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Andy Goldsworthy: His affiliations with Romanticism.

BY

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I am very much grateful for the advice of my tutor Joan Fowler towards the researching and shaping of this thesis. I would also like to thank my mother, brothers and sisters for their enormous support.

I dedicate this thesis in memory of my late father - Benny Fox (R.I.P.).

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Introduction.

This Thesis will examine the work of Andy Goldsworthy in relation to the Romantic tradition. It is important to stress that the objective of this thesis is not to determine Goldsworthy's practise as one that is strictly rooted to Romantic ideology. Romanticism in itself has been the subject of a lot of theoretical writing and debate, yet because it remains heavily loaded with complex and often contradictory views, it denies a specific logic. However, in Romantic art and literature certain stereotypes evolve, such as the popularisation of dramatic scenes and dream like visions of nature in painting. Although art and particularly landscape painting was a source for the propaganda of political, theological and economic issues it also was a reflection of romantic attitudes towards nature. It is in the light of Romantic aspirations and treatment of nature in the arts that comparisons can be made with what characterises Goldsworthy's attitudes towards the subject.

The first chapter gives a discussion of the artists' work. It outlines the major elements of the work such as the materials he chooses to work with, the places he works in, the forms that the work takes and the role that photography plays.

A short analysis is given to romantic notions of the 'sense of place' in regards to eighteenth century picturesque parks. This is necessary in order to trace it's more recent interpretations as in the works of Robert Smithson as well as Goldsworthy. Several of Goldsworthy's permanent works are discussed in relation to his own perception of the 'idea of place' which is expressed by his individual attempts to 'touch' on what he calls the 'heart of a place'.

Through the discussion of romantic concerns with the 'natural' world in the following chapter, it is suggested that Goldsworthy draws on an impulse to nature which is rooted in the Romantic tradition. For example through the artist's reliance on natural materials for his sculpture, and by the fact that he always allows nature to decide that final fate of the work, he echoes the romantic stance of the interdependence of man and nature.

This is followed by an investigation into ideas surrounding the romantic notion of the natural relationship between man and nature i.e. the notion of a 'closeness to nature'. It examines how romantic perceptions of nature were sensitive to ideologies bound up in the countryside as an idyllic setting and a place of peace and harmony. As Goldsworthy's practise is involved with a personal exploration of nature in which he chooses to work only in the 'natural' landscape, it is necessary to consider his stance in relation to these romantic perceptions of nature.

The last chapter is sub-divided into two main areas of discussion - 'The Sublime' and 'The Picturesque'. The first half concentrates on Edmund Burke's theories of the sublime within the context of Goldsworthy's Arctic works. Goldsworthy's response to this landscape is very physical and personal and this is manifested by his commitment to recurring motifs such as the cone, spire, arch, etc. for the forms that the work takes. However, through a discussion of some of the works in relation to their specific sites I hope to convey his interest with the more apparent mystical and spiritual aspects of this landscape. Our perceptions of the Arctic have been highly influenced by dramatic accounts of it's power, vastness, mystery and uniqueness. These perceptions are firmly grounded in documentation of this precarious landscape through books, newpapers etc. from the first expedition to the Arctic. In considering Goldsworthy's accounts of his experiences there, by way of his day to day diaries, I hope to illustrate the confusion between his role as an explorer and his role as an artist, and the implications that this has on his work.

This is followed by a brief synopsis of ideas on the picturesque in the eighteenth century as defined by the theorist William Gilpin. It extends the discussion on the representation of landscape art and landscape design from the previous chapter and links them more specifically to a 'picturesque' effect.

In considering Robert Smithson's and Ian Hamilton Finlay's responses to notions of the picturesque I hope to convey Goldsworthy's closer affiliations to Finlay's reminiscence of a past pastoral tradition. By Goldsworthy's preference for a conventional "scenic" landscape as the domain of his art, he aspires to a romantic reading of an idllyic countryside.

Chapter One.

The Work, 'the idea of Place' and the Photograph.

Goldsworthy has had the one way of working with nature since his days in art college. He works for the majority of time only with natural materials that he finds on site, creating objects and patterns which generally have a short-lived existence. The forms that his ephemeral sculptures take are noticeably geometrical. As this approach would seem to be too ordered and therefore incompatible with nature, it adds further friction and absurdness to any conceivable attempts to 'naturalise' the work by remaining loyal to nature's own resources. Goldsworthy claims to work intuitively yet surprisingly he relys on recurring motifs such as the circle, the triangle, the cone etc. for eventual forms of his ephemeral and permanent works.

However, there is an apparent uniqueness about the artist's practise. His work embraces a very personal relationship with nature. Goldsworthy stresses the importance for him to work in all weathers and in all seasons. In an interview with Jonathan Watkins for 'Art International' magazine he states; " I need the shock of touch and the resistance of weather and materials and place - I need things to dictate what I do". (Goldsworthy, 1989 P.69). Yet to what extent does his practise relate to a long tradition of landscape art in Britain? This artist is a sort of problematic figure in the sense that he does not really conform with any previous styles in art. Mark Barlett describes him as a "tribe of one" (Barlett, 1992. P.16).

Goldsworthy has a very physical and 'hands on' rapport with nature which he claims to be essential for the progression of his own understanding of the subject. Yet because he is selective of the places he works in, the materials he works with - by putting these limitations on his own working processes he too is involved with more broader issues in the politics of landscape.

It is therefore necessary to give some analysis of the effects of notions such as the 'ideas of place' and 'the Sublime' on past traditions in landscape in order to trace more recent interpretations as in the work of Smithson and Goldsworthy. John Beardsley suggests that attempts to evoke a 'sense of place' in recent times has become too common and perhaps even outdated. He states;

> *'A sense of place' has become the dominant cliché in describing the effects of recent work in the landscape. It alludes, however unconsciously to celebrated admonition of the eighteenth century English poet Alexander Pope, who advised that one '"Consult the Genius of the Place in all".*
> *(Beardsley, 1984. P.20).*

Notions of the 'sacredness' or genius of a place allude to romantic inclinations that nature was a source for the spiritual and the pantheist vision that the presence of God was everywhere. In the eighteenth century, picturesque landscape parks such as Stowe, Stourhead and Castle Howard aspired to notions of the genius of the place by their attempts to express qualities of the sacrosanct through the character of the place. By their attempts to recreate a sense of the Edenic or earthly paradise these parks obtain their mystical qualities yet their motive is also apparent. (See Beardsley. 'Earthworks' P.9).

In more recent times our world continues to be remodelled by increased urbanisation, industrialisation, deforestation etc., to the extent that very little of the 'natural' world remains. Robert Smithson was one of a small group of artists from the sixties who took to the open spaces of the landscape in revolt against the commercialisation of art in the gallery space. Entropy - 'the dissolution of the object' by forces of degeneration and decay has always been the focus of his work. Smithson was not interested in picturesque sites preferring to work in industrial wasteland, disused quarries and generally landscapes that showed the effects of some kind of disruption. Before his untimely death in 1973, when he was killed in a plane crash while surveying the site for the *Amarillo Ramp* project Smithson has completed numerous minimal sculptures, his 'non site' works and five site specific earthworks.

Smithson avoids a nostalgic relation to place, i.e. the place being restored to it's former appearance after his project has been realised. In fact, the artist appealed that it was impossible for a site to be 'restored'. In his essay *"A Tour of the Monuments of Passaic, New Jersey"*, Passaic being a place where he grew up in, the artist gives examples of the entropy that he detects at work there. He uses the sand box 'monument' to demonstrate "the irreversibility of eternity by using a jejune experiment for proving entropy". Smithson gives this example;

> *Picture in you mind's eye the sand box divided in half with black sand on one side and white sand on the other. We take a child and have him run hundreds of times clockwise in the box until the sand gets mixed and begins to turn grey; after that we have him run anti-clockwise, but the result will not be a restoration of the original division but a greater degree of greyness and an increase in entropy.*
>
> *(Smithson, 1967, P.51).*

It is in his writings on the works in relation to their specific 'entropic' locations that Smithson best succeeds in the evocation of the 'idea of place' rather that through the 'actual' constructions themselves. Two years after the completion of what has to be his

most famous work *Spiral Jetty* Smithson published an essay about the project. (See Plate 1). *Spiral Jetty:* a spiral form of black basalt and limestone rocks and earth constructed in 1970 on the northeastern shore of the Great Salt Lake in Utah. His infatuation with decay and ruin is evident through his writing about the piece. He states; "A bleached and fractured world surrounds the artist. To organise this mess of corrosion into patterns grid and subdivision is an aesthetic process that has scarcely been touched". (Beardsley. 1984. P.222).

The use of vocabulary - *shattered, fractured, corrosion* aspires to notions of the entropy of his own world. Goldsworthy's work is neither strictly natural or man-made. Yet it also draws enormously from processes of weathering and decay. He sees the work as successful if he has managed to evoke what he calls the 'heart of a place' "Not just the scenery, but the essence of the place, what makes it." (Goldsworthy. 1990. P.164). In his practise of using only materials found on site, working in the landscape itself, he attempts to evoke the *'heart of a place'*. Yet Goldsworthy is very selective of the sites where his works will be made. He shuns urban cities and towns by his commitment to reverence for what he has taken as the 'natural' landscape - remote, desolate places such as those in parts of southern Scotland, where he lives. Through his persistence to work in beautiful and remote areas of the landscape he aspires to romantic sentiments of the countryside as an idyllic place where man is at one with nature. However, by man's intervention in the landscape the natural world is changed. Britain in particular has become one of the most urbanised countries in the world. Therefore there can be no return to a romantic vision of an Edenic or earthly paradise and any attempts by Goldsworthy to regain contact with it by immersing himself in the 'natural' landscape would be ludicrous.

The *Lambton* and *Leadgate* earthworks are his only works that stretch across the boundaries of the 'idyllic' countryside into an area which is neither naturally beautiful nor remote from civilisation. *The Lambton Earthwork* was made in December 1988 in Co. Durham. It is built on a section of a disused railway track. A coil of black earth runs for about a quarter of a mile in a serpentine motif, alternating from narrow to wide as it advances. This gives the piece a sense of direction and a lyrical sense of movement. As in the case of all his permanent works the piece is site specific. In this example the work draws from the imprint left on the landscape from an old railway track. Sunlight cast on the form creates an interesting play of light and shadow, activating a new energy into a once abandoned, lifeless site. (See Plate 2). The theme of enclosure which was first taken up in a stone wall construction for Stone Wood near Penpont, is not as evident in this piece as it in the *Leadgate earthwork.*

Plate 1. *Spiral Jetty*, Great Salt Lake, Utah. 1970.
Estate of Robert Smithson.

Plate 2. *The Lambton Earthwork,* County Durham. December 1988.

The function of the Penpont wall was to form a boundary between Goldsworthy's own land and a neighbouring farmers'. Goldsworthy designed two intertwined loops, one on his own land for the farmer to use as a sheepfold, the other on the farmers' land for his own use. With this in mind it is somewhat easier to see closer affiliations to agricultural considerations - rather than art aesthetics. The method of dry stone walling which is used in this particular wall and for his other constructions derives from a strong tradition of agricultural stone walls in Britain. Furthermore, in order to keep the walls rooted to this tradition Goldsworthy employed two highly skilled wallers to undertake their actual construction. (See Plate 3).

Energy and the existence of it within nature is of the utmost importance for Goldsworthy. The ever-changing face of nature through natural processes of flux and change, growth and decay he regards as essential to his relationship with nature. The unpredictability of the primordial forces of nature has a major role to play in his art. Take for example his delicate arch constructions. Slabs of ice, stone and slate are the most common materials used for these hanging arches. Goldsworthy is playing with the laws of gravity in these free standing structures. Arches have been constructed over walls, in between trees, in the gallery space etc. The artist establishes an order in nature by way of these fragile constructions. However, it is the moment of chaos when an arch is knocked down that he attempts to capture in the photographs. It is the built-up tension of an arch suddenly released by a strong gush of wind that causes it to fall that continues to fascinate him. (See 'Stone' P.94. Goldsworthy).

Goldsworthy's 'black hole' works are also motivated by concepts of energy - in this case energies contained within the earth. The artist confirms this when he compares the blackness of a hole to the flame of a fire: " The flame makes the energy of fire visible. The black is the earth's flame - it's energy". (Stone, 1994. P.64).
'Black holes' appear in the use of various mediums such as slate, clay, leaves and ice both inside and outside the gallery space. In the Parc de la Courneuve in France Goldsworthy constructed a hole underwater surrounded by slate. The minuteness of the hole is underlined by the expansiveness of water. Light reflects off the water and is therefore prevented from penetrating the hole. Thus it is difficult to ascertain the depth of the cavity and this element of uncertainty is a potent force behind these 'black hole' works. (See Plate 4).

The holes in the earth are constructed so as to achieve the same effect. Light is prevented from falling into the cavity: all that can be seen is a perfect darkness. This intensity of blackness is sometimes reinstated by sunburst arrangements of brightly

coloured leaves or clay etc. around the rim of the hole. However, to what extent (if at all) do these 'holes' provoke deeper meanings? In the *Rain, Sun, Snow, Hail, Mist, Calm* catalogue for the Henry Moore centre in Leeds Goldsworthy hints at their more personal nature. He states; "Looking into a deep hole unnerves me. My concept of stability is questioned and I am made aware of the potent energies within the earth". (Goldsworthy, 1985. P.5).

The idea of the incalculable depth of a hole, where it is impossible to see beyond the 'blackness' gives it a sense of infinite space. In his *Philosophical Enquiry into the origin of our ideas of the Sublime and Beautiful*, Edmund Burke attributes the notion of infinity in nature as a source of the sublime. Vast, rugged mountains he attributes as the greatest cause of notions of infinity because of their suggestion of limitless space. Yet he also says "the last extreme of littleness is in some measure sublime likewise". (Burke. P.66. 1990) first published in 1757). Goldsworthy's realisation of the power or 'potent energies' within the earth induces a sort of terror or instability in him. This touches on Burke's idea of fear and suspense as causes of the sublime. Burke also considers darkness and blackness in relation to notions of the sublime. Soft, lightish colours such as greens, blues and yellows he regards as cheerful and therefore non-evocative of the sublime. On the other hand, dark and gloomy colours such as gaudy browns and blacks, having a more sinister quality about them, Burke has attributed these as elements of the sublime. (Burke. P.75. 1990). Of the effects of blackness he states;

> *Blackness is but a partial darkness, and therefore it derives some of it's powers from being mixed and surrounded with coloured bodies..... Black bodies, reflecting none, or but a few rays, with regard to sight, are but as so many vacant spaces dispersed among the objects we view. When the eye light on one of these vacuities after having been kept in some degree of tension by the play of the adjacent colours upon it, it suddenly falls as suddenly recovers by a convulsive spring.*
>
> *(Burke. P.133. 1990. Ed).*

I am not suggesting that Goldsworthy's 'black holes' have been directly influenced by these notions of the sublime. However, the holes do have a mystical impassivity about them. The arrangements of leaves around a hole gives it definition and a decorative dimension, yet more importantly it is a ploy to draw the eye into blackness of it's centre. By such an intensity of blackness the holes look as if they could almost float out of the ground. This underlines it's potential to evoke a silent dark energy within the earth.

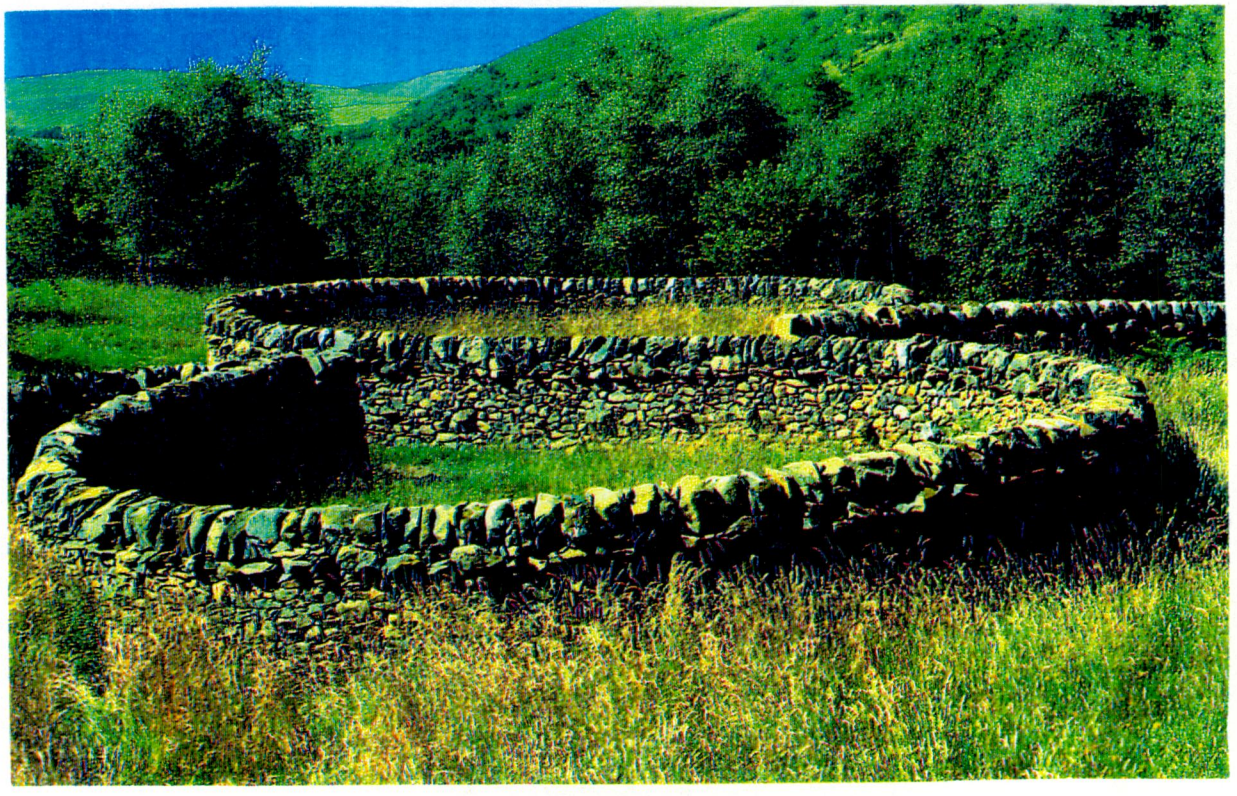


Plate 3. *The Wall,* Stone wood, Dumfriesshire 1988-89.

Plate 4. *Black water stone*, Parc de la Courneuve, France, Spring 1993.

However, 'the hole' motif is not just restricted to the exploration of blackness. In the winter of 1987, in Japan, Goldsworthy did several versions of the circle / hole form by cutting into slabs of snow. On one occasion the snow slab is carved into layers of receded circles. As each layer is scraped away the circle becomes more translucent. (See Plate 5). Goldsworthy usually accompanies a small text giving an account of how the work evolved with a photograph of the work. In the description of this piece he mentions that it was made on a bright sunny morning and that his only tool was a branch. As the layers cut deeper into the slab the innermost circles gradually become more illuminated by the strong sun. The idea of light seen beyond or through seems to be a common feature to all his sculptures.

In 1984 Goldsworthy completed *Seven Spires* his first commission for Grizedale Forest. (See Plate 6). Grizedale is not a natural forest. It's main function is to grow timber, and because of the continual replanting of trees after some have been cut away it can be regarded as a constructed space. Goldsworthy deliberately chose to work in the most secluded part of the forest. The work consists of seven spires, each spire made of several sets of pine trucks clustered together forming a conical shape. Only one spire is readily visible to the viewer from a distance so that one has to enter the enclosed space to experience the other six. It is interesting to note that although this is one of the artist's more permanent works it's relationship to it's surrounding is ever-changing as the environment itself is in a constant change.

In this piece and in the following project *Sidewinder*, completed in May 1985, Goldsworthy has been sensitive to the character, history and purposes of the sites. In the *Seven Spires* project the spires reach the summit of the surrounding trees - as if to prevent them from suffocating within the sheer intensity of the forest. *Sidewinder*: a rapid succession of arches formed by a body of tree trunks, was deliberately constructed in a remote part of Grizedale. (See Plate 7). It takes on a life of it's own as it weaves in and out between trees like a horizontal 'serpent'. There is a great sense of energy surging upwards in the spires, whereas for this sculpture piece the feeling of energy runs closer to the ground.

Are these permanent works evidence of a heavy-handed approach that forces nature to comply with his work? Goldsworthy would probably suggest otherwise. Whereas the ephemeral sculptures are made more by his own intuition and on the spot, he stresses the importance of preliminary drawings and plans of the permanent works in conjunction with their chosen sites. Thereby he suggests that the characteristics of a site can be implied through the work itself, thus enhancing a place. (See interview with

Plate 5. Bright sunny morning / frozen snow / cut slab / scraped away with a stick / just short of breaking through. Izumi-Mura, Japan.
19 December 1987.

Plate 6. *Seven Spires,* Grizedale Forest, Cumbria. 1984.

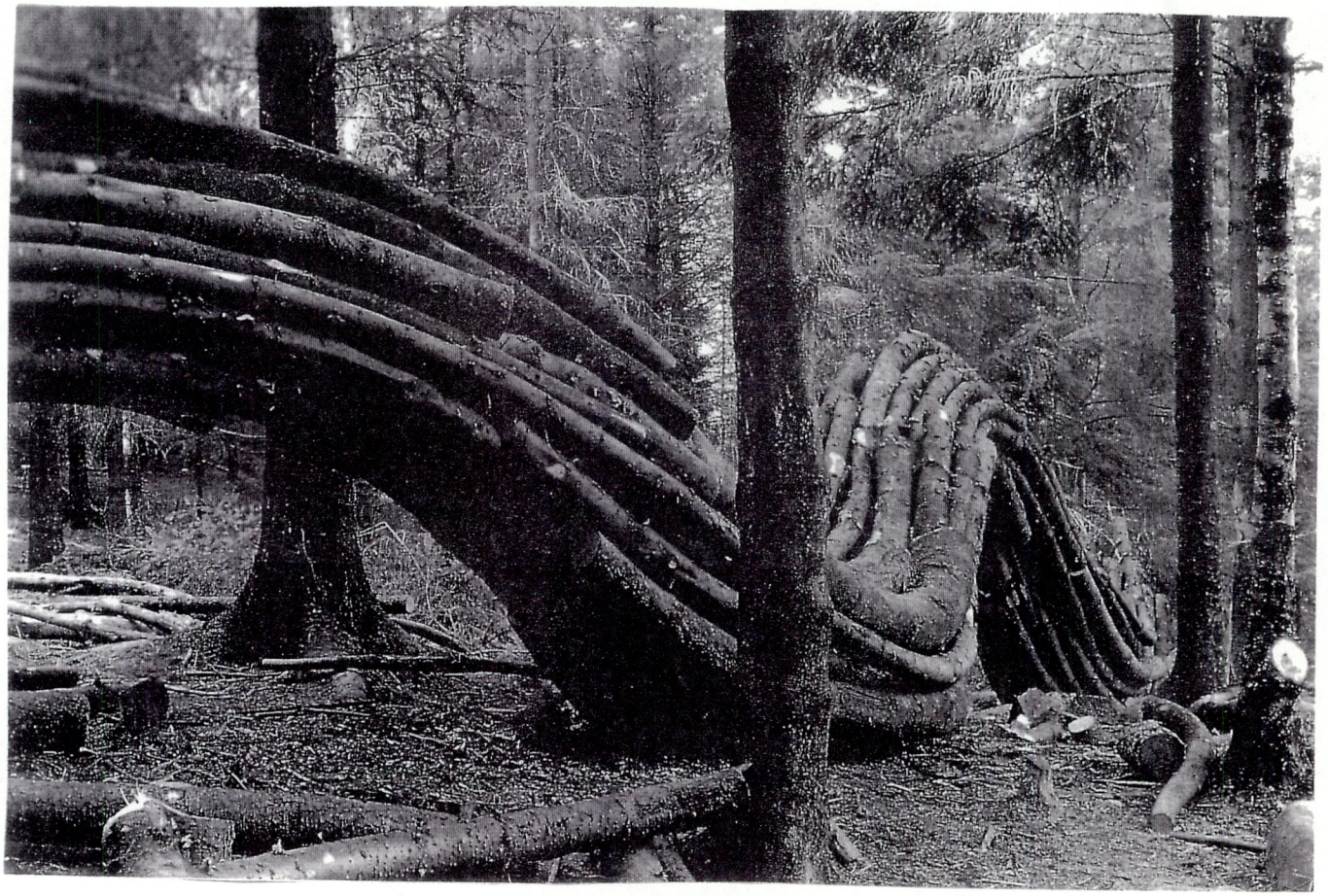


Plate 7. *Sidewinder*, Grizedale Forest, Cumbria, Spring 1985.

M. Tromble. Artweek. P.17.). Furthermore because the artist is aware of the function of the woodland as a working forest both *Sidewinder* and *Seven Spires* are made only with the forest's surplus timber. Another piece that was made in Grizedale was a large wall construction running for about a hundred and fifty yards forming loops that weave in and out between trees. It is a reworking of a surviving wall enclosure and is a direct reference to the time the land was divided into field enclosures prior to it's transformation into woodland. There is a distinctive element of secrecy about all of these Grizedale sculptures. The works act as markers to a passage through the forest and because they are all so secluded within the density of forest they are often difficult to spot. Even then, the viewer has to enter the space itself in order to see the work in it's totality. For *Sidewinder* and the wall construction which has become known as *The wall that went for a walk* this means following the form from one end to the other. (See Plate 8). Thus these sculptures are an expression of the connection between the physical activity of walking through the work as well as the experience of looking at them. Because these works are very much site-specific, drawing from elements of the forest itself, hidden within it's boundaries etc., one can speculate on the relevance of certain concepts that have become the embodiment of the character of the forest. I refer to notions of the forest as a wild and untamed place - a wilderness where the dark energies of nature exist. Andrew Causey in his essay *Environmental Sculptures* for the 'Hand to Earth' catalogue refers to *Sidewinder* as the 'emblem of the dark energy of the forest' because of it's remote location. (Causey, 1990. P.31). However, to make such an association is still very much speculation. Goldsworthy's work is a celebration of the wonder and awe of nature. The Grizedale works are a personal and silent expression of the characteristics of the site that are important to him. He is not trying to impose them on the viewer. Yet because of the works' close relationship with this 'wild' and desolate location they could also aspire to romantic associations of the forest as a place to be revered and cherished.

THE PHOTOGRAPH

Goldsworthy records his work by photography and through sketches and documentation in his notebooks. The care that is taken to produce immaculate and beautiful photographs is evidence of the importance he places on photography. In *'Stone'* Goldsworthy gives his account of his use of photography.

> *Photography is my way of talking, writing and thinking about my art. It makes me aware of connections and developments that might not otherwise have been apparent. It is the visual evidence which runs through my art as a whole and gives me a broader, more distant view of what I am doing. On*

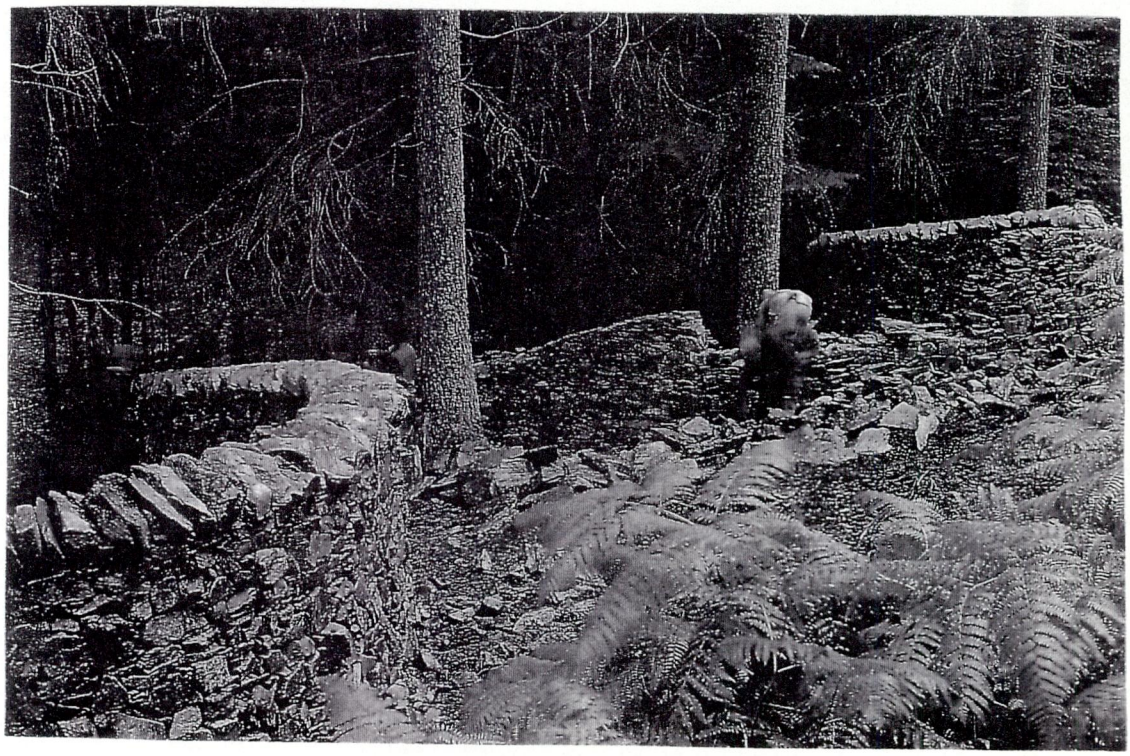


Plate 8. *The wall that went for a walk,* Grizedale Forest, Cumbria, September 1990.

occasions when film has not come out, that work feels dislocated - like a half - forgotten memory.
(Goldsworthy, 1994, P.120).

Photographs of the ephemeral sculpture gives the work a certain degree of permanence. The disintegration of an ephemeral work is suspended in the photograph. The work acquires the same status as the permanent works. Yet by recording the processes of the gradual degradation and disappearance by a sequence of photographs Goldsworthy poignantly reinstates the transient nature of the work.

We ask ourselves which is the most important art - form the actual making process or by Goldsworthy's insistence on excellence the photographic documentation itself. The answer inevitably is that both are interdependent. An ephemeral work is usually photographed in the following manner - a close up of the work followed by a second photograph which takes the site in from a distance. This is the format in which the work will be represented in the gallery space. Because the ephemeral work draws directly from materials found on site and from the light and weather conditions, a photograph of the work in it's setting is important. It invites the imagination to search within the scene for the possible source material of the sculpture, engaging the viewer to extend the boundaries of the photograph beyond the frame.

Goldsworthy is more reluctant to put photographs of his large projects into the commercial gallery. (See Causey, Hand to Earth, P.125). for these he uses photography purely for documentary purposes. Because the permanent works are site-specific Goldsworthy believes that they cannot exist outside of their space. Therefore to photograph one and place it in the gallery would be unjustified. 'The photograph' as an incomplete entity, Goldsworthy views it as it's most significant purpose in his work. Writing in *'Stone'* he stresses the necessity for a potential audience to imagine what their experience of the work would be if they came across it. He hints at a physical sensation by 'touch' as well as the visual experience of the work. He states;

It is necessary to know what it is like to get wet, feel a cold wind, touch a leaf, throw stones, compress snow, suck icicles ..... often reaching back into childhood to when those experiences were most alive.
(Goldsworthy, 1994. P.120).

However, even if Goldsworthy does not want photographs of the permanent works to be interpreted as artworks he cannot avoid this. Through the dialectics of photography all photographs of the works take on their own meanings, - their own

existence. Quite simply, if the work did not appear in galleries or in documentation through books, video and photography Goldsworthy would still be unheard of.

Chapter Two.

A consideration of Romantic attitudes to nature and their relevance to Goldsworthy.

Like his anti-Enlightenment forebears, Goldsworthy's creative researches seek to forge a unique self by doing battle with the sublime, transcendental forces of nature, but this naive assumption of the existence of a monolithic, transcendent "nature" undermines his rhetoric and infuses his art with contradiction.
(Mark Bartlett, ***Artweek****. P.16).*

In the Romantic era there was a vision of unity and wholeness within the world. This was defined by the belief that there was some kind of unity in nature, whereby it was assumed that all possible modes of existence were part of the 'order' of nature. The Romantics were hostile to science as a result of the goal of science to understand the complexities of nature, thus extracting the mystery and mysticism from it. In the age of science where Newtonian physics dominated it was thought that all things were knowable, everything could be theoretically understood. Science brought to light the unacceptability of the unexplained such as 'natural phenomena' (accidents in nature) of which the romantics had a passion for. It began a programme of questioning, yet it still held that the laws of nature were absolute or fundamentally predictable, thus reinstating the vision of a monolithic nature.

Ironically it is with further and much later scientific research that attempts are made to understand the disorder of nature. This was achieved by new concepts such as relativity and quantum mechanics.

In the above passage Mark Bartlett relates Goldsworthy to the notion of a uniform, transcendent nature which through a holistic vision of nature has it's origins in Romantic ideology. On the contrary, Goldsworthy's work draws from the constant change that characterises the natural world. Goldsworthy is primarily concerned with his own relationship with nature. He only intends to impose a certain amount of order into his work - the rest is left to the unpredictability of natural processes. He says "Movement, change, light, growth and decay are the life-blood of nature, the energies that I try to tap through my work" (Interview with John Fowles, 'Hand to Earth', P.160).

It is the creative tension resulting from the dynamic interplay between order and chaos that inspires Goldsworthy. His intentions are not to 'make his mark' on the landscape, instead he is working with it. Goldsworthy is very much aware of natures' continual state of change and the fact that his work inevitably be repossessed by it.

By means of photography he highlights the time element involved with the gradual degradation and disappearance of his work. Also by documenting the failures; be it the sudden moment of chaos when an ice arch collapses or when a balanced rock is knocked down by a sudden gush of wind he reinstates the element of disorder within the complex energy flowstructures of nature.

As a human being, and more importantly as an artist questioning his relationship with nature, Goldsworthy continually chooses to work on the landscape itself and primarily with it's natural materials. Goldsworthy has worked in different landscapes all over the world such as Australia, Japan, America, France and the Arctic, yet overall he is rooted firmly to British landscape and in particular to his homeland in Scotland, where he works for the majority of the time. It is from this landscape and it's past that Goldsworthy's strongest feelings for the land are evoked.

In an interview with Fumio Nanjo, Goldsworthy admits that his understanding of the British landscape has allowed him more control over his work than working in a country which is unfamiliar to him. (See Hand to Earth, 1990 P.163). It is significant that out of a total of twelve major permanent works as many as nine have been made in the British landscape. These permanent works evolve from full examination and careful consideration of their specific locations. It is then hoped that the works will evoke a 'sense of place' becoming rooted in the place almost in the same way that the stone wall enclosures have become an important part of the landscape.

Goldsworthy's personal involvement with nature has become associated with the notion of some kind of 'closeness to nature'. This notion is in fact a mis-guided conception that has been constructed by society. It is a cultural perception that was largely a product of the Romantic era but in reality it is in fact an imaginary one. The notion of a 'closeness to nature' is one that is bound up in political and social undertones. It recalls the romantic version of a natural relationship between humanity and the natural world. Before highlighting the political and social reasons that motivated, it is necessary to give some consideration to Romantic attitudes to nature.

The Romantics had a great respect for nature and it's hidden forces. Through art and literature the overwhelming wonder and awe of nature was celebrated. Paintings of dramatic scenes of dramatic visions and moonlit landscapes evoked strong emotional responses. The fears and pleasures of the unknown expressed itself in the artist's quest to portray the vastness and immensity of landscape in landscape painting. Often man is portrayed in small scale amidst the expansiveness of the countryside as if

he is insignificant to the omnipotence of nature. The Romantic's did not want to merely imitate nature in a straight forward realist manner. Rather by the embracing of emotion they strove to achieve an inner vision of nature which was believed to be the key to a genuine art.

In the classical period which preceded the romantic era there were much more pessimistic attitudes to nature. Remote, unspoilt landscapes were regarded as areas of untamed nature and places to be feared. The fear of the untamed saw it's strongest conviction in a fear of the wilderness. The Classicists believed that dark forces of evil were strongly connected to the forest, lurking within it amongst the vicious wild beasts and demons. The untamed and uncivilised wilderness became a symbolic representation of the Id. Within the darkness of the forest, at the mercy of savages and beastly animals one was in contact with the wild unconscious. The Classicists also expressed a distaste for mountains which were regarded as deformities of the earth (See John Rennie Short, 'Imagined Country', 1991, P.6-9).

By the nineteenth century Romanticism, remote, untouched spaces such as areas of mountains and forest became a major focus for art and literature. For the Romantics the unspoilt landscape had a strong spiritual significance. The wilderness as wild and untamed, was a place to be revered. In romantic painting scenes become infused with a pantheistic light - a reminder of the presence of God in nature.

The change in attitudes to nature also had it's effect on the landscape itself. In landscape design in the eighteenth century there was a shift from a tightly controlled garden design with 'geometric lines of vegetation' in enclosed spaces to a more freer 'natural' looking design . This was in accordance with the vision of an Edenic landscape (See John Rennie Short, Imagined Country, 1991, P.67-68).

The discussion of landscape and indeed garden design cannot be separated from a broad variety of social and political issues. The development of cities and industrial towns, and the strengthening of urbanisation and modernisation has had enormous effects on the British landscape. The notion of the 'idyllic' countryside made an impact with the effects of industrialisation. The countryside became a symbol of a past innocence, simple virtue, a lost tradition of a rural life. Man's direct productive involvement with the land for his own needs suggested a harmony between God's bounty and man's work.

The idealised countryside represented the location of a golden age of labour whereby the interdependence of man and nature was manifested through the purity of man's working relationship with nature. It is contrasted with the evil of the city where the power groups of industry reap the profits from economic growth and the power of the market.

With increasing growth in the industrial field more and more people left the countryside to find employment in the towns and cities. As a response to these notions of the dignity and repose of rural labour became highly suggested in Romantic landscape painting. It reiterates the feeling for a lost rural way of life and recalls Thomas Jefferson's ideology that "those who labour in the earth are the chosen people of God" (Beardsley. 1984. P.10).

The English Romantic ideology of the countryside reflects the sentiments for continuity and tradition. There is a sense of rejection to the rise of the cities and sympathy with the plight of industrial workers subjected to working long hours for low wages in such unfulfilling work. More apparent is the rejection to the creation of social hierarchies where the division of the rich from the poor is exemplified by the creation of a new group in British society - the urban working class.

It is ironic that the so called 'typical' English countryside with it's notions of purity and a natural of life has also the contradictory evidence of a society powered by a hierarchical system.

> *The paradox is that the twin elements of the 'typical' English countryside, small regular fields and rolling acres of parkland were not the result of centuries of unending conflict - free tradition, as is commonly supposed and regularly presented, but of a radical change in power relations. It was and is a landscape which carries the imprint of power.*
> *(John Rennie Short, 1991, P.71).*

The change in power relations that Short is referring to is that of the landed aristocracy whose power was strengthened by the landscape enclosure movement in the mid-eighteenth century and throughout the nineteenth century. Whereas it had become the fashion for the opening up of the garden design in accordance with rustic landscapes of the countryside, initiated by designers like William Kent and Lancelot Brown the landscape was also being transformed by the enclosure movement coinciding with the commercialisation of agriculture.

Open space of pasture and common ground were converted into networks of enclosed fields and ownership was given in the majority of cases to the landed gentry. While the enclosure and privatisation of land strengthened the powers of landowners, it signified the destruction of the English peasantry. The landowners built country mansions on their estates and employed rural people to work the land for them. The status of the rural poor became that of a rural proletariat.

Changes in landownership with the decline of the gentry and the passing of many of the large estates coupled with the development of a more fully organised agrarian capitalism resulted in the development of a single money market. With a fast growing population the advantages of an increased agricultural production were obvious. However, the effects of the increased intensity of farming on the 'look' of the countryside did not go unnoticed. The poet Ben Jonson in his play entitled 'Volopone' describes the effects of ploughing as wounding of the earth suggesting the ecological damage caused by intensive farming. (See John Rennie Short, 1991, P.38). As part of the pastoral stance (the view from the town) there is a sense of loss of a traditional countryside. The sense of nostalgia for the past is echoed by the desire to preserve country mansions. These country mansions look back to a past when Britain was at the zenith of it's power - the phase of British Imperialism and colonialisation. They housed important collections of paintings and artefacts that the landed gentry had brought back from colonist territories abroad. For the landowners the possession of such 'cultural properties' was a symbol of their wealth and prosperity, reaffirming their status as members of the bourgeoisie society. These objects de luxe also signified the privilege of an appropriation of taste. More importantly however was their colonist significance as "evidence of the spiritual and religious domination and subsequent conversion of the barbaric heathen". (Kenneth Coutts-Smith, The Myth of Primitivism, 1991. P.23).

The idealised countryside has become the embodiment of a national identity. The confusion of nature, as in the natural, remote and unspoilt with culture - the historical development of the intervention of humans, has led to the perceptions of the countryside as rural land and as native land to become synonymous. The myth of the countryside as a setting for a golden age, where good prevails over evil and where man is in the presence of a 'closeness to nature' are ideologies bound up in national sentiments of peace, harmony and stability.

The Romantic notions that humanity belongs to nature, that the artist is not only involved with the subject itself but in the discovery of his / her own human nature

through a supposed intimacy with nature has been an inspirational force for some land artists. The land art movement for want of a better term, evolved in the 1960's as a counteraction to the increasing commodity status of art. For land artists such as Michael Heizer and Robert Smithson there is a renewed emphasis on the landscape. Art and site are closely linked and the artwork predominantly takes the form of earthwork, and more often than not is of a more permanent nature than the work of artists such as Long and Goldsworthy. Both these artists pioneer a more gentle interaction with the landscape where the work has a transient nature.

Goldsworthy plays on the romantic idea of escaping the civilised forces of the city by his commitment to works in remote, picturesque landscape and often in solitude. He returns our attention to the notion of the artist, our attention to the notion of the artist wanderer which is infused with romantic qualities of Man in Nature. His working method is very much a personal expression yet by putting limitations on it as regards the use of only natural materials found on site and working primarily in isolated environments the work becomes associated with neoprimitivism. Take for example the artist's cone construction which are made from ice , sandstone, slate etc. Goldsworthy describes these as journey markers to his travels. In his book 'Stone' he is at pains to emphasise how the roughness and toughness of the material dictates the shape that the construction will take. (See Stone. 1994. p.37). On one occasion in Scaur Glen, Dumfriesshire Goldsworthy began a cone const0ruction at night and completed it at daybreak. (See Plates 9 and 10). Working at night he describes how his perception of the work changed with his reliance on feeling and touch rather than sight. By using only materials found on site added with the notion of the sensitivity of a direct contact with the materials Goldsworthy gives the work a feeling of the primitive. He confirms this when he says; "I needed a physical link before a personal approach and relationship could be formed. I splashed in water, covered myself in muck, went barefoot and woke in the dawn". (Goldsworthy, 1985, P.4). Goldsworthy takes on the aura of a sort of primitive character. Other limitations in his working process such as the use of spit or thorns to stick leaves together also evoke primitive. (See Plate 11).

I have previously mentioned that Goldsworthy is rooted to the British Landscape. In a personal journal from February 1988 he confirms this by saying;

> *"The land is an expression of it's past - the past is invariably drawn into my work through the materials I use and the places I work in. I am not trying to recreate the past - the monuments are not follies - they are of today but are affected by what has gone before. I have fed off those layers and I feel off these layers and I feel a deep need to put something back.*

Plate 9 and 10. Cone to mark night becoming day / began around midnight / worked through until dawn / finished at daybreak. Scaur Glen, Dumfriesshire, 24 October 1991.

Plate 11. Andy Goldsworthy at Morecambe Bay, Lancashire, October 1976.

(Goldsworthy, 1990, P.189).

The monuments that Goldsworthy refers to are his permanent works such as his dry stone wall constructions. His application of the dry stone walling techniques is one with a long history in the British Landscape since it's inception with the landscape enclosure movement of the eighteenth century.

Goldsworthy attempts to restore links with a past tradition by the use of old building techniques. In return it assists his efforts to 'naturalise' the wall into it's surroundings. He is hinting at a romantic 'rural tradition' in the countryside, but as I have already discussed this tradition is one bound up with social and political undertones. The significance of the stone wall constructions could be their indication of some sort of notion of Englishness. This would explain Goldsworthy's preference for to construct them on British soil rather than abroad.

Goldsworthy's commitment to making sculpture in the rural countryside in close confraternity with the 'wild' and the picturesque, echoes the romantic notion of the interdependence of humanity and nature. He states; "We all touch nature and we are a part of this process of interaction and change, we rely on each other". (Goldsworthy, 1990, P.164). Goldsworthy's reverencing of nature as the majestic, the wild and the unpredictable returns our attention to a romantic worship of nature. In his working practise where he aims to concentrate the mind on the natural beauty of nature, through his manipulation and rearrangement of it, his art becomes imbued with a transcendent intention to renew a spiritual contact with the earth. In addition by his efforts to convey the intricate and often delicate beauty of nature, we are also faced with the possibility that his work is motivated by a 'green approach'.

In an interview with Meredith Tromble Goldsworthy claims that his work is not strictly involved with ecological issues. He states: "I'm obviously deeply sympathetic to those concerns. I think my work express them. But I won't let my work be politicised and used, that's not my place". (Goldsworthy, 1992. P.17). Nonetheless Goldsworthy 's commitment to work in remote, picturesque landscapes is suggestive of his ecological nostalgia for a vision of an idealised countryside as defined by the Romantics.

Goldsworthy's transient work is in some instances barely conspicuous. The artist's stance might possibly be that a gentle interaction with the landscape is the key to his own understanding of nature. For his audience Goldsworthy's re-arrangements

of nature might be interpreted as an individual's attempts to forge an order in nature that does not exist. This interpretation falls in line with Bartlett's argument that is cited at the beginning of this chapter.

The use of recurring motif's such as the ball, line, arch, spire and circle could be interpreted as elements to convey or conquer his own order in nature. The gathering of scattered pebbles and reorganisation of them in graduations of colour and tone for his stone cairn works submit to order and pattern. An arrangement of leaves into sunburst patterns of colour also conforms to this perception. However, in my own opinion, Goldsworthy's commitment to the harmonising of nature's elements are his attempts to take the randomness out of nature. By taking the plainness out of nature he is forcing us to look at something we have stopped appreciating or have taken for granted.

Chapter Three.

'The Sublime' and 'The Picturesque'.

During the Romantic movement the visual arts had entered the subjectivist area. Landscape imagery became concerned with promoting notions of the spiritual values of nature. In art and literature nature becomes representative or symbolic of the territories of the human mind. Painting had shifted from depicting purely pictorial realism in nature to promoting the vision of a unique individual experience in a landscape of dreams and fantasies.

Notions of the spiritual, the sublime and the picturesque concurrently become highly popularised values attached to the land. As notions of the sublime and the picturesque carry a large amount of material and a wide range of discussion is involved, it is necessary to extract only those which seem the most significant to this thesis. The subjects are separated into two groups, however, one should bear in mind that ideologies bound in the sublime, the picturesque, the representation of the landscape in painting and even in the representation of the landscape itself are in many instances interrelated and interdependent.

The Sublime.

The sublime cannot be pinned down to a particular definition. Burke in his *'Philosophic Enquiry into the Origins of Our Ideas of the Sublime and the Beautiful'*, published in 1757, attributes the aesthetics of the beautiful in the natural landscape as having physical characteristics of regularity and smoothness as opposed to the irregularity and roughness of the sublime. He attributes Vastness, Infinity, Terror and Solitude as sources of the sublime. The vastness of a rugged mountain as it soars upwards to the sky he sees as a strong evocation of the sublime. He also views the expansiveness of a level plane of land as a cause of the sublime, but to a lesser extent than the latter. Lastly, looking downwards into an inclined plane where the scale of things become gradually smaller and smaller until they become scarcely perceptible provokes qualities of the sublime. The vastness and greatness of dimension induces an element of uncertainty in what lies ahead which in turn provokes the notion of the infinity in nature.

The sublime evokes paradoxical emotions of fear and excitement in the unknown. Burke has attributed fear and terror as the greatest effects of the sublime. He recognises that the sublime manifests itself when the fear of danger or pain or the ultimate threat of death is in some manner suspended. He says;

> *When danger and pain press too nearly, they are incapable of giving any delight, and are simply terrible; but at certain distances and with certain modifications they may be and they are delightful, as we everyday experience.*
> *(Burke, 1990. P.36-37).*

In other words the sense of relief by the distancing or suspension of fear provokes feeling of fearsome delight.

It has to be said that notions of the pursuit of some kind of sublime nature is not a continuous trend that Goldsworthy promotes in all of his work. However, in some of the works such as those made at the Arctic, perceptions of some sort of sublimity in nature become clearly evoked.

In March 1989 Goldsworthy travelled to Grise Fjord in the High Arctic Islands, spending a month there before travelling onwards to the North Pole, the climax of his journey. Sculpture made from ice and snow has always held an important position in the output of his work. Thus, the journey to the Arctic, a place which he describes as a kind of Mecca of sacred site aspires to notions of the pilgrim figure following winter to it's source in the hope of capturing it's beauty and mystery. Goldsworthy's work draws enormously from this virtually unspoilt landscape. In the photographs taken of the sculptures created at Grise Fjord and the North Pole the sharpness of the light and the sense of space are as equally important as the documentation of the work itself. Goldsworthy gives detailed descriptions of the intensity of light, the vastness of the space and even the qualities of the snow itself in a personal day to day journal of his experiences at the Arctic. (See Touching North: Andy Goldsworthy, 1989). He describes how the snow goes a deep blue when there is a strong light reflected on it. Then as the evening draws on, the blue changes into a rich pinkish colour. In the photographic documentation such as the series of photographs taken of the four rings at the North Pole, it is not just the structure of the work that is recorded but the changes in the colour of the snow under different atmospheric lights.

These four large circles consist of stacked slabs of snow built into round arches in a similar manner as to what is used in his stone arch constructions. Each circle faces a different direction and this was part of the artist's intention to evoke the feeling of being at the centre of the Pole. The series of photographs of the circles range from incredible blues to greys and turquoise blues. Set within a vast and flat area of the land with a horizon line that extends far into the distance there is a strong evocation of a limitless nature. (See Plates 12 and 13). The sometimes subtle of other times harsh colour effects caused by changes in the atmosphere evokes the presence of an almost

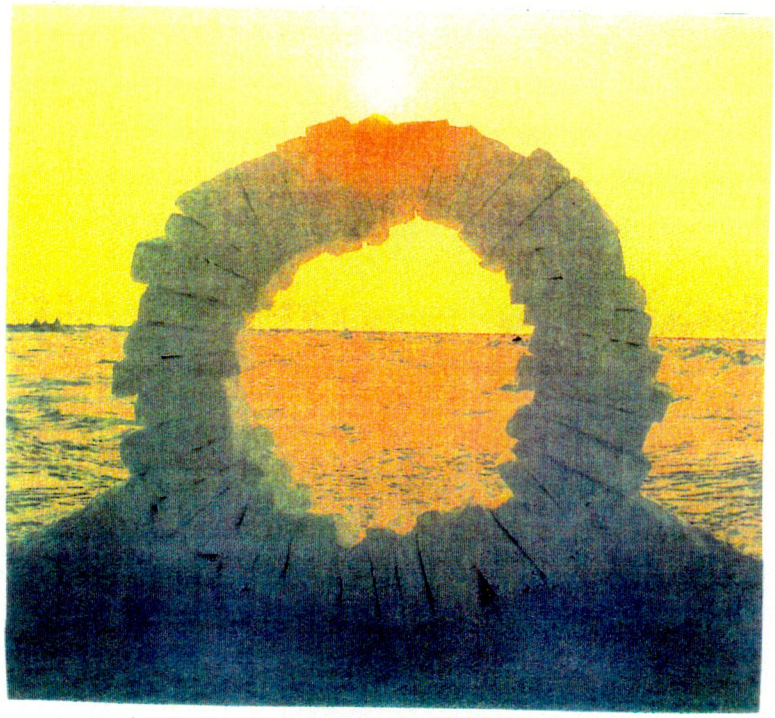
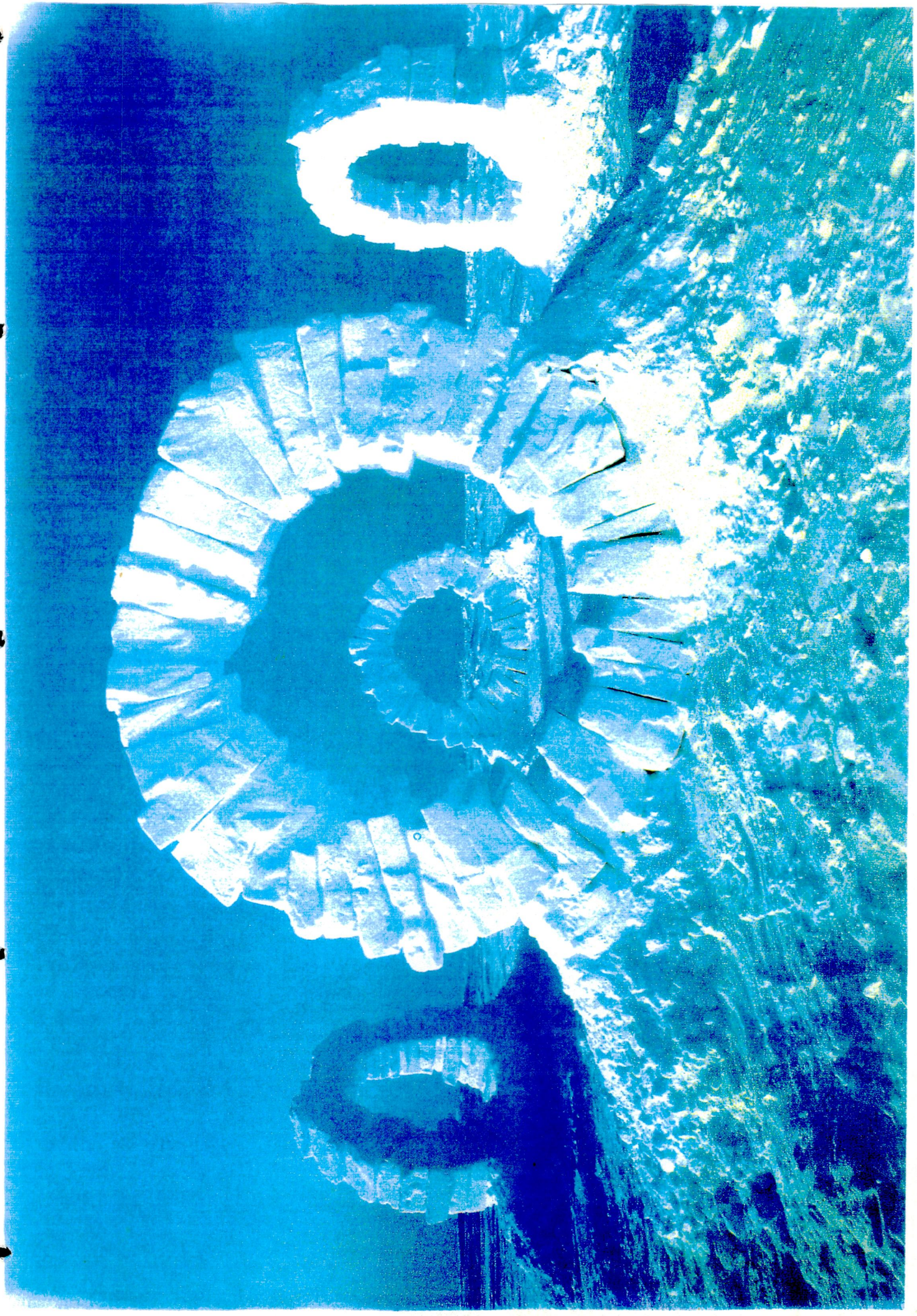


Plate 12. Snow Circle, '*Touching North*', North Pole, 24 April 1989.

Plate 13. (See Overleaf) '*Touching North*', North Pole, 24 April 1989.



celestial light. In an interview with Jonathan Watkins for 'Art International' magazine Goldsworthy's account of the landscape gives support to notions of the sublime. He states;

> *The sense of space is very strange out there because the light is so clear that things appear much closer than they are. Travelling to places that I thought would take ten minutes to get to, would take a day.*
> *(Goldsworthy, 1989. P.70.)*

This sense of limited space invokes a notion of infinity in this landscape of snow. Throughout his documentation of his experiences at the Arctic, which take the form of audio tapes, photographs and personal day to day diaries Goldsworthy's awareness of a unique, vast, powerful and sometimes intimidating and dangerous landscape is continually evoked. On one occasion he describes how he was thrown into a state of panic when an avalanche started while he was walking below the base of a mountain. He refers to the existence of animals such as wild polar bears which although he sees as beautiful beasts and very much apart of the landscape, he also recognises how dangerous they are.

From as early as the sixteenth and seventeenth century explorations ideas about the Arctic were conditioned by a response to the sublime. The Arctic was seen as a source of mystery, coldness and vastness. The fact that little remained known about it, even after the following century of exploration reaffirmed it's associations with the mystical. Goldsworthy's reverencing of nature through his work suggests that there is a metaphysical order in nature with which he is struggling to get in contact with. The Arctic as a kind of Mecca conjures up the vision of an Arctic explorer in search of some kind of personal exaltation through the inherent powers of this landscape. Through the difficulties he endures, such as the intensity of coldness and often treacherous weather conditions, he prompts notions of insecurity and terror with which Burke has identified as sources of the sublime.

In the Arctic sculpture, as indeed in a lot of his work, Goldsworthy attempts to deal with the chaotic forces of nature. For a photograph entitled *'Snow Slabs'* the accompanying text reads: 'stood on end for the wind'. (See Plate 14). In his daily journal the artist gives an account of how he deliberately chose a very open space for the work in order that the effects of the wind could be fully visible. At a mere glance at the photograph the snow blowing up and around the slabs creates a great sense of movement. The element of vulnerability which runs through all of his transient work is strongly suggested here.

The Arctic project was name 'Touching North' and this title basically symbolises what Goldsworthy had hoped to achieve. The idea of 'touch' is his own personal attempts to achieve some kind of harmony between nature and his own construction. He says;

> *'Touching North' was a temporary, fragile touch in a place which is ever-changing and cracking up. It was a touch which I hope was sensitive made from materials which came out of the place and will return to the place. (Goldsworthy, 1989. P.70).*

However the 'poetic' simplicity of 'Touching North' in fact is not as clear cut as all that. By Goldsworthy's embarkment on a heroic journey through this vast and precarious landscape the artist and his team of helpers conjure up visions of Arctic explorations of the past. Therefore the purist intentions of the project become clouded by colonialist resonance's of past expeditions to the Arctic. The notion of Goldsworthy's humble attempts to portray a gentle interaction with the landscape by means of his temporary Arctic sculptures is called into question by the perceivable notion of his efforts to conquer this landscape, by imposing his own artworks on it as he journey's through it. The artist's involvement with an exploration of nature through his inventive ephemeral works becomes confused by colonialist attributes of the conquering of nature by forcing his own order into this vast and 'barbaric' landscape.

In her essay 'Artworks on the land' Elizabeth Baker comments on the relationship between artwork and site through a discussion of the work of Smithson, Heizer and De Maria. Commenting on aspects of the sublime in relation to their choice of dramatic sites such as deserts, vast expansive landscapes or landscapes that convey the effects of time through ruin and decay etc. Baker discusses how preconceived notions of a place can prompt associations with the sublime. She states;

> *The artists undoubtedly harbours a degree of romanticism about place, space, loneliness, the elements, hard work and a certain danger inherent in the choice of such places ..... But what really counts is much more specific: particular places engender particular types of perceptions, and these perceptions play a role in determining the nature of the works. These works are not only inseparable from their sites - they are not really definable at all apart from them.*

This is true of Goldsworthy's Arctic works. As the perceptions of this place prompt notions of coldness, mystery, danger etc. the Arctic spurs on notions of the sublime. The visual beauty and ambience of the Arctic has an enormous impact on our perceptions of the work. It is only within this environment that the true nature of the work can be fully revealed.

The Picturesque.

One of the first major studies on the picturesque was done by William Gilpin (1724 - 1804). Gilpin added a third category to Burke's theories of sublimity and beauty in nature i.e. 'The Picturesque'. Whereas Burke had defined the beautiful in nature as having visual qualities of regularity and smoothness and the sublime as having qualities of irregularity and roughness, Gilpin felt that neither could account for those things that had visual values of regularity and roughness, yet were also visually engaging. Gilpin felt that picturesque qualities were only evident in the natural, rustic landscape. The picturesque looked to the countryside itself and to the concept that nature and naturalness was a part of the 'real' landscape. Instead of depicting nature as ideally beautiful Gilpin urged painters to depict it as it was.

In the eighteenth century the representation of the landscape itself such as the formation of gardens and vast landscape parks also conform to a picturesque ideal. The English Park and the landscape become almost unrecognisable from each other. In the picturesque parks such as Stowe and Stourhead dense groupings of trees, artificial lakes, grotto's, serpentine streams and free-standing sculpture were added to the landscape in order to improve and enhance on what was already there. Therefore although Gilpin had hoped that artists would abandon their efforts to depict 'ideal' landscapes by taking nature as the prototype, through the aesthetics' of the picturesque in actuality the reversed happened. The picturesque vision of landscape became a major factor to contribute to the embodiment of an idealised countryside that is discussed in the previous chapter. As a representation of the 'natural' beauty of the countryside it became a source of nostalgia in reaction to increasing urbanisation and industrialisation. For the vast landscaped parks the creation of an ideal picturesque nature on a massive majestic scale was a sympathetic response to notions of the sacredness in nature. (See Plate 15).

Moving swiftly along to the twentieth century it is necessary to examine the response of recent artists, who place their emphasis on the landscape in the light of these notions of the picturesque. Smithson made his stance against the continued support for an 'ideal nature' amply clear in his writings. He states;

> *"The 'pastoral' it seems, is outmoded. The gardens of history are being replaced by sites of time. Memory traces of tranquil gardens as 'ideal nature' - jejune Edens that suggest an idea of banal 'quality' - persist in popular magazines.*
> *(Smithson, 1979. P.85-86,91).*

Plate 14. *Snow slabs: stood on end for the wind.* Grise Fjord, Ellesmere Island, 30 March 1989.

Although Smithson along with several other land artists of the sixties broke away from the idea of landscape, as a genre to working on the landscape itself and in vast and isolated sites such as deserts etc., they were not primarily concerned with notions of the picturesque. The Romantics had been involved in efforts to recreate the illusion of an earthly paradise through their aspirations for the pastoral garden - the garden being the age old metaphor for nature. This was taken up again in the 1960's and seventies by several land artists striving for a renewed re-enchantment of art. However, Smithson believed that attempts to regain the Edenic landscape could no longer be valid. He states; ... "The certainty of the absolute garden will never be regained", (Smithson, 1979. P.85-86.91).

Ian Hamilton Finlay is a contemporary British artist. However, he cannot be really regarded as a modernist. Finlay's work reaches back to traditions of landscape in art and literature in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. For over two decades Finlay and his wife Sue have transformed four acres of moorland, ponds and old farmhouse buildings in Stonypath into what Claude Gintz describes as a 'poetic-philosophic garden'. (Gintz, 1987. P.111). Finlay is first and foremost a concrete poet yet he is also a landscapist, historian, botanist and philosopher. The garden at Stonypath, 'Little Sparta' is more specifically linked by it's scale and approach to eighteenth century English picturesque parks rather than to Modernist influences. Through the combination of the object and his poetic inscriptions, Finlay's metaphorical garden has taken a very pessimistic and often satirical stance to the style and sensibilities of modern culture. Finlay refers to his approach as "neo-classical rearmament". (Gintz, 1987. P.112). Whereas Heizer, Smithson and Morris looked for a way beyond Modernism, Finlay looks back to classical traditions.

Goldsworthy's work is on a much more modest and smaller scale than Finlay's, yet in a peculiar sense he shares Finlay's reminiscence of a past pastoral tradition. In Finlay's Garden Temple in 'Little Sparta' he has adorned the walls with symbolic heroic emblems; an axe, a scythe and a watering can. On the handle of the scythe these words appear: "REVOLUTION, A CONTINUATION OF PASTORAL BY OTHER MEANS", (Gintz, 1987. p.113). On another occasion a plaque bearing the inscription *'Et in Arcadia Ego'* (See Plate 16 and Plate 17) is accompanied by the depiction of a war tank within an Arcadian setting. The modern tank is one of Finlay's favoured warfare subjects which act as metaphors for death and forces of destruction within the modern world. By Finlay's metaphorical representation of the tank within an Arcadian dream of landscape, he reiterates the sense of loss or death of an ideal pastoral world.

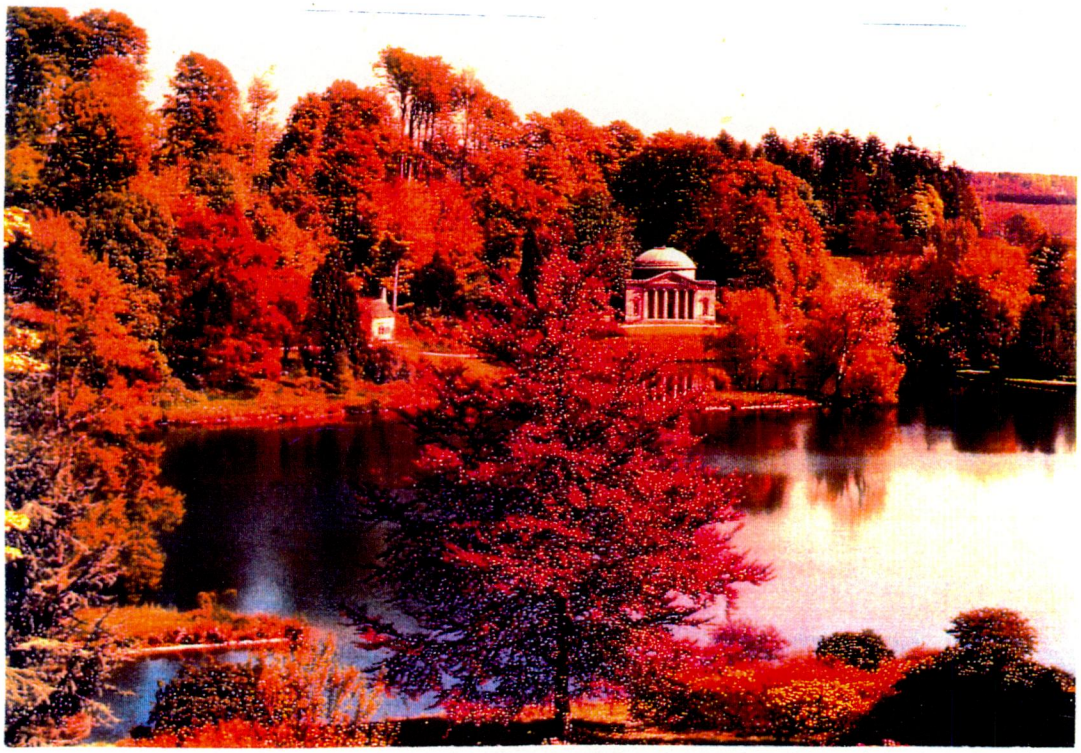


Plate 15. Henry Hoare, *Stourhead;* mid-eighteenth century landscape park in Britain.

Plate 16. Ian Hamilton Finlay , *'Et in Arcadia Ego'*, 1977 stone, with John Andrew.

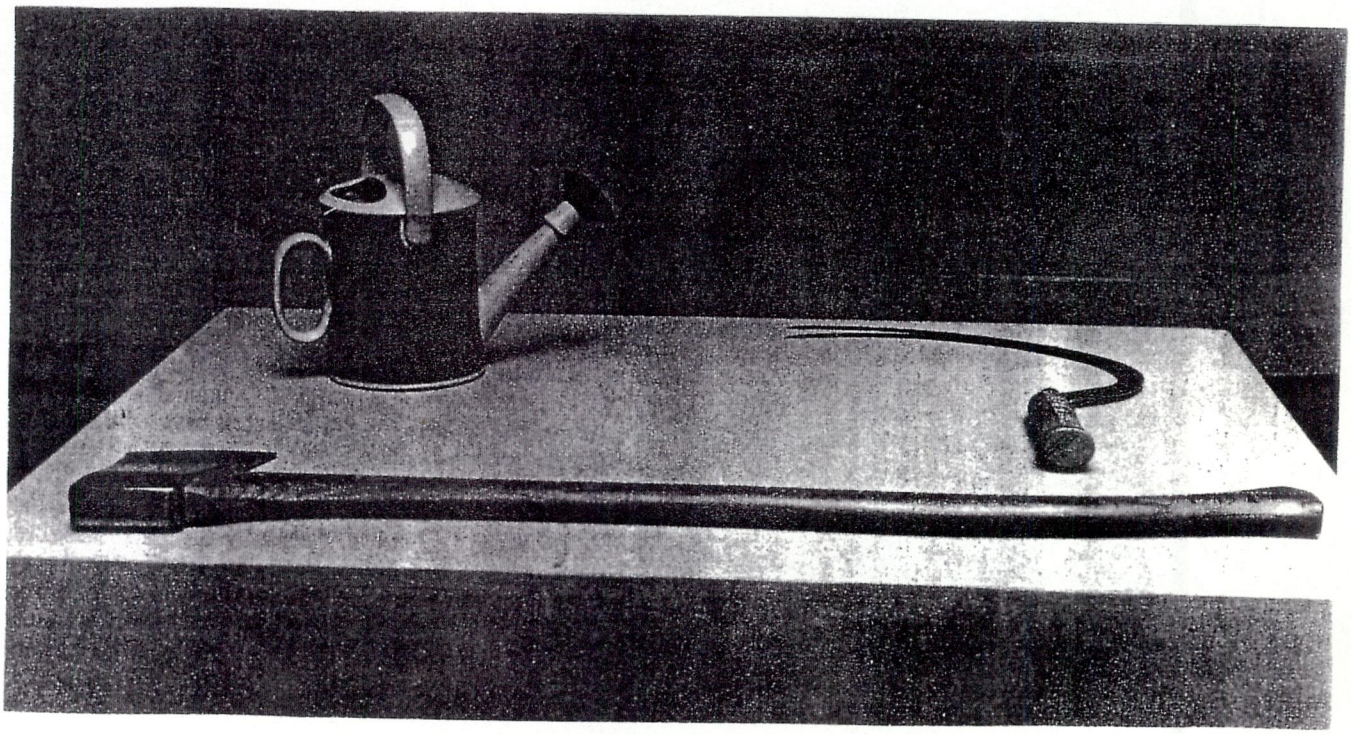


Plate 17. Ian Hamilton Finlay, *Temple Objects*,:Arrosoir (Watering can), Faucille (Scythe), Hache (Axe), 1985. The Garden Temple, Little Sparta.

While at college Goldsworthy spent his holiday breaks working on a farm. In many respects he prefers to see his work through the eyes of a labourer rather than be bothered by art aesthetics. His stone wall constructions conform to this idea. Goldsworthy believes that his days as a farm labourer were just as important to him as his training in college. Whereas Smithson celebrated a post industrial world through his preference to work in landscapes that showed signs of disruption and human intervention, Goldsworthy has somewhat closer affiliations to Finlay's vision of a pre-industrial innocence by his commitment to work in the countryside, using for the most part only natural materials found on site. Furthermore because he puts limitations on the tools he uses - preferring to work only with his hands and by the use of old agricultural techniques such as walling, he conjures up a simple rustic life.

Goldsworthy's permanent works which are made in conjunction with their specific sites follow the contemporary fashion of placing sculpture in a sympathetic relationship with is surroundings. For the majority of these permanent works such as the wall constructions a conventional, scenic landscape is favoured. However, because the artist has been involved in reclamation works such as the *Leadgate* and *Lambton* earthworks which were built on aesthetically unpleasing wasteland areas in Co. Durham, we cannot fully dislocate him from a modernist sensitivity to art in the land reclamation's works as is demonstrated by the works of Smithson and Morris. Also through the deliberate use of timber that has little use to the forester such as for his Hooke Wood entrance and the *Seven Spires* at Grizedale, Goldsworthy introduces a peculiar balancing between art and utility into his work.

Goldsworthy's transient work is more problematic. With the exception of perhaps the Arctic works, his ephemeral sculptures appear to be very singular, articulate and self-contained and therefore they seem to draw very little from their surroundings. Mark Bartlett describes Goldsworthy's documentation process as particularly problematic. He states;

> *This is demonstrated by a tendency to foreground the objects he creates while backgrounding what rhetorically he considers the most significant object of his efforts, "nature". In fact, nature forms an unfocused back drop to his sculptures as they are re-presented in the gallery within the foreground of tightly cropped photographs ... "Nature" is out to the quick as it is reduced to an "accompanying site".*
> *(Mark Bartlett, 1992. P.16).*

By Goldsworthy's cropping of the photograph in this manner he conforms with a highly formalised sculptural tradition whereby the monumental status of sculpture is

emphasised by the preoccupation with the object itself firstly and secondly with it's integration into it's surroundings. However, if we consider Andrew Causey's view that "placing sculpture *in* the landscape is not the same as making sculpture *out of* the landscape", as in Goldsworthy's practise, then notions of the monumental status of Goldsworthy's sculptures are considerably weakened. (Causey, 'Hand to Earth', 1990. P.137).

We therefore ask ourselves what exactly it is that these ephemeral work's draw from their surroundings. It would be very untrue to equate them with the symbolic purposes of Finlay's 'heroic emblems' yet surprisingly Goldsworthy's sculptures also stir an imaginative response. By being brought close up to the actual work by means of the photograph, the viewer becomes aware of Goldsworthy's sensitivity and intentiveness in his use of natural materials. Yet by being confronted with illusionisms of colours, patterns, textures, scales, etc. the works seem unnatural and therefore they arouse an imaginative response. Therefore Goldsworthy reflects on a Knightian interest in the role of emotion and imagination in the perception of landscape. Richard Payne Knight was an English essayist who published his ideas on the picturesque in *An Analytical Inquiry into the Principles of Taste (1805).* Knight agreed with the aesthetic qualities of the picturesque which had been discussed in the writings of Gilpin and Price on the subject. However, Knight also felt that the ability of landscape to arouse emotions and stir the imagination also contributed to the 'picturesque' effect.

Knight's argument places it's emphasis on a romantic sensibility of nature by his understanding of the purpose of landscape, as a place where personal expression and imagination is aroused in a spiritually uplifting natural landscape. Therefore he probes at notions of the sacredness in nature. Goldsworthy confirms that his relationship with nature is affected by the spiritual when he says;

> *I try to understand the processes of growth and decay of life in nature. Although it is often practical and physical art, it is also an intensely spiritual affair that I have with nature: a relationship.*
> *(Goldsworthy, 1990. P.164).*

Conclusion.

By means of conclusion I would like to briefly refer to Henry David Thoreau's writings on man's relationship with nature. The author says; "I wish to speak a word for, nature, for absolute freedom and culture merely civil - to regard man as an inhabitant, or a part and parcel of nature, rather than a member of society". (Beardsley, 1984. P.10).
Thoreau returns our attention to the age old question of where our relationship as humans to the exterior world of nature should be. He reiterates a romantic awareness of the interdependence of man and nature. However, new attitudes to the land have replaced this romantic view. Through the realisation that more and more of the 'natural' world is being destroyed by pollution, deforestation, urbanisation etc., there is a renewed urge to nurture and protect what we have left. This has become the focus for a 'green' approach to art, where attempts to reconcile our relationship with nature is demonstrated by the renewed understanding that man is in charge of nature and therefore must accept responsibility for damage that has been done to it.

By Goldsworthy's playing of the heroic figure in his quest to immerse himself in 'nature' as the wild and uncivilised, he recalls Thoreau's sentiments of an interdependent nature. In his commitment to romantic "scenic" landscapes as the domain for his art, Goldsworthy also aspires to a 'poetic' nature for an intensity of feeling for place. This he sees as manifested through his own intimate relationship with nature. Therefore Goldsworthy's work is infused with romantic associations of man's natural relationship with nature.

Through a discussion of the works made in the Arctic and in more conventional picturesque landscapes, I hope to have demonstrated Goldsworthy's loyality to landscapes that aspire to a 'sacrosanct' nature. By his efforts to experience the 'natural' landscape as it is, and by the fact that he often returns to work in the same site over and over again, he recalls a romantic ritualistic response to landscape. Rather than confront nature Goldsworthy is very much a servant to it. Through his humble interaction with nature by his efforts to harmonise nature's elements briefly with his own transient work, he hopes to tap on the inherent complex energy flow structures in nature and reveal some of it's mystery, wonder and magic.

However, this is not to suggest that Goldsworthy completely ignores ecological issues that effect today's world. He views such issues as sensitive to the nature of his work, yet he does not want his art to be politicised by them. (See M. Tromble, 1992, P.17). Nevertheless, by working intricately with natural materials, conveying the delicate beauty of nature Goldsworthy implies the irreplaceability of what we stand to lose through pollution etc.

In an interview with Fumio Nanjo Goldsworthy says that he is not really concerned on whether his work is perceived as Art or not. When questioned on the significance of his work he states; "I have an art that teaches me very important things about nature, my nature, the land and my relationship to it". (Goldsworthy, 1990, P.164). This recalls the 'soul searching' sentiments of Romantic artists who viewed the spiritual characteristic of the natural world as a means to discovering their own human nature. As Goldsworthy's cone constructions represent journey marker's to his travels, they could almost act as a metaphor for the artist's journey through life and the landscape. This is a journey that has literally taken him to the ends of the earth. The work will stand or fall without the artist, yet through the evocation of notions of hard work, solitude, distance, an extreme robust attitude to work through difficult weather conditions etc., the work is in keeping with a romantic vision of nature.

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