

## NATIONAL COLLEGE OF ART AND DESIGN

Faculty of Fine Art Department of Painting

"Art engaged with current environmental issues and its relationship with Land Art of the past."

## By

Anne Lenehan

Submitted to the Faculty of Fine Art and Design and Complementary Studies in Candidacy for the Degree of B.A. in Fine Art.

-

1993

### NATIONAL CONTRACTO OF AND AND AND AND

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I wish to take this opportunity to thank all those whose thoughts and ideas have helped form this thesis, particularly my tutor Dr. Sue Mc Nab, for whose help and advice I am very grateful.

#### STREME DOLLING MONTH

PITS 12 FARS this of portunity to there will the set whose throughts and ideas have in ignal turns threats: particularly my tutor in Sue Mu Hab, for whose help and

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

PALIST OF PLATES	AGE NO
INTRODUCTION	4
CHAPTER	
1. On a Road to Destruction?	7
2. The Earthworks of the 1970s	.22
3. The Priority is given to nature	.34
4. A "Grey" or "Green" Nature?	.46
5. Towards a 'Post-Mechanistic' World View	.57
CONCLUSION	.63
BIBLIOGRAPHY	.67

- 1 -

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

EDAN SO ALN 70 TEL

A ST TAR

2. The Barries ve of the Subscription of the

3 Far Frierity is given to nature ......

4. A vrey of Green Maturo2.....

E. Towarla a Frist-Machanistic World View, .... 5.

2MCL/0810W

# LIST OF PLATES

PLA	TE NO. PAGE NO.
1.	Ashley Bickerton, Minimalism's Evil
	Orthodoxy Monoculture's Totalitarian
	Esthetic No. 1, 198911
2.	Ashley Bickerton, Terra Firma Nineteen
	Hundred Eighty Nine No. 1, 198912
З.	Ashley Bickerton, Stratified Landscape
	No. 1, 198912
4.	Albert Bierstad, Cho-Looke, The
	<b>Yosemite Fall</b> , 186419
5.	Michael Heizer, <b>Dissipate</b> , 196825
6.	Michael Heizer, <b>Complex One/City</b> ,
	1972–197625
7.	Robert Smithson, <b>Spiral Jetty</b> , 197026
8.	Dennis Oppenheim, Identity Stretch,
	1970–1975

- 2 -

## LIST OF PLATES

ALL PR

Artiker Biccoreca, Minimalism's Evil Orthodoxy Monoculture's Totalitarian Esthetic Roll, 1989.

Arbiev Bickerton. Terra Firma Nineteen Hundred Eighty Nine No. 1. 1933.

Stratified Landscape

L. ALCOLLELFERD, CHO-DOOKE, 190

S. Stonaci Merser, Dianipäta, 1968.....

G. H. Sael Heizer, Complex One/City,

. Anser . sithand, Spiral Jetty, 1970. . . . . 2

beaute of genhoim. Identity Stretch.

9.	Michael Heizer, <b>Effigy Tumuli - Water</b>
	Strider, 1983-1988
10.	Alan Sonfist, Time Landscape, 1965
11.	Andy Goldsworthy wrapping poppy petals
	around a granite boulder, 1989
10	
12.	Andy Goldsworthy. Green sticks partly
	scraped and rubbed, 1987
13.	Andy Goldsworthy on the beach, 1976
14.	Andy Goldsworthy, Balanced Slates,
	1988
15 &	16. Helen Mayer Harrison and Newton
	Harrison, Sava River Project, Yugoslavia,
	1988–1991
	1000 1001
1 17	
	Helen Mayer Harrison and Newton Harrison
	Portable Fish Farm: Survival Piece
	No. 6, 1972

- 3 -

e Attiest Heizer, Effigy Tumuli - Water

ut. Alan Jonatat, Time Landscape, 1965.....

il. And. soldsworthy wrapping poppy petals sculed t granite bodider, 1989.........

13. Poly Didawarthy on the beach, 1976...........

4 Andy Goldow miny, Balanced Slates,

15 & U. He en Mayer Harrison and Newton Harrieun, Sava River Project, Yugoslavia,

17. Helen Hayer Harrison and Newton Harrison Portable Mah Tarmi Survival Piece





Art has always reflected the society that it was created in, and at present that society is one where a 'green' perspective on many issues has become commonplace. So naturally more artists are making work that deals either directly or indirectly with these concerns. Such artists usually work from or in the environment. While artists in the past have often taken the environment as referent, it has usually only been what is seen as the 'natural' environment, and they have often not addressed the fact that the land has not ceased to be continuously remodelled, and that the landscape is the product of patterns of ownership and use.

Our present society is beginning to question the traditional views of our environment by exploring our current spiritual frustration and asking are we truly on a road to ecological destruction and if so, how do we slow down? This is difficult as at present even industry is feeding off the fears of those concerned with the health of the planet.

It was once taken for granted that the planet was 'alive', but the view of nature as a mechanistic, lifeless storehouse of resources to be exploited for gain by humans has dominated for at least the last century; a century in which we have had the means to do to our environment whatever we liked. And

- 5 -

Art has givened the source to be accied to accie where a way created in, and at present that society is one where a creat perspective on many taxmes has become componence a

Insturatly more articles are making word that leads often directly or indirectly with three consorms. Each artists have fly work from or in the environment. White institution the part have often taken the environment with referent, it has usually only been what is seen as our natural contronment, and they have often hot addresses one for the take the land has not deased to be contronucly remodelies, and the land has not deased to be contronucly pattar a formed use.

our present society to organize congenizing to question the traditional views of our environment by exploring our current sparitual irostration and excing are we brown out trans to acclogical destruction and if so, how do we show down? This is difficult as at present even irouching is feeding off the fears of those concerned with the health

It was once taken for granted that the planes war alive but the view of nature as a mechanistic, lifeless storehouse of recources to to exploited for gein by humans has dominated for the rest the face rentury; a century in which we have had the secu-

3

inevitably it has brought with it the unprecedented abuse of the Earth.

It has been realised within the past couple of decades that such an attitude can no longer be valid. A new understanding is coming about in which traditional wisdom, personal experience and scientific knowledge can combine to everyone's benefit. There are many artists, such as Ashley Bickerton, who are presently drawing on this new understanding to produce work that deals with the many levels of our current ecological crisis. A crisis that is specific to our present society.

In this thesis I question the work of the 1970s Earth artists, who constantly tried to control nature, and I will look at how the beliefs of these artists arose. Other artists since then have submerged themselves totally, and given priority to, 'a world of nature'. I shall also question the actions and beliefs of these artists. I hope to prove that since the Earth artists art that takes the environment or environmental issues as it's referent has developed along with an increasing ecological awareness. The problems such art faced and the motivations of the artists and their relationship to ecological thought all serve to help us analyse our current relationship with nature.

- 6 -

const service states in it it is a service of the s

10-01 - 1

It has been realised within the part could of de the that buch an attitude par no longer be volid. However redered and by is coming about in which treditional wisters. Jet Coef experience and actualitic knowledge on wisters. Jet Coef experience and actualitic knowledge on wisters. Jet Coef experience and actualitic knowledge on wisters. Jet Coef experience and scientific knowledge on wisters. Jet Coef experience and presently drawing on the new unacculariting to produce work that deals with the the new unacculariting to produce work that deals with the many fermicing to produce work that deals with that is of our current ecological crisis. Alorists

In this takes are there is question the work of the information article, who constantly tried to control mature, and [ with look at how the boliefs of these studies of these articles since than have ambaned brital's will also question the actions and beliefs of nature : 1 and 1 also question the actions and beliefs of these evolutions is here to prove that since the Barth artists end that takes the onvironment of environmental increasing collegical awareness. The problems auch art increasing to cological thought all serve to here us increasing to ecological thought all serve to near us antipase our current relations thought all serve to near us antipase our current relations thought all serve to near us

# CHAPTER 1

On a Road to Destruction?



As recently as the mid 1950s, Eugene Odum argued that the components of the biosphere, the nitrogen cycle and the phosphorus cycle were essentially beyond the power of humans to affect;

Fortunately, the more perfect cycles have so many compensating mechanisms that Man has not yet done too much to modify them. Disturbance or manipulation of a cycle involving a vital element however, could conceivably be much more dangerous than the disturbance of the less perfect cycles, because if such a cycle were disturbed beyond its compensatory powers, the whole thing might go completely to pieces. (Art Journal, '92, p.19.)

Only a few decades after Odum wrote this, we are all very familiar with the term 'hole in the ozone layer' and the possibility of a major ecological disaster is already upon us.

Our present society defines success as money and power, and modern Western civilisation is composed of ideas of domination; domination over nature, of masculine over feminine, of wealth over poverty and also of Western culture over other cultures.

- 8 -

As recently as the mid 1950s. Eugene Oden argued that the components of the bloophers, the nitre and ryclo und the phospherus cycle were essentially boyond the proof of numers to affect;

Fortunately, the more perfect cycles have so weary compensating mechanisms that Man has no set done too much to medify them. Disturbance or manipulation of a cycle involving a vital element however, could conceivably be much more ungerous than the disturbance of the less parfect tycles, because if auch a cycle were disturded beyond its compensatory cowere, the whole thing might go completely to pieces. (Act

Only a few decades after Odum wrote this, we are all very familiar with the term "hole in the ozone layer and the possibility of a major acological distater in already upon US.

and power, and modern Western civilisation is composed of ideas of Junination; domination over nature, of mascaline over frainine, of wesith over poverty and also of Western culture over sther cultures We live in a culture that has little capacity or appreciation for meaningful ritual. Not only does the particular way of life for which we have been programmed lack any cosmic or transpersonal dimension, but its underlying principles of manic production and consumption, maximum energy flow, mindless waste and greed are now threatening the entire ecosystem in which we live. (Gablik, '91, p.2.)

We have all been made aware of all the more easily discernible environmental problems - waste management, pollution, and the damage of the ozone layer by organisations such as Green Peace, and the Worldwatch Institute. These problems have brought about the realisation that things must change. There is now a need for action. There is also the belief that the existing mythologies of our present culture are leading us to destruction and these assumptions must also change.

A cry for a more harmonious relationship with nature and our environment has been heard for the last few decades, but only now is it heard with greater clarity and more receptive ears.

The different methods by which we estranged humans have sought to reconcile ourselves with nature and with ourselves is huge. There is vegetarianism, animal rights and naturism. In religion there has been a revival of paganism and a modified Christianity. There has been

- 9 -

As five in a culture that has lithle endered effectively for relatinging result. Not this net the particular way of life for which we have the programmed lack any cosmic or transpersonal dimension, but its underlying principles of monic production and consumption assume energy flow, mindless waste and greet see now threatening the entire occayston in which we live. (Gablik, 'Si. p.2.)

We have all been made aware of all the serve weakly discountible environmental problems - waste banagement, pollution, and the damage of the econe wayse by organizations such as Green Peace, and the Worldwith, for itute, thaze problems have brought about the realisation that things must change. There is now a sect to: write the size the ballet that the existing action files of our present offices are leading of to such that there is also the ballet that the substance to an present offices are leading of to substance to an present offices and the company.

a cry for a more marmonious relations of a more than the with nature and our environment has been heard the the tast it heard with greater visitly and more receptive ears.

The different methods by which we estimate and humans have cought to reconcile ourselved with nature and with currolves is hoge. There is vegetarization, brunch rights and naturism. In religion there has been a revice of pagamism and a modulied Christianity. There has been

1 -

the development of theosophy and of Rudolph Steiner's Anthroposophism and an increasing interest in alternative medical practises such as homeopathy and herbalism.

Although many would not agree, developments in the scientific field such as quantum physics are also helping to bring back features of nature denied in the mechanistic revolution, features such as "Indeterminism, spontaneity and creativity, leading us towards a 'post-mechanistic' world view." (Allison, '91, p. 75.)

Such views have prompted the artist Ashley Bickerton to move from producing commentaries on consumer culture in the early '80s to commentaries on Man's relationship with nature. Bickerton's work has a mechanistic feel to it, but he has also incorporated a natural element, both of these qualities combine together in an unsettling relationship that reflects a post-mechanistic view.

## Bickerton: Man's Present Relationship with Nature

In Bickerton's exhibition at the Sonnebend Gallery in New York in 1990, he presented actual physical samples of coral, decomposed seaweed, agricultural raw materials and industrial waste. The sculptures are quite high-tech assemblages that encase his samples in anodised aluminium, black leather and glass. (Pls. 1, 2 & 3.) Some samples are spread out on layered sheets of canvas,

- 10 -

The devisionment of theogophy and of Woolffb Accure s coluroperophism and an Lagrannic interast in elfacerition workal practices duch as homeopathy and Acrobalism. Although many would not agree. deve apprecte

To the ectentific field such as quantum physics at the action of the action of the action of the sectors of active depletion the sector state as 'indeterminate active as 'indeterminate active as 'indeterminate active ac

B skurton to move from producing commentaries on consumer outture in the carly 'SCs to commentaries on Man's relationent, with nature. Sickerton a work has sechanistic feel to it, but he new also incorporated a nitural element, both of these gualities one incluse in an unsettling relationship that reflicits a

## Rickerton: Man a Present Relationship with Nature

In Bickerton's exhibition at the Schuckend Guilery in New York in 1930. We presented notual physical esempies of cural, decomposed seaweed, spricultural raw materials and industrial waste. The schiptures are bits high tech assembly ges that encase his rempies in another aluminum, black leather and glass. (Fis. 1, 2 & 3.) Some semplee are duread out on Evered should of the curo

- 113 -



Plate 1. Ashley Bickerton, Minimalism's Evil Orthodoxy Monoculture's Totalitarian Esthetic #1, 1989. Steel, concrete, glass, rubber, plastic, soil, rice, coffee, peanuts, 96 x 156 x 12 1/2 inches. Sonnebend Gallery, New York.





Plate 2. Ashley Bickerton, Terra Firma Nineteen Hundred Eighty Nine #1, 1989. Anodised aluminum, glass, peppers, copper sulphate, pebbles, plastic refuse, metal shavings, coral, seaweed/skate eggs, cigarettes, raw pigment, broken glass, hay, bubble gum, vacuum cleaner refuse, human hair, sand lichen, 88 x 88 x 10 inches. Sonnebend Gallery, New York.



Plate 3. Ashley Bickerton, Stratified Landscape #1, 1989. Wood, fibre glass, corroded steel, corroded copper, leather, rope, anodised aluminum, canvas, netting, beans, resin, decomposed seaweed, coral, 102 x 51 x 30 1/2 inches. Sonnebend Gallery, New York.



but all are neatly separated from each other.

Bickerton's concerns lie with environmental problems such as waste disposal, air pollution, and occupational poisoning and particularly with the destructiveness of agricultural practises such as monoculture - single crop farming which impoverishes the soil and confuses the ecosystems naturally varied vegetation.

His work raises questions about our complicity in the destructiveness of the environment and it is ecological in that it deals with natural systems. But that also includes the system of human culture, something that is often left out of the work of other artists dealing with environmental themes.

In sculptures with titles like Seascape; Transporter for the Waste of its Own Construction and Wild Gene Pool, Ark No. 1, Bickerton articulates his elegant understanding of Man's uneasy relationship to nature and an artists responsibility to ecology. (Harrison, '90, p. 141.)

In Wild Gene Pool seeds of various vegetables such as corn and beans are sectioned off in containers with round windows or portholes, all contained in a huge structure made out of aluminium, rubber, leather and rope. It is clear that these seeds are small and

- 13 -

bur sin bre neatly separated from each stater. Bickerton's concerns lie with environments:

problems such as waste dispossly air jollation, and occupational poisining and particularly with the descriptiveness of agricultural practices such as aconocilture - single urop farming which impoverience the soll and confuses the ecosystems naturally varied

His work raises questions about our complicity in the destructiveness of the environment and if is ecological in that it deals with natural syncame. But that also includes the system of human outture, something that is often left out of the work of other artists dealing with environmental themes.

In souptures with titles like Seascape; Transporter for the Waste of its Own Construction and Wild Gene Pool, Ark No. 1. Bickerton articulates his elegant understanting of Man's uneasy relationship to nature and an artists responsibility to ecology. (Harrison)

In Wild Gene Pool seeds of various

vegetables such as yorn and osans are sectioned off in containers with round windows or portholes, all ocausined in a huge structure made out of aluminium; rubber, issuance and rope. It is clear that these seeds are amain sur

1.1 -

precious and they are being overwhelmed by their supporting structure.

Minimalism's Evil Orthodoxy Monoculture's Totalitarian Esthetic No. 1, (pl. 1) consists of six vertical concrete and glass containers filled with soil and rice from Asia, soil and coffee beans from South America and soil and peanuts from Africa. All of which are crops that provide their producers with a living and us with the food that we take for granted. The intensive farming used in the production of coffee, rice and peanuts is dangerous as are the chemicals and pesticides that are used in production. Richard Kalina suggest that Bickerton is also implying that "monoculture is also dangerous in art; aesthetic orthodoxy is not merely restricting, it actually damages the life of the culture." (Kalina, '90, p.166.)

These works have a great visual sense that results from the differences between the delicate natural specimens and the shiny metallic and leather of their cases. This metallic, high-tech quality throughout this work "implies man's impressive ability to overwhelm nature", and the care taken in the display of the samples reveals the "pathos of man's efforts to preserve the relics of that which he is busy destroying." (Nesbitt, 1990, p. 76.)

Some critics have praised his work for stating that everyone who lives in a modern technological society is implicated in ecological destruction. One

- 14 -

priving and they are being overwie med by their

Minimaliam's Evil Orthodoxy Monoculture u

Totalitarian Mathetic No. 1, (pr. 1).complete of 21X vertical concrete and gluar containers filled with 2011 and rice from Asis, soil and coffee beams drom both America and soil and peanute from Africa. All of which are crops that provide their producers with a livine 1.2 to with the food that we take for granted. The intensity fermine, used in the production of collee, rice and peanut is demension as are the chemicals and pesticodes that see used in production. Mathed Kaline adgreet that the filter is the time implying that "monoculture is also danger up is art: secthetic orthodoxy is not merely restriction. So art: secthetic orthodoxy is not merely restriction. So

These works have a great vioual sense the requite from the differences between the deficate nutural continents and the chiny metallic and leather of their cases. This metallic, high-tech quality throughout and work 'implies nem'r impressive ability to overwheim nature , and the same taken in the display of the samples revenue the "pathce of man a efforts to preserve the relies of the which he is bary destroying. (Ne-6)(1), 1930, p. 70.)

Some critics have praised his work instating that everyone who lives in a modern tookupleg: ap posisty is implicated in ecological destruction. Gov

1.4

critic has said that this is merely exploiting "a generations collective guilty conscience". (Harrison, 1990, p. 141.) But the false belief that harm is done only by the obviously greedy and negligent exploiters of the environment absolves the rest of us of responsibility. The truth is that living well has its price.

Bickerton has combined the realities of our mechanistic society and our inability to manage that societies waste. This is the view that prompted Richard Kalina to comment that Bickerton's sculptures are "Smithson non-sites....for the '90s." (Kalina, 1990, p. 166.)

Landscape art is most interesting when it is a projection of culture onto nature. Bickerton has grasped the fundamentally ambiguous character of our societies relation to the environment. He leaves us seduced and discomfited. (Kalina, 1990, p. 166.)

Understanding how our present beliefs have arisen, and understanding how Bickerton's work came about, can be made more comprehensive if we realise that Man's relationship with nature is constantly changing.

- 15 -

errito and and on this is merely expliciting a generations following guilty conscience (marrison, 1930, p. 141., But the false belief that narm is ach only by the obviously gready and negligent exploiters of the environment absolves the rest of us of responsibility The truth is that living well has its price.

Bickerton has combined the realities of our mechanistic society and our inability to manage the societies waste. This is the view that prompted hickard Kalina to commant that Bickerton's oculptures are "Smithson non-sites....for the 'SDs.' (Kalina, 18mm, p

> Landscare art is most isteresting when it is projection of culture anto nature. Bickertoitas grassed the fundamentally amonghous character of our societies relation to the environment. He leaves us seduced and liscomfited. (Kalino, 1930, p. 166)

Understanding how our present beliefs rate arisen, and understanding how Bickerton's work came about. Can be ande more comprehensive if we realize that Man a relationship with nature is constantly changing.

- 1b

## Many Revolutions In Thought

We have been through many revolutions in thought about our relationship to nature. The ancient relationship to nature was one where Man and nature were mutually dependent, as were mind and body. Berman writes that the Greek culture in particular was responsible for the development of a disenchantment of the world. (Berman, 1981, p. 70.)

In the 6th century B.C. science, philosophy and religion were not separated in Greek culture. All were connected in a search for the essential nature of things. Greek scientific thought was initially based in natural correspondences, and such correspondences between Man and environment were seen as common sense. Practical observation, intuition and imagination allowed the ancient civilisations insight into the nature of Man and the universe.

The first revolution in thought may be attributed to Pythagoras, who held the view that the cosmos was a manifestation of geometric and numeric values. For Pythagoras reason and mystical experience complemented each other. He thought that each number had a mystical life of it's own and that all numbers were divine and symmetry inherent in nature, manifesting itself through ratio and proportion.

The learning process had been a sensual experience. Socrates, by urging the individual to "know

- 16 -

#### dany veyoig thru in thrught

We have been through any revolutions to thought about our relationship to nature. The anotent relationship to nature was one where Man and halors where mutually dependent, as were mind and body German where that the Greek pulture in particular was responsible for the development of a dicenchantment of the world.

In the 6th century 8.0. screace, photocophy and religion work not reparated in Greek wolture. All sere connected is a search for the essential asture of thinge. Greek spleatific throught was initially based in natural correspond moss, and such correspondences between Max and environment wore seen at companies preobservation, intuition and imagination allowed the so lead observations insight into the nature of Max and the

The tirst revolution in thought may be attributed to tythagoras, who held the view that it receive was a manifestation of geometric and humeric values. For Fythagoras reason and mystical experience complemented sech other. He throught that each number had a systical life of it's own and that all numbers were divine and symmetry inherent in nature, manifesting the d through ratio and proportion.

The learning process had been a usnault

- d -
thyself", (Berman, 1981, p. 72.) turned it into a nonsensual type of knowing. Socrates was aghast to learn that the artisans of the time learnt and pursued their craft by sheer instinct and personal intuition. Friedrich Nietzsche wrote that the creative person works by instinct and checks himself by reason, Socrates did just the reverse. (Berman, 1981, p. 71.)

Aristotle placed mind above body, believing that our mind should control and be the ruler as it possesses reason.

Plato believed in the existence of absolute knowledge. He believed that we should try to define what we are and we must solve our existence by knowing the truth and the truth would fix reality.

After Plato, the Greek began to see himself as an "autonomous personality apart from his acts". (Berman, 1981, p. 72.) Berman believes that at some stage between the lives of Homer and Plato there began the gradual disappearance of animism (Berman, 1981, p. 71.) the belief that everything, including what is now regarded as inert material objects, is alive and possesses an indwelling spirit. Such beliefs have greatly influenced us throughout the centuries. 'Western Man' now only looks for a sense of beauty that is defined by logic and analysis.

The second revolution was brought about around the 13th century when the Christians attributed good to God and evil to the Devil. The mind's power over

- 17 -

tryseif (Bernan, 1931, p. (1.) Turned 1. 100 a nonsensual type of Browing. Socraton was aghart to Inum. Ind the artisans of the time learnt and pursuod their erect by sheer instinct and personal intuition. Erreduich Nietzerne wrote that the creative person worke by inducer and checks himself by reason. Socrates did Just the reverse. (Berman, 1931, p. 71.)

Aristotle placed mind above body. Doliover the the ruler as it possesses reason.

Fiato believed in the enlatence of shoolute encwicoge. He believed that we should thy to dofine what we are and we must solve our existence by knowing the truth and the truth world fix reality.

we an interformed personality apart from his accelbetteen 1831, p. 72.) Berman believes that at dome chick betteen the lives of Homer and Plate there began the gradual disappearance of entwism (Berman, 1981, p. 71.) the belief that everything, including what is now regarded as incrt material objects, is alive and possesser us indwelling spirit. Good beliefs have greatly influenced as threadbout the centurfes. Western fish and on point to the centurfes of base of possesser us as the throughout the centurfes. Western fish and on points to a sense of beauty that is defined by logic and and the spirit.

The second revolution was brought about around the 15th century when the Christipus stribuled wood so God and svil to the Devil. The mind a cover cov

- 11 -

body was equated with God's power over the Devil. The Devil was seen as being savage nature, and God was pure ideas. The belief was that God made the world with a purpose in which Man was most important. The Earth was seen as totally Man's domain. This derives from the Old Testament where God gives Man dominion over the beasts, the sea, and the land.

With such ideas in mind Man believed that the Earth was his personal property, to be ordered, tamed or consumed as he wished. The Earth was seen as dead matter, there to be purely exploited.

The struggles with untamed nature can be seen in the landscape art of the 18th and 19th centuries where they tried to attain the beautiful in nature, which was seen as a tranquil nature that was well removed form the complexities of life. The overwhelming forces of nature were also depicted - thunderstorms, floods. Up to the mid 19th century the landscape was associated with spiritual qualities. A beautiful nature in art was seen as a sensitivity towards the work of God. Albert Bierstadt's paintings almost illustrate the Christian Mission to subdue the wilderness.(pl. 4.) The paintings show no threat that civilisation posed to nature.

At the beginning of the 19th century Sheldrake says that,

The new taste for wild nature was a sophisticated response, inspired to a large

- 18 -

Alp are optaved atto douth power over the Nevil, in Nevil day teach as being rayage nature, and dod was with a ideac. The beliet was that don made the world with a purples in which Man was most important. The Envil was seen an coully can's demain. This devices from the out legitment where and gives Man dominion over the behave.

With each ideas in mind Man Ballevol that the sarks was his personal property, to be ordered, tubed of commend as he wished. The Earth was seen as deed matter, torse to be Furely exploited.

seen in the landstope art of the 16th and 19th centuries where they arted to action the Lesurital in nature, which was seen to a treagall nature that we well removed from the completities of life. The overwhelming forces of networe were also depended - thunderstorms, floods. We to the mid 19th century the language was associated with spiritual publities. A besutiful neture in art was associated

as a sensitivity towards the work of gen. Atbert Bierstati's rainings almost (]]natrate the Christian Mission th subdue the wilderness tpl. 4.1 The pairties show no threat that civilization preed to nither. At the beginning of the 19th century

Shellhals reys thell.

the new taste for wild nature was a souhiet loated response, inspired to a large

BI



Plate 4. Albert Bierstad. Cho-Looke, The Yosemite Fall, 1864. Oil on canvas, 34 1/2 x 27 1/8 in. Tinken Art Gallery, San Diego.

extent by literacy and artistic models. Indeed scenes were called landscapes because they were reminiscent of painted landscapes. (Sheldrake, 1988, p. 48.)

With the 18th century there ends in Western civilisation an epoch in the history of Man's relationship to nature. What follows is of an entirely different order, influenced by the theory of evolution, specialisation in the attainment of knowledge, acceleration in the transformation of nature. (C. Glacken cited in Bramwell, 1989, p.22)

What followed was the development of capitalism and the embracing of technology. The ultimate aim of 'Western Man' since the turn of the century has been to own land. And as a prelude to that fact, during the 19th century nature was perceived as wild and destined to be controlled by Man, and since then the landscape has undergone relentless destruction, due to the fact that it was seen as inexhaustible.

The Surrealist movement seems to have realised the shortcomings of the mechanistic age. Salvador Dali's **The Persistence of Memory** has a dreamlike quality in which linear mechanical time has started to wilt and run down in the arid desert of the twentieth

- 20 -

school by thereasy and untratic models. Loss of school wire called landboures because they ward buildlocent of painted landscapes (sholdrafts,

With the loth century there ends in Western rivilization an spoch in the history of Man's relationship to nature. What follows in of all intirals different order, influenced by the theory of cvolution, specialization in the attainment of knowledge, acceleration in the Francell, 1859, 7.22)

What followed was the development of capitalism and the embrains of technology. The ultimate aim of Weakern Man since the turn of the century has been to own this And as a prelisic to thet fact, during the 19th century nature was percented as wild and destined to be controlied by Man, and rince then the landscape has moregone relentiess seatendtion, due to the fact that it was not as inexhauctible.

The Surrealist movement seems to have

realised the shortcomings of the machanistic age. Salvador Dall's **The Persistence of Memory** has a Brenalth: quality in which linear mechanical time has started to will and run down in the ardd deserve of the twentied.

12

century. Sheldrake links Surrealist art, dreams and alchemy saying that the messages they give are intuitive rather than rational.

All three use allegory and the incongruous juxtaposition of objects, and all three violate the principles of scientific causality and noncontradiction. (Sheldrake, 1990, p. 96.)

While nature was once seen as being wild and majestic, something that was beyond our grasp, out of control, but a great challenge to try and master, we then realised that we were actually strangling nature. It was realised that a more reverent approach to nature would be more beneficial to us, and this was another revolution in thought about our relationship to nature. These are the beliefs that the Land Art of the '70s grew out of. estimy solarate links three life art, dreams and without solard the messages they give are intuitive rather than retional.

All three as allegory and the incongruous functapocition of objects, and all three viclate the principles of solentific causality and neucontradiction. (Sheldrake, 1990, p. 96.)

While nature was once seen as being wild and

modeling that was beyond our graap, out of control, but a great challenge to try and monter, withen realized that a great chally shreagiling nature. It was realized that a more artially shreagiling nature would be more benetieses to da, and this was another revolution of thus his door our relationship to nature. These are the beliefs that the Land Art of the 'Yos grew out of.

CHAPTER 2

The Earthworks of the 1970s



The Land Artists of the '70s regained a mystical fascination for nature. They entered into it in an attempt to understand what it was about. It was an effort to help us link again with nature. Artists like Michael Heizer were entering into nature. But really all they were doing was physically 'entering into nature'; bringing peoples attention back to nature. But the work often struggled with nature trying to hold back earth, put it into a desired shape, battling against weather and vast distances while trying to move huge amounts of materials.

Michael Heizer, the son of an archaeologist, left New York in the late 1960s for the deserts of the American West, where he began making monumental constructions. Heizer's interest in the land seems to have been primarily in the scale that was available, this scale gave his every action the monumentality he seemed to crave.

Some of Heizer's early work consisted of gouging into cliffsides and carving large trenches in mountains. This type of work involved thousands of tons of earth being moved, by cranes, heavy machinery and explosives, and caused the extensive altering of the landscape. Heizer actually bought vast areas of the American desert and a lot of the work could only be seen from a helicopter. The public were, however, able to view

- 23 -

The Land Artiste of the '000 regained a myurical function for nature. They entered into it is or silengt to understand what it was about. It was un affort whelp us link again with nature. Artists into Muchael F. Lee were entering into nature. But reachy all they were toing was physically 'entering into nature'. bringing peoples attention back to nature. But the work often structed with nature trying to hold back even, rul it unio a desired chape, butting against weather active distoners while 'rying to rowe hugo amounts of material

left Now 2008 10 the labe 1000 for the comprise of 200 Americal where where he began making monumental constructions, deficing interest in the land means () have been primarily in the adale that was available, thus scale give us every action the monumentarity he secret () crave.

Lone of Heizor's carly work consisted of gousing rate (liffeided and carving large trenches in maintains. This type of work involved thousands of conof earth purch moved, by anales, heavy machinery and expressions taked the expensive alloring of the hands age. Heizer actually bought vast steas of the from a helicortor. The public work could ally as the from a helicortor. The public were, nowever, abie to to

311 -

the work in a gallery in the form of slides and photographs, many of the man himself supervising the various digging operations. One sharp critic wrote;

The city dwellers no doubt catch their breaths to see the natural vastness sullied by one puny man. It would be better to be the man of course...in fact you could be the man if you had the money, since the mountain was bought by the acre..... (Ashton cited in Sonfist, 1983, p. 28.)

One piece Heizer did in 1968 was Dissipate(pl. 5), a series of five rectangular trenches dug in random order into the soil of the Black Rock desert in Nevada. The sides of the trenches were lined with steel. The work was intended to be permanent and leave a lasting reminder of Heizer's presence there. His presence over nature. An attempt to control nature by trying to match its scale.

During the early seventies Heizer spent four years working on the permanent piece **Complex One/City**,(pl. 6) a huge earth, concrete and steel structure, which was an optical illusion in the desert - an optical game that I'm quite sure few people have had the chance to play. From the front and at a distance it appears to be a solid rectangle of concrete bordered by steel bands. From the side they are seen to be segmented and placed yards apart.

- 24 -

the set of a failery in the form of sliper and rhotestrphe, samp of the own linself supervising the residue disting operations. One sharp oritic wrotes

One piece Helser did in 1968 was

Dissipate(pi. 5), a seria, of five rectangular trenches day in readom order into the noil of the Brack area down a conflavade. The sides of the trenchus were lined with creat. The was interded to be paragram and leave e lasting remoder of Heizer's presence there. His function over network for strengt to control nature by trying to match the scale.

years working on the permanent place Complex One/City.(56. 5) a huge earth, concrete and cheel ctructure, which wor an optical filtueion in the desert - an optical come that I a quite summine people have had the shance to plac From the front and it i distance it appears to be a set 3 mottangle of concrete bredered by steel bunds. From the state they are seen to be segmented and placed yards sport.

Le Sa -



- Plate 5. Michael Heizer, **Dissipate**, 1968. Wood and steel, 40 x 50 foot, each trench 12 x 1 x 1 foot. Black Rock Desert, Nevada. (Collection of Robert Scull)
- Plate 6. Michael Heizer, Complex One/City, 1972-76. Concrete, granite, steel, and earth, 110 x 140 x 23 1/2 ft. (Collection of Virginia Dwan and the artist)







Plate 7. Robert Smithson, **Spiral Jetty**, Rozel Point, Great Salt Lake, Utah, April 1970. Mud, precipitated salt crystals, rocks, water. Coil 1500 ft. long and 15 ft. wide.



This piece was specially designed to "deflect enormous heat and enormous shock", in the event of "that final blast". "Its very much about the atomic age." (Gruen, 1977,p.99.)

**Complex One** is only one element of a project called **City** which is to be "a group of geometric abstract sculptures the size of huge buildings, arranged in a twenty-eight acre, rectangular complex" in the Nevada desert; "elements of the work are reminiscent of such modern structures as billboards, skyscrapers, highways and airport runways" (Mc Gill, 1990, p.20.). Completing the **City** may take his lifetime.

Early settlers in North America had no sense of the imminent conquest of the wilderness by Man, neither it seems did Heizer in 1970. Sheldrake says of the attitude of these settlers, "there were limitless lands to develop - and no sense that nature was sacred or of any value in its wild state." (Sheldrake, 1990, p. 50.)

One critic said of this type of gargantuan work, that Heizer was entering "the primeval wilderness to leave monuments of his manhood there." (Ashton cited in Sonfist, 1983, p. 28.) This comment points out the prevailing male thinking behind the production of such site specific works at that time. The thinking that gives traditional male values the dominating role. "Many Earth works attempt to challenge and even to obliterate an individuals sense of self." (Mc Gill, 1990, p. 20.) Robert Smithson, another artist who was also creating

- 27 -

Nue fleor and uputally designed to "deliant entrant hoet and emorants entrols". In the events is that fired bleet . The very much about the stomic age." (Ontern 1977, p. 88.)

Complex One is only one element of a proper colled Gity which is to be 'n group of geometric aborrants soulptures the size of huge buildinge, arranged in a twenty-eight acres restangular complex' in the Nevals desert; "size-onts of the work are reminiscent of soch modern atructures as billboards, skyscrepere, highways and airport rurants (de dill, 1980, p.20.), Completing the Gity may take min lifetime.

Barly settiers in Morth America had no course of the inclnent conquect of the wilderness by Man, netting threacer and here a limit in 1970. Cheldrage says of the whiltude of their a settiers, "there were limitless lands to develop - and a some that nature was secred or of ony value in its wild overe." (Sheldrake, 1980, p. 50.)

work, the balant was entering the primeval wilderness to heave nonneads of his senhood there." (Ashtor clied in Conflict, 2001, p. 201) This comman points out the prevailing mais thinking behind the production of such ofte specific works at that time. The thinking that gives confictent as a values the dominating role. Theny family works standt to the feather to abiliticate an endividuate conse of celf." (No 9111, 1990, p. 201) endividuate conse of celf." (No 9111, 1990, p. 201) Earth art in the '70s, has said in his writings that the "disruption of the earth's crust", was "compelling". Undoubtedly, Smithson, like Heizer, was interested in the vast scale that was available to him and which enphasised his every mark. His famous piece, Spiral Jetty(pl. 7) involved huge amounts of black asphalt, limestone rocks and earth that had been scraped from the surrounding shoreline and then deposited in a spiral form in the Great Salt Lake. Spiral Jetty is clearly an addition, a human gesture made to the site. By this gesture he is perhaps maintaining his own self-importance in the ultimate studio situation. Other works by Smithson involved pouring asphalt down hills and also plans for dropping broken Smithson admitted that he was glass onto an island. "confused" by "a lot of ecological language used in the furore" that preceded the broken glass piece. (Leider, 1970, p. 48.)

Smithson said of the difficulty in finding suitable sites for working. "Every time you thought you found your place in a site the site kicked you out of it. Makes you feel like a fool." (Leider, 1970, p. 49.)

Many artists of the time were interested in highlighting Man's ability to control the land. Dennis Oppenheim's pieces Branded Mountain and Branded Hillside involved branding the 35-foot-diameter sites by pouring hot tar on them in the shape of a circle with an X in the centre of it. He intended to draw attention to the similarities between branding cattle and branding the land

- 28 -

And the product of the south a grant in the vertices that the officiency of the south a grant back 'competities' bindenteeding, Smithaum, like Belger, was increased in the seat stale their was available in him and which explore the the sole, more of a statistic of the him and which explore the involved have accurate of black apphalt. Insection the and carth that had been compared from the surrounded encedine and then deposited in a spiral form in the other statistics his two we although the introduction estimation. The state is a spiral form the surrounded main the other is the state of the his sectors in the state interval of the state of spiral and the surrounded assisted in a spiral for the state of the main thing his two self-importance in the ultimete studie attention. The issues of back theory involved pouring attention. The issue, Shitheon involved pouring allows onto an island. Shitheon addition is he was allows onto an island. Shitheon addition in the state onto an island. Shitheon addition in the function that he was finded the broken state in the function that he was finded the broken state in the function which the broken the state part of the function the state of the broken state parts of the function the state of the broken state parts of the state function the state in the back of the broken state of the state in the

anthable sites for working. "Every time you thought you found your place in a site the site kicked you out at a Maker you fact like a tool." (Leider, 1970, p. 43.) cany artists of the time were interested a

highlighting Manus ability to control the lend. Dennis Oppenheim's surves Branded Mountain and Branded Hillside invalued branding the 35-foot-diamoter sizes by poursas for car on them in the ohore of a circle with an X in the combro of it. He intended to draw attention to the sciularities browen branding catile and branding the len

85 -

they grazed. But such actions draw more attention to the artists ability to mark the land. This ability was something that Oppenheim seemed to relish in. His relationship to the land was like that between artist and canvas, and he was prepared to make any mark he desired. In **Directed Seeding - Cancelled Crop**, done in Holland in 1970, an X with 825-foot-long arms was plowed into a 422 by 709 foot grainfield. Oppenheim said of the project: "Planting and cultivating my own material is like mining one's own pigment....I can direct the latter stages of the development at will." (Burnham cited in Sonfist, 1983, p. 46)

Clearly, leaving his mark was important to Oppenheim. He went one stage further with his piece Identity Stretch(pl. 8). It consisted of taking two thumbprints, Oppenheim's and his son's, on elastic material, which he then stretched to the maximum, photographed and reproduced over an area 300-foot by 1,000-foot by spraying hot tar to make the image. Jonathan Crary says that Oppenheim's practises assume that "all systems and materials whether global or microscopic, institutional or anatomic, are subject to his intervention and modification." (Cited in Sonfist, 1983, p. 48.)

The creation of Earthworks on such large scales can be related to a shift in the economic basis of work dealing with the environment. It parallels the evolution of the small business into the large corporation. A nineteenth century artist could relate to

- 29 -

test grater. Ent ruch activity draw more stientice to conentries ability in mark the land. This waility was received a that "granheim accased to reliab in His relationship to the land was like that between artist are convers, and he was prepared to make any mark he delified. In Directed Geeding - Cancelled Grop, done in Hollens in 1970, al X with 825-fact-long arms was plowed into a 47. by 700 (cor granifield. Oppenheim and of the Prodect "Flading and the acting my own material is like minima one's own of sevent...d can direct the latter stage of the 4690101100 and the stage of the devolution of a flating my dentrial is like minima devolution of a flating of the latter stage of the devolution.

The set of the stage for the mark was important to Opportant "he werd one stage for the main his preceidentity Stratch of (3). It consisted of taking two thumburing the souls, on elastic meter al, which to the said the souls, on elastic photocorresh and reproduced over an area a00-foot by 1.000 foot is specying bit to the maximum. Constian trans may that Oppocheim's fractions estant the mathematical ration and anterials whether slobel or aforeaction institut, well or analogic, are subject to his intervation and mathematics in Senier, 1983, p. 48.)

weakes can be related to a shift in the accornic basis of work dealing with the environment. It persiles the trainition of the small business into the large

63



Plate 8. Denis Oppenheim, Identity Stretch, 1970-1975. Hot sprayed tar, 300 x 1,000 ft. Artpark, Lewiston, New York.



Plate 9. Michael Heizer, **Effigy Tumuli - Water Strider**, 1983-1988, 685 x 80 x 14 ft., Buffalo Rock State Park, Illinois.



nature with paint and canvas, but when Heizer and Smithson began relating to their environment, which was far more multifaceted and complex, the traditional economics of art production seemed inadequate as a means of art expression, The Earth Artists, therefore, felt impelled to make work which related to the immense bureaucracies and multinational corporations and which did not pale when compared to them. A piece of art on a more human scale did not seem appropriate to them. One senses in Michael Heizer's work a competition with the scale of modern industry. Heizer said that, "We live in an age of the 747 aircraft, the moon rocket....so you must make a certain type of art." (Gruen, 1977, p. 98.)

Towards the end of the Earthwork age, some of the involved artists turned their efforts to land reclamation. Propositions were put forward to recycle land which had been used for industrial purposes and hence had left its scar on the land. Towards the end of his career Robert Smithson visited several strip-mined sites, proposing that the mining companies allow him to use such land for large-scale earthworks. One such proposal was **Project for Tailings**. Tailings are the solid waste that remains after ore is chemically extracted from rock. Such work appears to show more concern about the ecological implications of working on such a grand scale, but Smithson was merely hiring himself out to decorate an area of landscape the mining company had exploited.

Michael Heizer also turned to recycling

- 31 -

The control point and converse that when Helder and the training to their environment, which was can and the multilisisted and mapped, the readitional economics of an arms of a second to a be arms of a matter or and the flatty of the tendence between and the notation and the arms of and which we have to the tendence between and arms of an arms of a second and the arms of an arms of an arms of art arms of an arms of art arms of art arms of an arms of art arms of art arms of art arms of art arms of a second and the arms of art arms of art arms of a second and the arms of art arms of art arms of a second art arms of art arms of art arms of a second art arms of a second art arms of art arms of art arms of art arms of a second art arms of arts of art arms of arts of arts

Inverse of the three (logic effects to the control the transmitting of the transmitting of the logic structure (logic effects to the control the logic back of the logic back

- 31 -

In 1983 he was commissioned to help reclaim 150 land. acres of strip-mined land on the Illinois River. The resulting project was Effigy Tumuli. It consists of five earth sculptures, each as large as 1,000 feet long and 25 feet high, in the shapes of animals indigenous to the region(pl. 9). Due to the destructive mining techniques in the 1930s the area was covered with highly acidic materials and the entire landscape was poisoned, all the plant and animal life killed, and black acidic water spilled into the river with every rain fall. Heizer recycled the land and bulldozed it into geometric shapes resembling a cat-fish, a water strider, a frog, a turtle and a snake. The project was made possible by the state reclamation agency and Edmund Thornton, an Illinois mining executive. Heizer says that he did not undertake the Effigy Tumuli project for ecological reasons but purely for the possibilities it offered him as a work of art. (Mc Gill, 1990, p. 35.) The artist Robert Morris said of such land reclamation,

The most significant implication of art as land reclamation is that art can and should be used to wipe away technological guilt. Will it be a little easier in the future to rip up the landscape for one last shovelful of a nonrenewable energy source if an artist can be found - cheap, mind you - to transform the devastation into an inspiring and modern work of

- 32 -

The most significant implication of art of land reclamation is that art can and should be used to Wige they technological guilt. Will it be a little castar is the future to rip up the their specific one last showelful of a non-co-welde energy source if an artistican te to do denote the void - to teansfore the securation into as icenticing and modern work of

- 50 -

## art? (Cited in Dunham, 1979, p. 1.)

In Mark Rosenthal's essay, 'Some Attitudes of Earth Art: From Competition to Adoration', he quotes Pablo Picasso; "Nature exists to be raped", and says that the actions of Heizer, Smithson and others such as Walter de Maria and Dennis Oppenheim, retain in their actions "some of the impetus suggested by Picasso's metaphor of the rape". Rosenthal also quotes Smithson in the same paragraph; "...there's no need to refer to nature anymore. I'm totally concerned with making art." (Sonfist, 1983, p. 64.)

Rudolph Bahro defines the "patriarchal" character as "expansive, progressive", etc., moving "forward" and "upward", "away from the earth", while "feminine spirituality" is directed downwards, into the earth. (Cited in Bramwell, 1989, p. 28.) This definition of patriarchy seems to apply well to the work that I have just discussed. Bahro also argues that the salvation is that men should give more priority to the feminine part of their being. [1] J. C. Pert in Funkam, 1999, p. 1.4

(\*) Mark Art, forential a essay, "Some Articodes of Earth Art, From Competition to Adoration , he quotes Pable Prostone, "Mature eviets to be raped", and says that the actions of Herser, Shithron and others such as Worrer de Maria art Fornis Uppenheim, relais in their actions "some of the impeter suggested by Picasso's metaphor of the rap " Some other also quotes Smithron in the come paragraph, "...there's no need to refer to nature anymore, "a totally occorned with making art," (conflict, 13%),

hudoiph Bahro decimes the 'patrierone' character of 'repansive, proprioasive, atc., moving 'forware' ent 'opwara', away from the earth of while isaining spirituality" is directed downwards, into the earth, thread of Brameli, 1989, p. 28.1 This definition of patrieron scens to apply well to the work theo i have just discoved. Bahro also argues that the dairacton is that as should give more priority to the femining pur of their of ma.

CHAPTER 3

.

The Priority is Given to Nature

## The Princity is Given to Mainte
As opposed to these Earth works, other artists were beginning to produce work that banished the artists heroic actions and gave absolute priority to nature. Richard Long worked in a more unobtrusive manner, creating patterns from stones or branches. He viewed his work as a ritualistic response to whatever environment he was working in.

Alan Sonfists project, Time Landscape(pl. 10) consisted of a 9,000 square foot site that was reconstructed as a pre-Colonial forest in New York in The forest is set with natural species of trees and 1978. plants that existed on the site before New York city was Sonfist, in his work, wanted to form new formed. relationships between the society of the twentieth century and nature. He concerns himself with the Earth and the role society plays in connection with nature. Time Landscape exists alongside everyday situations and so brings Man and nature together with equal status. Sonfist said of his work, "I am trying to bring forth meaningful metaphors that show that we are only one of many internal structures that exist in nature." (Sonfist, 1983, p. 103.)

Robert Smithson disapproved of artists such as Alan Sonfist saying that he was seeking a Garden of Eden and naively trying to return to such a place from

- 35 -

An opposed to these Barth Works, other artists were designing to produce work flut banlahad (h) artist beroir actions and gave absolute priority to nother. Bithard Long worked in a more undurusive mark, v. creating isticana scores or brancher, He viewed to work as a tituelistic response to whatever environment of was work to.

10) numbered of a 3,000 equare fort hims managed of the that we reachastructed as a pre-foloatal forest in liew York in 1970. The format is set with network appended of trees and plante fin effect of the site byfore new York city was formed. Contact, in his work, wanted to the reaching of the reacting of the reacting and and and and an the contact of the contact of the reacting of the reactin

a such Artict saving that he was deeking a davider of

- 35 -

which humanity has not yet fallen. (Rosenthal, 1983, p. 7.)

Other artists who worked in or from the landscape in a very unobtrusive manner such as Richard Long or Hamish Fulton have also been criticised for presenting purely picturesque, passive and unprovocative views of the environment and have been ridiculed for trying to regain a lost paradise. Andy Goldsworthy might also fall into this category. He is an artist who has submerged himself totally in a natural world.

## Goldsworthy

Andy Goldsworthy has been practising his art since the mid-seventies. He is generally categorised as a wanderer or rambler who "creates his subtle and mysterious works as he goes." He takes everyday natural materials that he finds in forests, fields etc. and manipulates them to give a beautiful visual effect. He weaves sticks, arranges different colour leaves, uses feathers and stones and even the most delicate materials such as petals to create work that makes you look at the most familiar natural objects with fresh eyes(pls. 11 & 12). His work, however, does not seem to question or illustrate Man's effect on such natural objects or their habitat.

He is at present living near and working on a three acre tract of wood and stream in Scotland which he

- 36 -

(1) a provide the second probability of the second state of the

"there are not a work and a solved in or from the isomethic in a vory unobtrueive manner much an Richard hong of 200 by Fulcon have also been criticized to: Frequely plotareeques passive and unproverative views in the anvironment and brow isom ridiculed for broing to resolve has paradise. Andy Goldsworthy and also fail three this category. No is an artist whe has addue rgod black totally in a natural world.

## Guldew. cour

Ender the rul coveration of a generally the prediction wanderer or runtion who "creates his subtle and mysterious wanderer or runtler who "creates his subtle and mysterious works note from the takes corryday natural waterials that he find he finds a to store a twentiful visual effect. He weaves shifts, and eranged an to store teaker, uses feathers and store cand even the takes you look at the most radius to reade work that makes you look at the most radius to hew hewer, due not store to get an even to get and the file of the store of the set of the hewever, due not store to get an even to get and the set of the hewever, due not store to get an even to get and the set of the hewever, due not set of get and the set of the hewever, due not set of get and the set of the heat o

a three arrest need of wood and stream in Soctiand which is

82 -



Plate 10. Alan Sonfit, **Time Landscape**, 1965-present, trees, 45 x 200 ft. Corner LaGuardia & West Houston, New York City.





Plate 11. Andy Goldsworthy, wrapping poppy petals around a granite boulder. Sidobre, France, 6 June 1989.



Plate 12. Andy Goldsworthy. Green sticks partly scraped and rubbed. Yorkshire Sculpture Park, 10 February 1987.







Plate 13. Above, Andy Goldsworthy on the beach. Morcame Bay, Lancashire, Oct. 1976.

Plate 14. Left, Andy Goldsworthy, **Balanced Slates.** The moment of collapse. Barrowdale Cumbria, 1988.

- 39 -



has on long lease from the local landowner. He has the image of a Robinson Crusoe type figure who struggles yet again with the forces of nature such as bitter cold and the dampness. Goldsworthy gave up attending life classes in college because his hands, being used to the cold, hurt in the warmth of the studio, (Goldsworthy, 1990, p.13.) and one writer (Miranda Strickland-Constable) imagines herself to be among the trees where Goldsworthy works "miles away from anywhere" (Goldsworthy, 1990, p. 11.) All this helps conjure up an heroic image. Yet we know there is bound to be houses nearby, roads, square fields and telegraph poles that we all know from walks in the countryside are now part of the landscape. A landscape that has been altered radically by economics and politics.

I take the opportunities each day offers...if it is snowing I work with snow, at leaf-fall it will be with leaves, a blown over tree becomes a source of twigs and branches. (Goldsworthy, 1990, p. 10.)

It is hard to believe that he has never stumbled over a fence, a man-made field or even a pathway through a forest, all examples of Man's imposition on nature, that are also part of our environment. Surely an artist who deals with nature so directly has not only to deal with the complex modules of nature but also with the economic factors which surround each work, such as the leasing of

- 40 -

ness of hing leave trop the incluted isnaturor. He has not usege of a hobirson Gruece Symp figure she attackles yet again with the forces of nature show as bitter tool too the dampnets. deidemently gave up attending tifs classes in collage because his hands, baing head to the cold, how in the warrait of the studio. Galdsworthy, 1900, p. 5 and one we'ter (Mirands Stringland-Constable) imagines hereall to be smorg the troos where bolds on the first this takes anong the troos where bolds on the affiles among the troos where bolds or the too hereall to be smorg the troos where bolds or here in this takes that we have be bounded to be and and there is tound to bouses hearby, 1990, p. 11.) there is tound to be houses hearby, reads, some fields and telegraph goles that we all know from walks to ano that has mean altered radically by acquering and that has mean altered radically by acquering and that has mean altered radically by acquering and politics.

I tale the opportunities and day offers ... if it is enowing work with arrow, at leaf fall it will be with leaves, a blown over tree becomes a cour c of twigs and hierches, (goldsworthy. 1990, p. 10.1

It is hard to believe that he has never stumbled over a fames, a man-made field or even a pethway through a foreet, all examples of Man's imposition on nature, " are also perb of our environment. Surviy an antist wi deals with occurs so directly has not only to deel with the comptem modules of hature but also with the educates of even which rarround each work, such as the itselas of

- 40 -

land, financing (as in means of self support), and photography. Such factors of the society we live in today are not present in Goldsworthy's work. Perhaps Goldsworthy is still searching for the Garden of Eden. If so, he is denying that at present we have destroyed much of our natural environment, with drastic results, and are capable of more damage.

Dr. Terry Friedman, in the book about Goldsworthy, "Hand to Earth" describes the idyllic life and settings where Goldsworthy and his wife, son and daughter walk and talk and Friedman recollects his "personal journey to understanding and friendship." (Goldsworthy, 1990, p. 3.) Susi Gablik has argued that as we begin to move towards a new ecology of consciousness, and the world becomes understood as a place of interaction and interconnection, the challenge will be to break through the illusions that have generated the impression of separation and detachment. (Gablik, 1991, p. 60.) It seems that Andy Goldsworthy has detached and separated himself from the outside world, and this, according to Gablik is not the way forward.

Goldsworthy saw that the forcing of geometric shapes on to nature was an imposition. He realised this while looking through the window of a train at formal rows of trees along the edge of some fields. Yet, he admires the work of Richard Long, whose work has often placed or forced a straight line down the middle of large sections of land. Artists such as Goldsworthy and

- 41 -

boll end of an inclusion of coll anglerity, ind photeers, or in the isotons of the society we list in toriag are and prevent to deldemonthy a work. Fermers told worthy to will searching for the Carden of Raen. Vf so, he is environ that at present we have destroyed down of run net.tal chvironment, with drastic results, ind of corphies of more namens.

(a) iterry Priedman, in the book about (a) dealed (), "doub to Farin" describes the idyille of and set (), where Goldsworthy and his wife, and and drighter wilk and talk and Priedman resolutions the personal journey to understanding and friemBahis." (Goldsworth, 1990, p. 3.) Soal Gablik has argued (10, 0) we begin to nove towards a new scology of consumpress and isterrounce()) or the obsiling of a place of (). (hrough to informating has about the ister () and isterrounce()) or the obsiling and place of ().

control the control of any last the forcing of a geometric charter of a control of a control of a control of a control of the second of a control of the second of a control of the second as straight line down the side of the second of the second of the second as straight line down the side of the second of the second as straight line down the side of the second of the second of the second as straight line down the side of the second of the second as straight line down the side of the second of the second as straight line down the side of the second of the second as straight line down the second of the second of the second as straight line down the second of the second as straight line down the second of the second of the second as straight line down the second of the second as straight line down the second of the sec

- 1-

Richard Long, who began working in the early '70s, did work in a more unobtrusive manner to earth artists such as Michael Heizer and a clear division here is evident, but the emphasis was still on using the land to make the artists mark stand out. Goldsworthy considered his pieces to be "a trail of work that marks my progress through life." (Goldsworthy, 1990, p.60.) Even though the marks may not be permanent, the importance is placed on the ingenuity and skill of the artist in his ability to improve on nature, rather than on nature itself. And his abilities are usually immortalised by photography.

Goldsworthy is putting every effort into trying to gain an understanding of "not a single isolated object but nature as a whole." (Goldsworthy, 1990, p. 1.) "The creative act of touching rather than of encroaching on the land" (Goldsworthy, 1990, p. 6.) is evident in his work. But the most important aspect for him, more than the photographs of his work, is the "experience of making". (Goldsworthy, 1990, p. 6.)

Each work grows, stays, decays - integral parts of a cycle which the photograph shows at its height, marking the moment when the work is most alive...(the photographs) are not the purpose but the result of my art. (Goldsworthy, 1990, p. 9.)

The "transience" which is the most important aspect to him

- 42 -

An in the set togen working in the early (the curve of the set of the set

trying to ( ). An untersteading of "nones single detucted object but naths as alwhold ( (Goldsworthy, 1500, ).) "The reactive for of thirld rether that is each hits or the reactive for thirld ( P. 5), is even at that sock, each the near dependent spect for hit, more than has provothered by ( His work, ) to the "experience of each of a contemporting, 1880, p. 6.1

tash wife grows, stays, decays - threat parts it a vita which the photograph shows at its height, which the comput when the work is must alive filter photographs; are not the pulpher, alive filt its itself of my art. (coldsworthy, 1970, p. 5.)

die bewester ein while he the most important Assoct to not

is not conveyed to the viewer. The viewer merely sees a series of photographs. The transience is something this artist alone can truly revel in (pl. 14).

When Goldsworthy began making work in the mid-seventies the meaning of being closer to nature was perhaps different to what it means today. "When I began working outside...I splashed in water, covered myself in mud, went barefoot and woke with the dawn." (Goldsworthy, 1990, p. 12.) (pl. 13). Nowadays being closer to nature does not mean frolicking through the wilderness, it means obtaining a better understanding of how the processes of nature are being interrupted by us.

Goldsworthy is an heroic figure in a different sense from Michael Heizer. Heizer was confronting the primeval nature with his tools and explosives and trying to order it. Goldsworthy is seen as heroic for submerging himself totally in a world of nature and closing himself off from the plundered outside world. While Andy Goldsworthy is interacting and connecting with nature it seems that this is purely for his own benefit, he is separated quite literally from the average goings on of daily life.

Goldsworthy is known for entering into an enchanted relationship with the earth, and reintroducing the childhood wonder and amazement into such things as snow and sand. Lincoln Allison in his book, Ecology and Utility, says that people have a habit of bringing their children up in a realm of Tolkien fairy stories.

- 43 -

as of conveyed to the viewer offic viewer meanely seen a serves of partypic. The transforme is spectfung of artist alone can realy revel in fair LAT.

when the the meaning of bring closer to nature and mid-correction the meaning of bring closer to nature and perhaps instruction to what it means today. When I costs working outside... I aplashed in waters seared mysecif it mud, and and to condition waters seared mysecif it igon, p. 10 - (11, 13). Kowadays being closer to be dood not area froiteking through the wilderness. It near thaining a bother understanding of how the processes, or near the total the processes of

Different cases from Michael Heiger. Holder in a different cases from Michael Heiger. Holder was control in the tract reveal nature with his tools and explosions with the tract to order it. doldsworthy is seen to hard. Concernstrag manaelt totally in a world of actors and existing brackif off from the plundered outside world while had, inidexecting is interpoting and connecting world of the in separate which the paraly for his own cenetics he is separated with the tap paraly for his own cenetics be in separated with the tracting from the systeme give to be in separated with the systeme given by the systeme give to be in acting to be acting the systeme give to be in acting the systeme given by the systeme give to be in acting to be acting the systeme give to

idit(c)corting (a known for entering into or, onchothed elocitoning with the earth, and reintrouncing the idit(d) i worder and amplement into anch things on the idit(d). Lincoln diligon in his took, Booloury and diligo, seem that propid have a hobit of bringing of it. () drees up to a reing of Tolkied fairs clories

- 84 -

Certainly it is good to stretch childrens imagination and they need a world of fantasy. But it is not good to encourage the view that the real life of the higher self is lived among deserts and forests and mountains and not down here among the motorways and supermarkets. (Allison, 1991, p. 62.)

When asked in an interview by Terry Friedman, whether ecology was an important aspect of his thinking, he replied;

...I have a very personal approach; it is not in a political sense. For me ecological issues are very creative ones. I have found this a very exciting time to live, in a way, because we are reassessing our relationship to the land. For me it is not just doom and gloom; it is also a sort of celebration. It is a time when we can find a very personal relationship with the land. (Goldsworthy, 1990, p. 60.)

Establishing a rustic settlement where the individual can detach his or herself from the outside world and 'find' his or herself is not the concern of a progressive ecological thought. It is not engrossed with the concerns of the individual alone but is more concerned with mutual aggression and with Man's uncontrollable effect on the

- 44 -

All and a contract of thread and approximation of the second of the

When saled in an interview by Tarny Friedman, whether we clogy was an ingertant aspect of nil thinking, he realized:

. I have a very pressnal approach, it is not un a political rease. For an ecological isomer arwary breative ones. I have found that a very oxcibing has to live, in a way, because we are reassanting or relationship to the cend. For me it is not just doom and gloom, it is also a sort of relation it is a time when we too find a very present relationship with the land

Establishing - mustic settlement where the unityleter can detach his or hereelf from the outside world and find his or herself is not the conterm of a progressive coddginal throught. It is not supposed with the converof the individual sione but is note concerned with mutual is the individual sione but is note concerned with mutual

14 -

environment around him, through such things as the growth in population and in resource consumption.

population and in recourse consumptions

## CHAPTER 4

A "Grey" or "Green" Nature?

.



During the 1980s the idea of a 'green' perspective on politics became commonplace. However the impression was given that a lot of people voted 'green' on the grounds that it would mend the ozone layer or keep the countryside intact.

The broadest definition of 'green' thought, at this time, is that human beings have ceased to have harmonious relations with nature - out of this comes possible ecological catastrophe and the start of a sense of spiritual frustration. An examination of deeper ecological views reveals an opposition to humanism and a tendency towards "survivalism, anti-rationalism, authoritarianism and even racism." (O' Brien, 1992, p. 19.)

There is dissatisfaction with modern life in certain countries more than others. It lacks the tranquillity of previous societies and is highly destructive. Ambition and incentive have been organised around material life and in the countries where there is a sceptism about the benefits of economic growth, there has been a surge towards 'green' thoughts. Those countries are mainly, Britain, Germany and North America.

In Lincoln Allison's book 'Ecology and Utility' he says that there are two traditions of planetary management, the utilitarian and the ecological,

- 47 -

During the 1980s the idea of a groot spectroper of particles becaus commonpless. How we can be approximate the way in the provide that it will pend the same layer of the contact of the c

The Proposed definition of green to when at this the, is that human beings have beared to funharmon all relations with nature - out of this cones (corolide evological catactrophe and the plactory a corof spiritual fruitration. An examination of deeper of spiritual fruitration. An examination of deeper contest of the invests an opposition to nameniam and o contest of the relation. Tetlenal and the relation of survivalism. and retional tem.

in Lincoln allison's cook 'Eccler' all

Filtery as age that there are two tradicions of

the "grey" and the "green". (Allison, 1991, p. 1.) The utilitarian bases of practical philosophy says we should use the planet and subject our own activities only to the criteria of efficient use. The ecologist says that we revere the planet or at least treat it as if it had rights of its own. The central theme of Allison's book is that each of these ways of thinking has much to learn from the other and discusses them both, but from a "grey" viewpoint. He puts great importance on these views by saying that the ecology/utilitarian debate has been confused and overlaid by two other historical struggles between ideas, "between scientific rationality and orthodox religion and between left and right" and he believes that the importance of the ecology/utilitarian debate will soon become more apparent;

I think it is possible to argue from either a utilitarian or an ecological stance that these distinctions in themselves are likely to diminish in importance compared with the debates between ecology and economics, between utility and nature. (Allison, 1991, p. 3.)

The green movement have had a lot of influence on political policies but mainly through environmentalism. Environmentalism seems to be almost the middle man between ecology and utility. Environmentalism is generally the view "that certain goods inherent in our the slow one the grand of Allient, that, i. (1, 1, 1) into the planet and subject buy can introducty can be blocked and the planet and subject buy can introduct the control (1) criteria of officient use. The evologist mays (10) and out of a planet of at least treat it as if (1, the control of it, use. The central them of Allison's book to the evolution and the central them of Allison's book to the component of the booth, but from a treat the component of the point is point, but from a treat the and the control them both, but from a treat component of the second treat them and the second of the control of the the scolegy of this is portant of the treat theory is the second provided by two other historical structure theory religion and by two other historical structure theory religion and between solehiller and right' and the the second provided of the ecology/stiller as the stillers will be a here and between the the second of the ecology/stiller as the the second provided of the ecology/stiller as the

i inits it is possible to organ incompliance a utaliancian of an acological stance that these declamations in themselves are likely to distribute in importance compared with the deckars of all or ology and economics, botween which its and nature. (Allicon, 1991, p. d.);

Inthemes on pulitheat policies but a this of the second state of the second policies of the second s

94 -

surroundings are undervalued by public decision-making compared to material goods." (Allison, 1991, p. 7.)

If heads of state were to put environmentalism into practise it would mean an assumption of greater powers over economic and social activity. Examples Allison gives of this are that the state would

penalise certain kinds of activity (as with hydrocarbon taxes) or takes as regulatory powers what were once the rights of private ownership...or directly manages sectors of the economy for long-term public benefit rather than according to commercial criteria. (Allison, 1991, p. 3.)

This type of environmentalism is far from radical unlike a lot of 'green' views on such issues, Environmentalism does not demand changes in public philosophy, it usually consists of a lean towards conservation or preservation. True ecological philosophy rejects much of the way we now think and demands entirely different ways of living.

The different views may be illustrated as follows: it is better to have a road running around a forest (the environmentalists view), rather that through it (the utilitarian view), but it might be quite impossible not to build the road at all (the ecologist view). The utilitarian attitude seems to be the one that

- 49 -

outhin the secondal ended of related deviator call a commune to notanial souda [ [silison, 1991, p. 7... If heads of state were to put

invironmentaliam into practise it would mean an easing the of greater cowers over economic and social activity Receive alligen gives of this are that the state would

Sendire pertain kinds of activity is: with hydrorarbon taxes) or takes as regulatory powers whot were once the rights of private every displore the rights of private every displored by manages sectors of the every for long-tarm public banking ration, activity to nonversion origination (Allison, tool, p. 3.1

This type of environmentalism is far item rediced unrike a lot of green views on such isnues. Environment "I a does not demand changes in gublic pullorophy. It usually consists of a less towers: conconverion or preservation. True accongical philocouch rejones such of the way we now think and demands such ().

The different views may be illustrated a (ellows, it is osttar to have a road running around a tored (the environmentalists view), rather that through if (the elliterian view), but it might be quite lage shift our to build the road at all (the ecologie) tores. The unitarian attained means to be the book it .

- with -

Michael Heizer might assume; it clearly poses problems. The artist holding the ecological view also poses problems. Jan Avgikos sees this problem as being one of content. He says that even when there is strong content in the work it is still hard to negotiate or deal with because by putting really "hard" information in a gallery it may go "soft". (Avgikos, 1991, p. 109.) Artists such as Helen Mayer Harrison and Newton Harrison may be in danger of falling into this category. They present quite hard information within the gallery system. Their work seems to have arisen partly from their disapproval of the Earth artists such as Heizer, and while many believe Heizer's actions were drastic the same has been said of the Harrisons.

## The Harrisons

In Craig Adcocks recent interview with Helen Mayer Harrison and Newton Harrison, he begins by talking about the early '70s as the time the Harrisons began working as a collaborative team and a time when "ecology was just becoming a fashionable term". (Adcock, 1991, p. 35.) This typifies the attitude towards ecology at this time, a "fashion". Because of the realisation that the natural environment was beneficial to us, being "at one with nature" was then the current tendency or trend. This rush to enter into nature was spearheaded by people

- 50 -

No sees a Code Makir Madamet II Ciracty generate pointant the errors haling the coological view when House and Unothed. The Additor sees this problem as weing one of encoder. We says that your when there is strong on too to 'ne work if he strift hard, to regatize a codent wit increase by potting really 'nerge information in a same to in any so work'. (Avgikor, 1631, p.,1031) Artists and is a force they have light and Berran Herrison may he of danger of riting into this category. They present (with seene to be we unisen partiy from their dangerows) on and for the an into onth as Heimer, and while many he is here to into onth as Heimer, and while many here.

The shall he was

In Crate Mondka recent interview with born dayer Errende and Newton Harrison, he cagins by talkers about the corty 70s as the time the Marridone bagan working as a collaborative team and a time when evitops was just recoming a fachienchie term (Adoock, ire) of 35., This typittes the artikude towards sockey as this case, a (18%) of the artikude towards sockey as this tatuted any froment was bereficial to us, then in the rate to other the supreme towards accleded at the solution is a sector the suprementation of the term.

38-

such as Heizer and Smithson whose ideas of entering into nature were often to bulldoze into it. Newton Harrison's view of such artists was as follows:

Think of the vast energy put into big cuts and shapes in the desert that are inherently gestural, simply primary structures in another context. They are transactional with museum space, not with the earth. They are involved primarily with forms. (Sonfist, 1983, p. 182.)

Helen and Newton Harrison have been working together since 1971 producing art that engages in real world ecological situations. Their work poses questions such as: How devastating is an oil spill? What effects will deforestation have upon tropical ecosystems? How does continuing development interrupt the natural cycles of the environment? And they have focussed on matters such as the relationship between commercial fishing and seabed resources, and the problem of sulphuric acid rain because of increased air pollution. They create installations consisting of plans, maps, diagrams, drawings, photographs and verbal descriptions(pls. 15 & 16), all of which take on an environmental problem and propose a solution. They are mounted and hung in gallery spaces and sometimes in places like Town Halls.

When the Harrisons began working they were interested in the strength in ecosystems(pl. 17) and were

- 51 -

er a re deltare ond Smithern arres dess of entary (at) arrane ware uften to pulidose (pro 11. Memor beretron r them it area artists (22 as follows)

Thus of the cast energy put into big curt and chapes in the depert that are innercatly gostural, simply primary structures in another outbest. They are transectional with montal space, not with the sorth. They are incolved primarily with forms. (Soufist, 1985, p. 1961)

Helen and Newton Harrison have occe within togethor these 137% producing are that employed in the world coelested withstians. Their work poses form in such are they devactating is an all spill? What effects will deferentation have upon tropical equivations. In a new continuing devalopment interrupt the natural epote of the environment? And they have houseed on matter ruch as the relationship between commercial fishing out action as the relationship between commercial fishing out instatistical constating of plans, aspect instatistical environments and verbal descriptions () a drawings, photographs and verbal descriptions () a drawings, a solution. They are more and hung in gallory along a solution and sometimes () phone its formation () a drawings () and dometimes () phone its () a drawings () and dometimes () phone its () a drawings () and dometimes () phone its () a drawings () and dometimes () phone its () a drawings () a drawi

When the Harrisons began working they were

1.2 -





Plate 15 & 16. Helen Mayer Harrison and Newton Harrison, Sava River Project, Yugoslavia, 1988-91, two of twelve photo collages with texts, maps and mixed media. Moderna Galleria Ljubliana.




Plate 17. Helen Mayer Harrison and Newton Harrison, **Portable Fish Farm: Survival Piece No.6**, 1972. Plants and trees exhibited in containers to suggest future sources of food. Contemporary Arts Museum, Houston.



"dealing with the miracle of it all". (Adcock, 1992 p. 36.) They did however make the distinction between growth material and ecology, and according to the Harrisons other artists only used growth material because it was fashionable. (Adcock, 1992, p. 35.) Since the '70s they have gradually come to certain understandings about the interdependencies and basic patterns of nature. Newton Harrison believes that,

Those kinds of understandings can cause a revolution in values. Your values can change in the face of that information. One of the problems that we all confront today, in terms of our education, is that our values are not changing fast enough in the face of new information. (Adcock, 1992, p. 36.)

One of their earliest projects was The Lagoon Cycle. This was a massive research project in which they observed the Scylla Serrata lagoon crabs, natives of Sri Lanka. Their experimentation succeeded in getting the crabs to mate in a laboratory with the help of a man-made monsoon, something that had not been achieved before. Their discovery earned them a \$20,000 grant from scientists at a nearby Institute, to support further study.

We found that no researchers before had

- 54 -

Solutions with the attricted of it will, there all the a of 1 they did however asks the distinction between armon material and coology, and according to the matrixation armints only used growth material because it was (ashiomable. (Adocok, 1982, p. 35.), Since the '70s 'the lave gradually come to certain understandings about the interdependencies and basic patterns of mature. New Joseph Harrish on leves that,

Incess kinds of understandings can chuse a revolution in values. Your values can charge in Steries that information. One of, he of the of the

One of their seriest protects was The ingoon Cycle. This was a massive research protect in which they there was the Soylia Perrate isgoon Subby and the Soylia Perrate isgoon Subby and their organization successed in secting the trade to make the hold of the protect of the interval is a successed in a laboratory with the bold of the bold

We found that as researchers before had

succeeded in getting Scylla to mate in the laboratory - when we repeated the monsoon we found out how to duplicate the conditions necessary for mating to occur. (Sonfist, 1983, p. 25.)

The crab project began as a piece about survival and life cycles and became a ten year project that also questioned the nature and uses of technology. In 1980 they brought The Lagoon Cycle into a gallery space. The crabs were displayed inside a tank where they demonstrated their life cycle to the public.

The Harrisons have made extensive studies on other projects such as plans for extensive control systems for the Los Angeles basin which are designed to collect the floodwaters coming down from the San Gabriel mountains every year. A more recent project which was on show in Berlin in 1990 was a study on the Save region in Yugoslavia, one of the last large floodplains offering habitat to the black stork and the sea-eagle(pls. 15 & 16).

While the Harrisons were already doing work about such issues as global warming in the mid 1970s, and were fully aware of the effects all their actions had on the environment, they seem to be the exception rather than the rule. Earth artists like Michael Heizer had an extremely aggressive approach towards nature. The bulldozers and explosives he used emphasise this. The

- 55 -

recession to setting toyles to mate in the substatory when we repeated the monaces we tound but how to duplicate the conditions uccessary for mating to occur. (Sonfigt, 1962

The crab project began as a piece about survivat and life cycles and became a ten year project that also questioned the nature and uses of technology. In 1.00 they brought The Lagson tycle into a saller ender. The rabe were displayed inside a tank where the secondorstrated their life cycle to the public

The nerrisons have made extendive creaters on outer prodents chich as plans for extendive orbited cythese for the tet Argeles basin which are destimed to other the subsectors coming down from the Sam Gibler i mounts to contract year. A more recent propert which was on show to be here in 1920 was a study on the Sava region in Yaporlevie, one of the left large frondplatme strengs telled to the olark stork and the sea-sagle(plat. If a

while of a particular were an global warming in the wid 1 V(0), and void 1000 this aware of the affects all their actions wid conthe error comment. Shey seem to be the excettion 150h a 500 the model Barth articles like Michael Holter had an entropoly addressive approach towards catace. The

28 -

strength of the Harrisons work lies in the fact that all the work they have done together since the '70s is still valid today, unlike monumental Earth works which in my opinion are not. They have also, unlike Heizer, interacted with nature in a totally unaggressive way, but the fact that they present such hard information in the gallery makes it difficult to negotiate. We might ask where is the art?. Perhaps it is hard to deal with because the art that we are usually presented with serves no other purpose other than that of being a work of art. There are plenty of artists who make work that has no practical purpose out of what many might consider to be 'rubbish', and much of this work is considered art because it has been stripped of any practical purpose. Since Duchamp we have been prepared to treat any such object as a work of art. But the question still remains as whether the information the Harrisons present to the public is taken as seriously as intended. The dilemma for the viewer must be whether to feel shocked and gratefully informed or whether to look for the artistic qualities that might also be intended. Either way, the viewer will decide.

- 56 -

events of the Harringian warm like in the last that all the event they have done sugather gines the 70% is still work to it, unlike momental farth works which in an approach and they have have the during hutber. In electron that they present and hard information in the the last they present and hard information in the allow when it difficult to preschere. We which we are also and that we are available. We which we are been and that we are available. We which we have the to be attached as is hard in deal with a subscript and that we are availing presented with the form of the present and the difficult of the is subscripted with a star would be a work of with a content of artists who may age to be and the to be there are done and and and a subscript in the form and a this work is considered as the to be the here are and this work to considered as the is a subscripted of any pression propose, interto has been stripped of any pression propose, interto has been stripped of any pression propose, interant the star stripped of any pression propose, interto the here have inducted or transformer of the start.

# CHAPTER 5

.

Towards a 'Post-Mechanistic' World View.

### Towards a Third Mechanistic World View.

As previously mentioned, the developments in the scientific field are bringing aspects of nature such as indeterminism back into the fields of physics, mechanics and also medicine.

In 1969 Buckminster Fuller wrote that a Utopia could be attained and ecological disaster forestalled, by imaginative and fearless use of our most modern technical discoveries. He glorified technology and expected it to save the day. While his opinion has some truth in it - our discoveries may help way-lay disaster it is only one aspect that will help in the future, and it is not something to totally depend on. Comprehension of the ancient values, but at a higher level is also important. Raymond Dasimann said that "the future belongs to those who can regain, at a higher level, the old sense of balance and belonging between man and nature." (Berman, 1981, p. 292.) Morris Berman also states that "a reenchantment does not involve a return to archaic modes of thought, rather an insight into them must become a major part of our view of reality". (Berman, 1981, p. 195.)

- 58 -

As previously mentioned, the developments in the constitution theld are bringing aspects of mature coch as independentan back into the fields of payor a. the heritor and also measure.

In 1960 Buckminnter Fulter we to that a freque would be attribute and coulegical interator i contained, by immethative and fearlessings of our meet moteon transminal discoveries. He glocified behaviogy and superior transmitted discoveries. He glocified behaviogy and fulli in the our discoveries may help wavelay disaster it is only one expect that will belt in the forture, and it is no evoluting to totally depend on. Comprehension of the noriest behavior basis higher target in the forture belongs apprivent. Expects basis higher target in each ender the noriest belonging between usin and nature. (Bormon, 1981, p. 2821) Norris German and nature. (Bormon, 1981, p. 2821) Norris German also state to even to concrustment does not involve a return to even to each concrustment does not involve a return to even to each concrustment does not involve a return to even to be concrustment does not involve a return to even to each concrustment does not involve a return to even to each concrustment does not involve a return to even to be concrusted to the involve a return to even to be concrusted to an of reality", clocked become a state part of our view of reality", clocked become a

- 33 -

## A New Revolution in Thought

All these ideas have created a new revolution in thought about our relationship to nature, we now know that we are dependent on the health of the planet, and we have realised that we are also in charge. We have control, if we don't take certain actions and avert others, the results may be disastrous. This realisation obviously creates reactions and responses from concerned artists of our present day. These artists usually try to put across to us the notion of "a fragile environment at the mercy of human needs and systems". (Avgikos, 1991, p.106.) Ashley Bickerton would fall into this category as would David Nyzio.

In Nyzio's first solo show "Form", he created "eight sculptures that allude to biology, technology, beauty and a bit of sadism". (Cottingham, 1990, p. 156.) In this show Nyzio approached nature as something that could be constructed and reformed. Not constructed, as in the way Heizer might construct but in a scientifically investigative way. Two freestanding sculptures described as "treetrunk-like" consisted of magnets covered with iron pieces that change shape when moved, resembling a fungus growth pattern and suggesting "technologies potential to overpower nature". (Cottingham, 1990, p. 156.) Nyzio's work, like Bickerton's, suggests just how responsible for the planet we are and how much control we have.

- 59 -

In Ayrin's first or is first or is snow both the to be and to be and the to be and to be and the to be and the to be and the to be and to be and the to be and to be and

1.1. global holder to 1000, b Nychold work like Die ertage al carge after fuel how despagable for the large of the ert of all new when a scard we have

2 -

Jan Avgikos in his article 'Green Piece' points out the problems of art that has many built-in green beliefs. He also says that,

The stampede to board the green bus threatens to crush into conformity all work that takes nature as its referent...to hustle it into one hunky paradigm of just causes and didacticisms. (Avgikos, 1991, p. 105.)

The problems he sees in the art that he considers green, is that even when there is strong content in the work it is still hard to negotiate or deal with because by putting really hard information in a gallery, it may go "soft". The Harrisons may be in danger of falling into this category.

Avgikos gives Peter Fend as an example of an artist, who, like the Harrisons, gives hard information. He proposes political and ecological manifestos for a new world order, clean water and air and plans for a new paradise. He uses maps, models, satellite images and supporting documentation in the gallery. Avgikos calls them "geo-politico-bio-eco-logistic compatibility studies." (Avgikos, 1991, p. 107.)

Avgikos states that the possibility of "paradise regained" was an option for the 19th century Romantics but that option does not exist today. He believes that artists such as Meg Webster and Michael

- 60 -

or room of the continue in the second fragment fragment of the second se

Ya strangede to board the green hus threatens to start the constantity all work that takes nature as share rent....to hustle it into one husky bothwarsh of just caused and didactions.

The problems he sees in the art that is constructs production that even when there is strong contant in the work in to actil hard to degotiate or deal with because by potting really hard information in a gaitery. It div to be fit. The Harrisons may be to dange failing into this congreg.

artist, at a like the Harrisons, gives hard mitthad to the maproton a tribulation and evological manifestor for a new world are a lean water and air and plans for a reb puredite. In uses maps, models, satellite images and starriing termonomiation in the galfery. Avginos calls them (see a diffice have ano-logistic compatibility evolves, thughtan, 1001, p. 107.)

reginas states that the possibility of reculture regenned was as spoton for the 19th century norm they but that of the does not exist today. He read that that of the sound as Neg Webster and Michael Paha, who often use the metaphor for nature of the 'garden' in indoor gardens or 'ecosystems' in the gallery, are aspiring

to reconcile the arcadian dream of the garden with the materialism of natural history....it manages a liaison between corporate atrium greenhouses and museological displays of natural habitats. (Avgikos, 1991, p. 110.)

He describes Meg Websters Lifted Wetlands, which consisted of rocks, earth and flora on a structure in a gallery fed with a circulating water system, as "phantasmagoric" rather than ecological, and says that such work "reveals our reconciliation with the natural world as a pathetic illusion". (Avgikos, 1991, p. 107.)

Avgikos also says that the more techno-sublime of 'green' artists, such as Vincent Shine, provide a bleak and barren view of a science-fiction future with no way out. When the struggles of nature are

staged against the backdrop of sci-fi futurism....the terrifying and sinister come into play. We know that we humans, too, belong to the 'old' natural order, and like those little seedlings, may be subject to chemical modifications. (Avgikos, 1991, p. 108.)

- 61 -

to recently the arcadian dream of the garder with the weierfaltem of natural history..... transports a trainen between corporate striam arcoborcas and museological displays of wether radi atom thygines, 1391, p. 110.)

We describe a Meg Websters Lifted Wetlands. Addition of the structure of a structure addition of a structure of a structure addition fad with a structleting water system is "tous tous and adve the current of a structure the addition with the addition would be a put the time of (Avglion 1381, put of a Structure time ages that the cure

terme constant of "green" antista, auch as finlent blune. put ide t blost and burren view of a science fist, so for the strong view out, when the strangict of return are

erayed efficient the burkdrop of setting of a setting and a lister come into pray, we know that we humans, too, being to the fold natural orders and like those include readings, may be address to themical southings, may be address to themical The various words of caution Avgikos gives us on the obligatory moral content of "green art" today are all very valid, but I do not believe that art is in danger of being turned into a series of "just causes". He assumes that all such artists only purpose is to "pave the way for the mutual salvation of humankind and the planet". (Avgikos, 1991, p. 110.) As he says himself art cannot be expected to neutralise contradictions, when, if anything, art hyperealizes them. BANIN MULTER TO SEAD WELLEN AUGUST MULTER SHI

And the bin of the corry normal content of "shorn ash" conserser, all TTL, valid, but I de not balleve that art in an or over of some turned into a series of "just quadet". Re sourcess that all such artists ranky purpose is to pave the way doe de somtual salvation of humankind and the place . (Valide of the purpose is an order of the place of started to methal is contradictions, when, if any blue expected to methalism contradictions, when, if any blue

and hard second and them, p. 1

# CONCLUSION



We have experienced much cultural despair, since the peak of mass production. The early '50s was a time of urban sprawl. It was a time of cheap motor cars and a multitude of cheap plastic products, Hollywood films and canned food. This despair has gradually built up and many people now search desperately for love and authenticity, but are searching in a world that has taught us to fear these very things. The results, say Morris Berman are "mass neurosis and substitute gratification". (Berman, 1981, p. 16.) Berman sites the Beatles Sgt. Pepper album released in 1967, as an example of the mass neurosis that was felt at that time. The album is mainly about human dissociation. The substitute gratification takes the form of the world of drugs tranquilizers and television. Yet television is looked on as a form of entertainment, but now however, we are aware of the possibility of "amusing ourselves to death". In this present age, we have realised that depression has become a norm, and that something must be done about it.

Bramwell states that the ecologist is defined by many writers in terms of his opposite, the enemy of nature, "when the enemy is clearly portrayed, then the naturist emerges as his victim." (Bramwell, 1989, p. 23.) The enemy was certainly there in the '70s but perhaps it wasn't portrayed clearly enough for the Earth artists of

- 64 -

http://www.weimania.com// terminal intervention of the measure of the second term intervention of the second terminal intervention of the second terminal intervention of the second terminal second term

The above actions of the composites the enders of the advised of the enders of the order of the enders of the formation of the enders of the enders of the formation of the formation of the enders of the

- prip

the time. The earthworks were not very ecological, not that such work has to be dealing with ecological issues to be valid, but very ironically they were pertaining to a sacred nature that they did not show much respect for.

The impulse to make earthworks was not itself specifically ecological but was imbued with a transcendent intention to reconcile humankind....with the natural environment and its implicitly sacrosanct character. (Avgikos, 1991, p. 105.)

Much of the land is not a natural category at all, yet some artists have attempted to hide that fact. At the end of the Earthwork age some artists, like Goldsworthy, hung on to the idea of finding a path back to a 'golden garden' where we would find our salvation. But it is only by becoming aware of the control we have over the environment that we can attempt to stop its destruction. Other artists have harnessed this control and used Man's abilities to shape the environment for their own By using these abilities more wisely purpose alone. together with an appreciation of the natural systems, we can understand how to view our environment and how we can respond effectively.

The last few years have produced artists who now realise that we "no longer engage in a dialogue of how nature constructs us but rather how we construct nature".

- 65 -

with the surprise ward and very at logd with the shall the surprise to a dealing with equivalence its in and it is not very treminally they were percathing to a surprise taket they did not show and reaped for.

> impute to make cardinate was not itabl: >= (f) or (y arelegion) bot wis imputed with a tradacted) = (n) endion to reconcile horoacces, while the netural anvironment and si isplie) (y concreased) character, (Avginos, (SC)) > 100...

Activation of the land is not a not relighter as all, not a the active anterpred to hide thet is a the self of the of the new are and is flatter is a a character bury accorden to a firster a part have a character of the active is a second of firster a part is active of the active of the active active is a character of the active of the active of the control to the active of the active we have over the second to the active of the active we have over the second to the active of the active we have over the second to the active of the active of the sector of the active of the active of the sector of the active of the active over the second to active active of the active over the second to the second of the active over the second of the active of the active over the active of the active of the active weath over a second of the active over the active of the active of the active weath to active over the active over the active weath the active over the active active active weath over active over the active of the active of the active over the active over the active over the to active over the active over the active over the to active over the active over the active over the active over the to active over the active over the active over the active over the to active over the active over the active over the active over the to active over the to active over the active over the active over the active over the to active over the active over the active over the active over the to active over the active over the active over the active over the to active over the active over the active over the active over the to active over the active over th

the test test years have produced at the shire and the shire shire and the second state of the shire the test of the structure of the structur

0.8

(Avgikos, 1991, p. 106.) Avgikos believes that "green" art often assumes a "missionary position", but perhaps the good outweighs the pitfalls more now than it has in the past. The art produced is more interesting as it is a projection of culture onto nature, it is reflecting society, a society that is very slowly coming around to the idea of a 'post-mechanistic' age.

# BIBLIOGRAPHY

- 1. ADCOCK, Craig, "Conversational Drift" \_\_\_\_\_\_ Art Journal, vol. 52, no. 2, Summer 1992.
- ALLISON, Lincoln, <u>Ecology and Utility: The</u> <u>Philisophical Dilemmas of Planetary Management</u>, Great Britain, Leicester U. P., 1991.
- ANDREAE, Christopher, "Andrew Goldsworthy, Fire and Ice", <u>ARTnews</u>, vol. 89, pt. 7, (sep. 1990), p.89-90.
- 4. <u>Art Journal</u>, Art and Ecology, vol. 51, no. 2, Summer 1992. (Entire issue.)
- 5. S'GRAVENHENGE (ed.), <u>Art meets Science and</u> <u>Spirituality in a Changing Economy</u>, SDU c 1990.
- AVGIKOS, Jan, "Green Piece", <u>Artforum</u> no. 8, 1991, p.
  105-110.
- 7. BEARDSLEY, John, <u>Earthworks and Beyond</u>, New York, Abbeville Press Inc., 1984.
- 8. BERMAN, Morris, <u>The Reenchantment of the World</u>, London, Cornell U. P., 1981.

- 67 -

### IN BULOGRAPHY

- Art D.L. Cruig, Conversational Drift Art Lutreal, vol. 52, no. 1, Summer 1802
- M. J.J. SON. Lincoln. <u>Realogy and Utilizy: The</u> Mairie Infort Dilemmac of Planetary Managements Great Brissin, Leicoster U. P., 1491.
- Merchan, C. Sussapher, Andrew Meldawarthy, Anno San Levi, J.Tarwa, vol. 89, pt. 7. (sep. 1990), p. 60 00
- 4. Arlanmini, Art and Bolygy, Vel 81. no 1. cn.
  - R. d'ullerMdH (ed.), Arbineets Science and Spirituality in a Champing Economy, 500 - 1990.
  - Avelashi Jan, "Green Pleos", Artforim no. 8, 1991
    - Structur, John Fartuwerks and Bevend, New York, Alberting Franze Inc., 1984.

HERMAN, Notrice, The Englishediants of the World -

- 9. BICKERTON, Ashley and RANKIN, Aimee, "Fluid Mechanics", <u>Arts Magazine</u>, vol. 62, pt. 4, (dec. 1987), p. 82-5.
- 10. BRAMWELL, Anna, Ecology in the 20th Century, London and New Haven, Yale U. P., 1989.
- BRETT, David, "The Land and the Landscape", <u>Circa</u> no.
  40, May June 1988.
- 12. BUCKMINSTER FULLER, R., <u>Utopia or Oblivion</u>, U.S.A., Penguin, 1967.
- COTTINGHAM, Laura, "David Nyzio", <u>Flash Art</u> no. 152, May - June 1990, p. 156.
- 14. DUDDY, Tom, "Irish Art Critisism, A Provincialism of the Right?" <u>Circa</u> no. 35, July - August 1987, pp. 14-18.
- 15. GABLIK, Susi, <u>The Reenchantment of Art</u>, New York and London, Thames and Hudson, 1991.
- GOLDSWORTHY, Andy, Hand to Earth, Sculpture
  <u>1976-1990</u>, Leeds, W. S. Maney & Co. Ltd., 1990.

- 68 -

ele Sofred, Arney and KABRIE, Annes, Fluid decommiss", Arna Daguzine, vol. 53, pt. 4, edec. 1957 - p. 51-5

- be seatwhich Anns, Esclery in the 1925 Contact Conduction Sectors
- 11. BRUTT David. The Land Lie Landscape', duras -
- 12. D. T. GREER FULLER, N. Hunda or Ublivion. U.L. S. . - - \_rin. 1987.
- 18 ATTOMAN, Laural Travid Nysin, K.ach Art of MCL. May - June 1990, p. 156.
- 14 Diener in Lineh Ar Critisium, A Provincialiter of Phe biener **Circa no. 35, Dury August 1987**, Pro. 14-11.
- is dat die die in Reachanten Art. New York and Leven 1 week and Halada, 1993
  - 16. Charlenter Andre Hand to Barth. Mersketure 1276-1917, Loda, W. J. Hanar & Co. Ltd., 1960

- 17. GRUEN, John, "Michael Heizer, You Might Say I'm in the Construction Buisness'", <u>ARTnews</u>, no. 10, December 1977, p. 99.
- HARRISON, Katherine, "Ashley Bickerton: Tapping Into a Generations Collective Guilty Conscience", <u>Flash</u> <u>Art</u> no. 151, March - April 1990, p.141.
- 19. HARRISON, Newton and HARRISON, Helen Mayer, <u>Moderna</u> <u>Galeria Ljubljana</u>, Ljubliana, April 1990.
- 20. KALLINA, Richard, "Ashley Bickerton at Sonnabend", Art in America 78 no. 2, February 1990, p. 166.
- 21. LEIDER, Philip, "How I Spent My Summer Vacation or, Art and Politics in Nevada, Berkley, San Francisco and Utah", <u>Art Forum</u> ix no. 1, sep. 1970, p. 40-49.
- 22. MABEY, Richard, "Art and Ecology", <u>Modern Painters</u> vol. 3, pt.4, winter 1990-91, p. 60-2.
- Mc GILL, Douglas C., <u>Micheal Heizer, Effigi Tumuli</u>, New York, Harry N. Abrams, 1990.
- 24. NESBITT, Lois E., "Ashley Bickerton: Sonnabend Gallery", <u>Artscribe</u> no. 80, March - April 1990, p. 76.

- 69 -

• a Mouse Kenner, Mergina & Hellmer, Mergin Sar, Ens. 1, a 10 (1996) (1996) (1996) [Nilsenewer] [1, 415 (1998), 1997] [1, 50 (1997) (1977), pl. 356.

- Multiplie Rewissing HARRISON, Helen Mayers, Redenier alter trubled and - Lindeliens, April 1990.
- ''' M.L. M. Sicherd "Aspley Sickerson at Somboons . art\_in\_ ésetica 78 au. 2, Petrmary 1980, p. ic...
- ut of e Should Lips "Row I Spent by Summer Jacelou or o Antomat Colltics in Nevada, Berknoy, San Francis should should follow is for 1. sept 1976, p. 45-611.
- Control Art and Soulogy", Midera Pauloce, vol. . .t.d. winter P#90-91. p. 60-21.
- Generation Densitian C. Machines Herzan, Heiner Continues Rev frees france R. Akingma, 1990.
  - 1.3. Mattin Lots E., "Ashier Blokerton. Semistered Hallo y". Arteon Us no. [80. March - April 1790, 1

- 25. O' BRIEN, Paul, "Art and Ecology, a New Orthodoxy", <u>Circa</u> no. 60, Nov.- Dec. 1991, p. 18-21.
- 26. ROSEMBLUM, Robert, "Interview with Alan Sonfist", Hillwood Art Museum, Long Island U.P., 1989.
- 27. ROSENTHAL, Mark, "Some Attitudes of Earth Art: From Competition to Adoration", in Sonfist, Alan(ed.), Art in the Land, New York, E. P. Dutton Inc., 1983.
- 28. SHELDRAKE, Rupert, <u>The Presence of the Past</u>, London, Collins, 1988.
- 29. SHELDRAKE, Rupert, <u>The Rebirth of Nature; the</u> <u>Greening of Science and God</u>, London, Rider Books, 1990.
- 30. SIGGIN, Lorna, "The Warring of the Greens", <u>Irish</u> <u>Times</u>, Oct. 31, 1992.
- 31. SONFIST, Alan(ed.), <u>Art in the Land; A Critical</u> <u>Anthology of Environmental Art</u>, New York, E. P. Dutton Inc., 1983.

- 70 -

- Art and for the set and for own, a New Ortal and an Art.
  - [10] F. RH. LDM, Nobert, "Interview with Alen Southet", all'evoit art Mussim, Long Island U.P., 1983.
- /// contribute Mark, Some Activates of Barth Arts in //contribute contribution?, in Southar, Alunied. ). Art. in List Cond. New York, E. P. Dutton Tur. (98).
- n. DHELUUNE. bupert. The Presence of the East Gundon. volttes. 1926.
  - ie SHOLEEN huport The Yourto of Asturol th Gravit of Actence and God, Loudon, Fider Stoke, 1960 -
  - an elterit, icente, "ine Warring of the Greene". Last. Gast, at. 31, 1992.
    - LL LL ACAMONI, AL LA LE LAND, A MALE LAL (LEL LL LL ERVIRONNELLE ARL MAN 1678. E. C. FULLON LEL. 1863.