



Land Arts lunching at *Sun Tunnels* (1976), an earthwork by Nancy Holt near Lucin, Utah, collection of Dia Art Foundation.

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

Mythology is an imprint of the landscape and can only be understood fully by someone who has experienced the places described in the myth. . . . Rite is a living national library in which poetry is enveloped and preserved through action. . . . If the songs die, the land dies, if the ground dies, the people die.

Sven Lindqvist

Terra Nullias: a journey through one's own land. (New York: The New Press, 2005) pp 166 & 168. Quoted in *Time and Time Again: history, rephotography, and preservation in the Chaco World* by Lucy Lippard with photographs and commentary by Peter Goin. (Santa Fe: Museum of New Mexico Press, 2013) p. 154.

Land Arts of the American West is a field program investigating the intersection of geomorphology and human construction. Land art or earthworks begin with the land and extend through the complex social and ecological processes that create landscape. Including everything from petroglyphs to roads, dwellings, monuments and traces of those actions, earthworks show us who we are.

Examining gestures small and grand, Land Arts of the American West directs our attention from potsherd, cigarette butt, and track in the sand, to human settlements, monumental artworks, and military-industrial installations. The program creates opportunities to work in direct relation to the complex of forces that define the American West.

Land Arts situates this work within a continuous tradition of land-based operations that is thousands of years old. Analysis of sites visited provides a basis for dialog and invention. Issues of spatial and material vocabulary, constructional logics, and inhabitation serve as the foundation for an investigation through making. Students construct, detail, and document a series of site-base interventions in a context that places emphasis on processes of making, experiential forms of knowing, and transdisciplinary modes of practice.

Land Arts is a semester long field program that camps for over fifty days while traveling nearly 6,000 miles over land throughout the American West. The immersive nature of experiencing the landscape triggers amalgamated bodies of inquiry giving students the opportunity of time and space to develop authority in their work through direct action and reflection. Land Arts hinges on the primacy of first person experience and the realization that human-land relationships are rarely singular.

LAND~SCAPE: operating at the intersection of geomorphology and human construction

Space itself isn't an absolute, or at least the spaciousness of landscapes isn't. Up close, aridity means that even the plants grow far apart from each other; for people and animals, this sparseness means that they too have to spread out to make a living off the land. In the East, a cow can live off a few acres of grass; out here the land is often overgrazed and only a few cows per thousand acres, and where they overgraze the soil erodes back to dust and rock. It is rock—geology—that dominates this landscape. In lush landscapes, it is as though the skin and bones of the earth are dressed in verdure; here the earth is naked, and geological processes are clearly visible. It is geological time and geological scale that dominate this landscape, dwarfing all the biological processes within the uplift of ranges, the accretion of basins. The very rocks on the ground have lain in place so long around the Test Site that their tops and bottoms are different colors, and any disturbance leaves a lasting scar. Every act out here has to be measured against this scale of change and scope. It is this apparent geology, this bare rock, that makes newcomers read the desert as a dead or barren landscape, though if you spend more time in it, you may come to see the earth itself lives, slowly and grandly, in the metamorphoses of geology.

Rebecca Solnit

Savage Dreams: a journey into the landscape wars of the American West
(University of California Press, 1999) p. 7-8.

ARCH 5502 – 302 (graduate students, 5 credits)

ARCH 4000 – 001 (undergraduate students, 6 credits)

DESCRIPTION

This course will investigate our relation to the landscape of the American West through the creation of situated works. Particular attention will be paid to the examination of spatial, material and conceptual edges, limits, and thresholds. The specific nature and scope of the works produced will be determined by each student's research trajectory and evolve in context with the transdisciplinary range of the dialog and distance meshed within the Land Arts field experience.

NATIONAL ARCHITECTURAL ACCREDITING BOARD CRITERIA

A.2 Design Thinking Skills: Ability to raise clear and precise questions, use abstract ideas to interpret information, consider diverse points of view, reach well-reasoned conclusions, and test alternative outcomes against relevant criteria and standards. **A.3 Investigative Skills:** Ability to gather, assess, record, and comparatively evaluate relevant information and performance in order to support conclusions related to a specific project or assignment.

C.1 Research: Understanding of the theoretical and applied research methodologies and practices used during the design process.

STRUCTURE

The course will provide time for students to develop and realize works in the field. Progress will be discussed during seminar sessions and individual meetings with the instructor. Students must define their own research trajectory and manage time and resources accordingly to successfully complete site based work.

MATERIALS

Materials required may be collected on site or introduced as required. No record or trace of the work will be left in the field or at any sites.

ASSIGNMENTS

The scope and quantity of assignments will be determined in consultation with the instructor. An iterative process of making will be supported and approximately six finished works must be completed for final submission and consideration for the exhibition that will occur the following Spring to culminate the field season. All site works must be documented, disassembled, and the areas remediated to original condition prior to departure. Care must be taken in the production and scheduling of works to insure the completion of this process.

PLACE-LESS~PLACE: mining the shift from unknown to acculturated space

Trouble is an interesting word. It derives from a thirteenth-century French verb meaning “to stir up,” “to make cloudy,” “to disturb.” We—all of us on Terra—live in disturbing times, mixed up times, troubling and turbid times. The task is to become capable, with each other in all our bumptious kinds, of response. Mixed-up times are overflowing with both pain and joy—with vastly unjust patterns of pain and joy, with unnecessary killing of ongoingness but also with necessary resurgence. The task is to make kin in lines of inventive connection as a practice of learning to live and die well with each other in our thick present. Our task is to make trouble, to stir up potent response to devastating events, as well as to settle trouble waters and rebuild quiet places. In urgent times, many of us are tempted to address trouble in terms of making an imagined future safe, of stopping something from happening that looms in the future, of clearing away the present and the past in order to make futures for coming generations. Staying with the trouble does not require such a relationship to times called the future. In fact, staying with the trouble requires learning to be truly present, not as a vanishing pivot between awful or edenic pasts and apocalyptic or salvific futures, but as mortal critters entwined in myriad unfinished configurations of places, times, matters, and meanings.

Donna J. Haraway

Staying with the Trouble: making kin in the Chthulucene.
(Duke University Press, 2016) pp. 1.

ARCH 7000 – 001 (graduate students, 4 credits)

ARCH 3361 – 001 (undergraduate students, 3 credits)

DESCRIPTION

This course explores the process of making space into place through an examination of occupation and intervention with the land. We will develop multivalent definitions of place that span continuums of time and culture to find potential in questions located between disciplines and definitions, between land, art, architecture, infrastructure, industry, and use. We will investigate, analytically and generatively, the presence of habitation and questions of place that extend beyond programmatic performance and shelter from the elements to engage the multivalence of our existence in the particular landscape of the “New West.”

The specific nature of how the American West has been mapped, marked, and divided will serve as a point of departure for the creation of a set of documents that will test our methods of seeing, measuring and recording. Particular attention will be paid to operations at different scales. The primary objective for this set of documents will be to record conditions of visited and constructed site-based works, our experience of travel, and human occupation within landscapes. The documents will take whatever forms necessary, develop over time, and include (at a minimum) photographic imagery, drawing, and written texts.

NATIONAL ARCHITECTURAL ACCREDITING BOARD CRITERIA

A1. Professional Communication Skills: Ability to write and speak effectively and use representational media appropriate for both within the profession and with the general public.

STRUCTURE

The course is structured as a seminar with physical documentation seeking to value the integrity of our thoughts and dialog parallel to our actions and constructions. There are three primary components:

- **Dialogue:** formal and informal discussions of material in the program reader and the evolution of our experience and the works made will be discussed during regular formal seminars. Refer to the program schedule for seminar dates.
- **Documentation:** recording the conditions of our work and experience through photographic recording and daily journal writing.
- **Process:** recording the evolution and development of our work and experience through photographic recording and sketchbook notes and drawings.
- **Inquiry:** recording the evolution and develop of persistent questions driving our work through daily field notebook entries.

MATERIALS

The program reader will be provided and additional outside research is recommended (see Land Arts Bibliography as well as supplemental readings available in the mobile lab). The primary research of our field experience will anchor this course; in addition traditional 'library' research completed on campus will also prove helpful.

A journal, sketchbook and field notebook are required. While the journal and sketchbook can be conjoined it is important that clear distinctions be exist between the acts of chronicling documentation and process in the journal and sketchbook and the generative resource of the field notebook.

ASSIGNMENTS

Readings and seminar contributions, daily journal writing, sketchbook entries, daily field notebook entries, documentation of your work in the field and work created by others, and contribution to the program archive. Submission of work for inclusion in the Land Arts exhibition is also required. All photographic images from the field and of finished works, and scanned PDF copies of journal, sketchbook and field notebook must be submitted at the end of the term for inclusion in the archive of Land Arts of the American West.