



Landscape & Arts *online*

The Journal of the Landscape & Arts Network

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Contents

Page 2

Deep in the Forest
Rosie Leventon

Page 5

Review
Ecological Aesthetics
Prigann, Strelow and
David
Terry Fairman

Page 7

On Fertile Ground
Art Farm Project
Jan O'Highway

Dear Reader

Welcome to the online version of the LAN Journal. We are taking a different approach for the web-based material. Rather than putting up a mass of material every four months, trying to emulate the printed Journal, we are aiming to add articles, news and reviews every one to two months to keep the site fresh and thus encourage members to visit.

Forthcoming articles will include one on Richard Long by Mark Irving and a review of current approaches to Scandinavian Land Art by Marie Gayatri Kristofferson.

Speaking of visiting, how many of you out there have looked at the site recently. Still very few members have registered to participate in the Forum.

Also the take up for the Portland stone carving opportunity has been quite low - does this mean we aren't giving members what they want?

Please email comments, thoughts and ideas to me or post them on the Forum. Or, if you are coming to the Robert Robertson film show at the Gallery on June 13th, you can chat about thoughts and ideas afterwards. I hope to see some of you there.

Jeff Higley

L&A NETWORK JOURNAL

Editorial Board: Francis Carr, Jeffrey Higley, Amanda Hopkins, Martin Spray, Tam Giles.

Book Reviews: Martin Spray, Tam Giles.

Design and Production: Bob Williamson

The next issue is due online end of July 2006. All copy must be sent by e-mail or on disc/CD. Images can be sent by post and will be returned. The Editor reserves the right to edit all contributions.

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DEEP IN THE FOREST

by Rosie Leventon

Deep in Challock Forest in Kent is a collection of sculpture commissions dating from 1994. Sandra Drew set up Stour Valley Arts at that time, and new commissions are added each year. All work made in the area must work in a slow quiet way with the forest - no non-indigenous materials must be imported. Sandra said in a recent interview with Jeremy Theophilus...

"I wanted it to be a really ambitious and long-term project. I saw it as an opportunity to do something that would be significant. It was a unique platform to work from. The notion of commissioning site-specifically, of supporting artists' work in progress and of giving artists a long time to develop a proposal was what interested me from the beginning. I wanted to support artists to really engage with the place, to not have to hurry the artistic and curatorial process.

Also integral from the beginning was that the art works that emerged would be made accessible through a broad-based education programme for a range of ages and abilities, that would run in parallel to the commissions. I didn't want the commissioned artists to necessarily carry out the education work; we weren't looking to commission artists whose expertise was educational, but rather to work with artist educators to deliver the education element of the commissions. I wanted to

keep artists' specializations not completely separate but parallel, so that each artist would be recognised for their particular abilities and expertise."

Last year I was notified that I had won the Rouse Kent Award for Public Art for one of two elemental pieces I had recently made for the forest. Apparently it was the first time in the eleven year history of the award that one artist featured twice on the shortlist. The ideas I had were for two very different pieces which would nevertheless create a kind of dialogue. I



I was also clear from the outset of what I didn't want Stour Valley Arts to be. I didn't want it to be a sculpture trail.



My idea was to subvert the destructive power and aggression of this aircraft and to transform it into a living growing piece.

chose the B52 aircraft as subject matter for one of the pieces, because it was just at the beginning of the Iraq War, and it seemed such a powerful symbol. Excerpts from B52 propaganda read like this ...



B52 Clearing in the Sweet Chesnuts. Challock Forest Photo Dylan Woolf

'For more than 50 years the B52 Stratofortress has been the backbone of the manned strategic bomber force for the US. The B52 is capable of dropping or launching a wide array of nuclear weapons in the US inventory, including gravity bombs, cluster bombs, precision guided missiles and joint direct attack munitions. Current engineering analyses show the B52's lifespan to extend beyond the year 2045. In a conventional conflict the B52 can perform strategic attack, air interdiction, offensive counter-air and maritime operations. During Desert Storm B52's delivered 40 per cent of all the weapons dropped by coalition forces.'

My idea was to subvert the destructive power and aggression of this aircraft and to transform it into a living growing piece. The outline shape of the plane was to be planted with indigenous trees such as Hazel, Sycamore, Spruce, Holly, Hornbeam and Service. But during the discussions that followed it was thought that young trees would never survive, because rabbits and deer would eat them and there would be the inevitable vandalism from some visitors. So I had to agree to make the piece in the negative, as it were carving it out from an area of coppicing. First I had to work out the dimensions of the air-



craft and double them to work well on the side of a gradual slope in an area of coppiced Sweet Chestnuts. These trees had originally been brought by the Romans and form a monoculture of coppiced timber in some areas. But because the bottom has virtually dropped out of the market for this timber, Forest Enterprise is keen to work towards greater biodiversity in some areas of the forest. My cutting open an area of this size would allow for more light to get onto the forest floor and so encourage greater regeneration and allow more species to come in.

With two or three helpers from Forest Enterprise we staked out the enormous shape with great difficulty, unable to see more than a few feet in front of our noses and continually falling over coppice stools, brambles and down holes. The chain sawing took a few weeks, then the problem of clearing all the branches began, where could we put such mountains of undergrowth? A Stump Grinder would have been invaluable to remove all the old coppice stools from the clearing we had made. But it proved impossible to get any machinery on site because there wasn't even a track for part of the way.

Finally it was a great relief to see that from the air the outline shape of the aircraft held true.



RING 2003-4. Kingswood, Kent. Earth, water. Photo Dylan Woolf

Rosie Leventon 2006

www.rosieleventon.com

Also find Rosie Leventon on Landscape & Art Network website Members Pages
www.landartnet.org/rosie_leventon.htm

Ecological Aesthetics

Art in Environmental Design: Theory and practice

Prigann, Strelow and David

This book deserves to be more widely available. Seen once in the bookshop at Tate Modern it almost immediately disappeared from the shelves. It covers an area of eco-art activity neglected in our Anglo-American cultural milieu: Continental Europe. Even the Network eschews Europe. Note the themes of recent back numbers of this magazine. They cover various parts of the UK, the USA and even Japan but no hint of a European dimension. The Channel constitutes a more significant cultural divide than the North Atlantic.

The book is a European production but is published in English, often in translation from some other tongue. This has led to problems, not least that of deciding on a definitive title. In the publisher's press release the book appears as "Aesthetics of Ecology" but the book's actual title is "Ecological Aesthetics". This is not just a semantic issue but reflects a more fundamental problem. What is the book about? With seventeen contributors it can be little more than a compendium, a pot pourri, an interdisciplinary reference work reflecting the views of artists, designers, curators, philosophers, cultural historians and even a UN executive director on the complex issues surrounding the relationship between art and nature.

If there is a unifying theme then it is provided by the artist who initiated the work, Hermann Prigann. His career in environmental art, stretching over three decades, his projects, his philosophical outlook and his search for an over-arching ethical, ecological aesthetic of sustainability provide the book's engine, track and terminus. Whether



the metaphorical train ever reaches its destination is doubtful - in this case it is clearly better to travel than to arrive!

The structure of the book is biographical, following Prigann's professional Odyssey as he first contemplated the nature of the links between art and the environment; moved on to the practical issue of transforming particular landscapes - despoiled industrial sites, polluted river ecosystems; until finally confronting the problem of es-

establishing a holistic paradigm for an ecological aesthetic that would produce a fully integrative philosophy of landscape art.

The book is about Prigann but his career interests do allow for the opening up of a whole series of significant debates about the relationship between the artist - or, as this book would prefer it, the "designer" - and the environment.

This is not to say that the book is restricted to him or even to European artists. The book covers the work of some fifty artist/designers (their work used to support the theoretical arguments of the many authors), and they include all the names familiar to a British audience. The book's first illustration is by Smithson, and Morris, de Maria and others from the American canon follow: then Drury, Long and Nash from the UK.

But it's a rough journey, made more difficult by the lack of a conventional index



The book covers over 100 eco-art projects, many by Prigann. There are over 200 illustrations and almost as many arguments and discussions and the separation of wheat from chaff requires a considerable degree of commitment.

Birkhauser, Basel, Berlin, Boston, 2004,
255 pages £50, hdb
ISBN 3-7643-2424-4

Reviewed by Terry Fairman

'On Fertile Ground'

Art Farm 2006

Workshops

Workshops

The Art Farm Project 2006 is the culmination of a year-long artist-led collaboration finishing in a two week public showing of site-inspired contemporary art.

The workshop programme this year is designed to give you a taste of the artistic experience.

After visiting the exhibition give yourself some time and become part of the creative environment that makes this year's event unique. Come and create a work inspired by Middle Rocombe Farm, alongside one of this year's artists.

Booking Information

Children's Workshops

designed as drop in sessions, for your children and others still young at heart.

Cost: £1.00 pay on the day

Adult Workshops

Cost: £10

*Some workshop will have an additional materials charge up to £4.00 payable on the day

Please send your booking payment, or cheque made out to 'Art Farm Project' and booking details to
Workshops, The Art Farm Project 2006,
Middle Rocombe Farm, Stokeinteignhead,
Newton Abbot, Devon TQ12 4QL

For further information look at our web site on
www.artfarmproject.co.uk or
telephone 01626 873 880

Food

Lunch and refreshments are available on site, or bring a picnic

Clothing

Sturdy shoes and suitable outdoor clothing will add to your safety and enjoyment of the event. Children and adults should wear additional protective clothing for their workshops.



Weekend workshops

for children and the young at heart

Theme: **Charcoal making and Mud sculpture**
 Artists: Chris Howard, Alain Pezard, Sam White
 Dates: Saturday 3rd and Sunday 4th June;
 Saturday 10th and Sunday 11th June; Saturday
 17th and Sunday 18th June
 Time: 10am – 1pm and 2pm – 5pm



Adult Workshops: Daily 2pm – 5pm

Date: Monday 5th June
 Theme: **Painting with natural Pigments**
 Artist: David Harbott

Date: Tuesday 6th June
 Theme: **Digital Printmaking***
 Artist: Jan O'Highway



Date: Wednesday 7th June
 Theme: **Plaster Casting & Sculpture***
 Artist: Isabel Coulton

Date: Thursday 7th June
 Theme: **Printmaking**
 Artist: Rod Clark

Date: Friday 8th June
 Theme: **Mosaic for Cob Wall**
 Artist: Anne Read

Date: Monday 12th June
 Theme: **Painting with the Rocombe spirit**
 Artist: Suzanne Sanders

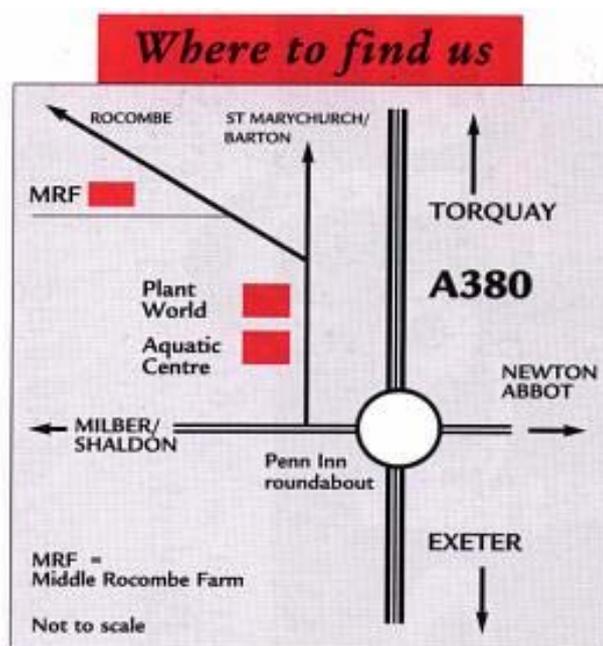
Date: Tuesday 13th June
 Theme: **Mosaic for Cob Wall**
 Artist: Anne Read

Date: Wednesday 14th June
 Theme: **Textiles with a difference**
 Artist: Liz Lockyear

Date: Thursday 15th June 10am – 1pm
 Theme: **Sculpting inspired by nature**
 Artist: Anne-marie Moss

Date: Friday 16th June
 Theme: **'Hybrids' – paper sculpture**
 Artist: Helen Snell

* Materials Charge



Landscape & Arts Network (LAN)

was founded in 1993 by artist Francis Carr, becoming a charity in 1998. Its aim is to bring together landscape architects, engineers, architects, artists, education-ists and ecologists - in effect, all those individuals, professional or otherwise, who feel passionate about improving and sustaining the quality of our urban and natural environment. Through an ongoing programme of seminars, visits, conferences and meetings it has broadened the context in which we understand art and landscape. It continues to inspire and break professional boundaries in its journal Landscape and Arts. As a Network, one of its founding aims is to encourage collaboration and cross-fertilisation both in theory and practice.

Our website provides immediate global access to our work. The Network consults with the public and private sectors on policy and project development to maximise the potential of artistic collaboration to produce innovative, creative solutions to urban and rural regeneration projects.

The Journal

The landscape & Arts Network Journal is free to LAN Members. Future issues will only be available online.

Some back numbers are available, £4.50 each. For back issues please list numbers you want and send with cheque made out to Landscape and Arts Network to:

Tam Giles
The Studios

330 St. James' Road
London SE1 5JX

- 24 Art and Ecology
- 25 Japan 2001
- 26 Ethnicity and Art
- 27 Art, Place and Materials
- 28 East London Public Arts
- 29 Land Art and Ecoart USA
- 30 Land Art and Land Use
Conference Papers
- 31 LAN 10th Anniversary Issue
- 32 Gunpowder Park Special Issue
- 33 Arts, Sciences and Ecology
- 34/35 Land of Spirit and Reason
- 36 Transformations

JOIN THE LANDSCAPE & ARTS NETWORK!

If you are viewing this on line you should already be a member but if you are reading a version printed out by a member then please use the form below to join. Please use Block Capitals



Name: Surname: Please tick as appropriate:

Address: L&A membership £26

..... Joint membership £36

..... Postcode: Student / unwaged £14

Telephone: Fax: Overseas member £40

E-mail: Corporate member £80

Area of work:
(e.g. sculptor, ecologist, arts administrator, education, engineer, architect, etc.)

Please make cheque payable to 'Landscape & Arts Network' and send this form with your payment to: The Membership Secretary, 16 Holmecroft Road, London, SE26 5QG, UK.