – where the thickness of the line indicates where they dawdled and hung around – offers a completely different mediated experience from photographs. The routine patterns and deliberately chosen detours are precisely delineated and form a legible record of the past. The final presentation of the *MILK* project shows the filmed reactions of farmers and milk transporters, who talk about their ties to their region on the basis of the GPS images.

Mediated landscapes support new cultural identities

The *MILK* project is another example of translations between different forms of visualisations of experiences in our daily surroundings. Moreover, Esther Polak's researches as well as those of Jeroen van Westen's involve a social feedback programme as part of the art project itself, enabling people to orientate themselves in their world in a new way. Taking root in a landscape is not a matter of cherishing age-old ties and of reproducing them in folkloristic festivals. On the contrary, taking root is an ever repeated performance, embodying new mediating technologies that not only reproduce the past but recreate it in the image of newly formed cultural identities. Artists, designers and architects play very important roles in the appropriation of the landscape and in the ensuing formation of the cultural identity of the inhabitants. They do not so much represent the landscape in their works as well disclose it actively. They help people engage by means of mediating images and instrumental perceptions.

My examples were already presented in 'Mediated Vision', but it pays off to connect them to the theme of neolandscapes chosen at Evora. I drew my examples from the Dutch perspective but I'm sure that Portugal – with its age old tradition of tilling the land for its excellent vineyards, clashing however with new forms of technological agriculture and transport – provides similar wonders and challenges. A splendid task in artistic research awaits the students of the faculty of the arts at the University of Evora.

Christopher Shipley

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The (Neo)Landscapes of Fiction

I approach the idea of landscape, cognizant of all its prefixes and modifiers and sensitive to the term's broadest figurative uses, as a writer who is enmeshed in a narrative where place is everything. That utterance, as all utterances, is both insufficient and deceptive. For it is not the idea of landscape that I am interested in, but true landscape itself, the brute, silent, unmediated physical fact of it. But as a writer, of course, language both bars passage and is my only access to this primal landscape I yearn for. Moreover I desire to re-present my imagined ur-landscape once I have encountered it, and so I compound the problem of mediation at exactly the point of my hope to escape it. And further, though I am wanting to directly re-experience landscape, I haven't been spending time walking in some "natural," physically present space, gazing about me. but rather trying to recall a place now gone, vanished, or at least transformed beyond recognition, attempting to rescue it from memory. Paradox follows me everywhere on this subject, and I have tried to get used to its shadow. I hope you will, as well.

Even if the landscape I seek still existed (an impossibility, actually, given that time, even in its smallest increments, changes everything) seeing that landscape again (or in the first place) would be no way out of this dilemma, for seeing is subject to language too, is enabled and shackled by it. So staring at pictures (and invoking yet another "media" problem) of this long lost place won't help either.

Let me start again and try something else. I am a writer trying to evoke in his writing a specific place no longer extant, that, I suppose, was never extant, since I am transmuting it through the act of re-creation. I am doing this because I want to make that remembered but altered place or landscape the chief character of the fiction I am creating around it, or rather, through it. Or perhaps that's better stated in reverse. I want the landscape to house the fiction I am writing, but I want that housing to be foregrounded not simply to function as a backdrop.

Why? Because the characters in this fiction, all variants of myself, of course, have been shaped, even made, by that landscape. The heart of my story is precisely the shaping power of landscape. The characters in this narrative were created by the landscape I am trying to recall, even as I was, back in time, in that remembered place I am seeking to re-create; each of is, after all, quite literally a product of a place. Two things, thus are going on at once. I am refashioning in fiction a once palpable (but no longer) landscape, the very landscape that created me as I was and still am; The re-created landscape that houses me, now also gives rise to the characters of my story, just as it gave rise to me. And what will happen when you hear this landscape of mine recounted, as you will at the end of this paper when I read to you a small part of my narrative? Will it become yours, grafted by your memory and imagination into the generative landscape that encloses you? Is it possible that we might find ourselves standing in the same spot, somehow recognizable to each of us as our own? When it is read, or, in this case, heard, writing twists and thickens; it inevitably oozes beyond the borders we think we set for it.

The idea of a landscape being the central character, the dominant presence, in fiction or non-fiction is an old one—think of Joyce's *Dubliners* and *Ulysses* or any Dickens novel or *Madame Bovary* or Jorge Amado's *Gabriela Clove and Cinnamon*, or the stories of Raymond Carver, the labyrinths of Borges, or Primo Levi's clear as glass memoir trilogy, especially *Survival in Auschwitz*, or Pat Barker's World War I memory-drenched trilogy, or any book by Redmond O'Hanlon. I might extend this list indefinitely and then you'd begin to get the idea of how important, but maybe neglected as something to talk about for itself, first, before anything else, the landscape of fiction actually is.

An important digression on a point touched on a moment ago: Landscape or more humbly, setting, is the phenomenon of fiction (or nonfiction) that brings into being, or allows, or makes possible, necessarily precedes, everything else in the fiction, that is, principally, agents and actions. Without setting there is nothing: there can be nothing without a place for it to occur. Place is the first condition of action and character. As a writer I cannot conceive of a character unless and until that character is situated *somewhere*. That's not exactly what I mean—the creation of a character always happens somewhere. If I am thinking of a character, say a 63 year old man with silver wire-rimmed glasses, short and balding wearing a white shirt open at the collar, that character is already somewhere, is already necessarily fixed in a space, a space that makes it possible for me to imagine him. Space, setting, landscape is always before me, there before I am, there before my words, waiting.

I'd like to say that this is a universal writing circumstance, but it is possible that it applies only to me. I doubt it, however, for even some nameless, murky, ostensibly shapeless writerly space, think perhaps of Kafka or James Kelman's *How Late It Was, How Late*, or something from Beckett, is *something*, is a *somewhere*, and the very fact of its uncertainty actually vivifies it as a place, makes its indistinctiveness distinct and, if the writer is talented, vivid and memorable. Place, whether described or not, is already there before the first word is written, before it is conceived, silent, sure, implacable.

Somewhere, either over the rainbow or right here, is the mother of us all. It is the circumstance, the situation, that permits us to know we are alive. It is the there-ness before our own there-ness into which we become. *Place* is our cradle, the ground of our being, of our knowing, however attenuated, ephemeral and transient. To say again, place is our cradle, the thing that surrounds us, pushes against us, holds us, and so it constitutes us and any and all of the fictions we create.

All landscapes are instantaneous, fluid and dynamic and hence ephemeral, yet, nonetheless, as I've said, the landscape silently presses against us, shaping itself around us as we are shaped and re-shaped by it in the process. It is like inhabiting the wind.

But how, exactly, are we *in* this fleeting, skipping ephemera, and most especially in its cousin, once removed, the landscape of fiction? How do we create, approach and

then reside in fictional spaces ? Here I must return to my second beginning and to the notion of evocation. I said that as a writer I am attempting to evoke a specific place no longer extant, calling forth the spirits of a landscape to take shape before our mind's eye, landscape as the result of a species of incantation.

The key to our entry into landscape is memory. Landscape, the somewhere-ness of our lives, is the cause and site of memory, and hence all landscapes are remembered, always re-seen, even as they are being seen, just as all writing, even the very first marks of our composition, are a matter of re-vision. Moreover, because memory is transfigurative—it necessarily alters and elevates the object of its attention—all landscapes are *neo-landscapes*. This idea of memory as a transfigurative force owes much to writers such as Wordsworth who wrote in the second edition to his *Lyrical Ballads* (1800) that “poetry is the spontaneous overflow of powerful feelings: it takes origin from emotion *recollected* in tranquility: the [recollected] emotion is contemplated till by a species of reaction, the tranquility gradually disappears, and an emotion, kindred to that which was before the subject of contemplation, is gradually produced, and does itself actually exist in the mind.”

We might think of the evocation of that transcendental landscape I hope to produce in my writing in precisely the same way. I do not wish to assert that one must be a poet to experience landscape in this way (indeed it is the only way to experience landscape), though many writers hope to be poets, but rather that the experience of landscape is necessarily through and by the operation of memory and that experience is itself always poetic, poetic to the degree one avails himself to landscape's inherent power.

What Wordsworth is talking about and producing in eminently landscapist poems like “Tintern Abbey,” or “I Wandered Lonely as a Cloud” is exactly the sort of landscape I am hoping to re-create in my work, the evocation and elevation, the transfiguration of a place no longer “there,” recalled through memory, and that recollection itself is a burning reminder that we are separate from the landscape, both writer and reader, and yet through our very awareness of our separation we glimpse, we experience a fleeting instant of oneness, a flash of unconscious “in-ness” or “there-ness” with the landscape.

For fiction and poetry and writing and art of all sorts is a reminder of our doubleness, the doubleness that consciousness produces, an observer cum remember-er and the implacable, silent place we observe and remember and then try to re-create with language or paint or charcoal or clay. Art reminds us of our separation from all that is around us, all that shapes and cradles us, makes us, and yet, if it is true, art at the same time it pushes us away from the evanescent ground of our being, it give us a glimpse of, an undivided moment of singularity with, that shaping, shifting landscape.

Fiction then, and even non-fiction, is never simply representative, not if it is work of the highest order. This transcendent work does not just show us what we are forever separated from, although it surely does that, it must do that, cannot help but do that, but it also provides a moment of singularity, an epiklesis that illuminates an ineffable wholeness, when we no longer stand outside observing or remembering but are beyond memory and time and consciousness altogether and are as one with all that was formerly not us.

With the citation of Wordsworth and the invocation of the transcendental quality of art I may have begun to sound theoretically retrograde, but the fact is I have come to these positions after wandering through the hellish and endless emptiness of postmodern problematizing. I may be perpetually cut off from certainty, blocked at every turn from a coherent self, and denied any positive ground on which to be, but, simply put, life goes on, and with it the ever-present promise for moments of reprieve, despite ambiguity and a shifting, depthless surface everywhere. That's why I write, for those moments of reprieve.

I am not arguing that there exists for all of us a single transcendently signifying landscape, from which all the myriad representations of landscapes originate and to which we all must return, though I very much like that idea. Rather I am asserting that fiction has specific effects, for me, a powerful mingling of feeling and form, of memory and desire, and that when I write it, I write from a certain tentative ground that serves as a point of departure, propelling me toward a place of conjecture and hope, of trial and error and at times, I think, some modest success.

Language is inexhaustible, after all, and while that may be a curse, it may also be a guarantee of endless ways to remind ourselves of what yet may be, a reminder and a memory of a place, a momentarily silent landscape that waits for us, ever faithfully, to gather us, and all things with us, once and for all, into itself. I write, I keep on writing, however humbly, with that luminous place in mind. For writing is a way of knowing, even if some final knowing is impossible. Writing is an act of faith when doubt would take our breath away.

Choi Ah-Sa

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City of Amnesia

Since the beginning of modernity the past has lost its meaning. The new, whatever its contents may be, have become fashion. The collective obsession for the new has justified the deletion of the memory of the past. The blind pursuit for the new material has displaced the old for the foul and the filthy for the inferior. The memory of the obsolete past is prohibited. To destroy the past is deemed to be a development and even the present is erased for the sake of development. Wherever the memory of the past could sprout has been cut off and destroyed. The present, derived from the past, has lost its past to 'quote' and has no memory to 'recall'.

The capital of the city spread out the ideal and dream of the modern and yields the collective phantasmagoria and hallucination. The slogan of the city demands the affluent life and material affluence. The space of the city is subsumed within the urban only when it forms the cycle of mass production and consumption. The eviction of the past space is a prerequisite for building the future urban space. The future urban space is always

The capital and power of the city fills it with enormous roads, buildings, bridges and straight lines. The monumental structure of the city with its humongous scale is an expression of firm belief in the domination of the capital. The capital and power of the city has the right to erase off the remnants of the old power. The urban space in which the old are demolished and newly rebuilt according to the logic of the capital erases the memory of the past as if possessed of some kind of obsession. This

phenomenon might be stemming from the contemporary trend which refuses to read the 'past modern' as the 'contemporary modern'. Such a city resembles the complicated and uncertain daily life of the modern haunted by amnesia. The image of the future that will come after the total erasure of the past memory is a cost paid for sacrificing the past memory for the altar of the fetishism.

Where does the memory of the city come from? The city is formed as a physical entity in an interaction of diverse elements such as history, culture, economy and politics. But on the other hand the city resides as a form abstracted in the memory of the people dwelling in it. The fragments of memory about the various aspects of the city are accumulated and form the whole memory of the city. The fragments of memory expand from my home to neighbor and then to community and the city. Any area in the city along with the memory formed in the course of the time. But the rapid development and the subsequent change in the city are caught up in the dilemma of self-negation that denies what came before it.

The current city has not been formed suddenly but resides in front of our vision in the continuity from the past. To suddenly erase the memory of the city within time and infuse new memory is a self-negation.

The city of amnesia repeats the history of self-negation. In the space in which the identity is lost people negate their own past. They don't confirm their identity through their memory. At least they don't fear the loss of 'the place' that reminds them of the memory. In it, the space is the representation of the materialized capital. In the urban space the remembered past surrenders its place to fetishized future and disappears.

City of Lost Memories, SEOUL

What is the shape of the today's city that confronts our gaze?

The urban landscape is a phenomenal appearance that came up according to the trajectory of the cultural and social change in the course of time and surfaces in the architectural and non-architectural accumulation of significant places. The urban landscape does not only constructs the significant places anew, but recovers the meaning of the place by getting rid of a certain part. The new landscape does not only yields the visible shape anew, but is created as a new meaning within the urban landscape that oscillates between rapid destruction and change.

The city that has erased tradition and history is like a human who has lost its memory. For the last century Seoul has abandoned the devices of memory. For Korean people were obliged to get rid of the thing of the past for the sake of modernization and prioritize the progress through development. The solid structure of the modern city results from the destruction of the urban context in which the urban space is treated only as a physical array of separate architectural elements while the demand for the placeness that encompasses the specificity and originality determining the character of the space is overlooked. The city is a place of self-loss in which diverse sceneries based upon meaning and symbol inherent in specific or inclusive places are destroyed.

The urban space without unique meaning and memory inherent in a specific place is merely an accumulation of physical spaces. Seoul has diverse devices of memory and they form the network in various ways that stores and reproduces the memory required in contemporary life. However, they are not as vivid and direct as the places of memory.

The restoration of the memory about Seoul starts from the creation of the place to recover the placeness and it is the prerequisite for the recreation of the sceneries and expressions of the city. For the devices of memory for Seoul should be each spot based upon placeness. As the difference between the original and its record is enormous, the device of memory that has lost the origin is merely a record.

In the current circumstance in which everything in contemporary society is accounted for on the basis of urban life and the city is functioning as the only conceptual reference point dominating all the conceptual thinking about the time and space, nothing can claim to be a unique value. When the city continuously evolves in the course of rapid change, the preservation of the places of memory is unrealistic and does not offer any immediate economic reward. Servicing a certain part of the city in order to rebuild the city structure or to maintain its continuity is necessary and can occur at any time. But in such obviousness lies negative moments that damage it. Especially so when economy, culture or history is subsumed under a single principle.

The grand project undergoing in Seoul is certainly a plan to make the city more impressive and beautiful. However the urban planning does not only reside in the value of beauty. It cannot be reduced to any single requirement. If the grand project is subsumed under the economic value that only produces the images of history and culture without any authenticity, its original meaning will be distorted.

The identity of the city will be defined according to the orientation of the large framework undergoing in Seoul for the present and future and the method in which it operates. The main scenery will also be defined according to the new context produced by the changed situations in separate or in common that come as the result of the grand project. According to whether the purpose of the replanning of a certain important area in Seoul is for the restoration of the memory of the place; to keep the identity of the place as a historical, cultural city; the treatment of the city as an element subsumed under the strategy of the urban development and maintenance that have been undergoing since the autonomous modernization; or the interpretation of a fragment of the city dwelling in the time and space of the modern in an abstract manner, the meaning of the urban scenery will reveal 'civilized structure of a certain time and space' beyond the physical landscape of the urban scenery.

Timothy Druckrey

Other 'landscapes' ... Other 'topographics' ...

“Since universal world time is gearing up to outstrip the time of erstwhile localities in historical importance, it is now a matter of urgency that we reform the ‘whole’ dimension of general history so as to make the way for the ‘fractal’ history of the limited but precisely located .. A landscape has no fixed meaning, no privileged vantage point. It is only oriented by the itinerary of the passerby ... the landscape is a passage ... From now on, the only relief is that of the event.” (Paul Virilio, *Landscape of Events*)

It would be convenient to consider the idea of ‘landscape’ in its most familiar form, a genre of painting and photography exemplified by luminous pictures of ‘nature,’ rustic townscapes, and later by study of geology, by fantasy ‘landscapes’ in Surrealism, by celebratory expeditions in remote territories, by images of the topographics of suburbs, urban landscapes ... And there’s no doubt that the dense history of the landscape genre will continue to demand re-articulation and re-thinking as the deep history of the enlightenment and modernity are re-written to include social, political and economic histories that reconsider often sanguine assumptions that appearance itself, the landscape ‘as-such,’ is sufficient to indicate the deeper relationships between aesthetic practices and the social circumstances that envelop them.

Rather than approach ‘landscape,’ I take the term ‘neo-landscape’ to provoke other

topologies, other terrains, other events ... most particularly, for me, is the figurative definition of landscape, "the distinctive features of a particular situation or intellectual activity." So often these days the terms 'political landscape,' social landscape,' the 'media landscape,' network topologies,' extend the articulation of the kinds of spaces we inhabit. More and more we map, track, and conceptualize on the basis of intricate technologies whose ability to traverse the spheres of space, mobility, or social presence are exploded by others whose intricate cartographies penetrate the 'neo-landscapes' of genes, track and compile the wanderings through information networks, become statistical info-scapes that profile, project into the future, recompile the data of the past, visualize patterns in, on the one hand, the stock market, and, on the other, expose the histories of carbon dioxide deposited, seemingly invisibly, in the history of the disappearing ice caps. The 'neo-landscape,' for me, is about the reverberations of these issues, a way to set 'the distinctive features of a particular situation or intellectual activity' clearly into a new perspective ... not headed for a rendezvous with infinity, not with a blissful instantiation of the sublime, not to stasis, or mere contemplation, but instead to a confrontation with the transformations caused directly by an assessment of current conditions, by the here and now and how it is represented, a look into its consequence and possibility.

The news I want to begin with is not good. In the past weeks the British Government issued a report, *The Stern Review*, on the reverberating effects of global warming. Sir Nicholas Stern is the former Chief Economist for the World Bank. The report outlined the consequences for failure to address the reciprocal economic and ecological effects of even slight increases in carbon emissions and rising temperatures. Extreme weather patterns, failing crops, rising sea levels could leave as many as 200 million people displaced. GDP's would be severely affected... Global consumption would decrease. Surely this comports with the scientific diagnosis coming from nearly every rational front. Even Al Gore's cinematic powerpoint presentation, *An Inconvenient Truth* ... a film that found release into the mainstream theatres, stood as a stark signifier of both the facts of the situation and of the counter-scientific mania of the current US administration in the face of overwhelming information, overwhelming reality. Also last week a report in the journal *Science*, *Global Loss of Biodiversity Harming Ocean Bounty* outlined a drastic scenario for the over-fishing of the oceans: "At current rates of diversity loss, this analysis indicates that there will be no more viable fish or invertebrate species available to fisheries

by 2050.”

The ecological ‘landscape’ teeters between a post-industrial and a post-natural condition, either or both of which evoke a state of emergency, catastrophe. This summer in Beijing, enveloped in a shroud of construction dust, pollution from the rapid proliferation of automobiles, the acid rain from the booming coal-burning generators, the staggering consequences of unchecked, or better mis-managed, development couldn’t have been more clear. In a long drought, even the massive *Institute for Weather Modification* can barely contain the desertification that surrounds the city... This while enormous and pervasive construction focuses on westernizing the city before the Olympics. Yet behind the veil of massive urban change, the devastation of the old city, the eradication of political opposition, the displacement of the poor and the privileging of the party was the spectre of the power politics of absolute state control joined with the economic power of absolute capital ... and, from what I could perceive, the absolute worst of both.

As Mike Davis writes in his recent book *Planet of Slums*:

“Industrial boomtowns such as Dongguan, Shenshen, Fushan City, and Chengchow are the post-modern Sheffields and Pittsburghs ... (12) and that “Instead of cities of light soaring toward heaven, much of the twenty-first century urban world squats in squalor, surrounded by pollution, excrement, and decay.” (19)... The brutal tectonics of neo-liberal globalization ... are analogous to the catastrophic process that shaped a “Third World” in the first place, during the era of late-Victorian imperialism. (174)... and concludes his book with “This delusionary dialectic of securitized versus demonic urban places, in turn, dictates a sinister and unceasing duet: Night after night, hornetlike helicopter gunships stalk enigmatic enemies in the narrow streets of the slum districts, pouring hellfire into shanties or fleeing cars. Every morning the slums reply with suicide bombers and eloquent explosions. If the empire can deploy Orwellian technologies of repression, its outcasts have the gods of chaos on their side.” (206).

Could be the favella’s of Brazil, the US/Mexican border, Lebanon, Baghdad, Faluja, the West Bank, Darfour, or any number of other places ... hardly sites where the ‘beneficiaries’ of globalization can relish much more than the worst of all possible

worlds because, in the end, one must ask what sort of ‘neo-landscape’ *they* will inhabit, what sort of neo-landscape in the decimated ground around Chernobyl, in the ravaged aftermath of The Three Gorges Dam, what sort in the devastation of Lebanon, what sort in Afghanistan, Iraq, Africa, the savaged rain forests of Central and South America, the oil soaked Alaskan coast, (the list goes on). Suffice it to say that ... as Zizek does in *Welcome to the Desert of the Real*:

“Here, we should abandon the standard metaphors of the Real as the terrifying Thing that is impossible to confront face to face, as the ultimate Real concealed beneath the layers of imaginary and/or symbolic Veils: the very idea that, beneath the deceptive appearances, there lies hidden some ultimate Real Thing too horrible for us to look at directly... the real Thing is a fantasmatic spectre whose presence guarantees the consistency of our symbolic edifice, thus enabling us to avoid confronting its constitutive inconsistency.” (32)

Perhaps T.S.Eliot was right, “Humankind cannot bear very much reality.”

In the aftermath of the first Gulf War, Werner Herzog recorded the ravaged fields of Kuwait. In *Lessons of Darkness*, an apocalyptic landscape is inhabited by “pillars of flame, oceans of oil and impenetrable clouds of smoke,” a ‘neo-landscape’ in which the victory of the coalition to liberate oil comes as a cruel Dante-esque inferno, the earth traumatized to fuel the dismal fantasies of the post-industrialist’s still drunk on petro-fuels... Here’s a short excerpt ...

The human ‘landscape’ is not faring much better.

... This month’s *New Left Review* had the second contribution from RETORT, a group of scholars whose first text, *Afflicted Powers*, aimed at the spectacle after 9.11. This one, titled *All Quiet on the Eastern Front*, started like this beneath this image:

we have no words for the horror of the present,

for the ghostly bodies showing through the plastic wrap. No words for the faces of despair and elation bubbling from the TV screen, faces of hatred and madness and dedication to death, faces that have had the truth of ‘collateral damage’ played out to them over the cell-phone videos even before the sound

of the drone has faded.

the balance of power in the image-world is changing

No one who witnessed the moral bankruptcy of the media during the Iraq campaign

can be left with the least illusion about the world the networks show us.

But something is shifting in the pattern of image dissemination. The reality of 'statecraft' and 'deterrence' is more and more on view. And it is a reality that lies at the heart of modernity. For more than a century, modernity and state terror from the air—modernity and mass civilian death—have been mutually constitutive terms. But never before so instantly, so vividly, so ubiquitously. *this situation—this visibility—enrages the forces of order*

'Our federal government,' says Donald Rumsfeld, 'is really only beginning to adapt its operations to the 21st century. Today we're engaged in the first war in history—unconventional and irregular as it may be—in an era of emails, blogs, cell phones, BlackBerrys, Instant Messaging, digital cameras, a global Internet with no inhibitions, hand-held videocameras, talk radio, 24-hour news broadcasts, satellite television. There's never been a war fought in this environment before.' (Speech to the Council on Foreign Relations, 17 February 2006). It is all so unfair, sighs the Torturer-in-Chief. It makes our Terror indistinguishable from theirs.

This kind of human 'landscape' harkens back to the first images - landscapes- of war in the 1850s, The Crimean War photographed by Roger Fenton, or the haunting images of the American Civil War by Timothy O'Sullivan or Alexander Gardner. (SLIDES: Valley of the Shadow, Harvest of Death) and extends through the death camps of Nazism, the killing fields of Cambodia, the massacres in Schrebiniza, the genocides in Rwanda, Darfour ... these too are neo-landscapes in which visibility often comes more in numbers than images... information over reality ... or perhaps dis-information over reality ... or yet worse, no information or no image of reality at all!

Strange that the tradition of autonomous landscape came hand-in-hand with the Enlightenment, with modernity. This history of landscape, or better, these histories of landscape art, to be distinguished from the landscapes of reality, pivot on numerous themes of naturalism, fiction, spectacle, and illusion. They range from the

observational to the imaginary, from the impressionistic to the conceptual, from the historical to the theological. Yet within each 'tradition' resides a carefully articulated methodology that rendered an image of the world that was at once familiar and strategic. To adopt the term used by Norman Klein in *The Vatican to Vegas: A History of Special Effects*, landscape was subject to the *script*. This 'scripting of illusions' surely characterized the optical 'events' of the kind of *trompe l'oeil* so familiar in architectural, theatrical, and artistic expressions since the Baroque (which itself became a landscape of the illusory).

Many of these illusions were accomplished with the intervention of optical apparatuses whose cumulative effect was to both secularize the gaze and to suggest a split between seeing and visualization. In this sense, the apparatus was a proto-interface that rationalized space (as Ivins suggested) in a symbolic form (as Panofsky suggested) that staged landscape as more than mere geography even while it provided views of the world that were increasingly 'realistic' (no matter how fanciful). Klein indeed suggests that this situation signifies that "the charm of Artifice exceeds the harmonies of nature itself." This 'triumph' of artifice, or better artificiality, clearly came hand-in-hand with an evolving modernity that would *enlighten* through rationality, entertain with technology, and institute authority through science.

The visual landscape was to be replaced by the visible landscape, sight supplanted by system, a prelude to the looming instrumentalization of vision through the camera (in all its forms), photography, cinema, x-ray, and the myriad machines exploding in the 19th and early 20th centuries.

The consequences of this "frenzy of the visible" (as Comolli terms it), radically changed throughout the 20th century and particularly expanded with the rise of the kinds of data visualization that characterize the 21st century. Statistics, databases, credit and travel profiles, genetic 'mapping,' etc, etc., an info-system that itself become a mapping of *activity-events* that are increasingly visualized in an electronic 'landscape' of relational rather than locational information. These data visualizations clearly have political, cultural, and artistic significance and provide dramatic forms to generate 'scapes' that are as projective as they are spatial, as predictive as they are diagnostic, and which extend far beyond the horizon of the perceptible into visualities that track itineraries into and through territories unimagined by

'landscapes' limited to mere geography.

Economies, markets, communications networks, package routing, travel, ... new formations of information that provide the foundation for an 'neo-landscape' of events and that provides a radical reconceptualization of the spheres of social interaction and a deep transformation of a long tradition of a 'landscape' enveloped in fantasy and rationalization.

Ingo Gunther's *World Processor* is a field in which numbers and worlds collide – a persistent modernity still ruled by statistics and the visual image. Yet rather than veil the global impact of data behind the often bleak, reductive, even dismissive, judgment of statisticians, 'spin-doctors' or political rationales, *World Processor* maps consequence directly onto the 'world stage' in direct relationship with local effect. In this planetary 'ecosystem' of information, no place is free of implications, there is no insular locale, no space outside the effect of the internationalized, the integrated, or the viral. In this field, repercussions abound. These hyper-statistical visual maps betray illusions, they defy isolation and expose saturations, concentrations, and distributions of data as blunt social imperatives. Trade Currents, AIDS infections, Fresh Water Reserves, Life Expectancy, the unremitting register of ongoing globalization stripped bare of its positivism, *World Processor* reintegrates the globe step-by-step, issue by issue, number by number in cumulative and proportional worlds that together form harrowing accumulations, dismal concentrations, and intricate flows.

In Rafael Lozano-Hemmer's *Relational Architecture*, the interface is more than just a portal into an illusion; it stands *against illusion* in favor of developing a unique relationship with a distributed public without losing site of either identity, locality, or with the delicate meanings of interactivity. To do this under the rubric of architecture is neither ironic or paradoxical. To transpose interior and exterior space, to reclaim the public square as a site of public discourse, of the social imaginary, of the 'projection' of the public will, is an act at once defiant and compelling. To 'write' into the surfaces of the sky, onto the exterior walls of buildings that stand as a repository of cultural history, to 'write' the body into the 'social text' of the physical world, the neo-landscape, suggests collisions of meaning that, on the one hand, embeds this work in specific histories, and, on the other, extends from the passive confrontation of space into that of time (both historical and experiential).

In this sense, *Relational Architecture* is neither attempting to ‘build’ consensus or to conjure up post-cinema. It is an evocation of the kind of social space in which active participation is not a by-product, but the driving force in the creation of a dynamic agora in which every position is established in an open system that ruptures hierarchies and dismantles the notion that the public is an undifferentiated mass, the media not the harbinger of a utopian global village, interactivity not the opiate of shoppers.

In carefully balancing often vast spaces with individual actions, the works that have been developed by Lozano-Hemmer conspire to reverse-engineer the looming, phantasmatic, or cultish extravaganzas whose effects were created to overwhelm the senses, to evoke false unity, or to provide a backdrop for mob rallies. Instead, *Relational Architecture* relinquishes the crowd in favor of the assembly. It simultaneously integrates the use of the net as more than a delocalized enclave and reconsiders it as an arena for communication rather than distribution.

Indeed, even the now vast literature on the so-called ‘architecture’ of cyberspace invokes immateriality, event-scenes, information atmospheres, trans-localities, forms of transitional or experiential ‘space’, and what might be called ‘haptic’ rather than merely ‘optic’ perspectives. *Relational Architecture* reminds us that our social spaces are never neutral, that they are inhabited by memories of all sorts, that ephemerality is not inconsequential, that interactivity is not merely a catchphrase for media art. It also proposes a ‘neo-landscape’ that will, in Virilio’s wonderful phrase, “take place.”

Joan Fontcuberta’s recent work *Landscapes Without Memory* continues an *oeuvre* that has relentlessly considered both the stability and legitimacy of representation and the systems that both situate and produce them.. This work renders the landscape with typical and deep irony. The images, strangely both deterritorialize landscape and simultaneously inhabit it. Using software primarily developed for geological research (and no doubt to render data into images) Fontcuberta instead imports picture data into a system meant to build topographic images. The results are uncanny ... and are shown with their source material -- that includes both highly recognizable landscape images (painting and photographs) as well as body-scapes. Orogenesis, “the branch of physical geography that focuses on the formation of topographical relief” was developed to provide a fuller method to interpolate the

data in maps .. to dimensionalize relief. Yet here the *raw* data is already intelligible, already mapped into the histories of art, of photography, with all the pretenses of authenticity, all the tropes of nostalgia, awe, or fantasy provoked by their alleged originality. Serge Daney, in this sense, is perhaps correct to hypothesize that, “nothing happens any longer to humans, it is to the image that everything happens.”

Fontcuberta writes:

“The crisis of landscape today is bound up with a sense of the loss of natural space.... We grieve over a nature we continue to sacrifice in favor of sprawling commercial or industrial hinterlands...The representation of the world is here dependent not on experience but on a prior imaginary and previously codified experience .. [the process] demonstrates that we have taught machines to produce hallucinations ... and bring to light their ‘technological unconscious,’ and that irrationalism and delirium can be induced where it once seemed that only logic and computation had a place ... Behind those bucolic digital paradises is a demiurgic technology that makes nature and its phenomena superfluous. These are landscapes without memory, without history: nothing has happened in them, they have witnessed no expedition, no battle, ... no echoes...”

Again just to cite Virilio: “techniques of rationality have ceaselessly distanced us from what we’ve taken as the advent of an objective world.” (107, *Aesth of dis*).

Flowing images, flowing information, flowing texts, information flows, economic flows, routes, signals, traces, porous borders, currents, boundaries ... the metaphors for the current ‘state’ of the post-industrial, post-electronic, post-modern, circuit we inhabit is enveloped in forms of contingency and mobility. Unremitting transience has substituted itself for stasis. Forms of representation undergo constant transformation to account for shifting conditions. In order to grasp the situation, reflection comes in the forms of interference, rupture, or cut. This comports with emerging notions that we are embedded in mental states of ‘continuous partial attention’ – interstices between perception and cognition, awareness and understanding, what Deleuze calls ‘chronic time’, what Virilio calls ‘the dictatorship of the short-term, the tyranny of real-time.’

In no way as a coda, and to invoke another consideration of the 'terrain' of the 'neo-landscape,' another short excerpt. This time from a film, more specifically, a "Typo-Film," *Beautiful World*, by the Dutch designer Mieke Gerritzen. With texts pieced together from a range of authors engaged in the critique of images, empires, signs, codes, consumer society, etc., it too is a neo-landscape, one of language, one of design, one of surfaces, screens turned into cinema....

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The Third Landscape (MyLandscape)

“Adam and Eve, according to the fable, wore the bower before other clothes.”

Afternoon. Exterior. 1862.

I quote Henry David Thoreau in *Walking*:

“At present, in this vicinity, the best part of the land is not private property; the landscape is not owned, and the walker enjoys comparative freedom. But possibly the day will come when it will be partitioned off into so-called pleasure-grounds, in which a few will take a narrow and exclusive pleasure only--when fences shall be multiplied, and man-traps and other engines invented to confine men to the PUBLIC road, and walking over the surface of God’s earth shall be construed to mean trespassing on some gentleman’s grounds. To enjoy a thing exclusively is commonly to exclude yourself from the true enjoyment of it. Let us improve our opportunities, then, before the evil days come.”

This communication is called The Third Landscape.

It is about the idea of the existence of a third level of understanding- understand-

ing landscape.

The text is derivative and incongruence is default.

A third landscape implies a second landscape and a first landscape.

The third landscape has nothing to do with the first and the second landscape.

The first landscape is the normal rustic landscape. The landscape we know and admit. It is Re-Present and evident. The photograph or the drawing that we are able to make and see. It is also a painting or images inside books or even the visible trees that inhabit the forest.

The remittable memoria.

Throughout history of man almost every palm of the surface of earth has been revolved and changed, several times. LANDSCAPE is now not just what we see but also a thought about time.

We can't see the landscape anachronistically (emotions or mood) or diachronically (*no return point de vue*). The *point de vue* is evolutionist.

The second landscape is NATURE (NATURA): "The Breathtaking Tits Goddess".

Blend R. Buckminster Fuller's idea of planet Earth as a space ship with humans working in the surface of the craft, and James Lovelock's Gaia Hypothesis, and you get an omniconnected, homeoregulated and gravitas living organism, where landscape means much more than a beautiful spot or what we see when travelling by train.

The third landscape. The third landscape it's a neomap.

An artificial idea.

The landscape is visible; the idea of landscape is invisible.

The idea of landscape is Male (memes propagation), European (cultural blood: Poussin, Friederich), Geometric (like a drawing entity), Smart ("stay-and-fight"), Private (it is owned by the ones who photograph or map it), pixelated (it is in your computer) and Militaristic (trees as soldiers – and eucalyptus as mercenaries).

This all-over mapped Landscape as acquired a powerful interdisciplinary strategy that links people to places, data and organizations, and physical and virtual environments. The mutation we observe is self-relying.

Kronos clocked-up the first run of landscape after send Uranus to the sky and persuaded his mother Gaia to make herself pretty and dress herself up with monkeys, snakes, carrots and all kinds of trees.

Plato didn't use the word landscape in the Republic.

I assume that landscape is not needed to the city (artists likewise) and time is all that landscape is made of.

Take *Flatland*: the beautiful romance about a world in 2 - dimensions written by *Edwin A. Abbott* before *Einstein*, *Godel* and *Hawking* suggested pluridimension and back-and-forth time travel as a possibility. In Flatland everything is dual, compressed and moral. The only way flatlanders found to simulate volume or deepness was to paint themselves. This was also the cause of a near state collapse, with bloody wars between painted shapes ending with the higher decision of color prohibition... There, landscape was a line and time was flat.

This 2-D world is an illustration of belief in absolute time. But when time travel will be a regular business, art historians, collectors, museum directors, artists and architects will jump in to the most sophisticated time machines (going back is much more expensive) to dive in their period of specialization in order to enforce whatever they stand for or discover an entirely new era.

Now, I'll make a story about the first "architect" piling ideas "en mélange d'après" H. Ibsen, H.D. Thoreau, W. Ruskin, M. Twain and J. Rykwert":

The Architect in the paradise.

Please read landscape when I say Paradise or Garden.

O Arquitecto no Paraíso:

As especulações teóricas de qual terá sido a forma (pre-style) da cabana construída por Adão no Paraíso são numerosas e inconclusivas. Como a construiu, porquê e com quê. Se lhe foi revelada por Deus, pela razão ou pela natureza. A casa primordial origem de toda a construção. O T1 do Ciclope (sub-zero). O templo dedicado a Cristo. O exercício zénite essencial para o arquitecto contemporâneo...

Quando choveu pela primeira vez no Paraíso, Adão refugiou-se numa caverna. (não se pode chamar a este comportamento um ritual de construção ou uma identificação do corpo com o universo)

Entretanto Eva chega. Adão pensou em tornar o habitáculo (dwelling) mais confortável e para as paredes não parecerem tão vazias fez pinturas que representavam tigres, leões, pássaros bonitos, luas, estrelas, etc. (a pintura primeiro que a arquitectura, olé)

Eva passava o tempo todo na rua e dizia a Adão sobre a caverna: “Hóh! Thsst. Não tem luz nenhuma, cheira imenso a mofo, não tem vista e, olha... essas bonecadas nas paredes até eu era capaz de fazer!”

Adão passou a dar atenção aos métodos e operações instintivas dos animais construtores. Os cucos (cuckos), as abelhinhas, as andorinhas, os porquinhos e as cegonhas (starks).

Copiou as melhores ideias de cada um e como tinha capacidade de raciocínio relacional e uma estrutura mecânica omnioperativa depressa ultrapassou os animais: reuniu troncos de árvores juntou-os numa forma cónica e cobriu-os com ramos e folhas consolidando tudo com barro.

Eva que aparecia curiosa de vez em quando, viu esta evolução assim: “Meu querido Adão, eu sou muito novinha pá, o meu instinto diz-me que sinto que esta tua experiência vai ser importante na história. Mas não percebes nada... O mundo todo é que é uma obra de arte. Só pensas em fazer barracas por auto-superação e para te fazer sentir superior. Não me dás puto atenção (I mean nothing to you). Achas que as flores são lixo. Queres fazer uma casa maravilhosamente perfeita? Ouve-me: constrói qualquer coisa que seja o símbolo do sentido do mundo. O chão é a Terra. As colunas são ursos e elefantes vivos, o tecto é feito de uma rede de milhões de flores vivas de todas as cores e na porta de entrada tem uma serpente que fala. Vá! Agora vou-me embora, vou chorar um bocadinho junto dos meus amigos tigres

que são tão fofinhos.”

Adão fica furioso, sem saber o que fazer: “Ela podia ter dito qualquer coisa quente ou agradável. E... lá está ela outra vez a deitar água pelos buracos por onde vê! Não me consigo habituar a isto. Acho que vou emigrar.”

Numa parte remota do Paraíso (novos territórios), Adão experimenta novos materiais como pedra e ouro.

Adão: “Mas porque é que eu construo com tanta intencionalidade, qual é a importância que tem uma porta, uma janela, uma adega, uma sauna, um telhado na natureza do homem, há alguma razão para além da necessidade temporal? Existe alguma relação entre eu construir uma casa e o pássaro construir um ninho?”

Eva, como tinha melhor noção das distâncias descobria sempre onde Adão tinha feito uma nova experiência arquitectónica: “Ele tem mesmo gostos mesquinhos (small-minded taste). E não é nada simpático. Vi que estava a tentar apanhar uns peixes que estavam a brincar numa piscina. Atirei-lhe uma pedra para que os deixasse em paz. Coitadinhos dos peixinhos. Tirei alguns da água e estavam a morrer-de-frio. Levei-os para a nova barraca que ele tinha construído e pu-los na cama dele para ficarem bem quentinhos.”

Adão: “Se no futuro houver cidades, planeadas ou conspiradas por arquitectos, tenho a certeza que serão um reflexo da revolta masculina contra os princípios femininos da dependência da natureza. Totems, museus, monumentos, torres infinitas serão erguidos. O arquitecto-artista sacrificar-se-á para deificar a sua edificação, obrigado pela política, pela erecção possível e pela imortalidade.”

Eva: “O Jardim está perdido. Admito que as edificações se forem belas podem pertencer essencialmente à própria paisagem natural. Mas, não é pela sua graciosidade e modos corteses e pela sua delicadeza que o amo. Não, ele tem lacunas nestes aspectos mas é bom o suficiente como está e tem vindo a melhorar. Eu sou só uma rapariga, a primeira a ter analisado o assunto e pode mesmo ser que na minha ignorância e inexperiência eu tenha percebido tudo errado.”

Automatically the architects came with politicians demonstrating the obligation for

pulchra sociography. This tactical use of architecture and planning in politics always increased the martial design of landscape.

Then they start digging and reshaping the surface of dear Gaia constructing a strategic landscape to glorify the Great Houses. Two laws were obliged:

1. Occupation, control and defense of space.
2. Cultivation, infrastructure, housing and cultural meaning of land use.

From Hercules and the Egyptian Hidro-Lego-Nilopet-Colossus to the fire-made drawing of the Portuguese countryside with an average of 20.000 fires per year. The small Americas in the US Military bases in at least 95 countries. The private islands. The sand Palm Island Resort in Dubai (much more figurative than Robert Smithson's Spiral Jetty). The 2,000-mile (3,200-km) brand new US-Mexico Border Fence, the Great Wall of Mexico. The Ben and Zac Goldsmith neo-environmentalist millionaire's idea of buying entire rainforests in South America and Asia. Pictorial Botanical Gardens, all Golf courses, all the Theme Parks and the synthetic Pixarlandscape.

I list now some pre words that you can add to the word landscape and make it sound good.

Invisiblelandscape

Matrixlandscape

Homeolandscape

Totolandscape

Orgasmlandscape

O.K.landscape

Finlandscape

Pationlanscape

Portugallandscape

Xaulandscape

Paxlandscape

Omnilandscap

Priorlandscape

Neolandscape
Gogolandscape
Nodilandscape
Mylandscape
Youlandscape
Yahooscape
Jesuslandscape
Popolandscape
Enoughlandscape
Exolandscape
Landlandscape
Nonlandscape
Hiperlandscape
Linklandscape
Nicelandscape
Warninglandscape

Thoreau's Walden Pond hut cost \$28.12.

Economy is roving the matrix-scenery like a German expressionist.

I propose the creation of the "NEOLANDSCAPE SOCIETY

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Railroad, Time and Space: Fluctuating Urban Landscape in Korea

This paper deals with the development of railroad technology in Korea in relation with the reconfiguration of space/time in the urban and rural area. With all the brouhaha about moving bytes around on the information superhighways, moving people around on a real ground has become less glamorous, not to mention studying its impact on their sensibility. However, the moment we are running toward the high technology, the past is lost along with the opportunity to interpret its meaning. So far, there have been a very few studies on the historical, symbolic meaning of railroad in Korea. Especially when it should be noted that the development of railroad technology is essentially related with the formation of urban/rural space in everyday life, the study on the meaning of railroad amounts to the investigation into the influence of technology on life.¹

For the understanding of the impact the railroad technology and culture have on our sense of space and time, the current status of railroad technology in Korea will be accounted. Then, based on the interviews with engineers and drivers of railroad

¹ Park Chun Hong's book, *Ride of Fascination, Crossing of Modernity: the Scenes of Modernity Reflected in Railroad* (Seoul: Sanchurum, 2002) is a rare but substantial book dealing with the early history of Korean railroad. This book is rich in topics for interpretation such as utopia of modernity, politics of space and the exploding desire.

machines, the change in the sense of space/time matrix brought about by the intervention of railroad will be accounted for. Especially, the landscape scenery in the rural outskirts of Seoul will be interpreted. This interpretation will be inquired in relation with the fluctuation of space in the rural vicinity of the city. Thus, this paper will include an account of the transformation of the urban/rural border in Korea.

According to French critic Roland Barthes, the same century invented railroad and photography². Both are in common in that they are the vision machine of the modern period and closely related to mobility. Especially when the railroad and photography were combined, as can be seen in William Henry Jackson, who used railroad not only as a vehicle of his exploration of the American wild West in the 1870s, but also as his gallery, or showcase of his works, we are given a new vision. This combination was all the more powerful in the America right after the Civil War, as the country began to explore the territory unknown to white people. For Jackson, railroad was part of his vision machine. Though he sometimes relied on mules to carry heavy photographic equipment, basically what he photographed was laid along the lines of railroad. Thus, railroad was the key determining factor of what he saw and took picture. For him, railroad was a channel of truth according to which we now know what the American West before development looked like.³ The significance of railroad as a vision machine has diminished to a great extent these days, as there are abundant, more powerful vision machines roaming every dimension of our world: satellites, aircraft and surveillance cameras. However, that does not mean railroad has lost all the meaning as a vision machine today. Though extremely marginal in its position as a provider of essential information for our everyday life and special purposes such as science, military and business, railroad still holds a unique viewpoint which has not yet been occupied by other types of vehicle.

The basic assumption in discussing railroad in terms of vision machine is that it is a mixture of technology, perception of time and space and social development. Indeed this mixture is not exclusively found in Korea. The development of railroad has always been accompanying a reconfiguration of the sensation of time and space

2 Roland Barthes, *Camera Lucida: Reflections on Photography*, New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 1981, p.145.

3 *William Henry Jackson*, ed. Beaumont Newhall and Diana E. Edkins, Amon Carter Museum of Western Art, 1974.

as well as technical and economic development.

However, one peculiar aspect of railroad culture in Korea is that it is split between the past and the future. The ever faster speed of development of technology and culture makes it easy to forget the past of technology, along with the changes and fluctuations it had brought about. Therefore, this paper tries to reconstruct the sensation brought about by the introduction of railroad in a rural countryside near Seoul. For this purpose, the change in landscape scenery found along the railroad lines will be examined. Here, landscape is not just understood as part of nature, but as an amalgam of nature and culture, born out of a dialectical conflict between brute nature and human desire to tame, map and master it. According to David Nye, the editor of the book, *Technology of Landscape*, landscape is understood to be “a composition of man-made or man-modified spaces to serve as infrastructure or background for our collective existence.” Thus, landscape is thus defined not as natural, but as cultural. It is not static, but part of an evolving set of relationships. Landscapes are part of the infrastructure of existence, and they are inseparable from the technologies that people have used to shape land and their vision.⁴

Like any other city in East Asia, Seoul is a rapidly expanding megalopolis. As Sanford Kwinter has noted, “the city [...] is rather a perpetually organizing field of forces in movement, each city a specific and unique combination of historical modalities in dynamic composition.”⁵ One of the media of expansion is transportation system along which people and stuffs move. As Wolfgang Schivelbusch has noted in his book, the natural landscape is abstracted and time and space are lost in this development. However, important argument in this paper is that such a development is not a linear progress that runs all the way toward a singular goal of modernization and mechanization of life experience.

When we consider railroad as a vision machine, instead of a scene homogenized along the straight lines of railway, we encounter a punctuated scenery. This paper is an investigation into that punctuation, its cause, mode and effect in Korean railroad. First of all, current status of railroad technology in Korea should be delineated here. Currently, most of railroad transportation in Korea is undertaken by diesel

4 David Nye, “Technologies of Landscape” in *Technologies of Landscape: from Reaping to Recycling*, University of Massachusetts Press, Amherst, 1999, p.3.

5 Sanford Kwinter, Daniela Fabricus, “Urbanism: An Archivist’s Art?”, *Mutations*, ACTAR, p.495.

power, with electric power fast replacing it.⁶ Inadvertently, diesel locomotive has come to preserve what Zeller has called the “lost natural past”.⁷ Along with the introduction of high speed train, KTX(Korea Train Express) in 2004, which is an adaptation of French TGV technology, the research on Korean design of high speed train G7 is underway. As a way of enhancing the speed on the existing line, the research on Korean Tilting Train (TTX) is also carried.⁸ These researches will be complete with the development of an operation system that follows the line of ATS(automatic train stop)→ATC(automatic train control)→ATO(automatic train operation).⁹ These developments put the status of Korean Railroad in a split position: that of the past and that of the future. The current diesel technology is quickly pushed to back into the obsolete past. In this sense, the diesel technology shares the same fate as the steam technology. This constant push into the past is why people consider the railroad culture almost always in relation with the reminiscence of the nostalgic past. On the other hand, the status of the railroad for the future comes along with the abovementioned technology in addition to the construction of new station buildings in a new, postmodern style, combination of railroad operation with other types of business such as department store, movie theater and shopping mall. Of course, the perceptive experience of space and time in these areas is not and will not be related with reminiscence or nostalgia.

This line of progress seems to fit to what Wolfgang Schivelbusch has noted about the development of railroad: “We have seen how people experienced the process in which the organic power becomes mechanized by steam power as a separation and abstraction from nature.”¹⁰ However, it should also be noticed there is a punctuation in this line of development.

The punctuation in the history and experience of railroad is best manifest in Kyungchun line in Korea. The loss of lively relationship between human and na-

6 Compared to diesel, electric power is claimed to be more efficient, clean and cost effective.

7 Mutations, p.233.

8 This technology, with a new design of tilting bogie, enables the operation of train up to 200km/h on existing rail by artificially tilting rolling stock. Research report by Korean Railroad Research Institute.

9 Roughly speaking, this line of development signifies more automation, while adding more sophisticated system of monitoring the operation.

10 Wolfgang Schivelbusch, *The Railway Journey: The Industrialization of Time and Space in the 19th Century*, American Sociological Association, 1977, Korean translation by Park Jin Hee at Kungri Press, p.32.

ture Schivelbusch mentioned in his book unfolds in a quite different manner in Kyungchun line. The destruction of time and space is also experienced in a different way. Furthermore, the experience of looking out to the scenery of nature through the cab window of a locomotive, not from the window of passenger car renders the whole thing differently.

Kyungchun line opened in 1936 between Seoul (Chungryangri station) and Chunchon, runs a relatively short distance of 87.3km. As Chunchon is located at the mountain area of Kangwon province, most mountainous province in Korea, and land transportation is quite limited from that city, Kyungchun line has been considered more as a railway for leisure, travel and romanticism than for industry and business. Moreover, unlike Kyungbu line that is an important part of transportation network in Korea, Kyungchun line can not be seen as a part of a network. It is rather an independent piece of line that is blocked in front of the wall of mountain of Kangwon province.¹¹

However, here comes the specificity of scenery along Kyung Chun line. That is the irony in that the scene of nature is well preserved by the machine of modernity.¹² This irony is more striking when we consider the rapid development of rural area into commercial, semi-urban areas along the railroad such as Keumkok, Pyungnae and Daesungri in Kyungchun line. Across the railway line as a border, we are facing a totally different worlds. One world running toward rapid urban development, the other world submerged in the scenes of the 19th century.

The experience of riding with the engineer while interviewing him about the mechanism and the system of railroad operation has revealed the scenery as a structure, not as an abstracted view. Thus, this structural viewing of the railroad demonstrated that there was a corner of nature not totally occupied by the human intervention. Or more strictly speaking, less disturbed part of nature. Or we might

11 Kyungbu line connects Seoul and Pusan and is the representative railway line in Korea. Originally, this line was laid out by the Japanese colonialists in the early 20th century with the distance of 444km with a strategic aim of connecting Japan-Korea-Manchuria-Siberia. It is a huge irony of history is that Korean government is currently planning to build TKR(trans Korean railroad) that can be connected to TCR(trans China railroad) and TSR (trans Siberian railroad). Of course, the backdrop of this plan is quite different from the period of Japanese domination. The expansion of railways is looked to be an effect of the unification of South and North Korea.

12 Whether the natural scenery has been well preserved can not be wholly determined by just looking through the window of a locomotive cab. However, according to the concept of physiology employed in ecology, the overall shape of the forest along some part of Kyung Chun line looked good in terms of the diversity of species and the healthiness of plants.

say, less abstraction of nature due to the relative position of conventional railroad system in relation with the development of other, faster means of transportation such as automobile, airplane and high speed train. However, one thing is clear. The more advanced system of railroad operation will put all these things under a surveillance gaze of the system. Then, all the bits of nature will be part of information, in which the extent of more or less development will not matter any longer. The following remark, though grim in its connotation, might be a proper portrayal of such a landscape.

“Capitalism’s finest hour: Electronic surveillance is to time what files, and the old techniques of bureaucratic administration, were to space. Data sets can now be updated in perpetuity and monitored, like an efficient market, for harvestable events and particularities. As public and civic administration becomes automatic, our world takes on a bizarre involution: everything is suddenly interior, subsumed, and anticipated in the technosphere, a machinery soon greater and finer than the organosphere itself. This evolution is the Protestant Ethic itself made into nature: we are sinners, and the watching god knows it, before we have even begun.”¹³

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Mary Beckinsale

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The Macchiaioli Revolution in Landscape Painting

When Filipe first talked to me about this symposium on neolandscape, I was excited as I had read Simon Schama's book on 'Landscape and Memory' and was fascinated by so much of it. Then I decided to write this art history paper to demonstrate how landscape painting has always contained cultural content...despite its innocent appearance....it has always been a heavily weighted player....

Landscape painting has always had cultural content in the Western tradition despite the commonly held misconception that background landscapes are only a little view of 'reality' or a window onto the 'real world'....And landscape painting has existed since antiquity. Although in Italian 14th-16th century, painting landscape was largely confined to covering background spaces, this was done to indicate a second level of time. To place the Crucifixion in the valley of Arno for example () was following the theological prophecies of Joachim del Fiore by which - as Giotto illustrated in the Scrovegni chapel - () there were three parallel time periods following a progressive revelation. That of the God, that of Christ, and that of the present time, of the Holy Spirit that paralleled each other and according to this eschatological time frame that messianically was leading to the end of the world. So for Masaccio in placing St Peter on a Florentine street () was to locate the mission of Christ in contemporary time.

Landscape views were often cityscapes used as a property or dowry record - the

simplest example of this are the views of the cities owned by Florence frescoed on the courtyard walls in the Palazzo Vecchio.

In the Western tradition, it is the French Revolution (1789) that shakes up the European class system and with it the class structures inside the Art Academies. Landscape painting (which was considered the lowest form of painting because it was considered unable to instruct to higher aims, in contrast to history painting which did,) was suddenly reevaluated. In 1817 landscape painting became an official part of the Academy's main curriculum because of a new nationalistic patriotism in Europe, a new evaluation of the value of farmers or lower classes, because of Rousseau's philosophy and his ideas on the state of nature and the innocence and importance of natural law. The painters of the Barbizon School() in the early 19th century, 'returned' to nature ...or rather found in nature like the great Romantic poets a way of finding in landscape the true ethical instructor.

So you have in that great painting ()by Gustave Courbet, shown in his own exhibition tent outside the Great Exhibition of 1855 in Paris, "The Studio - 7 years of my life", the artist himself is painting a landscape (not a didactic history painting) and is firmly turning his back on the nude. When Courbet was invited in the July days, by the students of the Art Academy to come and teach them, instead of a human nude he put an ox on the model stand.

It is however perhaps most in Millet's pictures ()that the peasant reaches equality with the viewer and dignity in his labour. Although interestingly enough when this picture the 'Angelus' expressing the peasants humble beliefs, crossed the Atlantic as a print reproduction it was a best seller in the USA, but retitled 'They buried the baby' ...talking about the hardships of the settlers march West..

The steady reevaluation of landscape in turn leads on to the ideas of John Ruskin who in 1856 in *Modern Painters* expounded the pathetic fallacy – the way painters (or artists in general) endow the world with human emotions which he saw pervading the Romantic tradition.

"To signify any description of inanimate natural objects that ascribes to them human capabilities, sensations and emotions".

To Ruskin this emotional description of nature, that talked more of the interior than the exterior mind, was against truth which was to be accurate not to be swayed by imagination or our fanciful reflections on it

“The foam is not cruel
Neither does it crawl”

For Ruskin creating a representation of nature was to be close to the Creator and the inherent benefits of learning from Nature.

This new evaluation of landscape in Western art did not have a single cultural function. In America which has its own very different cultural expression landscape became as Broude has shown a language of possession and imperialist expansion. In Europe the political changes of the 19th century can be found in its gaze.

Let us take this famous () Constable painting of Salisbury Cathedral. Against the political background of the Luddite rising when England was experiencing the closest thing to a peasants’ revolution it has ever experienced with ricks and farm buildings burning, thousands of dispossessed peasants condemned and many executed or sent to Australia and the Duke of Wellington then Prime Minister trying to stop or modify the Great Reform Act (1832) that would extend suffrage and destroy the rotten boroughs like Salisbury (Salem – it’s key example). Constable shows a completely unreal landscape of peasants humbly working in their station and church and aristocracy firmly in their places, glorified by heavenly radiance. In a sense it is a political Conservative prayer.

In Turner () instead you see instead the idealization of Switzerland, the cantons of freedom where so many Protestant and free thinkers like Voltaire had gained refuge, The Switzerland of Childe Harold (Byron) that had a democratic structure far more advanced than most countries in Europe. On the other hand, the German or Northern painters of the 17, 18th Centuries who went south to Italy on the Grand Tour, () were looking instead for a “Nietcheresque” dream of a landscape of ancient Greece (Magna Grecia) conceived of as a time that preceded the Judaeo-Christian ethical controls, a place where even today tourists come to run naked on the beaches. Something that can be done under the Southern pagan sky of course that they would never do at home.

This search in the Italian landscape for Arcadia has a long tradition in Claude Lorraine, Poussin, and so many others.

Today, as we have only a little time, I want to mention the Macchiaioli. The Italian landscape painters who painted their native land as they fought to free it from foreign oppression and rule in the 1840’s-70’s...in the battles of the Risorgimento.

“Macchia” means blob or stain, the swift, impressionistic application of paint, but it also means the scrub growth of bushes, the material that makes charcoal that humans or revolutionaries use to ignite fires.

Following from a prior Hungarian/Tuscan tradition, the idea of painting the soil and scenes of everyday peasant life was a revolutionary subject. This was true both in terms of the artist's prior traditional academic training and because the artists involved were following Mazzini's ideas of the painting every day life. The Republican Mazzini was one of the three revolutionary figures of the Risorgimento and its main theorist. The idea of painting contemporary life precedes the influence of Baudelaire on the Impressionists in France: Mazzini wrote that art was an essentially belief, “an eminently social expression”, “an act of resistance and freedom or a promise of change.” He condemned the sentimental effusion of the Romantics but sought a view of contemporary life that exalted the individual and at the same time the collective spirit.

The Macchiaioli precede chronologically the Impressionists and had a profound influence on them and on their painting technique through Degas and Manet who visited them in Florence.. Painting fast mostly without preliminary drawing, outside, often in the case of the Macchiaioli they painted between battles, painting on the small planks from the ammunition boxes they were using, between Garibaldi's marches and battles. They produced tiny paintings of intimate life, showing the humanity of peasants, women and children, of the ghetto, the subjects of the new freedoms whose liberty they were fighting for. These landscapes are possibly the most revolutionary paintings of the 19th century. I want to show you just a few, as for the most part they are very unknown. Their tiny dimensions have led them to be under valued as have their apparently simple execution. Instead they are profound statements of the land of the Patria...the native land for which the Macchiaioli fought, and are of a great sophistication and interest.()when reviewing the use of landscape as a genre.

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Perusing a Landscape from the Interior and Exterior

“First you lend the tree your passions, your desires or your melancholy; its sighs and its oscillations become yours and soon you are the tree.” – Baudelaire, Artificial Paradise

Aero 1998

Aero is a sound collector at Europos Parkas, a sculpture park on the outskirts of Vilnius, Lithuania near the geographical center of the European continent. It provides a universal language for people gathering there not one of words that convey specific meaning but sounds. According to the dictionary, sound can be defined as a mechanical disturbance in an elastic medium that travels easily through the air. When positioned up in the tree canopy, they allow a participant to make an aural map of the environment they are in. Sounds gleaned from people’s interactions with one another, leaves rustling in the breeze, chirping birds and creaking tree limbs all refocus one’s attention. As the senses engage the cycling rhythms, tones, and vibrations they make connections between who they are with where they are.

Terrestrially, sound is not only experienced as occurring *in between* but as surrounding the listener. The source of a sound is itself surrounded by its own sound. This mutual envelopment of aurality inherently predisposes an exchange between interior and exterior relationships. Listening brings into focus the nature and con-

nections between a site and sound. It suggests that they exist simultaneously, as both a social presence and a private experience. For example the concept “Matsukaze” which in English translates to be ‘Wind in the Pines’ evokes many ideas and sensibilities; mountain, hermitage, autumn, loneliness, at-one-ness, and silence. The kettle in the tearoom is the presence of matsukaze. Synaesthesia plays a rich role in Japanese culture.

SHISHI-ODOSHI (0:07)

SUIKINKUTSU (0:57)

Consider the “shishi-odoshi” the bamboo-against-rock accompaniment to the flow of a mountain stream or the “suikinkutsu,” the water zither cave. The sound of the suikinkutsu is made by the stream of water from a drain coming from a stone basin. When someone washes their hands, water drops slowly, falling to the bottom of the pot, and these sounds are amplified inside the water pot. After washing their hands, they have to wait for a moment until the sound from the suikinkutsu emerges. This delay, caused by the construction of the structure of the device, which has the effect of directing people’s listening to other environmental sounds in the garden. The result was that people forgot their ordinary time sensations. People regarded sound as an abstract image rather than as a pragmatic acoustic event. The concept of sound is extended from the real sound of an instrument to sounds of a variety of phenomena in ancient Japanese culture.

This dynamic relationship between landscape and sound is also contingent upon a subject – for within this relationship of acoustics and resonance, one is situated as both a receiver and transmitter. How does sound lead us to explore an understanding of our very location? How does listening as a practice, and as a perceptual state, determine the parameters of this understanding?

Doug Hollis 1986 and 1987

Doug Hollis harnesses the wind in the 16’ high Singing Beach Chairs created for Santa Monica beach, California. Wind passes through slots in aluminium pipes attached to the chairs resonating oboe-like tone warbles. On some days the oversize instrument invites the viewer to sit feeling the wind while hearing the vibration of

the sound, which one could refer to as tuning forks to the heavens. On other days the chairs are mute.

Zaha Hadid 1999 And 2004

On a much large scale consider the location of Zaha Hadid's The Space-bundle for the international gardening show (Landesgartenschau 1999, Weil am Rhein) and the Glasgow Museum of Riverside Transportation. These are part of a sequence of projects that try to elicit new fluid specialities from the study of natural landscape formation including river deltas, mountain ranges, ice-flows, oceans and even brings to mind the oscillating sound waves. The figures of the buildings are not contained. They literally "bleed out" and dissolve into the surrounding landscape. The Space-bundle emerges gradually from the tangle of paths, leaving it to the visitor to define and realize its beginning and its end. Additionally, the size and boundary of the building is rendered soft as its order and geometry ripples out into the garden-scape.

Sound exists as a phenomenal presence involved in and determining the world. It partially defines our perceptual, emotional, spiritual and psychological spaces. It contributes to our understanding of our environment, ourselves, and our relationship to one another. Attention to sound offers a rich, multi-dimensional, and direct palpable connection with the world around us. My sense is that we are largely unaware of the extent, to which we rely on sound to make decisions in everyday life. To consciously pay attention to the sounds we encounter every day, to notice the regular patterns of the diurnal and seasonal cycles, to be surprised by tiny, distant voices, or to enter into the cacophony of any moment until it expands to reveal its rhythms and tonalities, is to become more fully present where we are. Being present in the moment is not a simple task.

Bernhard Leitner 1987

Le Cylindre Sonore is sound architecture embedded in a bamboo garden, sunken landscape in the Parisian Parc de la Villette. Coming from the park, one descends a long stairway into the sound space before actually entering the garden. The sound that can be heard from the outside attracts the passersby, inviting them to stop and focus on the static and stationary form. The cylindrical space allows a concentrated

listening of the place, a contemplative rediscovery of oneself in transcendence of the place.

The inner diameter of the double cylinder is 10 m. the height 5 m. The ring is a resonance chamber, which consolidates the sound by means of weight and tension of the curved surfaces. From each concrete element, water forms narrow rivulets into the basin, which encloses the ground of the cylinder space like an island. The hushing sound distracts from the sounds of the urban environment, neutralizing the space. The rivulets acoustically tune the inner space.

Additional notes:

Behind the eight perforated concrete elements, three loudspeakers have been mounted vertically like a column. The circular space between the two curved walls is a functional space for the maintenance of the loudspeakers. It provides access to the control room under the ground.

They are a prerequisite for the acoustic sensors and cells, ears, skin, the body and the brain being able to listen in a concentrated way.

*Sound spaces are constructed, developed and varied in the *Cylindre sonore* between the sound columns behind the eight perforated concrete elements, i.e., between 24 loudspeakers. These are temporal spaces. Statically drifting, room-filling sound-tissue, circular supporting sound lines tracing the shape of the architectural instrument, prickling, high-pitched sounds along the envelope walls contrast with the archaic static of the concrete cylinder. Massive, heavy or light, transparent spatial bracings, guitar tissue as static filler material, material with a delayed reverberation time softens the concrete.*

Think about how our mouths emit sound that can be heard internally and at a distance as well as filling its own space. The voice projects perception into the world because it shares sound with hearing. The sound of the voice simultaneously returns resonating in the cranial cavity and in the union of utterance and audition.

A second example is a Fluxus work by Yoko Ono.

Jrq Bell Trumpets 2004-2005

Jupiter (0:023)

Da Bules (0:23)

AHHH (0:22)

These bell trumpets explore breadth and sound, words and rhythm; that sea of sound we swim in intuitively at first and then slowly learn to apply appropriate dictionary associations that define distinct meaning to the sounds becoming a language. Our urge to make meaning of linguistic noise; the rhythmic, syllabic and melodic structures of language is very strong. I am interested in the characteristics of sound that incorporate and envelop us, creating situations of immersion. Even young song-birds first listen to adults to memorize their songs. It is be at least a month or longer before the bird produces anything close to the mature song of an adult. The youngster listens to himself practice, babbling until he perfects the match between what he has memorized and what he hears himself sing. If you prevent a young bird from hearing an adult or practicing he develops abnormal songs because he has no access to memory.

Another Example is -*Wink Talk from Yoko Ono, Grapefruit-*

An intensity of a wink is:

Two cars smashed head on.

A storm turned into a breeze.

A water drop from a loose faucet.

Sound has properties beyond its powers of evocation that are actual spatial physical things we can feel and locate with our ears, sometimes with our bodies. Sound has physical size, actual dimensions in feet or meters, as well as density, vibrancy, rhythms and textures. Walking through it in its resonant state provides an experience similar to perusing a landscape from the inside, with all of your body instead of from the outside with just your eyes. It shows us the near field. Like a solid it has volumes, edges, planes and full nesses, flat nesses, round nesses, and hollows. To consciously pay attention to the sounds we encounter every day, to notice the regular patterns of the diurnal and seasonal cycles, to be surprised by tiny, distant voices, or to enter into the cacophony of any moment until it expands to reveal its

rhythms and tonalities, is to become more fully present where we are.

Elephants 1999 –2004 (0:23)

The Elephant Listening Project (ELP) was founded in 1999 with the primary focus on African forest elephants, a unique species (*Roca et al. 2001*) (which lives in deep equatorial rainforests where sightings are rare and visual censusing is impossible). An acoustic monitoring system is used to follow elephants' vocal patterns. The rate of elephant vocalizations in acoustic recordings is directly related to elephant abundance (*Payne et al. 2003, Thompson et al. in prep-a*) in terms of the size and composition of their populations. Unlike existing censusing methods, acoustic monitoring provides continuous information on the spatial and temporal patterns of elephant activity in forests. Acoustic monitoring can be used to determine migration patterns, hotspots of elephant activity, and responses to rapid environmental or habitat changes resulting from logging, mining, or human settlements. Poaching for ivory, bush meat hunting, habitat loss and the constraints of current methods used to monitor forest elephant populations (*Blake & Hedges 2004*) increasingly endangers Forest elephants in Asia and Africa.

Sped Up Vocalizations (1:13)

A number of researchers have studied speeded-up recordings of elephant vocalizations and discovered there is a component in the elephant's voice that is infrasonic – below the range of human hearing. Like whales, elephants may be using low-frequency sounds to communicate with each other over long distances, allowing researchers to identify the presence of elephants over large areas without visual sightings. Improvements to monitoring will allow evaluation of current conservation efforts and provide information critical to the future of this species

First listen to the elephant calls at normal speed – just on the edge of what most humans can detect in the low-frequency range. Then listen to the same vocalizations at three times normal speed, which places the low-frequency sound well within the range of our hearing.

Insects 2006

2 Researchers (1:50)

Bugs (1:49)

Rex Cocroft -- a researcher at the University of Missouri-Columbia -- studies

treehoppers, a diverse group of plant-feeding insects that spend their brief lives (a few months) living on plant stems. They use sound to communicate with one another. This thorn-like insect is quite small and usually so well camouflaged that it is often ignored.

Using a fairly crude device -- a hairclip attached to a phonograph cartridge, with a wire leading to a recorder -- Cocroft has captured the vibrating signals between treehoppers that may indicate some kind of social behavior, such as a group decision making process. He is interested in the evolution of social communication, and believes the insects are "talking" to each other most of the time.

Illustrating how sound is a powerful transmitter of messages regarding our communal actions and beliefs. We are reminded of the importance toward our environment and the care and attention we should give to our surroundings and fellow inhabitants. When considering transmitting sound, I am reminded of the renewed interest in urban phonography, field recording and many of the psycho geographic ideas of Guy Debord, a key Situationist theorist.

Situationists 1957 – 60'S

Guy Debord made a series of maps of Paris after he had walking aimlessly around the streets and alleys of the city, turning and acting directly as his mood and behavior influenced him. One day it is said that he slowly followed the lead of a turtle he had on a lease through the city. Recording these wanderings, The resultant map reflected non-scientific means that were subjective, records of the emotions given by a particular place, mental maps, street-level desires and perceptions rather than a synoptic totality of the city's fabric. Debord's maps located his own play and representation within the recessive nooks and crannies of everyday life. This series of works that served as a critique of their urban environment thus increased public consciousness and promoted direct action and systematic participation in everyday life. They were less interested in art objects and stylistic concerns than with the engaging life situations and social mapping alternative itineraries and subverting dominant readings and authoritarian regimes.

John Cage 1952 (1:57)

Curiously while the Situationist were busy mapping Paris, John Cage was simultaneously creating William's Mix. Consider how the world teems with resonance and reverberations, and in fact, is at no point free of them. The result has and continues

to provide terrain, which artists have developed into the musicalization of sound. Most familiar perhaps is, John Cage who championed noise, the use of recorded and transmitted sound and listening. His first tape recorded work, Williams Mix (1952), part of the Music for Magnetic Tape project, consisted of minutely and obliquely cut pieces of magnetic audiotape, chosen and spliced together through chance operations from a stock of 500 to 600 recorded sounds in six categories – city sounds, country sounds, electronic sounds, manually produced sounds, wind-produced sounds, and small sounds requiring amplification to be heard with the others.

Additional Notes:

The score is 192 pages. Each page has two systems comprising eight lines each. These eight lines are eight tracks of tape and they are pictured full-size so that the score constitutes a Approximately 600 recordings are necessary to make a version of this piece. The composing means were chance operations derived from the I-Ching. Editing and splicing the recorded tapes to complete this four-minute-long sound montage took approximately a year with the assistance of assistance of Earl Brown and David Tudor. The premiere performance used 4 stereo tape recorders and 8 speakers.

Christian Marclay – 1989

In contrast to the “noise” of John Cage’s compositions is Christian Marclay’s “*Tape Fall*” completed in 1989. It which links the experiences of hearing and seeing. The take-up reel of a reel-to-reel tape deck has gone missing. The tape itself, a recording of gurgling water, falls in great looping masses to the ground, becoming a melancholic hymn to material degradation of sound in the environment. The sound of cascading water puns with the falling of the tape—but it is also a monument to entropy. That sound, is irrecoverable, gone in the moment of its playing; all that is left is an ever-growing heap of spent noise. There is no way to stop sound and have sound. Unlike being able to stop a moving picture camera and hold one frame fixed on the screen. If sound waves are stopped there is only silence, no sound at all.

Charles Dodge – 1970 (0:29)

Continuing to explore the spatial sounds of the landscape the Earth’s Magnetic Field comes to mind. This composition by Charles Dodge, one of the most promi-

nent composer's of synthesized computer music utilizes normally inaccessible information, gathered graphed, and mapped by scientists tabulating changes made by the suns radiation upon the Earths magnetic field. This project is a collaboration between Dodge and three geophysicists at the Goddard Institute for Space Studies at Columbia University in NYC. The graphs are referred to as Bartels Musical Diagrams, resembling music notation. Each note in the Bartel diagram represented three hours of data, resulting in eight notes per day.

Additional Notes:

Using figures from the year 1961, one of the NASA scientists made a five-line musical staff representation of the data, and mapped onto it both a 7-note C scale and a 12-note chromatic scale.

The pitches were given to Dodge. He was to play with timbre and rhythm. In the summer of 1970, he began experimenting on an IBM mainframe computer at Columbia University using a version of MUSIC 4BF in Fortran, written by Godfrey Winham. Dodge used comb filters to experiment with timbre in the first part of the piece, and Allpass filters in the second part. Earths Magnetic Field was the first explicit use of comb filters in music; previous to this, comb filters had been used only to simulate reverberation. Dodge created two different algorithms for the organization of rhythm. Earths Magnetic Field was a turning point in his musical life.

When we talk about land we must talk about history and memory. All space has been lived prior to our encounter and within that space there are memories. Somehow in marking places and spaces, we are participating in reclaiming them.

Annea Lockwood 1967 - 1982

Urban (0:35)

The River Archive is a recording of rivers/streams and springs that started back in about 1966-67. It is a response to being exposed to the powerful New Zealand rivers growing up and subsequently ideas exploring the use of sound such as riverine environments as energy-form that potentially heals the body. It is a way of studying water sounds and their physiological effects. The goal is to record all the rivers in the world, which presently include Great Britain, New Zealand, Australia, the U.S., Austria, India, and Canada. Contributions have been made by friends and relatives. direction at once: I am at the center of my auditory world, which envelopes me,

establishing me at a kind of core sensation and existence.

Andrea Polli 2000

(0:40)

(0:36/1:04)

Another artist, Andrea Polli, translates scientific data into sound in real time. Her projects explore air pollution and climate changes that contribute to global warming trends. N. is an artistic visualization and sonification of near real-time Arctic data that maps an ongoing dramatic warming trend over the last decade, which may accelerate global climate changes. The N. installation expresses the isolation and environmental extremes of this remote region and addresses the importance of the region to the global ecosystem. This evolving composition approximates windswept desolation. It has a palpable sense of melancholy and loss, similar to that of a whale song.

Additional Notes:

Data and images for N. have been provided by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's (NOAA) Arctic research program. A portion of the raw sound material used in N. comes from live sferics (short for atmospheric), electromagnetic transmissions of lightning from the INSPIRE VLF (very low frequency) receiver at NASA's Marshall Space Flight Center. N. also makes use of a custom, open source object for Max/MSP called Datareader created by Andrea Polli and Kurt Ralske.

I will end with a work I recently completed, AWI-SPEK a life affirming public amenity. It sits on the north side of a bridge that connects facilities at a mental health facility in Charlotte, North Carolina. Like the bridge that connects the facilities at Billingsley Campus, this refuge area is symbolic of the connections patients make within themselves as they regain their health. Presently, treatment programs include but are not limited to exterior experiences such as walks on the campus grounds and interior ones such as listening to tape recorded sounds in nature. The refuge will provide a place to observe the cycles of woodland life and reaffirm patient activities while preserving and highlighting the ecosystem of indigenous plants and songbirds. You may know that songbirds are an indicator species for ecosystem stability and metaphorically are present in the stories of almost every human culture. Habitat loss is the single biggest threat to songbird populations.

The area is a destination for clients in therapy sessions taking a walk, or a place to listen to sounds of the environment amplified by “ear trumpet” sculptures as well as a site to eat lunch, read, and wait for an appointment. Additionally, educational programming structured around the resources of the woodland environment create platforms of exchange such as, bird walks that highlight sightings in order to identify and count the number of species or join the dawn chorus to witness the singing. Other possibilities include performances by poets, musicians, or storytellers and presentations and conversations by environmental youth groups, biologists on habitat, relationship to place, and sustainable living concepts that would integrate the arts, sciences and the humanities. This programming serves both the staff and consumers, as well as bridge the gap between the surrounding community and the campus by the sponsorship of events that encourage participation.

I have two thoughts I would like to end with, one didactic and the other incongruous. The first as I have mentioned previously is that sounds in the natural world can be important indicators of the health and diversity of a natural habitat. Attention to them is but one more window that might help us to become wise enough to face the future of our environments that we simultaneously inhabit and consume. Secondly, I am reminded by the words of John Cage how the relationship between space and human activity is very subtle and constantly evolving. *“the irony of snow falling is that it produces the conditions for listening closely but then absorbs the sounds that might be heard.”*

Thank you for your attention and this opportunity to share these thoughts.

Jardins, nouveaux paysages: la puissance du regard

Le jardin est le théâtre du temps avec son horizon visuel ; il reflète l'activité du démiurge. L'homme est doté de l'habileté pour dépasser le besoin et dominer la nature. Il cultive la terre et produit de la culture, marque l'espace qu'il remplit. Avec l'art, il projette sa figure éphémère au-delà du passage du temps dans une présence de qualité : il crée et marque de son empreinte son lieu d'habitation, qu'il perfectionne grâce à sa liberté vis-à-vis de la nature, grâce à l'art, qui fixe l'identité à travers le temps.

Les jardins, lieux évocateurs, sont de splendides réceptacles du mythe, barrière que l'homme même a érigée contre la mort, caractère temporaire de son existence, pour s'ouvrir à la temporalité de l'histoire et de la nature.

Chaque jardin est parcouru par un langage, un récit par images à l'impact plus ou moins percutant sur le spectateur selon les figures représentées et par les émotions. L'art des jardins est le résultat de l'action créatrice de l'homme. Chaque jardin est au centre d'un ensemble de relations : il n'imité ni ne copie la réalité, mais expose un monde et sa vision. Un monde en continuelle transformation. Si nous tenons compte de l'évolution de l'art, nous comprenons bien que le jardin n'est pas le point de départ, l'espace de l'origine de l'homme dans le sens de sa naissance, mais l'arrivée, la conquête de la demeure, c'est-à-dire la maîtrise de la nature. Le jardin reflète le contrôle de la nature et l'affirmation de l'art à travers le langage culturel

d'éléments végétaux. L'art des jardins exprime la vie d'une communauté avec les mêmes instruments que la poésie, en utilisant les éléments végétaux à la place des mots. Les jardins dévoilent alors les différentes visions du monde. Leurs dessins géométriques ou paysagés reflètent la société qui leur est relative.

Miroir de l'absolutisme, la géométrie rigide devient l'image d'une attitude tyrannique. Le grand parc de Versailles, métaphore végétale de l'Ancien Régime, manifeste le désir grandiose et ancien du domaine de l'homme sur la nature.

Un style différent caractérise le parc anglais où la main de l'homme ne doit pas apparaître pour favoriser l'image de la nature libre qui accueille l'histoire avec sa mise en scène. L'idéal esthétique sentimental favorise la fascination du gothique et du sublime. L'homme lutte aussi contre l'oubli avec son tombeau, figure de la continuité et forme architecturale de la mort : la réalité éphémère de la vie humaine s'écoule entre histoire et ruine.

Le contrôle sur la transformation des lieux emprunte en même temps le chemin de la réhabilitation et celui de la recherche de formes nouvelles, même avec d'anciennes figures. Les politiques territoriales planent aujourd'hui entre la protection et la création. Les nouveaux paysages sont des domaines d'expérimentation, à cause de la dégradation du territoire et de la perte de la trame narrative : un pari pour l'avenir et un défi pour l'homme et ses excès. Les jardins sont aujourd'hui des lieux où l'essence tactile est toujours vivante et où l'on peut découvrir des nouvelles formes pour accueillir l'incommensurable profondeur des paysages. Deux exemples comme modèle d'aménagement : « Cardada », de Paolo Bürgi, et « La Pratique démesurable », de Bernard Lassus.

L'observatoire géologique de Paolo Bürgi est un nouveau jardin : un « jardin du temps » où le passé devient contemporain à l'observateur. L'imaginaire est posé dans un large horizon des espaces et des temps géologiques. On peut ainsi lire les différents niveaux du paysage dans le temps : celui de la nature et celui de l'homme. La visibilité montre le cours des événements : elle offre une image sans limites.

Un vaste regard dépasse les limites d'une activité du jardin répétitif et sans aucune idée esthétique. Il faut réinventer un nouveau jardin avec la récupération de l'imagination – avec laquelle on peut découvrir la profondeur de notre passé. Une pensée paysagiste doit tisser une constellation de rapports, recoudre les morceaux d'un paysage pour les conduire dans les jardins qui sont sous nos yeux. La pratique paysagiste de Lassus transforme le monde en jardins pour rendre tactile la profondeur du regard dans un jeu marbré et de couleur.

Fernando Pessoa nous révèle cette profondeur : « Les dieux ne sont pas morts : notre faculté de les voir est morte. Nous avons cessé de les voir » (*Obras em Prosa*, de Fernando Pessoa. *Textos filosóficos e esotéricos*, Europa-América, Lisboa 1987, p. 134). Ces dieux sont les paysages – comme Plutarque nous le révèle – et ils sont visibles et courants, toujours en transformation. Le voile de brume se dissipe dans les jardins à travers la restitution du rêve avec l'utilisation de l'art moderne. Encore Pessoa : « Pour résumer dans un mot la principale caractéristique de l'art moderne : le mot est rêve. »

Les paysages ne sont pas morts. Ils sont des rêves difficiles à saisir – et là, c'est l'expérience de Bernard Lassus à nous démontrer la dimension du rêve dans les jardins et les paysages : sa théorie de paysage aboutit au jardin comme perspective de paysage, où les infrastructures, enracinées dans la profondeur, s'ouvrent au local dans l'évolution rapide de la globalisation.

Un paysage est délimité par son horizon visible, compréhensible à travers le regard, qui est moteur d'une pratique d'aménagement des lieux fondés sur un imaginaire incommensurable. Cette pratique est en même temps théorie. Elle entre dans les lieux pour en cueillir la présence des objets et de leurs relations qui donnent l'identité à un paysage, et pour saisir son image univoque, son identité, sa profondeur. Caractère qu'il faut récupérer pour que le futur puisse exister.

Le rapport entre objet et paysage est complexe, équivoque et réciproquement destructif. L'utilisation généralisée du terme « paysage » et la recherche continuelle de sa définition est la preuve de ce qu'il est difficile de saisir les articulations et les liens entre les objets.

Les objets forment une trame. Le paysage n'est pas un empilement de choses, un simple récipient. Les objets composent un tout et se valorisent mutuellement par les relations qu'ils instaurent entre eux, et non par une superposition réciproque. S'ils se déplacent, la trame en est modifiée. L'élément singulier ne doit pas être séparé de l'universel dans lequel il se place. Un paysage est une image univoque aux multiples éléments ; une image avec sa spécificité, avec son caractère particulier. Une image déterminée par la *relation paysagère* formée par la place que chaque objet y tient en rapport avec les autres éléments.

Lassus élabore une pratique de paysage, où lieu et sujet créateur sont étroitement connexes ; une démarche transférable dans toute réalité, affinée dans le temps par l'expérience et la réflexion continuelle sur les traces d'une méthode. Un processus qui n'élabore pas des objets, mais des relations, donc, des rapports de paysage : il

élabore des paysages. S'ouvre ainsi une esthétique enracinée dans les lieux et fondée sur l'imaginaire. Une esthétique comme pratique de paysage.

Les objets dans un paysage sont en relation entre eux en faisant une trame des événements : le paysage n'est pas un simple conteneur, mais il est composé d'une relation *paysagère* entre chaque élément et l'universel dans lequel il est placé. Nous pouvons parler des événements, des trames et des relations *paysagères* pour entrer dans les paysages pour les dévoiler. C'est la condition pour les comprendre et, alors, donner des solutions. Et de là la question : « Qu'est-ce qui arrive quand quelque chose est un paysage ? » C'est la question qui nous permet de donner un sens aux nouveaux paysages.

Il faut créer les conditions optimales pour une *expérience du regard*. Le mot latin *experiri* montre une interaction objet/sujet. Il signifie entrer dans un lieu et éprouver des émotions par la découverte. L'expérience du regard est-elle possible avec la bonne visibilité de l'ensemble, c'est-à-dire la lisibilité de l'*ethos*, la maison, la demeure de l'homme dans sa totalité éthique ? Elle donne la possibilité de réfléchir sur le rapport de l'homme avec son environnement, pour connaître son action.

Voir, c'est connaître un paysage, le monde humain. Une culture sans limites s'ouvre devant nos yeux, alimentée par un principe de fond : le monde perceptible, reconnaissable et discernable avec la vue – espace du regard avec toute sa puissance, du visible et de l'invisible. Elle est totalement l'œuvre de l'homme, un panorama, une vision du tout dense de contenus et riche de symboles. Le paysage contemple ce panorama. Observer équivaut à mieux connaître son propre milieu et celui des autres : lire, comprendre sa propre culture et celle d'autrui.

Observer, c'est découvrir les *trames* des paysages dans la profondeur de leurs horizontalité et verticalité. Il faut montrer un paysage dans la totalité imaginaire et mythique, complexité visible et invisible dans les limites ouvertes de ses bords bien définis. Ils sont les bords où se rassemble une forme de connaissance liée au fait de voir et à la capacité de distinguer.

La bonne visibilité de l'ensemble est un concept fondamental pour la connaissance des lieux dans leur complexité. Comment construire cette visibilité ? Comment éclairer l'invisible, c'est-à-dire l'œuvre cachée de l'homme ?

La réponse c'est le projet du monde humain avec sa bonne organisation, sa bonne lisibilité pour construire l'ensemble du tableau du territoire. L'homme marque l'espace qu'il remplit avec l'art, c'est-à-dire la liberté de transformer la nature. Il projette sa figure éphémère du vivant au-delà du passage du temps dans une présence

de qualité. Nous l'avons déjà dit. Une présence à souligner. Sa vie est une activité incessante. Il construit, habite et pense. L'action est simultanée et continue. Elle est éthique; elle crée et caractérise l'*ethos*, c'est-à-dire le lieu de l'habiter, son environnement, son domicile, sa demeure.

Cela, c'est son paysage, son projet du monde humain, caractérisé par la double, multiple contemporanéité. Miroir de la culture, c'est un monde marqué par la présence du présent et du passé; double, multiple contemporanéité qui accueille le mythe, la mémoire de l'ancien et l'action du présent.

Qu'est ce que la totalité d'une culture ? Elle est mythes, traditions, valeurs, normes, langages, symboles, comportements, mentalités, institutions, systèmes économiques et sociétaux. Ils sont tous en transformations. Ils constituent les événements qui sont arrivés, passés dans un lieu. Il faut les rendre évidents avec les trames d'une constellation du visible, avec ses relations qui forment les éléments particuliers d'un universel qui est une image unique, constituée par les éléments du lieu.

Les paysages sont des réalités vivantes en perpétuelle mutation. Ils sont des conteurs du mythe. Le jardin, mythe lui-même par son existence, le consolide. Celui-ci est une occasion mythique unique pour récupérer l'identité du lieu dans un contexte globalisant. Ceci, nous le rappelons, est la mémoire réelle du paysage.

La Convention européenne du paysage revalorise l'essence éthico-politique de celui-ci. Chaque lieu appartient à ses concitoyens qui ne peuvent pas en subir les transformations sans y participer. Une déclaration éthique fondamentale reconnaît un rôle actif des habitants pour les décisions qui concernent leurs paysages. Ils ont l'occasion de s'identifier avec les territoires où ils vivent et travaillent, et de fusionner avec le milieu global de leur vie dans l'ensemble de ses caractères ; avec son histoire, ses traditions et, surtout, sa culture. La relation avec le lieu forme l'identité personnelle, le sens d'appartenir à ce lieu et la conscience des diversités locales, facteurs éducatifs de la personne dans la société.

Les paysages doivent être considérés dans leur globalité, à travers le sens originel d'*ethos*: le lieu qui contient la totalité de l'existence, la vie active. Son rapport intégrant le mythe est bien dit par Cesare Pavese. Le lieu mythique est « le nom commun, universel, le pré, le bois, la grotte, le rivage, la maison ». Les contenus éthiques et esthétiques singuliers en font un lieu de lecture à reculons du monde, selon la leçon de Marc Bloch. Les politiques paysagères et, par conséquent, tout projet, ne peuvent ignorer ces caractères et doivent viser chaque particularité, en allant de la pure et simple conservation à la véritable création, en passant par la protection, la

gestion et la planification.

Pour conclure, nous vous proposons 5 mots clefs pour le projet du paysage :

- 1) *Visibilité* : l'espace du regard ;
- 2) *Temporalité* : l'art (la liberté), la nature, l'histoire, le patrimoine ;
- 3) *Temporanéité* : l'homme, sa vie ;
- 4) *Accessibilité* : la possibilité d'entrer dans la temporalité et dans la temporanéité pour découvrir le mythe ;
- 5) *Narration* : un parcours ouvert, contemporain, c'est-à-dire contemporain avec tous les temps, qui part du passé et regarde vers le futur du territoire.

Allen S. Weiss

10 Ways to Look at a Mountain

Epigraphy

“The void attracts: it isolates our personality, it places us at the center of the universe.”

Alberto Savinio, *Dico a te, Clio*

Photography

Roussillon, Friday 17 November 1999, 4:20 P.M. The only white in the landscape is the peak of Mont Ventoux, rising 1912 meters above the plains of the Vaucluse. Whatever the season, this mountain appears snowcovered, hardly what one expects to see in Provence. Seen from the village of Roussillon, it organizes the picturesque-ness of the place by providing an inexorable and singular focal point, and it is rare that it doesn't, in our epoch of infinite photographic representation, solicit at least a casual snapshot. I stroll to the car to get the camera, return, and take one picture, adding to an infinite number of quickly forgotten photographs scattered around the globe.

A mere five minutes later, approaching clouds mask the sun and throw a vast shadow on the mountain so that the white peak disappears, and then mountain and sky merge as the upper limits of the Ventoux are almost immediately obscured by a cloud bank. The mountain has disappeared! It is almost as if the mountain didn't wish to be photographed, resisted representation, wanted to withdraw. The Ventoux

is unlike Mount Fuji, everpresent in Japanese culture, even when invisible; a mountain of inexhaustible beauty and confounding grace; an absolute object which is the pure and exceedingly complex symbol according to which every other symbol, every other image in Japan. For on that day, Mont Ventoux appeared as an empty sign. Empty in its difference from the rest of the landscape, a vast, strange natural monument to something unstated or unknown, its peak a beacon without a message (*sign as analogue*: unity in a continuum, object in a system, relative difference). Empty due to its sudden and frequent disappearances (*sign as digital*: unqualified alternation, on / off, one / zero, visible / invisible.) An object needs to disappear in order to become a symbol; yet it is as if the absence of the Ventoux somehow signalled its presence—paradoxically, an inexpressible plenitude and an unimaginable emptiness—and nothing more. Mute semaphore, not living metaphor. Mont Ventoux appeared that day as a pure, active principle, a secretive manifestation of *natura naturans*. What follows is an account not — as would be the case in fairytales or myths — about what the mountain says, but rather about its inscrutable silence.

Iconography

In the entire history of European art, no major painter has depicted the Ventoux. The only example I have discovered in five years of research — and one can hardly say that this is from the brush of a great master — is *Le couronnement de la Vierge* (1454) [The Coronation of the Virgin] by Enguerrand Quarton, now in the Musée de Villeneuve-lès-Avignon. “Rome,” to the left, is actually Avignon, while “Jerusalem,” to the right, is nothing but Villeneuve-lès-Avignon! Behind this transposed Rome we see a small mound that is actually the Ventoux. But why shrink this glorious, stupifying, mysterious mountain?

Mythology

As Petrarch prepared to ascend Mont Ventoux on 26 April 1336, he was given a warning: “We came across an elderly shepherd on a slope of the mountain who made every effort with many words to keep us from continuing our climb, saying that fifty years earlier, driven by a like youthful motivation, he had climbed to the very top and had brought back from there nothing but repentance, weariness, and his body and clothing torn by stones and bushes, and that no one had been known before or since to dare undertake a similar climb.” The prophetic words of this unidentified shepherd constitute the earliest extant record of Mont Ventoux, a nega-

tive depiction of the mountain, suggesting desolation, emptiness, danger. We neither know his name nor celebrate his exploit, but his warning should not be forgotten, since in a strange way it informs the future history of the mountain. This shepherd offers as common sense what theorists both past and future would characterize in the most certain of terms: the sublime. Lucretius, in *De Rerum Natura*, characterizes mountains as the waste places of the world. This notion reached its limit in a now nearly forgotten work that was immensely influential on the romantic theory of the sublime, Thomas Burnet's *The Sacred Theory of the Earth* (1684), in which the author attempts to reconcile biblical interpretation with scientific discovery:

There is nothing in Nature more shapeless and ill-figur'd than an old Rock or Mountain ... if you look upon an Heap of them together, or a mountainous Country, they are the greatest Examples of Confusion that we know in Nature; no Tempest or Earthquake puts Things into more Disorder.

In short, mountains are chaotic, and chaos is ugly and evil. We shouldn't climb mountains, but flee them.

Theology

On the evening of his famed ascent, Petrarch wrote to his confessor, Dionigio da Borgo San Sepulcro, from the town of Malaucène at the foot of Mont Ventoux — the highest point in Provence, visible from nearly everywhere in the region, seemingly the prototype of the sacred mountain. The letter has become one of the most famous in European history, and is often cited as one of the major sources of Renaissance humanism. The text is both highly descriptive and wonderfully allegorical: the path to the mountain's peak is labyrinthine, the ascent difficult, the view breathtaking, the conquest revelatory. The verticality of the monolith has always been a mark of the sacred: from the tumuli and cairns of the pagans through the holy mountains of the great polytheistic religions, culminating in those peaks sacred to the monotheistic faiths, the mountain is the axis mundi, connecting heaven, earth, and underworld. *Uncover the layers of metaphor incrusting upon a landscape, and one will find a god.* And so Petrarch did. For visibility is but a metaphor for vision, and Petrarch sought loftier things. Suddenly remembering that he had with him a copy of Saint Augustine's *Confessions* given to him by his confessor, he opens it at random, and reads: "And they go to admire the summits of mountains and the vast billows of the sea and the broadest rivers and the expanses of the ocean and the revolutions of the stars and they overlook themselves." As is so often the case,

the mountain manifests its *genius loci*, the spirit of the place, through a revelation: the topos of this revelation is precisely the point where mountain and sky meet, a point of mystical fusion of the elements. Attaining the peak motivates the climber to abandon his physical situation and reorient himself towards a transcendental state. The world needs to disappear for the inner vision to reveal itself. The hyper-real becomes the unreal, evaporating into the mystical absolute.

Petrarch's inner vision was preconditioned by the Bible, as refracted through Saint Augustine. But for Petrarch, the revelation reveals a double effacement: that of *the mountain itself before the soul* (for what is higher is inner), and that of *the soul before its god* (for what is inner is sacred). It is as if the mountain catapulted Petrarch into transcendence. Along with the mountain disappears the vanity of the world. For even the highest mountain is ephemeral, its grandeur sheer vanity. Such is a well tempered transcendence, where sublimation takes the form of dematerialization and iconoclasm, both manifested in opposition to the mountain.

As a devout Christian, Petrarch cannot sacralize Mont Ventoux, as people of other faiths had done before him. Nor can he make a sacrifice on the mountain, for the biblical era of sacrifice is past. So instead, *he sacrifices the mountain itself*, a secret sacrifice to his god, to his poetry, to his soul. The mountain was abolished for the sake of the imagination.

Was it this disappearance that accounted for the fact that for the following six centuries there existed no major representation, whether literary or pictorial, of the Mont Ventoux? Or was there something about the Ventoux itself, a magic mountain, that prohibited such representation?

Petrarch made Mont Ventoux disappear precisely so as to escape from the symbolic web of the sacred mountain (Biblical, Augustinian, Dantesque) which would have forced his poetic efforts into a spiritual mold. Petrarch would circumvent, indeed dissimulate, God's *pneuma* to pursue his own poetic breath. The realism that permeated his account of Mont Ventoux would be transformed in his poetry, where mountains become symbolic or emblematic, mere silhouettes to decorate the emotional landscape. The Ventoux was Petrarch's sacrifice, and it would remain his invisible monument. Never again in his poetry or essays or correspondance would he mention the Ventoux. Furthermore, he chose as his residence Fontaine-de-Vaucluse, one of the rare places in the Vaucluse region from which Mont Ventoux is invisible. Petrarch's discourse *on* the mountain, his discourse *of* the mountain, his discourse *against* the mountain, would be the very precondition of his poetry.

Epistemology

In his letter on the ascent of Mont Ventoux, Petrarch's citation from Augustine's *Confessions*, "And they go to admire the summits of mountains...", was transformed, above all else, into an allegory to express the state of Petrarch's soul. The "sacrifice" of Mont Ventoux was a precondition of his self revelation and self-expression. But what did these very same lines mean to Augustine? The saint's state of wonder that men, in their fascination with the world around them, might overlook themselves, is in fact continued by the following:

They do not marvel at the thought that while I have been mentioning all these things, I have not been looking at them with my eyes, and that I could not even speak of mountains or waves, rivers or stars, which are things that I have seen, or of the ocean, which I know only on the evidence of others, unless I could see them in my mind's eye, in my memory, and with the same vast spaces between them that would be there if I were looking at them in the world outside myself.

What Petrarch elides is the fact that this citation appears, in the tenth book of the *Confessions*, within the context of Augustine's analysis of memory, *not* of perception. The mountain in question is unreal, a mere appearance: it exists not in the world only as a sensory image imprinted on the mind, recalled as memory. *The true panopticon is not the mountain, but the power of the imagination.* And yet, however abstract this particular passage on sensory experience and its resultant memory may appear within the context, for Augustine it is imbued with both a profound attachment to spiritual transcendence and a passionate, pathetic dramatization of earthly love. To understand this, one need only turn back to the eighth book of the *Confessions*, the culminating scene of his fierce inner struggle between earthly temptation and spiritual truth. In the summer of the year 386, as he begins to lose control of himself, as his speech disintegrates and his gestures become uncontrollable, as the very existence of the world becomes uncertain. "I was dying a death that would bring me to life." He takes refuge in the small garden of his house in Milan, which becomes the scene of his grief, his madness, his transformation, his salvation. At the height of anguish and despair, in a torrent of tears, he went out into the garden and sat under a fig tree, where he heard the voice of a little child from a nearby house repeat, over and over, as if speaking to him alone: "Take up and read." Augustine opened the Bible at random and fell upon the Pauline epistles, reading words as if addressed expressly to himself: "Not in revelling and drunkenness, not in lust and

wantonness, not in quarrels and rivalries. Rather, arm yourselves with the Lord Jesus Christ; spend no more thought on nature and nature's appetites." He was saved, and received his baptism at the hands of Saint Ambrose in 387. Augustin entered the City of God through the portal of his garden.

And it was another garden — that of the house he shared with his mother in Ostia, awaiting their sea voyage to return to Africa that same year — that would be the scene of Augustine's greatest pathos.

As the flame of love burned stronger in us and raised us higher towards the eternal God, our thoughts ranged over the whole compass of material things in their various degrees, up to the heavens themselves, from which the sun and the moon and the stars shine down upon the earth. Higher still we climbed, thinking and speaking all the while in wonder at all that you have made. At length we came to our own souls and passed beyond them to the place of everlasting plenty, where you feed Israel for ever with the food of truth.

This ascent — which necessitated no mountain, which eliminated all body — resulted in a moment of total spiritual love for his mother and ecstatic mystical union with God. The soul of Augustine was transfigured, and his mother converted to Christianity. Five days later she died. *This* is precisely the ascent, the love, and the death, all occluded by the abstract considerations of memory in book ten, which is actually a profound philosophical work of mourning. For Augustine, it is not the garden that constitutes true sanctuary, but memory, that "vast, immeasurable sanctuary," containing earth and heaven, circumscribing the self. When in book ten Augustine relegates the entirety of the material world to memory, he does so from the position of one who has gained the spiritual world. The remembrance of the ascent evokes both the *specific* pathos regarding his mother's death augmented by the ecstasy of his mystical union with God, and the *general* sense of eschewing the vanity of the world, to celebrate true faith. The memory of the mountain in book ten is both part of his work of mourning, and a sign of his newfound faith. *This* sad and dramatic ascent is the secret behind Petrarch's revelation, the pathos masked by his own very different, very wordly longings.

Toponymy

It has long been believed that Mont Ventoux and the Montagne Sainte-Victoire, made famous by Cézanne, are connected by underground currents—that archetypal metaphor of unconscious intuition and creativity—to Fontaine-de-Vaucluse, and thus to each other. It is also believed that an entrance to hell is to be found

within caves on the face of each of these mountains. Here, the secret is in the name, for etymology often reveals destiny. Charles Rostaing, in his *Essai sur la toponymie en Provence* [Essay on the Toponymy of Provence] explains:

La racine VIN- "mountain" is well known: Trombetti cites Mount Vindius in Iberia where today we find Vignemale. In Provence two names of mountains refer to this root: Mont Ventoux (Vinturi) and the Montagne Sainte-Victoire, a late transcription of Ventùri. Both derive from a stem VIN-T-, like Vindius. We find this stem in certain place names in Provence.

For further evidence, consider the following etymological analysis of the Ventoux offered by Camille Jullian:

The Sainte-Victoire, that of Aix, derives, I believe, from a celtic or ligurian word such as Ventur, Venturius, or something similar. The primitive name of the mountain was never Victoria [...] When one finds a mountain under its true local and provençal form [...] it is called Ventùri or Sancto Ventùri, and never otherwise [...] I thus consider the name Ventùri, from the Latin Ventur or Venturius, as the true and primitive name of the Montagne Sainte-Victoire [...] Ventùri and Ventur are one and the same. And in the past the distance between these two words diminishes even more. On maps the Ventoux was called Venturius and, during the Roman era, Vintur [...] Sainte-Victoire and Mont Ventoux [...] both bore the same celtic or ligurian name at their origin, a most appropriate name for those summits from which the clouds and the wind seem to arise.

What we can conclude is that *Mont Ventoux and the Montagne Sainte-Victoire are one and the same!* In every place there is an absent place, and every place is always the symbol of another. Here in Provence, north and south, celtic and ligurian, resonate with each others' myths. Not only are Mont Ventoux (near the northern limit of Provence) and the Montagne Sainte-Victoire (near its southern limit) one and the same, but *all the mountains of Provence are named Ventoux!* This is *metaphor* in the literal and prolific sense of the word: *metapherein*, transfer, change. The Sainte-Victoire loses its name and gains a false identity. The Ventoux keeps its name but hides its true identity, driving away all those who wish to sing its praise, always seeking invisibility, ever eschewing representation. *The Ventoux is not only itself: it is also a generality, a tautology, the very mountain of mountains.*

Meteorology

René Char, writing of the Ventoux, remarks that, "*At the summit of the mount, amongst the pebbles, terra-cotta trumpets of the men of the ancient white frosts chirped like little eagles.*" Among the many objects sold to the British museum in 1901 by the

French researcher and collector L. Morel are to be found two terra-cotta trumpets discovered during an excavation on the peak of Mont Ventoux. These horns, similar to many others found in the region, are sorts of primitive megaphones of Celtic origin, anciently used to herald the Spring. We don't know how were they ritually used? Perhaps they were blown *to drive away* the mistral — a small, short, pathetic human breath disproportionately pitted against that eternal, divine, powerful, maddening wind. Or perhaps they were sounded *in harmony with* the mistral, as an act of sympathetic magic, in order to divert some of the god's powers for human purposes. In either case, at the end of the rite they were violently shattered against the rocky peak of the Ventoux. Only one of these trumpets was ever found intact. What could this mean? Did one year bring a disaster that precluded the ritual, with the trumpet transfixed in its perfect form, like those tragically preserved objects eternally covered with lava and ash at Pompeii and Herculaneum? Did its wholeness imply a Spring that never came? Or perhaps at some point did people just stop bothering to announce the Spring, a moment that quietly announced the forgetting of yet another god?

Consider another, more theologically oriented etymological suggestion. As is popularly believed, and as meteorology well attests, Mont Ventoux is named after the northwest wind, as we learn from Marjorie Leach's *Guide to the Gods*: "Vintios, Vintius. A Celtic god of the wind identified with Pollux. Gaul." *The mountain and the wind are, paradoxically, one and the same.* Thus the trumpet that breathed the human wind was smashed against the mountain that bore the wind's very name. As god of the wind, Vinturius cannot be precisely localized. He is one of the rare gods whose essence is detachment from place. He is a god without an altar, without source or season, without a face. Paradoxically, the genius loci of Mont Ventoux is Vinturius, a god who does not inhabit the mountain, a god omnipresent in Provence, a god whose very essence is uprootedness, the detachment from place, from all places — a god who is everywhere and nowhere. The destiny of the Ventoux, and of the Sainte-Victoire, was to be the site of the struggle between two unlocalizable pneumatic gods, between two gods who manifest themselves as air, wind, breath, spirit: the now forgotten *Vinturius*, and the *Christian god*, whose far greater domain was ecumenical and seemingly universal. Thus the battle was immeasurably unequal: the perceptible pneuma of Vinturius was pure *unarticulated* wind, while the immaterial pneuma of the Christian god was the Word, the thundering word — that which separated the heavens from the earth and organized the originary chaos

from which our world arose — an *articulated* wind that demanded sublimation and worship, an articulated wind that we, speaking creatures, could easily identify with, could easily reproduce, could easily imitate. Vinturius, eloquent yet inarticulate, long forgotten because ineffable, lost the battle centuries ago. But by some quirk of history, Vinturius never quite lost its aerie hold on Mont Ventoux, that rare site which has resisted representation over the centuries. Perhaps he survived because as wind he was invisible, intermittent, inexorable, and it was at the Ventoux, equally unrepresentable, that he blew the strongest, in divine empathy with the mountain. *Ventoux, mirror of Vinturius*. Perhaps he survived because as wind he was almost silent, thus concealed: not thunder, but breath. Perhaps he survived because, as René Char believed, certain gods exist only through metaphor, and are thus always elsewhere.

Poetry

Perhaps the most beautiful expression of Mont Ventoux is the line from René Char's poem "Le Thor": *Le Mont Ventoux, miroir des aigles, était en vue*. [Mont Ventoux, mirror of the eagles, was in sight.] But what does this metaphor mean? Does the mountain somehow reveal the eagles to themselves? But this would be to denature the mountain. Are the eagles' shadows upon the peak their reflections? But this would be a weak metaphor, taking the less articulated shadow for the more defined reflection. Is it a matter of resemblance between the white heads of the eagles and the Ventoux's stunning white peak? But this would be to offer the least common visual denominator as the most striking image? Might the eagles harken back to those in the poet *Mistral's Calendau*?: "*Lis aiglo en gingoulant s'enaaron dins lis èr*" [The shrieking eagles rise in the air.] Char would certainly have had little motivation for alluding to the outmoded, overtraditional, musty poetic style and narrow regionalism of the *Felibres*. Might the eagle be a symbol for transcendence? Char was not one to use readymade metaphors. In a sense, the emptiest context creates the richest symbols, since the undecidability of meaning multiplies the potential complexity of semantic content. Thus the eagle appears here in the full glory of its symbolism: ascensional, flying above the clouds, it is a celestial sign of divine transcendence; sovereign, fixing the sun, it invokes the illumination of supersensible knowledge; vast wings outstretched, its form evokes both the holy cross and the lightning-flash; soaring, diving, disappearing beyond the horizon, it bears initiatory, tutelary, mantic powers; in the Bible, four of the angels described in Ezekiel's

vision bear both “the face of an eagle” and “the appearance of a flash of lightning” (*Ezekiel, 1:10*), yet the symbolic inversion of this figure also makes of it a sign of the Anti-Christ.

However, none of these readings is warranted by the context. In Char’s line, the stark syntax and minimal context create a polyvalent symbol in an open field of virtualities. The mirror, here identified with the Ventoux itself, is an archetypal figure of the chiasm (chiasmus), formed by the exact inversion of syntactic elements (AB/BA) so as to establish a reflective, reflexive structure. This makes of it an exemplary figure of mimesis. As Jean-François Lyotard explains, it is “the figure constitutive of the sensible, the figure constitutive of figures.” It is also transformative, a “magic” mirror, reflecting death in life, transcendence in immanence, the supersensible in the sensible. However, for such reversibility between object and image, between reality and appearance to exist, *the mirror must disappear, for only the broken mirror has its own visibility.*

In Char’s poem, the mirror is conflated with the mountain, which reflects nothing. It thus voids the mirror of its essence, creating a false chiasm. As for the Ventoux itself, its undetermined semantic content is already so meager as to reinforce the ambiguity. What at first appears to be a simple metaphor, graspable in its unity, is in fact equivocal, undeterminable, unstable. It represents an anxious space, uncertain, fluctuating in signification: the space of poetry, of language itself. The power of Char’s “mirror” resides precisely in its inexactitude, in the fact that it barely holds together, causing a linguistic instability that most appropriately expresses *a mountain that has always resisted revelation through metaphor.*

Autobiography

The late Gustaf Sobin, American born, lived in the Luberon for the last four decades of his life, just a few kilometers from La Coste, the chateau of the Marquis de Sade. His work — poetry, fiction, and essays, much of which is devoted to provençal art, landscape and toponymy — is imbued with the spirit, and the words, of Petrarch and Char. He wrote in a small hut overlooking the valley and the mountains, in full view of Mont Ventoux. Yet he never mentioned the Ventoux in his writings.

Sobin is a poet of breath and wind, immanence and void. He takes on Mallarmé’s dictum as his own: “everything I’ve created has been by *elimination*.” The seventh and final poem of Sobin’s series, “Odes of Estrangement,” concludes:

...oh blown weather
dis-
banded heart, whatever utters,
utters nothing, really. and makes of that
nothing —lyric— its
only
measure.

This is precisely the absolute poetic moment described by Gaston Bachelard, where the imagination projects the entirety of being: “When one goes so far, so high, one recognizes oneself to be in the state of *open imagination*.” Here, the “fluid architecture of each given instance,” as Sobin puts it, marks through its turbulent flow, through its unsubstantial substantiality, the origins of the word. Such a pneumatology is poetically liberatory, and the most extreme state of this atmospheric poetics, of this cosmic dynamics of the imagination, of this psychic pellucidity, is that of the tempest, as Gaston Bachelard explains: “It seems that the immense void, by suddenly finding an action, becomes a particularly clear image of cosmic anger. One may say that the furious wind is the symbol of *pure anger*, of anger without object, without pretext.” The mistral — that wind which drives humans and animals mad — is the hyperbolic instantiation of this cosmic anger. And the highest peak of the Ventoux, the Col des Tempêtes [Peak of Storms] is where the mistral blows the strongest.

I met Gustaf Sobin for the first time at his home in the Luberon on 28 November 2000. From his writing hut, Mont Ventoux was dazzlingly and gloriously visible on the horizon. In front of his house stands a seventeenth century borie, a small, domed, drystone shepherd’s shelter. In March 1993, while doing repairs on this structure, he discovered a damaged, rectangular chunk of conchitic limestone that had obviously been used some time in the distant past to repair a fault in the borie. This stone bears the dedication: “*V[i]nt[u]ri...*” The rest of the inscription is illegible. This fragment is the upper part of an altar to the god Vinturius, the top of which was slightly hollowed out, thus creating a miniature hearth, a focus, that point of concentration in which oblations to the god were burnt: wine, honey, myrrh, aromatic herbs. The smoke from this tiny altar would, ironically, almost make Vinturius visible for but a moment, rising in the fumes of the very offerings sent up to him, like a miniature djinn from a magic bottle. Visible, but hardly distinguishable. I share a destiny with the Ventoux, with Vinturius, a destiny of dispossession and

deracination, ephemerality and transition, a poetic destiny that Sobin paradoxically characterizes as one where, “...we articulate away from ourselves in a continuous elision towards.” As Sobin once inscribed one of his books to me, truth appears, *per fumum, through smoke*.

In this shattered fragment, I had found the altar of the god without altars: Vinturius, Ventoux. Its sacred smoke no longer wafts in the mistral, that “fluid architecture of each given instance.” It is no longer his altar, but not yet his tomb.

[This essay is an oral presentation version derived from my recent publication, *The Wind and the Source: In the Shadow of Mont Ventoux* (Albany, State University of New York Press, 2005).]

Paisagem em Discurso

A pertinência de um blog sobre paisagem no espaço dos blogs nacionais já há muito se fazia sentir. A paisagem, no seu sentido mais lato e simultaneamente mais profundo, complexo e sistémico, raramente era abordado. Pelo contrário, o discurso generalizado, não só patente nos blogs como em quase todo o discurso tornado público por qualquer outro meio, retinha-se em pequenos pormenores sintomáticos de uma qualquer paisagem raramente enunciada. Obviamente que surgiam honrosas excepções mas que por se reduzirem a um determinado assunto restrito perdiam a sua pertinência na apresentação da complexidade de sistemas que definem a paisagem.

Assim, em finais de Dezembro de 2005, foi iniciado o *verdete*, um blog que apresenta a paisagem em discurso. O *verdete* surgiu da necessidade de questionar os estereótipos e as ideias pré estabelecidas que teimam em persistir sobre a paisagem, de contribuir para um discurso crítico sobre paisagem e sobre arquitectura paisagista (praticamente inexistente em Portugal), de implementar uma consciencialização social, não necessariamente ecológica ou ambientalista mas, sobre os processos, as organizações, os sistemas que definem e constróem a paisagem e, consequentemente, o quotidiano em habitamos. Em suma, o *verdete* apresenta a paisagem em discurso, nas suas múltiplas vertentes e nas transformações a que está sujeita ao longo do tempo.

O nome, não indiferente aos assuntos que sustentam o blog, propõe, à partida, um questionamento das imagens pré-adquiridas. Pois, o *verdete*, o mesmo que prolifera nas nossas estátuas de cobre e nas moedas de cobre, é também designado por Acetato de Cobre, aliás, $[\text{Cu}(\text{CH}_3\text{COO})_2 \cdot 2\text{Cu}(\text{OH})_2]$. A paisagem é demasiadas vezes associada ao ‘verde’, às plantinhas ou a imagens pitorescas, idílicas. *Verdete* questiona esse pressuposto. *Verdete* é um pigmento verde que resulta de reacções químicas provocadas pela atmosfera, pelo clima e pelas acções humanas sobre uma dada superfície de suporte – o cobre. De vegetal, o acetato de cobre não tem nada, excepto a cor associado à maior parte das plantas. No entanto, a sua formação resulta de alguns dos mesmos processos que transformam o território moldando aquilo que comumente se designa por paisagem.



Este volume reúne actas do colóquio *Neo-Landscapes*, que decorreu no dia 8 e 9 de Fevereiro de 2006 na Fundação Eugénio de Almeida com orientação de Aurora Carapinha (Universidade de Évora) e Petran Kockelkoren (AKI, Instituut voor Hoger Beeldend Kunstonderwijs, Enschede).

O debate, destinado a avaliar o impacto deste conceito sobre a realidade do início do século XXI, marcou também o Encontro em Évora da AIAS - International Association of Art and Design Schools. Incluímos as comunicações de Peter Sonderen, Petran Kockelkoren, Jann Rosen-Queralt, Christopher Shipley, Asa Choi, Massimo Ferriolo, Mary Beckinsale, Pedro Portugal, Allen S. Weiss, Lee Young June, Timothy Druckrey, e ainda uma apresentação do grupo Verdete.



CHAIA

CENTRO DE HISTÓRIA DA ARTE
E INVESTIGAÇÃO ARTÍSTICA