Earth in Focus:

The Complex Sculptures of Land Art and their 'Big Picture' Effect, as Seen through the Lens of Photography and Film (1960s – 1970s).



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A thesis submitted for the degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

Trinity term, 2019

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Short Abstract:

This dissertation focuses on previously unstudied material of the films and photographs of Land Art – or Earth Art, as it is sometimes interchangeably called – in which the reciprocal relation between the Land Art sculptures *in situ* (earthworks) and lens-based media is considered. It introduces the notion of 'complex sculptures', sculptures that are not only site-specific, located within the landscape or in an exhibition space, but also time-specific, mediated through photography, film, and even television. The complex sculptures of Land Art are thus shown to incorporate both a mediated and phenomenological viewpoint.

I present new archival material to re-evaluate Land Art, especially given the abundant use of lens-based media by the artists of early Land Art, which is linked to the socio-political circumstances of the late 1960s and early 1970s. The importance of a decentring dynamic in the Land artworks is pointed out and related to the 'primary humility' that certain critics perceived in Land Art. Not in the sense of a sublime experience that overwhelms reason completely, or as a 'back to nature' experience, but through a channelled experience of multiple, constellational elements. It is thus shown that the artists of Land Art were seeking ways in which *both* presence and absence, 'presentness' and distance, would become components of their aesthetics through their search for a continuous relationship between their artworks on-site and the distancing and displacing functions of different media, like film, photography and television. This dialectical constellation of elements is directly bound to the ontology of Land Art (or: its 'conditions of possibility'), an ontology that points to a search for a different worldview: one that is interested in 'the bigger picture' of the relation of human beings to our planet, as well as in a growing awareness – through lived experience – of the intrinsic *reciprocity* of our lives.

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Long Abstract:

This dissertation focuses on previously unstudied material of the films and photographs of *and as* Land Art, in which the reciprocal relation between the Land Art sculptures *in situ* and lens-based media is considered. Land Art – or Earth Art, as it is sometimes interchangeably called – extends far beyond the boundaries of the actual sites of its sculptures, which is a fact that has a hard time slotting in to art historical discourse. Land Art, which has often been defined as art that deals with landscape or uses natural material in its creation, has traditionally been usurped by a (predominantly modernist) discourse that gives precedence to either the so-called unmediated, pure aesthetic experience of the spectator on-site, i.e. the phenomenology related to the experiencing body within the site-specific artwork, or to the intentions of the artist in making Land Art, which are usually interpreted as an act of resistance to the mediated experiences of galleries, museums and the media. Land Art has thus been explained to be about presence, materiality, place specificity, unmediated experience and institutional critique.

Yet Land Art has always included a multitude of different media and places, which extend far beyond the actual site of the Land artwork, as this dissertation shows. The evidence for this thesis provided here also significantly alters one's view about the motivation behind the development of Land Art itself as a practice, which has often been assumed to be a direct critique of the increasing power of the media and institutions that shaped the art world in such significant ways during the 1960s and 1970s in the United States and Europe. This dissertation shows, however, that the supposed institutional critique that these artists conveyed through their artworks was far less directed *against* the media and art world institutions than is often assumed: almost all of the Land artists keenly and consistently explored new possibilities *within* the media and institutions. Moreover, in all the Land artworks discussed in this dissertation, it becomes evident that the lens of the photographic (or film) camera, which can be seen as an extension of the lens of our eye and thus an extension of our own perception, plays an important role in the functioning of the *in situ*

sculptures: they function as an instrument of perception, allowing the beholder of them to experience a change in vision that links to important philosophical ideas and practical experiments that shaped the early aesthetics of Land Art. This alternative interpretation of Land Art is also related to the socio-political circumstances of the late 1960s and early 1970s, and to specific historical events, like the first colour pictures of the Earth from outer space, as captured by NASA on Christmas Eve of 1968 – pictures that brought a sense of scale after which the Earth and the universe could no longer be considered to be human-centred.

It is my thesis that the abundant use of photography, film and even television in Land Art points towards this important shift of vision – both literally and metaphorically – that started to emerge during the transformational period of the late 1960s and early 1970s. Through the diverse explorations of lens-based media, in which a continuous stress on different perspectives and the undermining of one central perspective became the leading force, the Land artists lead the beholder into an expanded landscape and the experience of, what astronaut Edgar Mitchell once called, a 'big picture' effect. This 'big picture' effect coincides with a decentring dynamic in the Land artworks themselves, in which an 'intervention of the outer world' takes place that can be called the *primacy of the object*. The latter will be related to the 'primary humility' that certain critics perceived in Land Art: not in the sense of a sublime experience that overwhelms reason completely, but in a channelled experience of multiple, constellational elements that places the beholder of the artwork back in a natural relationship with the surrounding world, as one element that is part of a very large whole (which is shaped by every action of each element). It is thus shown that the artists of Land Art were seeking ways in which *both* presence and absence, 'presentness' and distance, would become components of their aesthetics through their search for a continuous relationship between their artworks on-site and the distancing and displacing functions of different media such as film, photography and television.

Throughout this dissertation I present new archival material (from the Smithsonian Archives of American Art, the Museum of Modern Art archives, and elsewhere) to re-evaluate the art historical category of Land Art, especially given the abundant use of lens-based media by the artists working in early Land Art. In order to do so, I introduce the notion of 'complex sculptures': sculptures that are not only *site-specific*, located within the landscape or in an exhibition space, but also *time-specific*, mediated through photography, film, and even television. In other words, 'complex sculptures' are not 'complex' simply because they look it (due to their many components or eccentric shapes), or because they situate themselves within the complex compound field of (traditionally) different categories of art. The main reason for their complexity, as this dissertation will show, is a reflection, intrinsic to the artwork itself, on the way that such different visual (or even textual) components are linked, while these sculptures also include a reflection on their own position in relation to the vision of the beholder. As this dissertation will argue, it is in the early works of Land Art that the first of these complex sculptures can be found, and where their quest for a shift in vision begins. The research question of this dissertation is: In which ways can the historical and future reception of Land Art be (re-)shaped by the notion of *complex sculptures*, through the investigation of the 'big picture' effect produced by the interaction between the *in situ* sculptures and the use of lens-based and time-based media in Land Art?

This question will also be related to a larger methodological question at work in the discipline of art in the last half of the 20th century, which informed and influenced these artists in their specific decisions concerning the complex sculptures of Land Art. Related to concerns that were for the first time made visible by Minimalism, it is evident that Land Art was very much concerned with a shift in paradigm, in which meaning was no longer seen as something that arises from a private space, but instead from a public space. I would argue that this 'project of decentring', as Rosalind Krauss once called it, that was started by Minimalism is also the leading concern behind the aesthetic ideas of early Land Art, while pointing out

that the artists working in Land Art simultaneously underlined the intrinsic dialectics at work between the private and public space. In Land Art, I would argue, this shift from a private to a public space occurred on *both* a formal, internal level, directly related to the Land artworks and the art market as such, as on a larger socio-political level related to the human idea of 'self' and the state of the world in the period during which those artworks saw the light.

This is an essential point towards the credibility of the argument about Land Art as expounded in this dissertation: the fact that both lens-based media and sculpture work towards a decentred view, often placing the beholder in an 'eccentric position' without the possibility to occupy or perceive a stable centre of the artwork, thus inducing an awareness in the beholder of the incompleteness of one single image or view. Indeed, it can be argued that it is through photography and sculpture that the postmodern awareness of the inherent instability of meaning has become so apparent, which gives the decentred view of postmodernism its key meaning: *uncertainty*. Yet this uncertainty is not a negative one: it is in this very instability that the strength and resistance of an artwork against commodity culture lies. One could say, with Alex Potts, that artworks can use uncertainty by 'a perpetual *unfixing* of images that represent any ideal or collectively shared subjectivity within modern culture'. In doing so, artworks do not presume to embody a stable essence – instead, they will point towards 'the intrinsic contingencies of the viewer's encounter with a work' (Potts).

Indeed, it is this emphasis on the instability of meaning, and the instability of our own, self-centred view – both personally and collectively – that both photography and sculpture are masterfully expounding, especially in the context of Land Art. In other words, it is my thesis that by thinking through Land Art and by mapping some of its works in their hitherto unmapped, mediated domain of photography and film, something new can be said about the conditions of possibility that were shaping – sometimes literally – the ground of postmodernity yet have remained largely unacknowledged. It is with this aim that this dissertation focuses on a selection of the numerous early Land Art sculptures that incorporate photography, film, or even television.

All of this brings an alternative perspective on Land Art which this dissertation maps out, which is needed in order to appreciate the contemporary relevance of Land Art and the profound ontological meaning that it expounds about the relation between art and technology, nature and culture, vision and experience, and man and world (and cosmos). As I will show throughout this dissertation, the fact that all of the above lies at the very basis of Land Art counters the common view that Land Art was a simple 'return to nature'. Indeed, this dissertation will suggest that, instead of a romantic notion of going back to nature, the Land artists were much more interested in what Oppenheim believed to be the inherent consciousness 'of very gradual physical change' in Land Art, as incorporated into the complex sculptural nature of the Land artworks themselves – on and beyond their physical sites. It is only in light of all this that one can make sense of Smithson's statement that Land Art shows how 'you're always caught between two worlds, one that is and one that isn't.'

In the following chapters, it is this network of unstable relations that will be mapped out, through which I will show how Land Art embodies the uncertainty of our postmodern world, while also pointing to the conditions of possibility underlying the shift of vision that took place during the 1960s and 1970s. It is through this network of relations that the 'big picture' effect of Land Art will unfold itself: an effect that puts the beholder both on and off our planet, both in- and outside of nature, and both in- and outside our own bodies. Yet what is most important is that through this mapping of the instability of meaning, it becomes possible to arrive at the conditions of possibility of Land Art itself, which will point to the ongoing relevance of Land Art for contemporary art today. I will therefore discuss a selection of the most resistant and effective Land artworks, during the period that is spanned by this dissertation (from the late 1960s to the late 1970s): sculptures that not only move out into the

expanded field of nature, but also into the landscape of lens-based media, and even into the field of human vision itself.

In the chapters that follow, I show how media like photography and film seem perfectly designed to help the postmodern, complex sculptures of Land Art to emerge, as well as the 'new expanded notion of viewing' that they expound. Last but not least, I argue that photography and film were not only used to show a different perspective on the *in situ* Land artworks, but that they also – in even more significant ways – intrinsically informed the actual sculptures as such. The complex sculptures of Land Art are thus shown to incorporate both a mediated and phenomenological viewpoint. It will be argued that the artists working in Land Art were clearly interested in how landscape itself is shaped by media, especially in the way we look at the world. By using media like photography and film they intensively explored the relation between seeing and being seen, self and other, private and public space, forming the landscape and being formed by the landscape – and in doing so they shaped these relations anew. The photographs and films of Land Art can therefore be understood as *learning manuals* for engaging the actual Land artworks *in situ*: they teach us *how* to see these works and, in the process, teach us how to see ourselves in relation to the world itself. Such an approach is directly linked to Land Art's ontological and aesthetic ideas (or in Krauss's words, 'the conditions of possibility' of Land Art itself), which relates to a search for a different worldview, pointing to 'the bigger picture' of the relation of self to our planet, as well as to the growing awareness – as a lived experience – of the inherent *reciprocity* of our lives.

Keywords (15):
Land Art; Earth Art; earthworks; Complex Sculptures; Postmodernism; Walter De Maria; Robert Smithson; Nancy Holt; Michael Heizer; Mary Kelly; Dennis Oppenheim; Jan Dibbets; Richard Long; Marinus Boezem; Barry Flanagan.

Acknowledgments

I feel that proper acknowledgments are not only due to the many important people that helped in bringing this dissertation to a good end, but also to the artworks and artists that have been influential for my thinking and writing about art. Of course, it would be a daunting task to acknowledge all of them, yet it seems necessary to name at least one artist who has been of crucial importance to this dissertation: Walter De Maria, with whom this entire project began.

During the summer of 2013 (the break between the two years of my MA program in Art History at New York University), I was able to visit De Maria's *The Lightning Field*, thanks to the generous Levy and White travel grant of the Institute of Fine Arts. Similar to many people who have related their stories about visiting this great work of Land Art, I, too, had a feeling of initial disappointment when I got out of the car (it must have been about 3 PM) and had a first look at what I knew must be *The Lightning Field.* My disappointment came from the fact that there seemed to be no artwork at all: the 400 stainless steel poles that constitute *The Lightning Field* were almost invisible at that time of the day. A vague shimmer betrayed the presence of some of the first poles, closest to the place I was standing, but the rest seemed to have disappeared. However, as all visitors to the field, I had booked a night's stay in the wooden cabin bordering the field, which practically meant that I would be at *The Lightning Field* until the end of the next morning. That was quite some time to spend with an artwork, in an age where it is considered normal to spend only those couple of seconds with an artwork that are necessary to photograph it with a mobile phone. I therefore decided to ignore my initial disappointment and instead walk into *The Lightning Field* for the first time.

This was when a shock befell me: as soon as one enters the field, something starts to happen. It is almost as if the steel poles work like acupuncture in space: they condense the space into a place where one can wander. And wandering I did, and with every step avenues,

like sightlines, were opening up all around me. Due to the placement of the 400 steel poles in long rows, running from north to south and west to east, sightlines between the poles are created into every possible direction around the beholder inside the field. After a couple of hours in the field it dawned on me: *The Lightning Field* is like a field of vision – the operations of vision laid bare. But how? If I would walk all the way to the end of the avenues created by the poles and reach the end of *The Lightning Field*, my unobstructed view of the horizon was less mesmerizing than when I was still contained by the field. This made me return inside the field again and again. I was looking for some sort of explanation. What to think of this unique, quite strange but enticing sculpture?

Of course, many people do and did the same. They start thinking about the number of poles, the geometrics of their positioning, the way that they were manufactured, or if lightning would strike and if that would create any danger while inside the artwork. They start to count the steel poles, while walking around the borders of the field and examining it from afar. Or they just sit down somewhere, maybe on the porch of the wooden cabin at the edge of the field, trying to figure it out. I, at least, did all of this. I was also puzzled by the important differences between the actual work and the famous photographs of it (which raised questions that would later become the starting point of my MA thesis and also, indirectly, of this dissertation). However, after some time of thinking about this seemingly irresolvable puzzle, I realised that I simply had to give up on my attempt to 'figure it out'. As a Japanese 'kōan', *The Lightning Field* resembles a riddle that can never be solved by rational thought – any solution can solely be intuited through the experience of the artwork.

Remarkably, it is at the moment one reaches this conclusion that *The Lightning Field* starts to do its most mysterious work. Or rather, it is at this point that one can allow the mystery of the field to do its work: one simply opens-up a bit, and starts to think less, because of which the artwork can enter one's very body and mind. And it enters first through one's vision. Because one cannot figure it out in one's head, one simply starts to be with whatever

is in front of our eyes. One *sees* the reflections of the light on the poles, one *sees* the landscape of the field and the surrounding mountains in the distance. And then, slowly, one becomes aware of something else: one starts sensing oneself in that specific time and place – breathing, looking. Still thinking, but quieter now. When seeing is related to sensing, and sensing is like seeing, it is as if one suddenly becomes alive. This is especially true during the moments of sunset and sunrise at *The Lightning Field*, when the sculpture is revealed in its most glorious form due to the reflection of the sun on the poles and the long shadows that they cast on the ground. Seeing and sensing this, the beholder of the work is gripped by a sense of beauty, combined with a feeling of wonder. A sheer sense of being alive is felt: of being *here*, present, for *this* sunset, and *this* sunrise.

When I left *The Lightning Field*, I felt I had encountered a great work of art. Not because it left me astonished by its cleverness, or skill, or artistic concept, or even due to its beauty (which are all a definite part of this complex artwork), but because I realized that I had finally understood part of the mystery of the field. I believe that all art aspires to make the unseen visible, but the greatest art is also able to make oneself visible to oneself – not in one's usual egoistic vision of oneself, but as a being that takes part in a collective world. This is what happened in *The Lightning Field*: it was as if the very web of life was uncovered before my eyes. The long avenues, forming the one-point linear perspectives of *The Lightning Field*, do not only point to an 'elsewhere': they also mirror one's gaze and point it back to oneself. In every step, in every turn, one not only looks out into the landscape, but simultaneously sees oneself seeing, sensing, becoming aware and more present to what is around: life itself. One thus not only sees oneself seeing – one literally sees *vision* as such: a dialectical relation between the seen and the seer becomes apparent. And in that vision, something more is revealed. It can strike like lightning. 'Who am I if not an intrinsic part of this planet I walk on, this world with all its sentient beings, plants, rocks, its moon and sun?'

It is since then that I believe that the great, diverse works of Land Art are concerned with doing precisely this: to make not only some*thing* visible, but also some*one,* by teaching us *how* to see the world that we continuously create around us, and to appreciate it more. Great works of art do not allow us to figure out the meaning after one look, after which we can rush off and then decide if we liked or disliked what was shown. Instead, they reveal us to ourselves, in relation to everything that we normally consider to be 'not self'. Simple: breathing, sensing, looking, relating, connecting. It is as if one gets in touch with something more essential – something that goes beyond our personalities, ego, wishes and desires. One gets in touch with what it means to be human. And to be part of humanity, one needs to realise that one is alive, intensely, at every moment of time, and as an intrinsic part of a world that is just as alive as we are.

To be a human being. And through that the realization that one is related to all other beings on this planet. After all, we are here together – on this Earth. What kind of responsibility does that bring us? What kind of responsibility does it bring to the artist? And what possibility does it bring to art?

***

I am thankful that even after four full years of working on this dissertation, these essential questions, once perceived while standing in *The Lightning Field,* still touch me deeply. And I would like to thank many people for reminding me of these questions, always rekindling the fire of inspiration that once blazed within me.

I would first like to thank my supervisors, Professor Geraldine Johnson and Professor Anthony Gardner, at the University of Oxford. Without their continuous guidance, unwavering support, and critical revisions, I would not have been able to finish this project – let alone start it. I am also grateful that, during those periods of research where life – as it

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warmth of the sun, continually transforming my sticky, ordinary spider's web to something that likens an artwork made of silken threads: catching the sunlight in the drops of water that remain there after a 'British blue' rainy morning – reflecting the beauty of life all around – and bringing an eternally returning wonder about finding ourselves *here*, *now*, and (most importantly) *together*.

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Introduction

An Art of Uncertainty: Complex Sculptures

> And so we stare at the pit in the earth and think we both do and don't know what sculpture is.[1]
>
> To think the complex is to admit into the realm of art two terms that had formerly been prohibited from it: *landscape* and *architecture* – terms that could function to define the sculptural (as they had begun to do in modernism) only in their negative or neuter condition. Because it was ideologically prohibited, the complex had remained excluded from what might be called the closure of post-Renaissance art. Our culture had not before been able to think the complex, although other cultures have thought this term with great ease. … Which is *not* to say that they [the artworks of other cultures] were an early, or a degenerate, or a variant form of sculpture. They were part of a universe or cultural space in which sculpture was simply another part …[2]
>
> Rosalind Krauss, 'Sculpture in the Expanded Field'.

When Rosalind Krauss published her article 'Sculpture in the Expanded Field' (1979), it was clear that the return of the complex she was talking about had only just begun. In distinct opposition to Clement Greenberg's emphasis on medium-specificity as the foundations for a progressive modernism, Krauss argued in her famous essay that, since the 1960s, sculpture was no longer interested in opposing itself to other categories, i.e. by saying that sculpture is that which is not-landscape or not-architecture (or not-painting).[3] Thanks to the artworks of Minimalism and Land Art it had become possible to imagine, according to Krauss, 'an opposite term – one that would be both *landscape* and *architecture* – which … is called the *complex.*'[4] The complex, according to Krauss, designates sculptures that are not afraid to get mixed up with other disciplines, and it emphasises that sculpture had become 'only one term

[1] Rosalind Krauss, 'Sculpture in the Expanded Field,' *October* 8 (1979): 33.
[2] Ibid., 38.
[3] I refer here to Clement Greenberg's 'Modernist Painting' (1965), as reprinted in: *The New Art: A Critical Anthology*, ed. Gregory Battcock (New York: Dutton, 1973), 100-110.
[4] 'Sculpture in the Expanded Field,' 38.

on the periphery of a field in which there are other, differently structured possibilities'.[5] Krauss explained this thought by means of a Greimas square, in which she mapped the 'set of oppositions between which the modernist category *sculpture* is suspended', placing sculpture as one cornerstone of a four-fold, expanded field that featured 'marked sites', 'axiomatic structures', and 'site-construction' as its other three cornerstones, while also relating these cornerstones visually to '(not-)landscape' and '(not-)architecture' (fig. 1).

In other words, Krauss redefined sculpture as a form of art that dealt with spaces, environments, different kinds of media, and assemblages of objects. As Alex Potts formulates it: 'It had in a way become painting that had moved out into three dimensions, with the frame extended to encompass the viewer.'[6] Indeed, sculpture had not just redefined itself as something more than a self-contained object, but, as Potts remarks, this reformulation also coincided with a 'new expanded notion of viewing … – no longer just a disembodied gazing, but a process involving the viewer spatially and kinaesthetically and intellectually, as well as visually'.[7] In other words, these new sculptures – such as Robert Smithson's *Spiral Jetty* (1969-1970), Robert Morris's *Observatory* (1970), Alice Aycock's *Maze* (1972), or the video corridors by Bruce Nauman – were not just to be viewed, but made it necessary for the viewer him- or herself to become part of the expanded field of the artwork.[8] Interestingly enough, as Krauss also points out, this suddenly brought Western art much closer to non-Western art, which had traditionally incorporated the complex with great ease, like the 'Japanese gardens [that] are *both* landscape and architecture.'[9] The change in American and European sculpture that occurred during the second half of the 20th century thus links with the changing global cultural climate of that time, in which artists and musicians had become

[5] Ibid.
[6] Alex Potts, *The Sculptural Imagination: Figurative, Modernist, Minimalist* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2000), 3.
[7] Ibid.
[8] Krauss, 'Sculpture in the Expanded Field,' 41.
[9] Ibid., 38.

interested in other, foreign cultures (John Cage, for example, often sat in on lectures on Japanese Zen Buddhism by D. Suzuki in the late forties) and started to appropriate many aspects of non-Western culture in their artworks.[10]

Krauss's essay has proven itself visionary in terms of the future of art that followed, and it comes as no surprise that so many scholars refer to Krauss's essay still, as a foundation for any discussion of art that originated post-1960. Moreover, the complex continues to be made: those sculptures that cannot simply be categorised by medium or appearance, that often make use of other media (including photography and/or film), and emphatically incorporate the viewer into their dynamics.[11] Yet the complex is not just synonymous with anything that is put under the header of sculpture today. As Potts states: 'Sculpture, or three-dimensional work, has become a capacious category that includes installations, environments, staged video displays and assemblages of objects, and now enjoys just as high a profile in exhibitions of contemporary art as painting or other strictly two-dimensional work.'[12] Even though all of this sounds rather complex, this kind of sculpture, often specifically made for the museum or exhibition space, is, according to Potts, nothing more than 'a continuing celebration of the move beyond the confines of the traditional sculptural object [which] is hardly more than a conventionalised promotion of current practice.'[13] In other words: sculpture in the expanded field has become the norm and has thereby lost the force of the truly complex, as well as its critical function by accepting the status quo.

It seems clear that something is forgotten. This is also the case with the reception of Krauss's famous essay. As she herself emphasises at the end of the text, her mapping of the expanded field is only of importance as a basis for the investigation of the deeper layer of the

[10] Cf. with: Ellen Pearlman, 'Nothing and Everything: The Influence of Buddhism on the American Avant-Garde, 1942-1962,' (2012).
[11] Krauss, 'Sculpture in the Expanded Field,' 41.
[12] Potts, *The Sculptural Imagination: Figurative, Modernist, Minimalist*, ix.
[13] Ibid., 4.

problem of explanation of postmodernist sculptures – that which Krauss calls the 'conditions of possibility'.[14] As she points out at the end of her essay:

> I have been insisting that the expanded field of postmodernism occurs at a specific moment in the history of art. It is a historical event with a determinant structure. It seems to me extremely important to map that structure and that is what I have begun to do here. But clearly, since this is a matter of history, it is also important to explore a deeper set of questions which pertain to something more than mapping and involve instead the problem of explanation. These address the root cause – the conditions of possibility – that brought about the shift into postmodernism …[15]

This overlooked pointer at the end of Krauss's essay might have seemed insignificant for many decades, but, in the context of this dissertation on Land Art and in the context of contemporary art today, has become extremely important. For it not only sheds light on the problem of contemporary art criticism, which – one could say – often gets stuck in the process of mapping and therefore fails to arrive at the 'conditions of possibility' of the current status quo, but it also explains the ongoing relevance of Land Art for the understanding of our contemporary situation and its possible change. Such a change could be initiated through a more thorough understanding of, what I would call, the ontology of *complex sculptures*. Therefore, the research question of this dissertation is: In which ways can the historical and future reception of Land Art be (re-)shaped by the notion of *complex sculptures*, through the investigation of the 'big picture' effect produced by the interaction between the *in situ* sculptures and the use of lens-based and time-based media in Land Art?

[14] This Kantian term – 'the conditions of possibility' – would have seemed out of place in Krauss's essay, if one would not understand that she in fact refers to Michel Foucault, who reintroduced the term in 1966 in his well-known work *The Order of Things*. Making use of Kant's famous opposition of the *phenomenon* versus *noumenon* (the world of appearances versus the 'thing-in-itself', *ding an sich*), while also countering its historic antinomian connotations, Foucault reformulates the term 'conditions of possibility' in the post-structuralist context as an 'archaeology of knowledge': 'a history which is not that of its growing perfection, but rather that of its conditions of possibility' which is therefore 'not so much a history, in the traditional meaning of the word, as an 'archaeology'.' Michel Foucault, *The Order of Things* (London: Routledge, 2002 (originally published in 1970)), Preface, xxiii-xxiv

[15] Krauss, 'Sculpture in the Expanded Field,' 44.

This dissertation thus introduces the notion of *complex sculptures* to shed new light on Land Art: as sculptures that claim to be *more* than just sculpture, *both* sculpture and landscape, or sculpture and architecture, or, for that matter, sculpture *and* landscape *and* photography or film, while simultaneously pointing to their ontological reasons for being so.[16] Contrary to modernist sculptures which were defined as something else than landscape, architecture, or painting, complex sculptures are those sculptures that positively situate themselves within one or more fields that are not assimilable to sculpture as such, while also opening up reflections on the conditions of possibility of our postmodern era and all that it entails. In other words, 'complex sculptures' are not 'complex' simply because they look it (due to their many components or eccentric shapes), or because they situate themselves within the complex compound field of (traditionally) different categories of art, as Krauss pointed out in her essay. My thesis is that the main reason for their complexity, as will be shown in this dissertation, is a reflection, intrinsic to the artwork itself, on the way that such different visual (or even textual) components are linked, while these sculptures also include a reflection on their own position in relation to the vision of the beholder.[17]

Yet it is important, in my view, to hold on to the category of sculpture in relation to Land Art, albeit as *complex* sculpture.[18] This is related to Potts' critique, as quoted before, that a simple transcendence of the category of sculpture as such only seems to amount to a continuous celebration of the move beyond the confines of the traditional sculpture – and thus becomes the new conventionalised approach to it.[19] It is also my view that the category of 'sculpture' cannot be absolutely transcended, nor need to be. Therefore, my proposal to look

[16] Ibid., 38.
[17] This is therefore an expansion of Krauss's ideas about 'the complex'. Cf. with page 7.
[18] In contrast to the editors of the *Ends of the Earth* exhibition catalogue, who suggest that Land Art should be categorized in its negative as 'Not Sculpture' – which is the theme they suggest as a heading for McFadden's essay in the catalogue (which, however, is very dialectically written and McFadden does not state herself that Land Art is 'not sculpture'). Philipp Kaiser and Miwon Kwon, *Ends of the Earth: Land Art to 1974* (Los Angeles, Calif./London: L.A. Museum of Contemporary Art/Prestel London, 2012), 5 and 43.
[19] Potts, *The Sculptural Imagination: Figurative, Modernist, Minimalist*, 4.

at Land Art as *complex sculptures* invites a dialectical consideration in which sculpture does not exclude intermediality, dispersal and other networked practices, but explores these as elements *inherent to* sculpture, i.e. that which *enlivens* sculpture as such: its dialogue with the living and changing world of nature, but also of technology, the media, and different mediums.[20] As such, it avoids the extreme 'art as life' argument that sees 'sculpture as everything else', which, as Potts emphasised, would simply imply a new status quo.[21] This dissertation instead adheres to Potts' notion of the 'otherness of sculpture' through a first comprehensive examination of the multimedia practices contained *within* the Land Art sculptures.[22] This also acknowledges the artists of Land Art itself, who often explicitly situated their Land artworks within the (expanded) category of sculpture: for example when De Maria's explicitly says that the *Earth Room* can be seen as a 'minimal flat horizontal earth *sculpture*',[23] or when Dennis Oppenheim states about his video work *Timetrack* (1969) that one 'never thought of *sculpture* as being like, for instance, three miles long…'[24]

This dissertation thus aims to show that the ontology of Land Art includes both the category of sculpture and that of 'not-sculpture' – hence the introduction here of the notion of 'complex sculptures'. Although Rosalind Krauss mentions 'the complex' in her essay of 1979, she did not introduce it as a term for the new sculpture.[25] In this dissertation I propose that the early Land artworks are to be located in a field of expanded sculpture, as *complex*

[20] On intermediality, dispersal, and networked practices, cf. with: R.E. Krauss, *"A Voyage on the North Sea": Art in the Age of the Post-Medium Condition* (London: Thames & Hudson, 2000). Also: David Joselit, 'Painting Beside Itself,' *October* 130, no. Fall (2009). And the essay 'Dispersion' by Seth Price in: P. Staple, *Dispersion* (London: Institute of Contemporary Arts, 2008), 82-91.
[21] Gilbert-Rolfe in his essay 'Sculpture as everything else' suggests that: 'Sculpture offers itself as a form, or way of thinking, that can engage real space,' thus implicating the old Bauhaus idea of 'art as life'. Jeremy Gilbert-Rolfe, 'Sculpture as Everything Else: Twenty Years or So of the Question of Landscape,' *Arts* 62, no. no. 5 (January 1988): 71.
[22] Potts starts his book with his interest in the 'otherness of sculpture'. Potts, *The Sculptural Imagination: Figurative, Modernist, Minimalist*, xi.
[23] Emphasis mine. Walter De Maria, interview by Paul Cummings, October 4, 1972. Transcript online.
[24] Emphasis mine. Robyn Farrell, 'Network(Ed) Tv: Collaboration and Intervention at Fernsehgalerie Gerry Schum and Videogalerie Schum,' *Afterimage* 43, no. 3 (November/December 2015): 15.
[25] Her definition of the expanded field, however, where there are several categories which are 'all … a condition of the field itself, and none of them assimilable to *sculpture*', is what I have in mind, too, with *complex sculptures*. Krauss, 'Sculpture in the Expanded Field,' 38.

sculptures, which also includes lens-based media like photography and film that are intrinsically connected to the sculptures on site. Of course, the complex sculptures of the Land artists will be shown to also display a great variety – as each artist would naturally have taken a slightly different approach. Yet this diversity in the final Land artworks as discussed in the following chapters does not exclude that the Land artists here considered have all explicitly stated that their photographs, films and televisual works should be seen as an intrinsic part of their artistic practice, and often as works of art in their own right.[26] This is not to say that the Land artists never took any photographs merely as documentation, nor that every Land artist made the same use of their photographs or films, or shared the exact same view in relation to their use of photography, film and television. However, what does connect all of the works discussed in this dissertation is their approach to these lens-based and time-based media as extensions of their original Land artworks, or at least as a new perspective within a network of viewpoints – and thus part of their artistic practice – through which they were often questioning the common priority given to the 'original' artwork as such.

As I will show by means of this dissertation, it is in the early works of Land Art that the first of these complex sculptures can be found. It is not without reason that Krauss's essay 'Sculpture in the Expanded Field' starts with a reference to Land Art, and she often refers to works of Land Art as examples at other places in the text, for instance when she relates the recognisable situation of '[staring] at the pit in the earth and think[ing] we both do and don't know what sculpture is'.[27] However, besides these formal references, and the direct link of Krauss's remark about her own mapping (a favourite word of Smithson) of the sculptural expanded field, Land Art is especially of great importance in the second step of Krauss's project: to indicate the *conditions of possibility* of postmodernism. In other words, it is my

[26] Please see the following chapters for specific references.
[27] Krauss, 'Sculpture in the Expanded Field,' 33.

thesis that by thinking through Land Art and by mapping some of its works in their hitherto unmapped, mediated domain of photography and film, that something new can be said about their conditions of possibility that were shaping – sometimes literally – the ground of postmodernity yet have remained largely unacknowledged. It is with this aim that this dissertation focuses on several of Land Art's complex sculptures: a selection of the numerous early Land Art sculptures that incorporate photography, film, or even television.

Whereas place-specificity has often been discussed in relation to Land Art, this dissertation also places emphasis on the time-specificity of many of the complex sculptures of Land Art.[28] As we will begin to see in the first chapter, the early works of Land Art often incorporated a strong emphasis on time-specificity, sometimes even lifting that aspect to the same level of importance as the site-specificity of the artworks. In fact, the earliest use of the term 'time-specific' in the context of Land Art might have been in 1973, in a description by Maria Nordman of some of her untitled works 'inter-connecting various landscapes of different cities'.[29] Time-specificity is thus used in this dissertation to denote the specific, very limited timeframe of certain complex sculptures of Land Art, as discussed in the next chapters in relation to, for example, Dennis Oppenheim's *Gallery Transplant #1* (Chapter I) or the television exhibition *LAND ART* by Gerry Schum (Chapter IV). [30]

[28] Cf. with, for example: Miwon Kwon, *One Place after Another: Site-Specific Art and Locational Identity* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2002).
[29] See: Kaiser and Kwon, *Ends of the Earth: Land Art to 1974*, 88. For a more recent account of the importance of time in curatorial and exhibition practices, cf. with: B. von Bismarck, R. Frank, and B. Meyer-Krahmer, *Timing: On the Temporal Dimension of Exhibiting* (Berlin: Sternberg Press, 2014).
[30] Hence, time-specificity in Land Art is used slightly differently than Bourriaud's definition that 'artists translate and transcode information from one format to another, and wander in geography as well as in history'. Cf. Nicolas Bourriaud's essay 'Altermodern explained: Manifesto', as published on the website of the Tate Modern London: https://www.tate.org.uk/whats-on/tate-britain/exhibition/altermodern/altermodern-explain-altermodern/altermodern-explained Also cf. with: Nicolas Bourriaud, *Altermodern: Tate Triennial* (London: Tate Pub., 2009). Moreover, it also has to be distinguished from the notion of time in modernity, where time was often conceptualised as a 'promise of progress' – cf. with, for example: Christine Ross McGill, Anthony Gardner, and Amelia Barikin, 'Historical Time in Contemporary Art: Longue Durée Revisited,' in *Session 4 paper for the Art out of Time: Challenging Periodization Symposium* (Oxford: University of Oxford, 2014).

Although the chapters are (more or less) divided according to the three mediums of photography, film, and television, it is clear from the start that this structure only serves to show how these different mediums blend in with each other, as well as with the sculptures they are intrinsically connected with. In other words, this dissertation will show that Land Art's complex sculptures included photography and film (and even television) as part of their very being, as well as the other way around. The intention is to follow Krauss's pointer and start a project that not only involves the mapping of Land Art as a distinctively 'intermedial' artform (contrary to the Romanticist notion of Land Art as a simple 'return to nature' that many critics still expound)[31], but to also move into the deeper layer of concern that Krauss indicated: the conditions of possibility of postmodern art at such, and the relevance of Land Art for the developments in contemporary art today.[32]

The Expanded Field of Land Art

'Whether one sees media as the enemy of Land Art or as an integral extension of it, its significance to the discourse cannot be denied.'[33] This statement led to the development of the innovative exhibition *Ends of the Earth: Land Art to 1974* that was held in the L.A. Museum of Contemporary Art in 2012. This exhibition testified to the fact that the landscape of Land Art – or Earth Art, as it is sometimes interchangeably called – extends far beyond the boundaries of the actual sites of its artworks, while also showing that this is a fact that has a hard time slotting in to art historical discourse.[34] One of the curators of the exhibitions,

[31] Such as John Beardsley who states that 'only sculptures in earth and sod can properly be described as earthworks'. John Beardsley, *Earthworks and Beyond: Contemporary Art in the Landscape* (New York: Abbeville Press, 1989), 7.
[32] I introduce the term 'intermedial' as a reference to Dick Higgins' well-known essay *Intermedia* of the 1960s, in: Dick Higgins, Steven Clay, and Ken Friedman, *Intermedia, Fluxus and the Something Else Press: Selected Writings by Dick Higgins* (2018).
[33] Kaiser and Kwon, *Ends of the Earth: Land Art to 1974*, 30.
[34] The name 'Land Art' and 'Earth Art' were coined at the same time and have both been used interchangeably since then. While 'Earth Art' comes close to the term 'Earthworks' and thus references the first American art exhibition of the subject, the name 'Land Art' was introduced in Europe by Gerry Schum's film of the same

Miwon Kwon, argued elsewhere that there are three paradigms of site-specificity: 'phenomenological, social/institutional, and discursive', seen and used as 'competing definitions, overlapping with one another and operating simultaneously in various cultural practices today (or even within a single artist's single [sic.] project).'[35] Similarly, one could argue that Land Art, which has often been defined as art that deals with landscape or uses natural material in its creation, has traditionally been usurped by a (predominantly modernist) discourse that gives precedence to either what one could call the 'romantic paradigm' of the unmediated, pure aesthetic experience of the spectator on-site, often including theories about the phenomenology related to the experiencing body within the site-specific artwork, or to theories in which Land Art is seen as 'institutional critique' – a paradigm in which the intentions of the artists in making earthworks are usually interpreted as a critique of, or an act of resistance to, the mediated experiences of galleries, museums or the media.[36] The term 'institutional critique' was, as Alexander Alberro and Blake Stimson point out, 'used to describe the politized art practice of the late 1960s and early 1970s, [and] first appeared in Mel Ramsden's "On Practice" (1975).'[37] In the context of Land Art, institutional critique is not only, as Andrea Fraser points out, 'art that exposes "the structures and logic of museums and art galleries"', but is more broadly defined as a methodology of *critically reflexive site-specificity*.'[38]

name. In this study, the name 'Land Art' will be preferred. (The terms 'environmental art' and 'ecological art' have also been used in relation to Land Art, but these have different connotations and were less used by the artists working in Land Art themselves.)

[35] Kwon, *One Place after Another: Site-Specific Art and Locational Identity*, 30.

[36] This binary has also been observed by Robert Slifkin, who mentions that the 'ultimate aestheticization of the gallery space and academicization of the expressive potential of sculptural space' are 'typically understood through the respective philosophical and academic discourses of phenomenology and institutional critique'. Robert Slifkin, *The New Monuments and the End of Man: U.S. Sculpture between War and Peace, 1945–1975* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2019), 15.

[37] Alexander Alberro and Blake Stimson, *Institutional Critique: An Anthology of Artists' Writings* (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 2009), 8.

[38] Andrea Fraser, 'What is Institution Critique?', in: J.C. Welchman, *Institutional Critique and After* (Zurich: JRP/Ringier, 2006), 305.

The first view – which one could call the 'romantic paradigm' of Land Art – has been aptly illustrated by James Meyer in his book *The Art of Return: The Sixties & Contemporary Culture,* where he draws upon the great example of Amy Granat and Drew Heitzler's artwork *T.S.O.Y.W.* (2007), which is an English acronym for *The Sorrows of Young Werther,* the famous story of Goethe. In this split-screen film projection the romantic longing of the American (South-)West, as portrayed in films like *Easy Rider* (1969), is put into dialogue with the Land Art movement. In a re-imagination of Goethe's story, the protagonist of the film – a modern Werther – steals a Harley-Davidson and drives it to Turrell's *Roden Crater,* De Maria's *The Lightning Field,* and Holt's *Sun Tunnels,* before reaching the *Spiral Jetty.* As Meyer observes, the film not only shows that 'the great earthworks of the Seventies are objects of desire, amorous destinations', but throughout the film the protagonist is often filmed in such a way, against the backdrop of a major earthwork, that it 'cannot fail to remind us of Caspar David Friedrich's *Wanderer above a Sea of Fog* (c. 1817), the most iconic image of German Romantic painting.'[39]

Meyer is not alone in this observation: from the beginning of Land Art, certain romantic tropes have been observed to be a part of earthworks' aesthetic. In the first comprehensive study about Land Art by John Beardsley, *Earthworks and Beyond* (originally published in 1984), for example, Beardsley explicitly relates the Land artworks to the notion of the Romantic sublime.[40] More recently, Lucy Lippard also points to this connection in her recent book *Undermining: A Wild Ride through Land Use, Politics, and Art in the Changing West* (2014), when she states: 'When land art was new, bringing provincial New Yorkers out of their lofts and into the hills, the expansion of consciousness it offered was both experiential and esthetic. … Religious undertones and the nineteenth-century "sublime" are

[39] James Meyer, *The Art of Return: The Sixties & Contemporary Culture* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2019), 255-259.
[40] Beardsley, *Earthworks and Beyond: Contemporary Art in the Landscape*, 61-63.

part of the attraction.'[41] Indeed, Meyer himself seems to allude to this romantic view himself, albeit more critically by means of the theory of phenomenology, when he relates his own experience at the *Spiral Jetty*: 'When we have entered the world of Smithson's sculpture we enter a system of perception. We are not monads, isolated in ourselves, but part of the work and the place where we are as others are, and we are inseparable from them. We experience the sense of interconnectedness that the philosopher Maurice Merleau-Ponty calls Being-in-the-World.'[42] Meyer then continues: 'Reaching the end of Smithson's spiral … I find that Smithson's work is hard to read. I *know* that the sculpture is a spiral, knew this before coming here. I have now walked it myself. But as my eyes drift along the half-submerged boulders and across the mysterious lakes and horizon, the *Jetty* dissolves perceptually. It refuses to resolve into a discrete mental image, a Gestalt. … I am in the *Spiral Jetty*, and so I can't perceive it as a whole.'[43]

Indeed, this seems to be a contemporary rendition of Burke's formulation of the sublime in his famous treatise of the 18th century, where he stated that the sublime is always coupled to a sense of the unknown – a literal translation of C.D. Friedrich's famous painting, where the mist covers the landscape beneath, thus rendering it invisible and unknowable.[44] Yet whereas Meyer simply acknowledges the link between earthworks and the Romantic era and seems to accept it (albeit critically), Amanda Boetzkes in her book *The Ethics of Earth Art* points out that 'Earth artists are sometimes misunderstood as romantic or essentialist for taking their encounters with nature as the principal tenet of their artworks', thus referring to (and clearly denouncing) this 'romantic view' of Land Art.[45] (More evidence that speaks

[41] Lucy R. Lippard, *Undermining: A Wild Ride through Land Use, Politics, and Art in the Changing West* (New York: The New Press, 2014), 89.
[42] Meyer, *The Art of Return: The Sixties & Contemporary Culture*, 156.
[43] Ibid.
[44] E. Burke, *A Philosophical Enquiry into the Sublime and Beautiful* (London: Taylor & Francis, 2009). Originally published in 1757.
[45] Although Boetzkes often makes use of a phenomenological lens in her discussions of specific artworks in this book, relying heavily on Maurice Merleau-Ponty, especially in Chapter 3 and 4. Amanda Boetzkes, *The Ethics of Earth Art* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2010).

against this Romantic view of Land Art will also be given in the following chapters.) Moreover, Boetzkes draws upon the second paradigm that one could identify in the literature on Land Art, too: the view that Land Art emerged as a form of 'institutional critique'. In a slightly generalising way, Boetzkes states that 'art has a part to play in critiquing the ways we frame nature through representation as well as through science and technology.'[46] This latter position of critique she subsequently relates to (at least the early examples of) Earth Art, as Boetzkes believes that 'when the earthworks movement began, the idea of siting artworks in deserted landscapes was a means of breaking out of the spaces and economy of the gallery system.'[47]

This idea of Land Art as a critique of the art institutions (the museums, galleries, and even, occasionally, the media or medialised world itself) has become even more articulated in some of the studies of the earthworks of Robert Smithson, like Gary Shapiro's *Earthwards: Robert Smithson and Art after Babel* (1995). On the first page of the introduction of this book, Shapiro states that Smithson 'was concerned to question the presuppositions and limits of museums, galleries, and other traditional frames of art by taking his work into the isolation of the Great Salt Lake or the Pine Barrens of New Jersey…'.[48] Shapiro even goes as far as to say that 'We might … think of Smithson as providing a series of strategies for deconstructing the museum and its culture …'.[49] Moreover, Smithson is often perceived to be the initiator of so-called 'post-studio' art, created as critique of modernist aesthetics. Caroline A. Jones, in her book *Machine in the Studio: Constructing the Postwar American Artist,* even claims that 'the post-studio construct has its source in [Robert] Smithson's own critiques, where the studio is frequently positioned as the source of a modernist isolation that must now be

[46] Ibid., 17 and 2.
[47] Ibid., 5.
[48] Gary Shapiro, *Earthwards: Robert Smithson and Art after Babel* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1995), 1.
[49] Ibid., 49.

opposed.'[50] Jones traces the term 'post-studio' to Lawrence Alloway, who described the *Spiral Jetty* in his essay 'Robert Smithson's Development' of 1972, 'a year after its completion, and a year before Smithson's death, as "a 'post-studio' system of operation."'[51] Jones aligns this idea of 'post-studio' art with earthworks, by explicitly relating Smithson's idea of 'site' as a 'stand in' of the studio.[52]

Last but not least, Land Art's supposed allegiance to an anti-institutional movement has won in strength in studies that look at Land Art from the lens of site-specificity. Miwon Kwon's study *One Place after Another: Site-Specific Art and Locational Identity* (2004), for example, states that Land artists like Smithson 'have variously conceived the site not only in physical and spatial terms but as a *cultural* framework defined by the institutions of art.'[53] This view has been given a very nuanced exploration by James Nisbet in his *Ecologies, Environments, and Energy Systems in Art of the 1960s and 1970s* (2014), who quotes Dennis Oppenheim saying: 'With the fall of the galleries, artists have sensed a similar sensation as do organisms when curtailed by disturbances of environmental conditions. This results in extension or abandonment of the homesite …' (the 'homesite' meaning the gallery or museum space). Nisbet then continues: 'But cutting against Oppenheim's suggestion that land art simply rejected the gallery environment in favour of a new "homesite" out of doors, *Directed Seeding – Canceled Crop* reveals the manner in which the art world was in fact internalizing ecological relationships from other systems.'[54] Although Nisbet's formulation is based upon his main interest of the relation between ecology and Land Art, this dissertation

[50] Caroline A. Jones, *Machine in the Studio: Constructing the Postwar American Artist* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1996), 272.
[51] Ibid. The essay Jones refers to is: Lawrence Alloway, 'Robert Smithson's Development,' *Artforum* 11, no. 3 (November 1972): 59.
[52] Jones, *Machine in the Studio: Constructing the Postwar American Artist*, 326.
[53] Kwon, *One Place after Another: Site-Specific Art and Locational Identity*, 13.
[54] James Nisbet, *Ecologies, Environments, and Energy Systems in Art of the 1960s and 1970s* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 2014), 106.

will argue for a similar nuanced view on the incorporation of institutional critique within Land Art itself (see especially Chapter I).

These are only some examples from the extensive literature mentioning Land Art, in order to show that Land Art has mostly been related to the 'romantic paradigm' that circles around presence, materiality, place specificity, and unmediated experience, or the paradigm that sees Land Art as institutional critique. These two paradigms converge with the mainstream interpretation of Land Art 'as fundamentally an American sculptural phenomenon that developed out of Minimalism and Postminimalism, expanding into the 'field' beyond art spaces to occupy or to become one with vast landscapes like the deserts of the Southwestern United States'.[55] However, just as Land Art has never been an exclusively American phenomenon, so the practices of Land Art have never been limited to sculptural on-site interventions. Instead, Land Art has, from its very beginning, been intertwined with many different media and, more specifically, with lens-based media. In fact, the first Land Art exhibitions all included several forms of lens-based media, such as the exhibition *Earthworks* in 1968, organized by Virginia Dwan in her New York gallery (and discussed in Chapter I of the present dissertation), which not only included drawings, paintings, sculptures, blueprints and some texts, but also photographs, a film and a photo light-box.[56] Moreover, the last chapter (Chapter IV) of this dissertation is based upon the so-called *Fernsehgalerie* ('Television Gallery'), founded in Berlin during the late 1960s by German filmmaker Gerry Schum, which initiated the first Land Art exhibition in Europe. This exhibition was in fact a broadcast on public television of the film *Land Art* in 1969 – a broadcast that consisted entirely of eight short films of Land artworks *as* Land Art, filmed on location and made specifically for television, while directed by the participating Land artists

[55] Kaiser and Kwon, *Ends of the Earth: Land Art to 1974*, 18.
[56] Ibid., 30.

themselves. Indeed, most of the Land artists were directly engaged, both practically and theoretically, with the possibilities of lens-based media in relation to their artworks. Smithson is an important example of this, as will be shown through both his theoretical writings and through certain artworks, for instance *Spiral Jetty* (a work that consists of a film and several photoworks as well as the Land artwork on-site, as discussed in Chapter III). In all these works, it becomes evident that the lens of the photographic or film camera, which can be seen as an extension of the lens of our eye and thus an extension of our own perception ('the camera … working now'), allows a kind of vision that is directly related to important philosophical ideas and practical experiments that shaped the early aesthetics of Land Art – which is one of the main arguments laid out in Chapters II and III.[57]

Yet despite all this evidence, the expanded landscape of Land Art has, until now, only marginally been discussed by art historians and critics.[58] This sparks a sense of wonder, since, as some have noted, it is remarkable how 'an exclusive focus' on the 'solitary sculptural object … manages to rise again and again', despite the multitude of mediated practices (most of the time intended by the artists themselves as directly related to their work on-site) that constitutes such a large part of what has come to be known as Land Art.[59] This might have to do with, as Shapiro suggests, the opinion that the 'earthworks artists and … others whose public art seems to deliberately reject the museum … that by filming, photographing, recording, or reporting their works to the art world, they are necessarily complicit with it [i.e. the art world].'[60] Thus, these practices were often seen merely in a

[57] Stanley Cavell, amongst others, often relates the film camera to the 'human' camera, for example when he notes that: 'One can feel that there is always a camera left out of the picture: the one working now.' Stanley Cavell, *The World Viewed: Reflections on the Ontology of Film* (Cambridge, Mass./London: Harvard University Press, 1979), 126.
[58] Some of the few critics who have discussed this relation between Land Art and the media are: Jane McFadden, 'Earthquakes, Photoworks, and Oz: Walter De Maria's Conceptual Art,' *Art Journal* 68, no. 3 (2009). And the contributors to the catalogue of the *Ends of the Earth* exhibition: Kaiser and Kwon, *Ends of the Earth: Land Art to 1974*.
[59] Andrew V. Uroskie, 'La Jetée En Spirale: Robert Smithson's Stratigraphic Cinema,' *Grey Room*, no. 19 (2005): 55-56.
[60] Shapiro, *Earthwards: Robert Smithson and Art after Babel*.

negative light, which would explain the fact that it is only recently that studies have begun to emerge in which this almost exclusive focus on the materiality of the on-site Land artworks has been extended to include the rich variety of media practices in Land Art and the self-reflexivity that the Land artists brought to these artworks as such – a self-reflexivity that extended far beyond their own, individual lives.

For example, in the important exhibition catalogue *Ends of the Earth* (2012) curators Philipp Kaiser and Miwon Kwon argue that their exhibition '"Ends of the Earth" presents four major propositions that counter the most common myths associated with Land art', by stating that: firstly, Land Art is not only an American phenomenon, but that 'Land Art is international'; secondly, that Land Art 'is not an escape from the city, as it is commonly characterized, but is part of the complex processes of urban transformation and spatial politics of the period'; thirdly, that the 'belief that Land art is a dematerialized or antiobject [sic.] practice and, as such, a turn away from the art system as a rejection of the commercial market and the ideology of art institutions is inaccurate'; and fourthly, that 'Land art is a media practice as much as a sculptural one'.[61] Indeed, it is especially this fourth point that has proven to be a guiding principle in the realisation of this dissertation, although the *Ends of the Earth* catalogue only investigates this through Tom Holert's highly informative essay 'Land Art's Multiple Sites', which looks into the use of media in Land Art (but focuses mainly on 'the power or representation' of, mostly, documentary photographs of Land artworks, although mentioning many implications that the author, presumably, was not able to pursue due to the limitations of the scope of the exhibition catalogue).[62] This dissertation is therefore the first extensive investigation that is solely dedicated to the relation of Land Art and lens-based media such as photography, film, and television.

[61] Kaiser and Kwon, *Ends of the Earth: Land Art to 1974*, 19-31.
[62] Ibid., 97-122.

Although many contemporary authors mention the use of lens-based media in Land Art, it is not often discussed as more than a marginal phenomenon. In terms of the relation between photography and Land Art one can find only a couple of authors who elaborate on this, and even fewer who actually expand this interest into more than one or two sentences on the subject. Maybe the most comprehensive account is given by James Nisbet, who looks at certain relations between the on-site Land artworks and their relation to the media and photography in his book *Ecologies, Environments, and Energy Systems in Art of the 1960s and 1970s* (2014). Much of his book is interested in the influence of several developments in the media connected to Land Art, from the NASA photographs of the moon to developing technologies. This seems to touch upon some of the issues mentioned by Joy Sleeman in her essay 'Land Art and the Moon Landing' (2009), where she traces some of the historical coincidences that seem to tie Land Art and the moon landing together, although she cannot substantiate this claim too much, as she makes clear from the start that the 'most straightforward connection between 'land art' and the moon landing is temporal coincidence'.[63] Moreover, although Sleeman mentions photography when saying how Robert Smithson thought of the photographs from space as 'very expensive non-sites', she does not investigate the role of photography *as Land Art* at all (i.e. how photography can be seen as an inherent part of the practice of Land Art itself), and instead focuses on Gerry Schum's television exhibition *LAND ART* (discussed in Chapter IV).[64] The same is true for Robert Slifkin's more recent account, where he notes that 'land art emerged more or less concurrently with the height of the "space race"' and refers to a work by Michael Heizer that shows some influences of 'how an interplanetary consciousness may have informed Heizer's imaginary conjunction of the Earth and the Moon' – without, however, going into detail

[63] Joy Sleeman, 'Land Art and the Moon Landing,' *Journal of Visual Culture (SAGE publications)* Vol. 8 (3) (2009): 300.
[64] Ibid., 303.

about this, nor analysing in any extent Heizer's photographic works, which will be done here in Chapter II.[65]

This dissertation will thus provide an in-depth investigation of the use of photography within Land Art, which will make this connection much more straightforward. Moreover, the use of photography *as* Land Art will also show an alternative view on Land Art's supposed institutional critique. This is something that Nisbet seems to be aware of, as he mentions the 'growing divide within De Maria's work – between being on site and accessing earthworks photographically', and furthermore states that 'the role of photography in this equation complicates any simple binary between abandoning the urban gallery and embracing the open West … De Maria's use of photography provides no straightforward relay between such poles.'[66] However, although Nisbet mentions the complication that photography brings to the simple binary between an abandoning of the urban gallery and Land Art's move to the (South)West, he does not explain further how this complication is brought about in other Land artworks and only focuses on De Maria's *The Lightning Field* and the photographic essay under the same name. In contrast, this dissertation aims to investigate this link in a much broader perspective in Chapter I and II, firstly by discussing this relation between Land Art and institutional critique by looking at some of the exhibition spaces used by Land Art, and secondly, in Chapter II, presents an account that is entirely dedicated to an investigation of the relation between Land Art and photography.

Similarly, on the relation between Land Art and film only a couple of studies have appeared in recent years. Again, the exhibition catalogue *Ends of the Earth* is the only comprehensive study up until now, although some critics have explored the link between film and Land Art through specific examples. Sleeman's interest in Gerry Schum's television

[65] Slifkin, *The New Monuments and the End of Man: U.S. Sculpture between War and Peace, 1945–1975*, 157.
[66] Nisbet, *Ecologies, Environments, and Energy Systems in Art of the 1960s and 1970s*, 191.

exhibition *LAND ART* has already been mentioned; and Jane McFadden, together with Eva Ehninger, are (to my knowledge) the only art historians that explore this relation in terms of Walter De Maria and his two films, *Hard Core* and *Two Lines Three Circles on the Desert.*[67] (McFadden is the only one, however, who shortly mentions De Maria's film *Beds of Spikes*, which is for the first time extensively discussed in this dissertation, in chapter III.) Other texts on film in Land Art solely focus on Robert Smithson's *Spiral Jetty*, for example Andrew V. Uroskie in his essay 'La Jetée En Spirale' (2005), and Kathleen Merrill Campagnolo in her essay 'Spiral Jetty through the Camera's Eye' (2008). Both these latter essays, as their titles suggest, analyse the *Spiral Jetty* (the film and the work on-site), without acknowledging other filmic works of Land Art – something that will be done in Chapter III of this dissertation. Moreover, these essays also fail to examine in which ways specifically, as Boetzkes notes in her work *The Ethics of Earth Art* (2010), 'the documentation of the artwork is an integral part of much earth art practice'.[68] Like Boetzkes, they do not explore this theme in depth (Boetzkes only focuses on the case of Smithson's *Spiral Jetty*, and does only conceptualise the film as a text, in relation to her discussion of Craig Owens' point of view).

The 'Big Picture' Effect

Yet, however limited, these studies have begun to shift attention from an exclusive focus on the solitary Land artworks themselves to the Land artworks in focus – that is to say, as seen through the lens of the photographic or film camera. This shift in focus not only makes visible the fact that the landscape of Land Art has always been one that includes a multitude

[67] Uroskie, 'La Jetée En Spirale: Robert Smithson's Stratigraphic Cinema.'; Kathleen Merrill Campagnolo, 'Spiral Jetty through the Camera's Eye,' *Archives of American Art Journal* 47, no. 1/2 (2008).; Jane McFadden, *Walter De Maria: Meaningless Work* (London: Reaktion Books Ltd, 2016). And in German: Eva Ehninger, 'Die Land Art Als Film. Parallelen Der Raumkonstruktion in Land Art Und Film Bei Walter De Maria Und Robert Smithson,' *Zeitschrift für Ästhetik und Allgemeine Kunstwissenschaft* 55, no. 1 (2010).

[68] Boetzkes, *The Ethics of Earth Art*, 20 and 3. For Boetzkes discussion of Smithson's film *Spiral Jetty*, see pp. 86 to 91.

of different media and places, which extend far beyond the actual site of the Land artwork; it also significantly alters one's view about the motivation behind the development of Land Art itself as a practice, which has often been assumed to be a direct critique of the increasing power of the media and institutions that shaped the art world in such significant ways in the United States and Europe. That is to say that in a time in which technological media started to dominate visual culture, from the documentary films and photographs of the horrors of the Vietnam War (the first 'living-room war') to the broadcast footage of the first man on the moon in 1969, the abundant use of technological media in Land Art can only to a certain degree be considered a form of criticism.[69] In fact, it will be shown that the supposed institutional critique that these artists conveyed through their artworks was far less directed *against* the media and art world institutions than is often assumed: almost all of these artists keenly and consistently explored new possibilities *within* the media and institutions. (This will be discussed in more detail in the first chapter.)

This latter argument would be able to make sense of the keen and consistent exploration of other landscapes – real as well as mental landscapes and the landscapes of the media – within the Land Art movement, while also creating a bridge to contextualize Land Art within the socio-historical context in which it found its origins. As Suzaan Boettger points out, 'Earthworks were not only prominently material, but also strongly metaphorical a manifestation of the lives of the artists, who were self-reflective men [and women] of the world.'[70] Indeed, this self-reflexivity that manifested itself in the Land artworks also definitely incorporated the socio-political situation of the world of the 1960s and 1970s, and many of the Land artists referred in one way or another to their interest in the socio-political

[69] The first 'living-room war' is a term that Michael Arlen used as a title for his book on the Vietnam War. Michael J. Arlen, *Living-Room War* (New York: Penguin Books, 1982).
[70] Suzaan Boettger, *Earthworks: Art and the Landscape of the Sixties* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2002), 27. I do not understand why she leaves out the women in Land Art in this sentence, so I have added them.

events of that time. Moreover, one of the first Land Art exhibitions, the film *Land Art* that was broadcast on public television on the 15th of April 1969, coincided so closely with Armstrong's walk on the moon on 20/21 July 1969, that a direct relation has been made by both critics and artists.[71] Art historian and Land Art scholar Joy Sleeman asks herself if the photographs taken from the Earth by the crew of the Apollo can be seen as Land Art ('Is this Apollo's earth art?'), and also Smithson himself once remarked that the images that resulted from the moon landing reminded him of 'very expensive non-sites'.[72]

Indeed, the sight of the earth as a sculptural form, as captured by NASA for the first time in colour photographs on Christmas Eve of 1968 (fig. 2), seems to make an initial formulation of the conditions of possibility of Land Art and postmodernism as such, possible. For it is this sight – often remembered by astronauts as one of the most sacred sights they had ever seen – that worked as a magnifying glass on the vulnerability and fragility of our relatively small planet: this beautiful blue, atmospheric Earth, floating in an enormous silent, black universe.[73] As Harry Eyres recalled, the Earthrise photograph asked for a rethinking of the ideas of human's treatment of Earth and their position in the universe:

> For both the astronauts and who were involved in taking the photograph and for millions of others who responded to it, the Earthrise photo had huge significance: it was not just the

[71] Cf. with, amongst others, Richard Aldrich et al., *Artists on Walter De Maria* (New York: Dia Art Foundation, 2017), 76-78; Ben Tufnell, *Land Art* (London: Tate Publishing, 2006), 13; Thomas Kellein, *Sputnik-Schock Und Mondlandung: Künstlerische Grossprojekte Von Yves Klein Zu Christo* (Stuttgart: G. Hatje, 1989).
[72] Sleeman, 'Land Art and the Moon Landing,' 303. (And Robert Smithson in *The New Yorker*, 1972, 54.)
[73] As astronaut Mike Collins said: 'The little planet [Earth] is so small out there in the vastness that at first I couldn't even locate it. And when I did, a tingling of awe spread over me. There it was, shining like a jewel in a black sky. I looked at it in wonderment, suddenly aware of how its uniqueness is stamped in every atom of my body… At that point I made my discovery. Suddenly I knew what a tiny, fragile thing Earth is.'

It is striking that almost all astronauts who have seen Earth from space afterwards changed their lives dramatically. Two years after he had returned to Earth, Apollo 14 astronaut Ed Mitchell founded the Institute of Noetics, an organization devoted to the study of consciousness. Mitchell had had what he called an epiphany during the return journey to Earth, in which he experienced that the universe is 'in some way conscious' – not so much a religious experience, he said, but a natural response of the body 'to the overwhelming sense of unity of the universe.' This while one astronaut began to write poetry, and another began obsessively to paint the Moon upon their return. Several astronauts turned to God, notably Apollo 15 astronaut Jim Irwin, who spent the last years of his life exploring Mount Ararat in an attempt to find the remains of the Ark. (See Christopher Potter in his article, 'On Seeing the Earth for the First Time', in *The Space Review*, April 9, 2018.)

> astonishing beauty of the earth but also its fragility which were revealed. Perhaps the overwhelming feeling conveyed was of nostalgia, remembering the Greek roots of that word in the words for homecoming, *nostos*, and pain or grief, *algos.* It took the act of distancing oneself, of being at the necessary distance, to bring home the essential homeliness of the planet.'[74]

Indeed, this sense of the fragility of our planet and how small it is (and even smaller we are) in relation to the cosmos contributed to a certain sense of humility: 'when the Earth appeared in its true context, humanity would be humbled, not before God but before the cosmos'.[75] Together with the scenes of the Vietnam War and the fear induced by the ongoing Cold War, these images of 1968 from outer space led to an awareness of how important it was to stress that, in Smithson's words: 'The universe can no longer be considered man-centered.'[76]

It is this 'big picture effect', as it has been called by astronaut Edgar Mitchell, in which humans do no longer take centre stage in the universe, which is comparable to a Copernican revolution (albeit of the 20th century), which is of central concern in this dissertation.[77] For it is this shift in perspective that, as will be argued, also lies at the basis – the conditions of possibility, in Krauss's words – of the expanded field that Land Art opened up in its diverse explorations of lens-based media, in which a continuous stress on different perspectives and the undermining of one central perspective became the leading force. As Lucy Lippard observed in 2014: 'The task of land art … is to focus landscapes too vast for the unaccustomed eye to take in, or to give us views into the cosmos, connecting the places

[74] Harry Eyres, *Seeing Our Planet Whole: A Cultural and Ethical View of Earth Observation* (Cham, Zwitserland: Springer International Publishing, 2016), 135.
[75] Robert Poole, *Earthrise: How Man First Saw the Earth* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2008), 49.
[76] Smithson, 'Outline for Yale Symposium', 1968, reprinted in: *Robert Smithson: The Collected Writings*, ed. Jack D. Flam (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1996), 360.
[77] The change in our worldview after these first images of Earth seen from space has often since been compared with the Copernican revolution, as is recalled in, for example, 'From the Blue Planet to Google Earth', Chapter I in: Ursula K. Heise, *Sense of Place and Sense of Planet: The Environmental Imagination of the Global* (New York, NY: Oxford Univ. Press, 2010), 17-67.

where we stand with the places we will never stand.'[78] Indeed, it is through this 'big picture effect', related to 'thinking big', as Timothy Morton would call it, that Land Art facilitates a contemplation of the fragility of the Earth and our relation to it: 'Thinking big means realizing that there is always more than our point of view' while it is also meant to 'make us feel humble, not proud'.[79] It is my thesis that the abundant use of photography, film and even television in Land Art points towards the important realisation that, in many ways, was related to this global experience of a *shift of vision* – both literally and metaphorically – during the transformational period of the late 1960s and early 1970s after which the Earth and the universe could no longer be considered to be '(hu)man-centred'.[80]

In the chapters that follow, it will be shown how media like photography and film seem perfectly designed to help the postmodern, complex sculptures of Land Art to emerge, as well as the 'new expanded notion of viewing' that they expound.[81] Moreover, it will be argued that photography and film were not only used to show a different perspective on the *in situ* Land artworks, but that they also – in even more significant ways – intrinsically informed the actual sculptures as such. Indeed, while looking at the documents that are the only remainders of the many temporary Land artworks done in the dessert or other remote places, one can ask oneself the question if the Land artworks on-site were in fact made for the camera instead of the other way around.[82] Moreover, it can be argued that even major Land artworks such as Smithson's *Spiral Jetty*, Walter De Maria's *Beds of Spikes* (in relation to *The Lightning Field*), Nancy Holt's *Sun Tunnels*, or Heizer's *Munich Depression* not only

[78] Lippard, *Undermining: A Wild Ride through Land Use, Politics, and Art in the Changing West*, 91.
[79] Cf. with the chapter 'Thinking Big', in: Timothy Morton, *The Ecological Thought* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2012), 57 and 23. I do not concur with Morton's more general ideas about object-oriented ontology, though, as explored in his later works, as can be seen in the following chapters. This is the reason that I prefer to use the term 'big picture effect', instead of 'thinking big'.
[80] This is signified by the first 'Earth Day' in 1970. Cf. with: Heise, *Sense of Place and Sense of Planet: The Environmental Imagination of the Global*.
[81] As quoted before. Potts, *The Sculptural Imagination: Figurative, Modernist, Minimalist*, 3.
[82] Kaiser and Kwon, *Ends of the Earth: Land Art to 1974*, 27.

exist in photographs or films as well, but were meant to incorporate the photographic and/or filmic vision into their very structure.

Taken all together, one might probe the possibility that the institutional critique performed by artists working in Land Art was not so much based on an act of resistance to the mediated experiences of the galleries, museums and the media, resulting in them trying to get away from the gallery or museum and into the expanded field, but might rather manifest itself in the ways that they were exploring and transforming new terrains – the 'land' of photography, film, television, magazines and exhibition catalogues, as well as the earth (and our view of it) itself. In doing so, the objective of the artists of Land Art in using lens-based media during the late 1960s to the late 1970s will show itself as twofold:

- Firstly, it will become clear that the artists working in Land Art showed a genuine interest in better understanding these 'other spaces' (the expanded field of lens-based media), in order to gain new insights about how to *immanently shape* (or even transform) the power of lens-based media through their practice. They did so precisely by using lens-based media and exploring them – thus opening up new critical terrains by incorporating lens-based media into their complex sculptures.
- Secondly, they were clearly interested in how landscape itself is shaped by media. By using media like photography and film they intensively explored the relation between seeing and being seen, self and other, private and public space, forming the landscape and being formed by the landscape – and in doing so they shaped these relations anew. The photographs and films of Land Art can therefore be understood as *learning manuals* for engaging the actual Land artworks *in situ*: they teach us *how* to see these works and, in the process, how to see ourselves in relation to the world itself. This is directly bound to Land Art's ontological aesthetic ideas (or in Krauss's words: the conditions of possibility of Land Art), which seem intrinsically connected to a search

> for a different worldview, pointing to 'the bigger picture' of the relation of self to our planet.

Hence, without denying that a certain amount of institutional critique certainly played a role in the founding of Land Art, this critique as practised by the artists working in Land Art is far less simple – as in getting away from the institution and the media by moving art into the landscape – and much more nuanced and expansive (bringing a focus on the bigger picture) than is often assumed.

The Primacy of the Object: From Private to Public Space

The quest for this shift of vision is also related to a larger methodological question at work in the discipline of art in the last half of the 20th century, which informed and influenced these artists in their specific decisions concerning the complex sculptures of Land Art. Related to concerns that were for the first time made visible by Minimalism, it is evident that Land Art was very much concerned with a shift in paradigm. That shift occurred on both a formal, internal level, directly related to art making and the art market as such, and on a larger social level related to the human idea of 'self' and the state of the world in the period during which those artworks saw the light. These two levels are intricately clarified by Rosalind Krauss in her book *Passages in Modern Sculpture* (published in 1977, two years before the publication of 'Sculpture in the Expanded Field'), where she admits that she is interested in a more 'positive side' of Minimalism. This remark is meant as a reaction to Michael Fried's argument of Minimalism as literal and anti-illusionistic, as proposed in his famous text 'Art and Objecthood'.[83] As Krauss explains:

> In structural or abstract terms, compositional devices of the minimalists deny the logical importance of the interior space of forms – an interior space which much of

[83] Michael Fried, 'Art and Objecthood,' in *Minimal Art: A Critical Anthology*, ed. Gregory Battcock (New York: E.P. Dutton & Co., Inc., 1968).

> previous twentieth-century sculpture had celebrated. … This … helps us by analogy to see the positive side of Minimalism's endeavor: for in refusing to give the work of art an illusionistic center or interior, minimal artists are simply re-evaluating the logic of a particular *source* of meaning rather than denying meaning to the aesthetic object altogether. They are asking that meaning be seen as arising from … *a public, rather than a private space*.[84]

Indeed, this interest in a meaning that arises not so much from a private space as from a public space can be seen as the leading concern behind the aesthetic ideas of Land Art as well, although the artists working in Land Art simultaneously underlined the intrinsic dialectics at work between the private and public space.[85] Instead of denying meaning altogether, as was often suggested by the first reviews of Land Art by art critics that found themselves, like Krauss, 'staring at a pit in the ground' and wondering what sculpture was, the Land artists were, from the very beginning, interested in exactly this paradigm shift in the location of the source of meaning – or maybe one should say: the beginning of meaning.

A good example for this is Michael Heizer's *Double Negative* from 1969 (figs. 3 and 4), which Krauss argues is an exemplary artwork that continues 'this project of decentering' that Minimalism had started.[86] In *Double Negative,* which consists of two large cuts in the rocks of a Nevada ravine, mirroring each other, the body of the viewer becomes part of the sculpture (fig. 5), yet without invoking the anthropomorphic connotations that 'the sculpture or the picture was understood as a surrogate for the artist' and the human body, as it had been before in Modernism.[87] As Krauss points out, the *Double Negative*:

> … does not resemble the picture that we have of the way we inhabit ourselves. For, although it is symmetrical and has a center (the mid-point of the ravine separating the two slots), the center is one we cannot occupy. We can only stand in one slotted space and look across to the other. Indeed, it is only by looking at the other that we can form

[84] (Last emphasis mine.) Rosalind E. Krauss, *Passages in Modern Sculpture* (New York: The Viking Press, 1977), 253 and 262.
[85] One could relate this shift in meaning as arising from a public space also to 'the crucial importance of publicity', which links to certain themes of Conceptualism. Cf. with Alexander Alberro, *Conceptual Art and the Politics of Publicity* (Cambridge, Mass.; London: MIT, 2004).
[86] Krauss, *Passages in Modern Sculpture*, 258.
[87] Ibid.

> a picture of the space in which we stand. … By forcing on us this eccentric position relative to the center of the work, the *Double Negative* suggests an alternative to the picture we have of how we know ourselves. It causes us to mediate on a knowledge of ourselves that is formed by looking outward toward the responses of others as they look back at us. It is a metaphor for the self as it is known through its appearance to the other.[88]

Indeed, it is this eccentric position, combined with an essential outward-looking movement which is bent back upon the self (like in a mirror), which defines much of the ontology of Land Art.[89] In other words, in Land Art – transcending (at least Krauss's conception of) Minimalism[90] – the private and the public space become intrinsically connected in a dialectical movement that brings, what one could call with Theodor W. Adorno, a *primacy of the object*.[91]

Such a primacy of the object can be explained as follows. A complex sculpture, such as Heizer's *Double Negative*, compels the beholder to incorporate a certain incomplete self-reflexive movement, in this case due to the eccentric position in which the beholder is placed, which is brought about through the physical demands of the artwork, or otherwise (through lens-based media, for example). Yet it is essential that such a self-reflexive movement denies priority to the individual self and compels the beholder of the artwork to invite 'the other' to enter – in the case of *Double Negative* the cut on the other side of the ravine, as well as the ravine itself, which is incorporated into the sculpture as such. In Krauss's words: '[*Double*

[88] Ibid., 280.
[89] This becomes a significant point in discussing works of Robert Smithson in which mirrors are used. Cf. Chapter II, 122-125.
[90] 'The ambition of minimalism was, then, to relocate the origins of a sculpture's meaning to the outside, no longer modelling its structure on the privacy of psychological space but on the public, conventional nature of what might be called cultural space.' Krauss, *Passages in Modern Sculpture*, 270. Yet Land Art's dynamics seem to transcend this. Also cf. with Lisa Anderson, *Minimalism and Post-Minimalism: Drawing Distinctions* (Hanover, N.H.: Hood Museum of Art, Dartmouth College, 1990), especially pages 119-142; Philip Ursprung, *Allan Kaprow, Robert Smithson, and the Limits to Art* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2013).
[91] The philosopher Theodor W. Adorno has based his entire late philosophy on this concept of 'the primacy of the object', which he expounded in relation to – especially – art. See, amongst others: Theodor W. Adorno et al., *Aesthetic Theory* (London: Athlone Press, 1997); Theodor W. Adorno, *Negative Dialectics* (New York: Continuum, 2007 (originally published in 1973)), especially the section 'The Object's Preponderance'. Also compare with the short explanation in Chapter IV, 225.

Negative] depicts the intervention of the outer world into the body's internal being, taking up residence there and forming its motivations and its meanings.'[92] It is this 'intervention of the outer world', in a way decentring the self or subject, that can be called the *primacy of the object*. Since without such a primacy of that which is *not* self, everything is always already subjective and self-centred, without leaving space for anything other than the narrow, subjective personality and its emotions, likes and dislikes.

As such, Krauss emphasises that the *Double Negative* or other Land artworks that *do* have a centre (such as Smithson's *Spiral Jetty* where the beholder *can* stand in the middle if (s)he walks to the end of the spiral[93]), serve 'to place both viewer and artist before the work, and the world, in an attitude of *primary humility* in order to encounter the deep *reciprocity* between himself and it.'[94] It is this notion, 'humility', that Land Art was able to bring back into its artworks and that links it directly to the photographs of the Earth as seen from space and their 'big picture' effect. One could say that, instead of the focus on the artist as a genius, as individual creator, Land Art brought the focus back on the human being as – only a relatively small – part of a much larger whole, and the inherent *reciprocity* of our lives. However, this was done through a number of different instruments and ideas, and never just by means of one single principle: sometimes through the scale of the works, which were often quite large (*Double Negative*, *Spiral Jetty*), yet at other times Land artists simply used media – like photography and film – to trigger this sense of scale that would allow this humility of the self and our reciprocity with the Earth to be experienced.[95] As Poole observed in his book

[92] Krauss, *Passages in Modern Sculpture*, 280.
[93] Krauss explains that even a work such as Robert Smithson's *Spiral Jetty*, which – as a spiralling form – does have a centre, evokes this decentering of the self 'within the great expanse of lake and sky'. Ibid., 282.
[94] (Emphases mine.) Ibid., 282-283.
[95] The difference between size and scale and how both function independently is explained in Chapter III. There is a direct link here to the notion of the 'sublime' in relation to Land Art, with unexplored possibilities if coupled to the notion of *humility* rather than the usual connotation of the sublime as overwhelming/spectacular and the 'return to nature' argument that has often linked Land Art to Romanticism. Cf. for this latter type of argument with: William Malpas, *The Art of Richard Long* (Kent, UK: Crescent Moon Publishing, 2018), 84.

Earthrise: the depiction of the globe has historically been associated with 'an invitation to contemplate with humility the limits of earthly existence'.[96]

It is through this shift in focus towards the expanded field, not only of the artwork itself, but also in terms of scale (i.e. our relation to the world and even the universe), that Land Art begets its significance for our contemporary situation. As the art world, as Potts points out, appears to be stuck in a status quo, in which everything 'new' seems to resemble everything else, the necessity is felt to find the impossible viewpoint that would enable one to look at art and society from the outside, 'free' from internal or conventional restraints. This is something that Land Art, for many critics in the 1960s and after, literally did, and one of its supposed characteristics that has made it famous: the fact that many of the *in situ* Land artworks themselves were often situated far away from the city, and were therefore also often considered to take such an 'outside the art world' position. Yet besides the fact that such an 'outside' standpoint has been contested by Postmodernism itself, the Land artists, too, did not see their artworks in this way (as if the location of their artworks far away from the city, in the landscape, would lend the artworks an inherent power of institutional critique) as I will show in Chapter I.[97] Moreover, I will also show that not all Land artworks held such remote locations, as many were constructed in close proximity to (or even inside) the city. And last but not least, and most importantly, I will show that the sense of scale that brought 'humility and reciprocity' back into art, did not necessarily come from physically placing the artwork far away in a potentially sublime landscape, but that this look could be (and often was) incorporated in the very functioning of the Land Art sculptures themselves, for example by the use of lens-based media (as expounded in Chapters II and III).

[96] Poole, *Earthrise: How Man First Saw the Earth*, 49.
[97] I refer here, of course, to the 'master of Postmodernist critique', Jacques Derrida, and his famous statement that there is 'nothing outside the text', in: Jacques Derrida et al., *Of Grammatology* (Baltimore, Md: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2016).

The Art of Uncertainty

It can be said that sculpture has always been the medium that, according to some critics, provides the greatest challenge in our perception of it. As Potts puts it: 'Our sense of the [sculptural] work as a whole is partly defined through the ever changing and variously focused partial views we have of it, and can never entirely be condensed in a single stable image.'[98] Indeed, it is this fragmented look that many modern sculptors such as Auguste Rodin (in his very work process and later interest in the fragment as sculpture) or Constantin Brancusi (as evidenced in his photographs of his statues, always showing a different standpoint) started to explore and were interested in. Moreover, this same fragmentation also characterises photography as such (and, in a different way, film), as the photographic image always only captures part of what is seen, cutting out everything that falls outside its frame. This has led Potts to some observations about photography that are closely aligned to his observations about sculpture (as quoted earlier on): that the photographic camera is able to generate 'a multiplicity of photographic images that would undo the framing closures of a single privileged view.'[99]

This is an essential point towards the credibility of the argument about Land Art as expounded in this dissertation: the fact that both lens-based media and sculpture work towards a 'decentred' view, or 'eccentric position' (as Krauss puts it), where there is an awareness of the incompleteness of one single image or view. Indeed, it can be argued that it is through photography and sculpture that the postmodern awareness of the inherent *instability* of meaning has become so apparent – which gives the decentred view of postmodernism its key meaning: *uncertainty*. Yet this uncertainty is not a negative one.

[98] Potts, *The Sculptural Imagination: Figurative, Modernist, Minimalist*, 9.
[99] Alex Potts, 'The Minimalist Object and the Photographic Image', in: Geraldine Johnson (editor), *Sculpture and Photography: Envisioning the Third Dimension* (Cambridge, United Kingdom: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 184.

According to Potts, for instance, it is in this very instability that the strength and resistance of an artwork against commodity culture lies. As Potts puts it:

> Throughout various shifts in the [post-]modern sculptural imaginary, the *instability* of a viewer's encounter with a three-dimensional work has been integral to any affective and conceptual power it might have, as well as to any resistance it might offer to being consumed as mere commodity. … At issue in this development [initiated by Minimalism] is not so much some intangible decentring of subjectivity as such, but rather the tendency to a perpetual *unfixing* of images representing any ideal or collectively shared subjectivity within modern culture. … The compelling art work will no longer be one that purports to embody some stable essence of individual subjectivity. If a work gives rise to a vivid subjective awareness, this awareness cannot seem to be encapsulated in some potentially inert and fixed objective thing. It has to emerge from within the *contingencies* of the viewer's encounter with a work. Where three-dimensional art of the past few decades differs most noticeably from modernist sculpture is the way the staging focuses the viewer's attention *on this contingency and unfixing*.[100]

Indeed, it is this emphasis on the instability of meaning, and the instability of our own, self-centred view that both photography and sculpture are masterfully expounding, especially in the context of Land Art.

All of this brings an alternative perspective on Land Art which this dissertation maps out, which is needed in order to appreciate the contemporary relevance of Land Art and the profound ontological meaning that it expounds about the relation between art and technology, nature and culture, vision and experience, and man and world (and cosmos). As I will show throughout this dissertation, the fact that all of the above lies at the very basis of Land Art counters the common view that Land Art was a simple return to nature. Significantly, this was often implied by the artists themselves, but somehow – due to the different views and priorities of editors or interviewers – this has remained covered up in the growing literature and archives of our times, or otherwise most art critics seemed to have preferred to ignore this fact. For example, Smithson stated in one of the (heavily edited) interviews that were

[100] (All emphasis mine.) Potts, *The Sculptural Imagination: Figurative, Modernist, Minimalist*, 23 and 18.

published in *Avalanche* magazine about Land Art that he perceived a direct link between the planet, as a sphere sculpted by time, and the different forms of instability, intrinsic to contemporary times:

> I would say that the reason people see objects is because they've been told that they are objects. … It's all in the seeing. … If somebody is writing or talking about objects for years, then everybody starts seeing objects. Actually, there is a possibility that only places exist. That's all in the viewing. You can say a building is an object. But you can also say that the earth is and object, or you can say that the universe is an object.[101]
>
> And elsewhere:
> I think most of us are very aware of time on a geological scale, of the great extent of time which has gone into the sculpting of matter… [Land Art is] an art of uncertainty because instability in general has become very important. So the return to Mother Earth is a revival of a very archaic sentiment. Any kind of comprehension beyond this is essentially artificial.[102]

Elsewhere in the same interview, Smithson explains: 'In other words, we are not dealing with … nature in terms of any kind of return to nature…'.[103] However, this part of the oral interview was cut in the official version that later got published in *Avalanche*'s first issue, where it was instead suggested that the new Land Art was *all about* a return to nature.[104]

Yet Smithson's emphasis on Land Art as 'an art of uncertainty', directly related to the fact that 'instability in general has become very important', is crucial in the context of this dissertation. Indeed, this dissertation will suggest that, instead of a romantic notion of going back to nature, the Land artists were much more interested in what Oppenheim believed to be the inherent consciousness 'of very gradual physical change' in Land Art, as incorporated into the complex sculptural nature of the Land artworks themselves.[105] It is only in light of all

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[101] Symposium, the *Earth Art* exhibition, 1969, transcripts (page 13), in: Smithsonian, 'Robert Smithson and Nancy Holt Papers,' (Washington DC, USA: Smithsonian Institution, Archives of American Art).
[102] *Discussions with Heizer, Oppenheim, Smithson,* in: *Robert Smithson: The Collected Writings*, 248.
[103] (See also Chapter I.) MoMA, 'Avalanche Magazine Papers,' (New York City: Archives of the Museum of Modern Art), Series III: Audio Tapes 1968-1978, folder III.3, 45.
[104] (More will be said about this in Chapter I.) Ibid.
[105] 'Discussions with Heizer, Oppenheim, Smithson', originally published in *Avalanche*, I, Fall 1970, reproduced in *Robert Smithson: The Collected Writings*., 242-252 (248).

of this that one can make sense of Smithson's statement that Land Art therefore shows how 'you're always caught between two worlds, one that is and one that isn't.'[106]

In the following chapters, it is this network of unstable relations that will be mapped out, through which I will show how Land Art embodies the uncertainty of our postmodern world, while also pointing to the conditions of possibility underlying the shift of vision that took place during the 1960s and 1970s. It is through this network of relations that the 'big picture' effect of Land Art will unfold itself: an effect that puts the beholder both on and off our planet, both in- and outside of nature, and both in- and outside our own bodies. Yet what is most important is that through this mapping of the instability of meaning, it becomes possible to arrive at the conditions of possibility of Land Art itself, which will point to the ongoing relevance of Land Art for contemporary art today. I will therefore discuss a selection of the most resistant and effective complex sculptures in Land Art, which were created during the period that is spanned by this dissertation (from the late 1960s to the late 1970s) – sculptures that not only move out into the expanded field of nature, but also into the landscape of lens-based media, and even into the field of human vision itself.

[106] Ibid., 249.

Chapter I

Land Art and the Exhibition Space: An Intentional Paradox

> The question is: Why have the national art magazines both overrepresented and misrepresented the earthworks movement and its related disciplines, choosing to portray them as a kind of agrarian Children's Crusade against the art market and the museum system, when this is obviously not the case? First: the work is marketable – anything is marketable, as St. Paul so aptly demonstrated. Second: the museums have proved a good source of commissions for these artists. And third: even if the work weren't marketable and the museums were rejecting it, an esthetic trench in Utah is going to have about as much effect on the object market and museum endowments as admission figures at the Grand Canyon.
>
> Dave Hickey, 'Earthscapes, Landworks and Oz', in: *Art in America*, 1971.[107]

Although Dave Hickey has proven to be wrong about this last point, he nonetheless clearly intuited the paradox of the developing discourse that started to surround Land Art, which situated Land Art in a strenuous relation to the institutions of art (as well as the media). Indeed, probably one of the most discussed aspects of Land Art is its relation to the exhibition space.[108] That is to say that it seems that many would like to believe that this relation is in fact non-existent: that with the venturing into the outdoors, Land Art freed itself from the gallery and museums and the entire art world system.[109] Yet nothing is less true, of course. Indeed, a complete disconnection from the art world system would have been contrary to the intentions and aims of the artists working in Land Art, who were very much engaged in exhibiting their work in the galleries and museums. Artists such as Robert Smithson, Walter De Maria, Michael Heizer and Dennis Oppenheim would explicitly call such a belief in becoming 'free' of the institutions ideological, anticipating what Michel

[107] Dave Hickey, 'Earthscapes, Landworks and Oz,' *Art in America* 59, no. 5 (Sept-Oct 1971): 48.
[108] In almost every book on Land Art this is a theme that is taken up as one of the most significant aspects of Land Art.
[109] This chapter provides a lot of historical evidence of this, but this belief is also shared by the Land artists themselves. For the latter, cf. with Aldrich et al., *Artists on Walter De Maria*, 10.

Foucault would say in his famous text on critique, where he argues that it is impossible to free oneself from institutions and institutional power.[110] During a symposium before one of the exhibitions discussed in this chapter, *Earth Art,* Smithson remarked:

> There is no romantic urge towards the never-never land or something. I think that artists are now very conscious of strict limitations and they see them very clearly and can expand them in terms of other limitations. There's no way you can really break-down limitations – it's a kind of fantasy that you might have, that things are unlimited, but I think there's greater freedom if you realize that you have these limits to work against and actually, it's more challenging that way.[111]

Hence, as this chapter will show, it is not the case, as is often claimed, that these artists were merely interested in using their art as a form of 'institutional critique' (a term that originates in the 1970s),[112] in order to 'find a way of eluding the system'.[113] Nor does it seem that they were trying to 'engage in a form of institutional critique that examined the microcosmic economic and political preconditions' – at least it can be argued that this was not their main point of concern.[114]

Since this assumed aim of institutional critique has often been aligned with Land Art's so-called escape from the city, or its 'return to nature', it seems of central importance to first address these two points.[115] It is therefore that this first chapter will begin by showing that

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[110] See Michel Foucault's lecture, 'What is Critique?' (lecture held in 1978), as published in: Michel Foucault, *The Politics of Truth*, ed. S. Lotringer; J. Rajchman (Los Angeles: Semiotext(e), 1997), 41-81.
[111] Symposium of *Earth Art*, 1969, transcripts (p. 22), in: Smithsonian, 'Robert Smithson and Nancy Holt Papers.'
[112] The term 'institutional critique' was first coined in 1975 by Mel Ramsden. See Mel Ramsden, 'On Practice', 1975, as reprinted in: Alberro and Stimson, *Institutional Critique: An Anthology of Artists' Writings*.
[113] Hugh Honour and John Fleming, *A World History of Art*, 4th ed. (London: Laurence King, 1995), 858. Ben Tufnell says something similar: 'By working outside the gallery, in the landscape, by making works that could not (in theory) be sold or, in some cases, even exhibited, and by thus initiating a critique of the role of the gallery or museum institution, artists … are said to have forged a new model …' See: Tufnell, *Land Art*, 17. Similar ideas can be traced in works written on individual Land artists, especially in works on Robert Smithson. For example, Eugene Tsai writes: 'Smithson performed a kind of institutional critique, pointing to the geographical and cultural limitations that the purportedly neutral space of museums impose on art'. See: Eugene Tsai and Cornelia Butler, 'Robert Smithson,' ed. Los Angeles The Museum of Contemporary Art (Los Angeles: Museum of Contemporary Art, LA, 2004), 11. Also cf. with Kwon, *One Place after Another: Site-Specific Art and Locational Identity*.
[114] Jeffrey Kastner (editor), *Land Art and Environmental Art* (London: Phaidon Press, 1998), 36.
[115] Many historical articles and reviews about Land Art allude to a 'return to nature', or an 'escape' of the institutional art system. For example the exhibition announcement of 1970 in the Museum of Contemporary Art,

there was, in fact, a significant gap in the late 1960s and early 1970s between the interests of the artists in anything like 'institutional critique', and the interests of the curators and art critics, as well as the media and institutions themselves, which propagated that notion. It is this paradox that Hickey had already vocalized in 1971, when he asked in his lucidly written 'Earthscapes, Landworks and Oz' why the art magazines had portrayed the Land Art movement as a kind of 'agrarian Children's Crusade against the art market and the museum system'.[116]

By asking this question, Hickey clearly intuited the developing, anti-institutional discourse that started to surround Land Art by the late 1960s and that seemed so much at odds with the all-present, continuous relation of Land Art to the media and the many works exhibited inside of galleries or museums by the artists working in Land Art.[117] Hence, interrogating this emphasis – propagated by the media themselves – could provide an explanation of why Land Art's use of lens-based media, such as photography and film, have often been left out in the study of Land Art (the study of Land Art has concentrated almost exclusively on works made from 'earth and sod').[118] The consistent trend in the media of the late 1960s and the beginning of the 1970s to characterise the Land Art movement as an artistic impulse against the institutions and indeed, against the institutional power as such (in a more Foucauldian sense), will be a point of close analysis further on in this chapter.

In doing so, I will show that the artists working in Land Art did not think about the relation of their outdoor works and the inside exhibition space as two separate things, which had to become disconnected or – in case of the indoor works – transported into the outdoors.

Chicago, with the title *Evidence on the Flight of Six Fugitives* (in: Smithsonian, 'David Bourdon Papers,' (Washington DC, USA: Smithsonian Institution, Archives of American Art). Another example is Daniel Buren's critique on Land Art as a return to nature in 'Critical Limits' (of 1970), in: Daniel Buren, *5 Texts* (London: Jack Wendler Gallery, 1973), 5.

[116] Hickey, 'Earthscapes, Landworks and Oz,' 48.

[117] Think, for example, of the huge impact of Land Art on the endowments to the DIA Art Foundation in the 1970s.

[118] Beardsley, *Earthworks and Beyond: Contemporary Art in the Landscape*, 7.

It is important to show the difference here between the idea of the Land artists trying to find a way *out* (from the indoors exhibition space) as often proposed by the media and curators at the time, and the actual practice of Land artists who were trying to find a way *in between*: in between the indoors and the outdoors, the city and the landscape, or even the centre and the periphery. The latter is one of the claims of this dissertation, which argues that these Land artists were especially interested in the problem of how to connect the inside with the outside, private space with public.[119] It also connects to the fact that, since the beginning of Land Art, a critical analysis of both the centre and periphery as they relate to artworks have played an significant role in its development, as epitomised by Smithson's understanding of the universe as 'an infinite sphere, whose center is everywhere and whose circumference is nowhere'.[120]

Although that in itself is not a new view on Land Art, this chapter is meant to give a first introduction to why this connection between the centre and periphery was deemed to be so important for the Land artists, in which the often-cited answer to that problem – 'institutional critique' – will be countered and an alternative explanation will be offered. That explanation will show that, for the Land artists, the emphasis was on the drawing together of art and life: not by confusing the two, so that life and art become one, but rather by constantly showing the uncertain border between the two as a *threshold*, leading back and forth, inside and outside, thus constituting a *decentring* of both the artwork itself, and the beholder of the artwork (and the collective more generally).[121]

[119] See the introduction.
[120] This is Smithson's altered version of a quote by Blaise Pascal (the original is believed to stem from Hermes Trismegistus's *Liber XXIV philosophorum*). *Robert Smithson: The Collected Writings*, 210.
[121] William C. Lipke picks up on the aim of the Land artists to draw life and art together, yet directly connects this to a quote by John Cage saying something about the conflation of art and life. (See W.C. Lipke's essay 'Earth Systems' in: Willoughby Sharp and Thomas W. Leavitt, 'Earth Art,' ed. Cornell University Andrew Dickson White Museum of Art (Ithaca, New York 1970), 30.) The argument in this thesis is different, though related: not interested in a conflation of the two, but in a pointing to the difference in order to present what will be called a 'threshold'- situation.

This implies that, in addition to examining the outdoor works of Land Art, the long and significant history of Land Art exhibitions *inside* the gallery or museum space should be considered as well, since in many instances the indoor works were related to the outdoor ones. This chapter will therefore start with some observations about the first two exhibitions of Land Art in America: the (entirely indoors) *Earth Works* exhibition staged at the Dwan Gallery in 1968 and the (partially outdoors) *Earth Art* show at the Museum of Art of Cornell University in 1969. By examining these two exhibitions, the view that the artists working in Land Art were supposedly trying to leave the museums and galleries behind them in a methodological, practised form of institutional critique – often implied by the curators of the exhibitions at that time – will be turned to a more nuanced understanding. Moreover, by means of several case studies, I will show that this is directly linked to the question of how to find a way in between the centre and periphery, city and landscape, which featured as an important topic in several unpublished interviews and debates in which these artists engaged in the late 1960s.[122]

This search for the *in between*, the relation or connection of all the different elements of these first Land artworks, gives a good insight into what is meant by complex sculptures: sculptures that unfold their complexity in such a way that they both expound and ask for reflections on the extensive network of relations they are themselves a part of. In this first chapter, the museum or exhibition space will show itself as such a possible network, in which Land Art found its first premises: the possibility to create an expanded field through the use of media like photography, film, but also magazines or maps. Hence, throughout this first chapter, this relation of Land Art to the exhibition space will be explored in often unexpected ways, i.e. not only in terms of the famous Land artworks in the outdoors, but also through the inside exhibition spaces, lens-based media, or printed matter such as maps or texts and an

[122] See further on in this chapter: 'At the Threshold: The Space of Printed Matter'.

important artists' interview as published in *Avalanche*.[123] The exhibition space of Land Art will thus show itself as a landscape in itself, explored by the Land artists as a new terrain. This chapter therefore provides the starting point for this entire dissertation, in which the use of lens-based media like photography and film by the artists working in Land Art is examined and linked to the alternative objective of the Land artists, as stated in the introduction, that forms the main thesis of this dissertation: a change of focus and vision and an expansion of experience that not only includes the 'self', but also the 'other' – both the individual and the collective.

[123] The importance of text or language in relation to Land Art is discussed in Chapter III (especially in relation to Smithson), but not further clarified due to the scope of this dissertation. However, language is an important link that connects Land Art to Minimalism and the beginning of Postmodernism as such, as explained in: Craig Owens, 'Earthwords,' *October* 10 (1979). Also cf. with P. Kosta et al., 'Minimalism and Beyond: Radicalizing the Interfaces,' (2014). It is in this context that I present the unpublished artists' interview in the *Avalanche Magazine Papers* of the Museum of Modern Art, which I take as an important primary source to further inform this discussion.

1.1 Outside In: From Earthworks to Earth-Scapes

> I do think that what we all [the Land artists] see is that the landscape is co-extensive with the gallery or the gallery is co-extensive with the landscape. In other words, we are not dealing with … nature in terms of any kind of return to nature…
>
> Robert Smithson, *Avalanche Magazine Papers* in the Museum of Modern Art Archives, 1968/1969.[124]

This quote by Robert Smithson reflects the opinion that was expressed by many of the Land artists in the late 1960s and early 1970s. However, both the idea that Land Art did not concern itself with 'any kind of return to nature' and that the artists working in Land Art believed that 'the gallery is co-extensive with the landscape' would sound quite contradictory to the established view of Land Art as we know and learn about it today. As Beardsley says in the first academic book written on Land Art, 'only sculptures in earth and sod can properly be described as earthworks' and the Land artworks are 'inextricably bound to their sites' (and therefore far away from the gallery space).[125] Indeed, the latter seems to be the view that was strengthened by the art magazines, journals and art critics since the late 1960s and early 1970s. Yet at the same time, there are the artists working in Land Art themselves, who expressed quite a nuanced view towards the art institutions and museums.

For example, to the question 'What kind of problems do actual museums present for you?', Dennis Oppenheim replied in an unpublished interview of 1969: 'I don't know if any of the artists here are after a pure breakdown of some feeble limits. I don't think that's the impetus. But I would like to see someday an art so closely knit with a societal framework that there is no concern with viewing, no concern with recognizing, no concern with making posters, but an art that is inside of our head and inside of our total system so that it will be out

[124] MoMA, 'Avalanche Magazine Papers,' Series III: Audio Tapes 1968-1978, folder III.3, 45.
[125] Beardsley, *Earthworks and Beyond: Contemporary Art in the Landscape*, 7.

of the caves of the Manhattan lofts and spread across a vaster area.'[126] Thus, Oppenheim did not place the emphasis on working against the galleries, but clearly expressed himself as being concerned with expanding the exhibition space beyond the established Manhattan 'loft' gallery. Not as an anti-institutional strategy, but with the main aim to create artworks that are more intertwined with life itself and less separated as objects that are designated as art.[127] The same goes for Michael Heizer, who agreed with Smithson in another unpublished interview in 1969 that an artist 'is not more freer [*sic*.] outdoors than one is indoors' and claims furthermore that 'there are just as many esthetic restrictions working in the Mojave Desert as there are in the Dwan Gallery'.[128] Heizer explains (in that same interview) that he does not consider this to be a bad thing: 'I mean, you have to have [limitations].' And a bit further on: 'I'm agreeing [with Smithson] that it doesn't matter what's around, it matters that the limitations are ones imposed by the artists.'[129]

As will be shown further on, most of the Land artists seemed to agree on the fact that the move to make outdoor works was not one that was intended against the institutions but was rather concerned with the expansion of an artistic idea and a set of limitations that were imposed by the artists themselves according to that idea. This artistic idea was never absolutely opposed to the indoor exhibition space and the Land artists often spoke about the responsibility of exhibiting works inside galleries and museums in order to bring their art back to the city and the art public.[130] Yet this nuanced view about indoor exhibitions would have made the artists working in Land Art seem much less radical than the magazines and art critics liked them to be in the late 1960s: in the social and political upheavals of those times,

[126] Smithsonian, 'Robert Smithson and Nancy Holt Papers,' Transcript of the Symposium at Earth Art, Cornell University, 1969, 16.
[127] See further on in this chapter, 'A Manipulated Causal Web: Oppenheim's *Gallery Transplant #1*', where this aspect in Oppenheim's work is further discussed.
[128] Sharp and Leavitt, 'Earth Art,' 21.
[129] MoMA, 'Avalanche Magazine Papers,' Folder III.3, 41.
[130] Ibid.

Land Art seemed destined to have to fill the role of an 'agrarian crusade against the art market and museum system', as Dave Hickey has put it.[131] This has partially obscured the fact that the real radicality of the Land artworks made during the 1960s all the way to the late 1970s did not lie in its assumed attitude of protest against the art market (which is, after all, as old as modernity). Indeed, the objectives of Land Art were concerned with much larger questions that are both timeless (or at least bound to a much larger temporal frame than only the political and social situation of the 1960s and 1970s, i.e. the search for a shift of vision within our postmodern world) and, one could say, placeless (going beyond one single place or object, or, for that matter, country). This has been made clear from an early stage by the artists working in Land Art, who never failed to point out that they were more concerned with issues related to the world at large than issues related solely to the art world.

It is the thesis of this chapter that it is this intrinsic search (and the felt need) for a paradigm shift, a different – literally – view on the world, which formed the motivation for the Land artists to work outdoors and to start to consider their exhibition spaces in new ways, creating different paths between their site-specific works and the gallery or museum. In order to start to understand this relation between the outdoor Land Art and the use of indoor exhibition spaces, as well as the use of media like photography, film and television (in the chapters that follow after this one), it is necessary to trace this development back to the beginning by re-evaluating some of the first exhibitions of Land Art – starting with its two founding exhibitions in America: *Earth Works* (in 1968) and *Earth Art* (from 1969).[132]

[131] Hickey, 'Earthscapes, Landworks and Oz,' 48.
[132] Other significant exhibitions in Europe and America that featured Land Art were: *9* at Leo Castelli Gallery, NYC; *When Attitudes Become Form*, Kunsthalle Bern, Switzerland; *Square Tags in Round Holes*, Stedelijk Museum Amsterdam, the Netherlands; and *Anti-Illusion: Procedures/Materials*, Whitney Museum of American Art. These were all held in 1969 but were much less explicitly focused on the emerging Land Art movement than the two exhibitions of *Earth Works* and *Earth Art* discussed here.

***Earth Works*, 1968**

During the late summer of 1968, the Dwan Gallery in New York City sent out an invitation that said: 'EARTH WORKS – DWAN – NEW YORK – OCTOBER 5 1968'. Although this in itself was not very peculiar, the way that these letters were written on the natural brown paper was: they consisted of grains of sand, somehow pasted onto the paper in the shape of capitalised, type writer-style letters (see fig. 6). Nothing else was visible on the invitation: no names of artists or artworks, no photographs. There was only the raw material of sand on paper, which, moreover, was not pasted on just arbitrarily: both brown and beige sand was used for the inside of the letters of 'EARTH WORKS', while the outline of the letters was formed by a line of white sand, which was also used for the rest of the text on the card (see figs. 7 and 8). This unusual invitation would have conveyed a clear message to the recipients: the *Earth Works* show was not just another New York contemporary art exhibition – this exhibition was something different.[133] Indeed, in retrospective, one could state that the *Earth Works* exhibition was the founding of a new, and maybe the most reluctant, art movement of the late 20th century.

Although works of Land Art had already been done during the years before, such as Richard Long's work *A Line Made by Walking* (fig. 10) or his *Turf Circle* (in Ireland, fig. 11) of 1967, Dennis Oppenheim's *Cut in an Oakland Mountain* (also of 1967, no figure), Robert Smithson's *Tar Pool and Gravel Pit* (1966, fig. 12), Walter De Maria's *Earth Room* (1968, fig. 13), Jan Dibbets's *Grass Roll* (1967, fig. 14), and Michael Heizer's *Depressions* (again of 1967, fig. 15), it was Dwan's *Earth Works* show that – for the first time – convincingly conveyed the impression to the wider public that a new art movement had been born. The *Earth Works* show brought a wide variety of artists together in an exhibition that – for some

[133] The Dwan Gallery also had an advertisement in *Artforum* in October 1968, with a photograph of some tire tracks in the mud. (See fig. 9.)

of them – would influence the rest of their life: Robert Smithson, Walter De Maria, Michael Heizer and Dennis Oppenheim, but also Robert Morris, Claes Oldenburg, Carl Andre, Hubert Bayer, Stephen Kaltenbach and Sol LeWitt.

Although not all of these artists considered themselves Land artists (nor, after time, became one), it was nonetheless the energy of all these artists doing Land Art-related things that generated the force of the *Earth Works* exhibition. One of the reviews of the exhibition, written on the 28th of October 1968, gives a good insight into the impression people got of Dwan's *Earth Works* show:

> **Earthworks** (Dwan, 29 W. 57th): The riveting machine and the shovel have become the latest tools of the artist. Their canvas has been replaced by mother earth, herself. … Dennis Oppenheim offers a photograph of a nebula made out of aluminium chips, then sprinkled on a field near New Haven, Conn. Robert Smithson exhibits five progressively scaled bins containing large chucks of ore gathered from mines in Franklin, N.J. On the wall he shows aerial shots of the actual mines. … Michael Heizer went to the Black Rock Desert in Nevada to dig five rectangular holes which form a geometric earth-scape that could easily be mistaken for five graves for five jolly green giants. Robert Morris, the minimal sculptor, brought 1200 pounds of earth into the gallery, dumped it on the floor and garnished it with peat, bricks, pieces of steel, aluminium, copper, brass, zinc, and felt, then topped it all off with a gigantic helping of industrial grease. … A plexiglass container holding earth as well as earthworms is Claes Oldenburg's contribution to the exhibit. When last seen, the earthworms were dying by the droves, but the earth continued to have a rich, brown texture. … *Earthworks,* being perishable commodities (one sand or rain storm will do them in) seem destined to be among the least commercial of creative products. But these artists are unconcerned – for a change. Their goal is visionary – their wish is to change the face of the earth completely. For that, at least, they have my deepest respect.[134]

This excerpt not only underwrites the impression that was conveyed by the Dwan Gallery that a new, rather different art movement had arrived with a common goal – 'to change the face of the earth completely' – it also shows how the original title of the exhibition, *Earth Works*, was turned into one word, *Earthworks*, probably due to the almost invisible space in between the two words of the title of the show on the invitation card, advertisement and (most likely)

[134] Smithsonian, 'David Bourdon Papers.' Review from an unknown source (dated by Bourdon).

at the exhibition space. Indeed, in the United States, the new art movement would henceforth almost always be designated by the term *Earth Art,* and its works as 'earthworks'.[135]

It becomes clear here how the sense of unity of a new movement was first shaped at the Dwan exhibition, which is quite remarkable if one looks at the list of participating artists. Except for all being American, the diversity of these artists and their individual styles would not have necessarily conveyed any unity at all. Indeed, one could say that through the diversity of Dwan's selection, the show became a sort of 'anthology show' about the current state of Land Art in 1968.[136] However, Virginia Dwan was able to bring everything together: since she only knew a handful of artists who expressed themselves as being interested in making Land Art, she decided to also invite artists that would not have necessarily fitted into the *Earth Works* exhibition but for her careful selection of the works they would show – something that turned out to be a very strong strategic move. And even though most artists participating in the show were (at least at that moment in time) well-known for other works (like Robert Morris for his minimal sculpture), the *Earth Works* exhibition had nonetheless managed to show works of art that directly linked each artist to the others there, thus presenting them as a unity and – through the quantity – strengthening the impression that a new movement inside the art world had emerged by portraying them all as sharing the same goal: to change the very face of the earth.

That Dwan had succeeded in expressing this unitary goal in the show was proven by the titles of several reviews of the *Earth Works* show. Shortly after the show had opened *The New York Times* published a review that was titled: 'Moving Mother Earth' (on the 5th of October, 1968); while about a week later *Time* published another review with the headline:

[135] It is therefore, as explained in the introduction of this dissertation, that I have opted for 'Land Art', which is less bound to one continent and therefore conveys the international scope of these works.
[136] Smithsonian, 'Virginia Dwan - Oral History Interview, by Charles F. Stuckey,' (Washington DC, USA: Smithsonian Institution, Archives of American Art, March 21, 1984), 40-41.

'The Earth Movers' (on the 11th of October, 1968).[137] Hence, the *Earth Works* show seemed to have effectively communicated what for a long time would dominate as the most significant characteristic of the new art movement: the view that these were works of art that were concerned with the earth itself – with soil and dirt. This impression had already been strengthened by the sand-written invitation card that Dwan had sent out before the show and was underlined by the presence of works in the exhibition that were engaging with actual materials from nature – such as the works by Smithson, Morris and Oldenburg that were described in the review (fig. 16 and 17). As a telling photograph of Robert Morris shows, holding a shovel in his hand in front of his piece in the Dwan Gallery (fig. 18), the magazines widely propagated the view that, as the caption reads: 'the shovel [had now become] mightier than the brush'.[138]

The Lack of the Outdoors

Yet it is this emphasis that one needs to question, since most of the grand works of Land Art were either yet to be made (such as Smithson's *Spiral Jetty*, Heizer's *Double Negative*, etc), or were at that moment far away in the desert. In fact, in Dwan's actual *Earth Works* exhibition the emphasis lay on different media like photographs and drawings or paintings. Herbert Bayer, for example, showed his *Earth Mound* (of 1955, see fig. 19), a 'sculptured garden project obviously based on Japanese rock gardens' by means of one large blown-up photograph.[139] Dennis Oppenheim was present with some photographs of an untitled work that showed 'mountain contour lines' filled in with aluminium near New Haven, while there was also a model of another project of a reconstruction of the Cotopaxi Volcano in Ecuador,

[137] 'Moving Mother Earth,' *The New York Times* 1968; 'The Earth Movers,' *Time* 1968.
[138] 'David Bourdon Papers.' The caption mentioned accompanied a review in *Time* magazine, on the 11th of October 1968.
[139] Ibid. See also the review of Dwan's *Earth Works* by an unknown author in *The Columbia Owl*, October 30, 1968.

to be realised in the Smith Center, Kansas (figs. 20 and 21). Walter De Maria was present in the exhibition with a monochrome yellow painting (with a small, metal plate in the middle that states 'The Color Men Choose When They Attack the Earth', see fig. 22), which, according to Dwan referred to 'the color used by Cat[erpillar] tractors and so forth, that color [in which] all those earth-moving objects seem to be painted.'[140] Heizer only showed one very large blown-up photograph of his work *Gesture* in the Mojave Desert in California (fig. 23). The other works in the *Earth Works* exhibition consisted of drawings, sculptures, blueprints, texts and more photographs, while there was also a film (by Claes Oldenburg) and one photo light-box.[141]

The reason for this lack of what are generally considered to be 'real' Land artworks (those made in or with earth or sod) was explained by Dwan as merely due to the confines of the exhibition: the fact that there was no outside space available and that the artists working on actual Land artworks had not yet found the space in the land to execute them. As Dwan recalls:

> In the late spring of '68, when we still hadn't found land in New Jersey to put these earthworks on … we decided that there was so much energy behind the whole concept – there was so much of a need to get this, to move this out into the world, that we wanted to find some vehicle, and the only thing that seemed available was the gallery space, which was definitely our last choice. That was not what the original drive had been at all. Nevertheless, we decided while waiting to find some earth, to find some proper land to build things on, we would go ahead and do sort of an anthology show of what we were aware of as current earthworks at that point, or of projects which we intended to be earthwork projects. So in October of '68, we opened this wonderful show, which was so satisfying, even if it wasn't on the land. It was just a really dynamic show.[142]

Hence, Dwan believed that the gallery exhibition was contrary to the 'original drive' behind the initial Land Art projects. Most of the reviews of the show also noted the discrepancy

[140] 'Virginia Dwan - Oral History Interview, by Charles F. Stuckey,' 42.
[141] Kaiser and Kwon, *Ends of the Earth: Land Art to 1974*, 30.
[142] Smithsonian, 'Virginia Dwan - Oral History Interview, by Charles F. Stuckey,' 40-41.

between the propagated aim of the Land artists and the actual works shown in Dwan's gallery, for instance in the review quoted before in which the writer also remarks at the beginning: '[The work of these artists] may cover miles of land, as they dig trenches or build mounds that form geometric patterns of vast proportions. It is landscaping on a monumental scale. [Yet, t]here are only hints of such *gigantisme* to be found at the Dwan Gallery – or, at best, aerial photographs that show completed works at various sites around the country.'[143]

Although Dwan thus felt called upon to explain this discrepancy between the ideals of the Land artists (working outdoors) and the reality of the exhibition of *Earth Works* (works that were exhibited indoors and in many different media), the Land artists themselves did not perceive this as a problem at all. As will be shown in the next part of this chapter, the Land artists often talked about the exhibition space as something that they considered to be part of the dialectic of Land Art, instead of something opposite to it. Moreover, the artists working in Land Art – from the very beginning – conveyed no sentiment against using media like photographs, drawings, films and other so-called 'non-natural' materials. In fact, quite the opposite can be said: they all used these media frequently and with great skill, which was clearly reflected in the *Earth Works* exhibition. Also, contrary to Dwan's insistence that the exhibition of *Earth Works* only exhibited works inside of the gallery due to lack of land to build on, the artists working in Land Art kept on exhibiting works in different media inside a wide range of exhibition spaces also after the more monumental Land Art sculptures had been built. Hence, from the artists' point of view, the motivation to bring the outside inside by using gallery spaces and museums seems to have been a different one than a mere lack of space or ground to put new Land artworks on.

[143] 'David Bourdon Papers.' Review from an unknown source (dated by Bourdon).

Towards Earth-Scapes: De Maria's *Earth Room*

A good example of this is Walter De Maria's first *Earth Room* (or *The Land Show*, as it was originally titled) in Munich in 1968, of which not many photographs have survived that show its completed stage, except for one in which De Maria himself is dropping some of the dirt from his hand while standing in front of the gallery space (fig. 13).[144] The work was created by De Maria himself, who had ordered 1600 cubic feet of soil that he, after covering the gallery floor and lower walls with plastic, levelled evenly until it covered the entire gallery space (with the exception of the hallway) in a 60 centimetres thick layer (see figs. 24-27). There is also an exhibition poster (fig. 28) that pictures a plan of the Galerie Heiner Friedrich, showing the tripartite space of the gallery (with two smaller side rooms and one big central room). In each space, De Maria has written in red letters the word 'DIRT', except for the hallway in front of the gallery, where black letters explain that De Maria designated this space to function as a 'viewing area'. Underneath the plan, there is a sort of poem – apparently written by the artist himself:

> Pure Dirt . Pure Earth . Pure Land
>
> No object on it
> No object in it
>
> No marking on it
> No markings in it
>
> Nothing growing on it
> Nothing growing in it

These lines are followed by some details on the right-hand side of the poster: the name of the artist, followed by the words '50m2 (1600 cubic feet) level dirt' (which have often been taken to be the title of the artwork) and then the address of the gallery. All the way down, at the

[144] James Nisbet, 'Walter De Maria in Europe,' *Archives of American Art Journal* 52, no. 3/4 (Fall 2013): 51.

bottom of the poster, an intriguing photograph of Walter De Maria is pictured, where he is standing on an asphalt road in a flat landscape, one hand raised in a gesture that parallels the white stripe in the middle of the highway behind him.

For most visitors of the first *Earth Room*, the sight of the gallery filled with earth was not only shocking, but also fascinating: many people remarked on the strange beauty the artwork conveyed and the artist himself had remarked that the show 'was a tremendous success', with 'articles in *Der Spiegel* and *Die Zeit*, photos and enthusiastic attendance'.[145] The moist dirt (the artist insisted on keeping the earth moistened) conveyed an earthy scent, and the dark soil defamiliarized the three rooms of the gallery thoroughly. Many critics remarked that it was as if the artist had literally buried the gallery space under tons of earth. A confusion between inner and outer space seemed to take place and due to the tripartite gallery space the inside Land artwork had to be viewed as one looks at a landscape: in multiple views that lack one coherent overview.

Yet the difference with a work in the landscape is that the experience of the *Earth Room* did not allow one to walk in or around the artwork: the space in which the visitor could view the work was constrained to the hallway (or 'viewing area', as the poster explained), because of which one was forced to view the artwork as if from a distance, through the '3-doorway-viewing points'.[146] There was a shared feeling of being limited and even obstructed, physically, by the artwork, while at the same time visitors experienced what seemed to be a visually unlimited space – reinforced by the fact that one was not able to see the entirety of the artwork (some corners of the inside gallery space were invisible from the hallway). Another important aspect of the work was its relation to the architectural space. As De Maria commented: 'Since the gallery was on the 3rd floor – it was an added sensation – no

[145] Walter De Maria, letter to Sam Wagstaff, dated Oct. 24, 1968 (Munster, Germany). Smithsonian, 'The Samuel Wagstaff Papers (Folder on Walter De Maria),' (Washington DC: Smithsonian Institution, Archives of American Art).
[146] Ibid.

elevator.'[147] Moreover, the view of the gallery filled with fifty cubic metres of dirt, divided over three rooms, which reached about sixty centimetres high (just underneath the windowsill), was a sight that strongly contrasted with the detailed buildings outside of the gallery as seen through the windows. In that context, De Maria stated that 'the sun – through the windows – became very important'.[148]

This *Earth Room* in Munich was the first one of two, both made by De Maria himself, with the second one being installed when Heiner Friedrich expanded his gallery to New York's Soho, at 141 Wooster Street in 1977. The *Earth Room* was initially reinstalled for a three-month exhibition there, but after that time it was decided that the room would remain on permanent view, as it has been ever since (fig. 29-30). Yet there are quite some differences between the first and second *Earth Room.* As Laszlo Glozer points out, the 'first *Earth Room* was situated not in a designated gallery district, as was its later Soho version, but rather in the middle of the historic city center in a nineteenth-century apartment building on Munich's grandest boulevard.'[149] This location also played a part inside of the exhibition space (situated on the second floor of the building):

> Approaching the gallery on the second floor, visitors gazed from the corridor through the doorway at a homogenous, room-filling layer of dark soil, and above it, out the windows to Maximilianstraβe. The windows permitted a view of the façade on the other side of the street, a meticulous architectural construction coming into sight together with the amorphous volume of earth – a visual conflation of stark contrasts.[150]

[147] There seems to be some confusion if the exhibition in Munich was on the 2nd or 3rd floor. Walter De Maria, letter to Sam Wagstaff, dated Oct. 24, 1968 (Munster, Germany). Ibid.
[148] Ibid.
[149] Laszlo Glozer, 'Pure Dirt, Pure Earth, Pure Land: A European Perspective on the Beginnings of Land Art', in: Kaiser and Kwon, *Ends of the Earth: Land Art to 1974*, 173.
[150] Ibid.

This is quite a difference from the current location of the *Earth Room* in Soho New York, where the windows are less present in the exhibition space and offer quite a different view on the public space beyond.

This 'visual conflation of stark contrasts' can also be found in other elements of the *Earth Room*, which seems to embody all the different perspectives that the exhibition poster had already indicated. Inside the artwork, it was as if De Maria's gesture in the photograph on the poster, inviting our look to follow the white line on the road into the horizon, became materialised inside the *Earth Room* itself: it was as if one stepped on a threshold – as if one was entering another space by looking, sensing, and smelling the earth inside the gallery space, which directly transported the beholder (not only mentally, but also, through the senses, physically) into nature. Yet the earth sculpture is simultaneously contrasted to some sort of romantic notion of 'landscape', instead showing dirt as land, and the land as earth. It is clear that the transportation of earth into a gallery space was more than a conceptual (or anti-institutional) act here.

De Maria remarked about the artwork in a press release in 1968, where he said: 'The dirt (or earth) is there not only to be seen but to be thought about.'[151] Indeed, as De Maria insisted, one is forced to think about the earth inside of the gallery, since there is nothing else on view inside of the gallery space – both literally and figuratively – thus demanding that the gaze keeps on circling over the black earth that stands in such a strong contrast to the white gallery space. As De Maria had bought the soil from a local store, instead of using dug up earth from a specific location (a significant difference with, for example, Smithson's non-site works), the soil was indeed 'pure' dirt, earth or land, with no object or markings in or on it, nor anything growing in or on it – exactly as De Maria had written on the exhibition poster. It

[151] Press release for 'Walter De Maria: The Land Show' (1968) as cited in Thomas Kellein: 'Land Art – ein Vorbericht zur Deutung der Erde,' in: Siegfried Gohr, 'Europa, Amerika,' ed. Museum Ludwig (Cologne: Museum Ludwig, 1986), 384.

appears that De Maria was after something else than a simple landscape inside of a gallery space, which is reflected in his remark that the *Earth Room* can be seen as a 'minimal flat horizontal earth sculpture', as he called it himself in an oral interview four years later.[152]

This is a significant remark, which directly relates the *Earth Room* to Minimalism, and the shift from a private to a public meaning of art that became so important in the 1960s (and after), as indicated by Krauss.[153] In the case of the *Earth Room*, one could ask oneself if the spread-out tons of earth cannot be likened to something like Carl Andre's floor works.[154] At the same time, there are significant complexities that play into the *Earth Room* that would not play into these works by Andre. Because of all the references and physical actualities of nature outside the gallery space (and possibly even the city), different perspectives are constantly invited into the *Earth Room* from outside the sculpture, and even the exhibition space, itself: from the restrictive access to the work, limited to the hallway, to the view from the window and the sun shining in, bringing the black soil's irregular surface to life through an intricate play of light and shadows. This clearly shows a different concern of meaning than that of a Minimalist artwork: a meaning that not only resides *within* the artwork itself (and its relations to the room or exhibition space), but also in its surroundings (certain restrictions on viewing the work that the artist placed on the beholder), as well as the context and artistic framing through other media (the floor plans and photographs, for instance). Indeed, this path that the artwork opens up between the inside and outside of the work is also emphasised by De Maria's provision of the plan of the gallery as shown on the poster, providing the visitor a

[152] De Maria, 'Walter De Maria - Oral History Interview.' Transcript online.
[153] See the introduction.
[154] I think of, for example, Andre's *Steel Zinc Plain* of 1969. For a recent discussion of Andre's works, see Alistair Rider, *Carl Andre: Things in Their Elements* (London: Phaidon, 2011). Rider also makes an interesting comparison (simultaneously pointing out important differences) between Carl Andre's works and the art of Richard Long in his text 'The "Curve over the Crest of the Hill": Carl Andre and Richard Long', in: Clarrie Wallis, *Stones Clouds Miles: A Richard Long Reader* (London: Ridinghouse, 2017), 252-260.

bird-eye's perspective on the work that enables a jump into another perspective – out of the actual situation – like another window that opens the exhibition space up to the outside.

All of this is quite different from the sculptures of Minimalism. Moreover, the mass of earth of the *Earth Room* is not an 'object' that one can grasp or easily transport elsewhere: this work cannot be comprehended, cannot be appropriated by either the body or the gaze of the beholder. Instead, it is as if the beholder is pushed out of the work into the hallway area, because of which the earth in the room does not resemble the experience that one would have in the landscape, where one would be able to turn around 360 degrees: what is offered for view in the *Earth Room* is not a landscape, but more something like an 'earth-scape' – related to the view of the Earth, transformed into a sculptural sphere as seen from the moon, as pictured in the famous photographs that NASA took from 1966 onwards (which were broadcast on public television in 1968, the same year as the first *Earth Room*).[155] De Maria's *Earth Room* shows the same rugged and monotone soil resembling the Moon's dusty surface as seen on these photographs. Moreover, one could also state that *Earth Room* offers a view on the earth inside of the gallery space that resembles looking at a photograph, as the beholder is unable to change the perspective. Contrary to a two-dimensional photograph, however, *Earth Room* allows other dimensions to permeate its internal meaning: it is as if one gets literally alienated from the earth, as the soil and the gallery's viewing space are physically separated through the 'border' of the hallway.[156]

Evidently, the *Earth Room* was a work that invited a larger perspective than that which one normally associates with a sculpture inside a gallery space. By obliterating the gallery space, occupying it literally from wall to wall, De Maria did not only ask a question

[155] Dave Hickey also talks about 'earthscapes' but seems to mean something different than is proposed here. See: Hickey, 'Earthscapes, Landworks and Oz.'
[156] See for a discussion of Land Art and NASA's landing on the moon: Sleeman, 'Land Art and the Moon Landing.' Also cf. with mentions elsewhere, connecting some of the Land artists' works to this event, for example: Aldrich et al., *Artists on Walter De Maria*, 76.

about *that* space, but also about *other* space: the possibility to open up a space or artwork, and bring it into communication with a world that is larger than that which is in front of our eyes and extends itself beyond the given exhibition space. Yet this question was clearly not meant as a critique, but as a means to open up other possibilities and strategies: a question about materials, about potential space, about combining the internal and external worlds (both literally and conceptually) in sculpture and about the possibility of any artwork to function as a threshold towards something beyond. As De Maria wrote, shortly after the *Earth Room* exhibition, 'Contrary to some talk in New York now about museums being dead … I feel that perhaps they are at a point of near explosion … where some energy and change could bring about a great new vitality.'[157] Indeed, one could state that De Maria transformed the gallery space itself into a sculpture, because of which the entire space was turned into an environment in which the sensing of the beholder was expanded and intensified – vitalised – by the artwork, while also directing the beholder towards the outside of the actual space in which the artwork was placed.

De Maria's *Earth Room* thus seems to provide a transition in the way that artworks were viewed: instead of giving the public an artwork to look at, the public is invited to travel away from the artwork into other spaces – something that is symbolised by the windows, openings, and doors of the exhibition space.[158] De Maria himself writes, shortly after the *Earth Room* show and referring to the oncoming USA elections and their implications beyond mere politics:

> [W]e are in a tremendous period of change … The next month or months should be of great importance however – (for U.S.A.) … It's that way in art too – I know. N.Y. is

[157] Walter De Maria in a letter to Samuel Wagstaff, dated 4th of July, 1969 (Munster, Germany). Smithsonian, 'The Samuel Wagstaff Papers (Folder on Walter De Maria).'
[158] Georg Simmel, in his essay 'Bridge and Door', has an important theory about these 'threshold' spaces that could be of use to understand this point. See Georg Simmel and David (editor) Frisby, *Simmel on Culture: Selected Writings* (London: Sage Publications, 1997), 170-173.

> in the midst of a re-evaluation. – The land will be only one clue – the form of what we do will change.[159]

Indeed, it is this transformation of thinking and 'the form of what we do', which also includes art, that one finds reflected in the significant difference between a normal landscape and what De Maria created with his *Earth Room*: an earth-scape, i.e. a sculptural expanded form that positions itself as a dialectical threshold in between opposites – like the indoors and outdoors, internal or external space, culture and nature, and subject and object. Such an earth-scape emphasises both the actual location of perceiving (the position of the beholder of the artwork), as well as the distant view (either literally or metaphorically) of another place, which stands in strong contrast to the notion of a landscape as a historical idea that can be enjoyed or even grasped by the subject perceiving it. These characteristics of the 'earth-scape' can also be seen in many other early works of Land Art, for example the artworks that were shown during the second major exhibition of Land Art in the United States: *Earth Art* from 1968, which will be discussed next.

[159] Walter De Maria, letter to Sam Wagstaff, dated Oct. 24, 1968 (Munster, Germany). Smithsonian, 'The Samuel Wagstaff Papers (Folder on Walter De Maria).'

1.2 Inside Out: The Exhibition Space as Nerve Centre

> It's kind of dumb to go into a room sometimes and view something when the world is spinning around, and there's a lot of things happening, and they're looking at an object. I mean most of the art here is implying dialectic, implying a thing other than what takes place in front of your eyes, and I think you are going to reach an impasse if you attack this with a traditional aesthetic.
>
> Dennis Oppenheim, Series III: Audio Tapes 1968-1978, of the *Avalanche Magazine Papers* in the Museum of Modern Art Archives.[160]

Walter De Maria's *Earth Room* is one example of what Dennis Oppenheim describes here as an art that is intrinsically dialectic and which is, moreover, 'implying a thing other than what takes place in front of your eyes'. Indeed, it is this artistic strategy that started to become clearly pronounced during the first exhibitions of Land Art, in which the participating artists were showing their work in many different media, thereby opening up an extended notion of landscape – or rather, earth-scape – beyond the actual exhibition space. This also becomes evident in another institutional exhibition that helped in founding Land Art as a new movement: The *Earth Art* show, organised from the 11th of February until the 16th of March 1969 at the Museum of Art of Cornell University in Ithaca, NY. The exhibition *Earth Art* was guest-curated by Willoughby Sharp, an upcoming video-artist and young art historian, at the invitation of Tom Leavitt, who was the director of the Andrew Dickson White Museum of Art at Cornell University at the time.

During the symposium that was organised before the opening of the *Earth Art* exhibition at Cornell University in 1969, Sharp remarked that for this show, the intention was to use the museum 'as a nerve center to send out twelve artistic energies into the

[160] MoMA, 'Avalanche Magazine Papers,' folder III.3, 27.

environment…'.[161] As in Dwan's *Earth Works* exhibition, it is thus again suggested that the 'real' Land Art only happens outside, in the landscape or at least outside of the museum walls. Yet again, much of the artworks were in fact exhibited inside of the museum, with the idea of the museum as a 'nerve centre' not working according to the initial intentions as expressed by Sharp. This was directly related to the fact that this exhibition, like *Earth Works,* was strongly curated and even though the artists were – in theory – granted a lot of freedom in regard to their contribution to the show, the course of events during the actual exhibition seems to point to the strong sense of the artists being managed by the museum, starting with the rule that was given to each of the participating artists that they 'had to touch dirt' in order to participate in the show.[162]

***Earth Art*, 1969**

In contrast to the *Earth Works* show of Dwan, Sharp had invited a much more international group of artists: although Robert Smithson, Michael Heizer, Walter De Maria, Dennis Oppenheim, Carl Andre, Neil Jenny, and Robert Morris were there, other artists such as Richard Long, Jan Dibbets, Hans Haacke, Günther Uecker, and David Medalla also participated. Thus, with five out of twelve artists coming from outside of the United States, the group was much more diverse than Dwan's *Earth Works* show (although *Earth Art* resembled the *Earth Works* show in that no women artists were invited to participate).[163] The number of the artists participating had been established by the budget that was available for the art exhibition. As Sharp recalls: 'Financial considerations dictated that the number of

[161] Sharp during the symposium of *Earth Art,* 1969, transcripts (p. 11), in: Smithsonian, 'Robert Smithson and Nancy Holt Papers.'
[162] As mentioned by Pamela Seymour Smith Sharp, in an essay on Willoughby Sharp on the Cornell University website of the Johnson Museum of Art. Pamela Sharp refers to: Willoughby Sharp, *The Earth Art Interviews*, 2008. A film by Bil Thompson including interviews with Dennis Oppenheim and Willoughby Sharp (20 minutes, colour, sound).
[163] This is an important point, which receives some more consideration in Chapter III, in the section on Mary Kelly's *Earthwork Performed.* Cf. with Boettger, *Earthworks: Art and the Landscape of the Sixties*, 159.

participating artists should not exceed a dozen, because a unique feature of the exhibition was that the artists would be invited to Cornell to execute their works *in situ* from locally available rock, soil, etc.'[164]

The artists that were invited to exhibit their work were sent a floor plan of the museum space and the grounds of the museum in advance by mail, and they also received photographs that showed the surrounding museum grounds. Sharp explains that each artist had the choice to do his work indoors or outdoors, or both, and that an outdoor work did not necessarily need to be on the museum's grounds: the only requisite was that it would be within reasonable access of the Cornell community.[165] The artists then submitted a detailed plan for their proposed work, and all artists (except for Medalla, who was in India at that moment) had decided to come to Cornell in person to execute their work – some arriving a week before the opening (in the case of the European artists) and some a few days before.

Yet, despite the ostensible great amount of freedom thus granted to the participating artists, for the actual exhibition only four artists out of twelve decided to create their artworks outside of the museum walls: Dennis Oppenheim's *Beebe Lake Ice Cut* (fig. 31)*;* David Medalla's *Untitled* (figs. 32-33); Richard Long's *Untitled, 27 East Avenue, Ithaca, New York* (fig. 34-35); and Jan Dibbets's *A Trace in the Wood in the Form of an Angle of 30° Crossing the Path* (fig. 36-37). And even though these artists made works outside of the museum, they were also represented inside the museum, where most of them had exhibited a few photographs or an indoor work. The remaining five artists, including Smithson, all executed their work exclusively indoors. Hence, the tension between the indoors and the outdoors was played out again in the *Earth Art* exhibition, as it had been in the *Earth Works* show, with more or less the same dynamics: the curator of the show wanted to have outdoor works to put

[164] Sharp and Leavitt, 'Earth Art,' not paginated.
[165] Ibid., n.p.

Land Art on the map as a new art movement, while the artists themselves were participating in these ideas out of a very different interest. After all, one could ask the question why, if Dwan had been right by saying that her exhibition was staged indoors only because of a lack of space, the Land artists did not jump on this first opportunity – facilitated by Sharp – to start to create their works outdoors?

Manifesto for a New Art Movement

Part of the answer to this question has to do with certain tensions between the curator and the Land artists, related to the promotion of Land Art as a new movement in art, which was clearly one of the main objectives of both the *Earth Works* and the *Earth Art* show. Especially during the *Earth Art* exhibition, many of the artists seemed to have been discontent with being managed by the museum and curator, which is sensed in the concluding excerpts of the Symposium as published in the *Earth Art* catalogue that was produced after the exhibition.[166] This resulted, amongst others, in the fact that, contrary to the intentions of the *Earth Art* show, in the end only eight artists were included in the exhibition, because Michael Heizer and Carl Andre declined to participate (in the case of Heizer because of a conflict with Sharp, the nature of which is unknown).[167] Moreover, De Maria had proposed a work that Sharp had declined because it did not involve De Maria 'touching dirt',[168] after which De Maria made another work on the evening of the exhibition opening (a designated area of dirt with the words 'good fuck' written in the sand, fig. 39) that was deemed

[166] Ibid.
[167] Heizer's work, however, was still there during the exhibition opening, since he had dug a hole outside on the museum grounds, which he had left there after officially withdrawing his piece, so it remained part of the exhibition. See fig. 38. The work is featured in the 'Video Catalog of the Earth Art Exhibition A.D. White Museum, Cornell University, February 1969,' ed. Willoughby Sharp (filmed by Marilyn Rivchin) (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University, College of Architecture, Art, and Planning, 2007).
[168] According to Amanda Dalla Villa Adams, De Maria had proposed 'to exhibit a mattress and an audiotape of crickets in the room (presumably Cricket Music)'. See Amanda Dalla Villa Adams, "'Draw a Straight Line and Follow It (Repeat)": Walter De Maria's Cricket Music and Ocean Music, 1964–1968,' *Archives of American Art Journal* (2015).

inappropriate by the museum staff and was therefore cordoned off and dismantled the next day.[169] All these events seem to indicate that the artists felt that there was a significant amount of control and power exercised by the museum and curator, who – despite the appearance of freedom that the initial invitation to the exhibition had propagated – appeared to have the final say in the artists' works.[170] Indeed, at the symposium that was organized before the opening of the exhibition, this strong management of the show brought a lot of resistance from the side of the artists – especially because it came forth from an insistence on showing the diverse artists that participated in the show as all united in the aims of the new art movement called 'Earth Art'.[171]

This insistence on creating a new art movement seems mainly, although rather covertly, propagated by Sharp himself. In the exhibition catalogue of *Earth Art,* Sharp writes: 'Given the number of significant works with earth, critics have hailed an earth art movement. But most of the artists [in the exhibition that were] mentioned have sculptural concerns which transcend the use of any single material or group of materials. There is no earth art, there are just a number of earthworks, an important body of works categorized under a catchy heading.'[172] However, despite this initial recognition of diversity, stating that there is 'no earth art', Sharp then continues his essay with strengthening this impression of a new 'art movement' under a 'catchy heading' by giving a well-reasoned list of the characteristics of what he believes to be the common characteristics of the 'new sculpture'.[173] Moreover, in the second part of the essay, it seems that Sharp's hidden manifesto is suddenly brought into the

[169] De Maria also had a small dispute with Sharp about the work he wanted to make for the show. See: Kaiser and Kwon, *Ends of the Earth: Land Art to 1974*, 39.
[170] This might also explain why a lot of the artists made artworks in the area around Cornell that they considered to be independent of the museum exhibition.
[171] This was one of the main points that became apparent as a controversial theme during the symposium organised before the exhibition at Cornell. See the symposium transcripts in: Smithsonian, 'Robert Smithson and Nancy Holt Papers.'
[172] Although there were more works done by the artists as independent projects around the ground of Cornell, inspired by the climate and locality of Ithaca. See: Sharp and Leavitt, 'Earth Art,' 18.
[173] Ibid., 16.

open, when he goes to great lengths in order to point out what the 'common denominator' is of the new Earth Art sculptures, namely 'their focus on physical properties – density, opacity, rigidity – rather than … geometric properties.'[174] Or when he states that 'the new sculpture does not stand remote and aloof on a pedestal' but is rather 'laid down on the ground or cut beneath its surface', thus expressing the 'intimate relation which the work bears to its site'.[175] Moreover, at the end of the essay, it is clear that – contrary to his overt statement that there is 'no Earth Art' – the entire essay aims to differentiate the Land Art movement from the previous 'ism' (Minimalism) and constitute it as the new art movement.[176] This intention becomes evident when Sharp, further on in his essay, finally gives the 'new sculpture' the name of 'earth art', in accordance with the title of his exhibition.[177]

Hence, it seems that – like the Dwan exhibition – two rather conflicting forces came together in the *Earth Art* exhibition: the views of the curator (intertwined with the museum or gallery) and the views of the artists. In the view of the curator, the museum or gallery space is like a nerve-centre, in which it becomes explicit that the final decisions are made through the institution (as the central point of the exhibition), and not the artists. This is also true for Dwan's exhibition, although Dwan's relation to the Land artists was definitely very different from Sharp's, as she often gave the artists a great amount of real freedom (and funding) to execute their works of art. Yet despite all this providing an answer to the reluctance of the artists to collectively start making works in the outdoor grounds of Cornell University, it still has not provided much of an insight into the ways that the Land artists themselves were relating to the indoors and outdoors, which has to be the next question that this chapter will seek to provide a preliminary answer to. As will be shown further on, contrary to the curators,

[174] Ibid.
[175] Ibid.
[176] As Sharp argues on the page before. Ibid., 15.
[177] Ibid., 19. Sharp also repeatedly said during the interviews of *Avalanche* magazine with Oppenheim, Heizer and Smithson that he is interested 'Earth Art' as a new, international art movement. (See for more on this the next section of this chapter about *Avalanche*.)

the artists seem to have been much more interested in exploring ways in which the inside exhibition space and the outdoors works could become related – like a photo camera can be used to take both close-ups and overviews. A good example of this is Dennis Oppenheim's work *Gallery Transplant* of 1969.

A Manipulated Causal Web: Oppenheim's *Gallery Transplant #1*

One of the unofficial works that was done outdoors in conjunction (but not officially part of) the *Earth Art* exhibition was the first in Dennis Oppenheim's series of works called *Gallery Transplant*.[178] For this piece, *Gallery Transplant #1,* Oppenheim was designated a room in the gallery space (gallery no. 1 inside the Andrew Dickson White Museum of Art at Cornell), which, however, he left completely empty. Instead, outside in the museum grounds, he drew the contours of the actual gallery space by transplanting the dimensions of the indoor room upon the snow outside (fig. 40). The visible contours in the snow lasted for 24 hours, the longest one in a series of different durations of transplants.[179] Because Oppenheim had chosen a place inside a bird sanctuary, the gallery space that was outlined in the snow was subsequently visited by flocks of birds, which gave the piece a sense of a *happening* and an indeterminacy or contingency that seems closely related to the views of John Cage or Marcel Duchamp, or the views expressed by Potts and Krauss in the introduction to this dissertation.[180] This interest in indeterminacy is certainly true for Oppenheim's later performance works. As Thomas McEvilley puts it: 'Oppenheim would come to feel that the artist should create circumstances for an artwork to occur in – or set going the chain of causes

[178] Not an official part of the exhibition, since the official piece that Oppenheim had done for the *Earth Art* show was the *Beebe Lake Ice Cut* (see fig. 31), *Gallery Transplant #1* was done on Oppenheim's own initiative, after finishing his official work for the show.
[179] Another transplant is fig. 41, apparently a transplant of gallery number #6 of the Johnson Museum of Art in the same year, which, however, lasted for only 4 hours.
[180] William C. Lipke draws a link to John Cage in the *Earth Art* catalogue. See W.C. Lipke's essay 'Earth Systems' in: Sharp and Leavitt, 'Earth Art,' 30. On Potts and Smithson, see the introduction, 20-21.

which would produce it – but not the work itself, which remains hidden or unknown till it appears out of the manipulated causal web.'[181]

Yet this idea of a 'manipulated causal web' already becomes apparent in Oppenheim's sculptural interventions in the landscape at Cornell. In *Gallery Transplant #1,* Oppenheim does not only manipulate the natural space that he selected, by drawing the gallery contours in the snow, but also the inner gallery space of the museum, by 'manipulating' the 'causal web' between the outdoors and indoors and making it visible for the first time. That causal web showed itself through the dynamics of the piece during the *Earth Art* exhibition: while the gallery form in the snow outside got filled with birds, the room inside the museum filled itself with people. It was thus made clear that both the inside and outside forms are interdependent: they do not exist independently of each other. Indeed, the room inside the museum is taken as a form that is not bound to the walls of the museum: by transplanting the form to the outside birds' area, this inner form of the room is put into a dialogue with nature. Moreover, the outside form, while losing the enclosing space of the indoors, is set into dialogue with the gallery space indoors, as if a window has been opened in the actual gallery space of the museum.[182] This links directly to the epigraph to this section, citing Oppenheim who once said: 'It's kind of dumb to go into a room sometimes and view something when the world is spinning around, and there's a lot of things happening, and they're looking at an object. I mean most of the art here is implying dialectic, implying a thing other than what takes place in front of your eyes …'.

Indeed, in *Gallery Transplant #1,* this dialectic is directly made visible in both the aesthetic concept and the actual dynamics of the physical work: a connection between the two places – outdoors and inside – is created, while both places also show their integral dialectic

[181] Thomas McEvilley's essay, 'The Rightness of Wrongness: Modernism and Its Alter-Ego in the Work of Dennis Oppenheim' in: Alanna (editor) Heiss, *Dennis Oppenheim - Selected Works 1967-90: And the Mind Grew Fingers* (New York City: P.S.1 Institute for Contemporary Art, 1992), 20.
[182] Indeed, there are interesting similarities here between this work of Oppenheim and De Maria's *Earth Room*.

through the uncovering of their internal limits (the limits that come with each space or place). As Oppenheim himself said: 'The tendency was to take information from other areas, what I would call "information lines," lines that *meant* something.'[183] These 'information lines' expose a dialectic that redefines the exhibition space as something that is much more expansive than the actual location of one or more work(s) of art. In other words, the lines invite the observer of the piece to walk a path between the drawn space outside in the snow and the space inside of the museum, through which the museum's inside gallery space is opened up by an extension outside, while the outside piece gets its meaning though its relation to the inner museum space.

This co-dependence also shows that *Gallery Transplant #1* is not meant as a critique of the institution or museum: the transplant of the gallery is no 'rejection of the reality of the gallery', or 'a critique of the relation between the gallery and the outside world' (as McEvilley has argued), but rather shows that reality is not a static form but fluid, created each moment again, and is thus something that can be opened up or closed down.[184] In this case the reality of the gallery space is augmented by the space of the gallery transplant outside, showing the inside gallery as incorporating a domain that is greater than one single, enclosed space. As Oppenheim affirms: 'I think that the outdoor/indoor relationship in my work is subtle. I don't really carry a gallery disturbance concept around with me.'[185] It is precisely because of this lack of a superimposed institutional critique in the artwork, that certain subtleties between the outside *Gallery Transplant* and the inner exhibition space are able to become visible, through which this work seems exemplary for many of the other Land artworks.

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[183] Germano Celant, *Dennis Oppenheim: Explorations* (Milan: Charta, 2001), 348.
[184] See Thomas McEvilley's essay, 'The Rightness of Wrongness: Modernism and Its Alter-Ego in the Work of Dennis Oppenheim' in: Heiss, *Dennis Oppenheim - Selected Works 1967-90: And the Mind Grew Fingers*, 17.
[185] Dennis Oppenheim, 'Dennis Oppenheim', in: Kynaston McShine, *The Museum as Muse: Artists Reflect* (New York: Museum of Modern Art, 1999), 84.

Indeed, in many ways the outdoor *Gallery Transplant #1* shows a relation to the exhibition space that is characteristic for most Land artworks: like De Maria's *Earth Room*, it is as if a path is created, not only visually or conceptually, but also physically – connecting two (or more) places in a configuration that invites one to constantly displace one's own physical position, to become, so to say, 'decentred'.[186] In the case of Oppenheim's *Gallery Transplant #1*, this physical path is materialised by the beholder of the work, moving back and forth between the outdoors and indoors, creating both a temporal and a spatial relationship between the two 'galleries', which is intrinsically fluid in form – like the permeable nature of a membrane.

This complexity of the temporal and spatial implications of the *Gallery Transplant #1* dual nature is exemplified by the collage panel that Oppenheim created based on this work, on which he pasted a selection of six photographs of the work, as well as an aerial map that indicates the location of the artwork, and the floorplan of the Johnson Museum of Art (fig. 40). Besides the spatial jumps between perspectives from the aerial map to the museum's floor plan to the actual work of art (which strongly resembles the dynamics between De Maria's exhibition poster of *Earth Room* and the actual work *in situ*) that connote the zoom function of a photographic or film camera, there is also a strong sense of the temporal aspect of the work unfolding itself through the six photographs on the panel – an emphasis on the time-specificity that almost takes precedence over the place-specificity of the artwork.

In the six photographs that Oppenheim selected for this panel, which now remains the only evidence of the existence of *Gallery Transplant #1*, the first three photographs show Oppenheim with a shovel in different stages of constructing the gallery transplant, removing the snow in the form of the outline of the gallery. The last three photographs then show an

[186] Jean-Louis Bourgeois speaks about the path of the eye, i.e. a visual path, but I think it is significant to stress that it is also a physical path, in which the body, walking through the snow and making traces of its own, becomes part of the actual dialectics of the artwork. Cf. with Jean-Louis Bourgeois, 'Dennis Oppenheim: A Presence in the Countryside,' *Artforum*, no. October (1969): 36.

increasing number of birds, that appear to be migrating into the finished contour of the gallery transplant. This filmic sequence of events, starting with the human and his shovel and ending with the birds re-occupying their sanctuary, seems to refer directly to the indexical relation of the gallery transplant to the inside gallery space: something is taken, occupied for a moment, and then left to itself, to be transformed through time. A strong sense of the transient, which is such an significant part of this series of *Gallery Transplants*, appears: one can imagine how, when the snow starts to melt, or maybe when it snows again, the bird's sanctuary will still be there, while the artificial (human) form of the gallery transplant will have disappeared. Moreover, in the same way, one can imagine the actual gallery #1 inside of the museum, filled with people who have come to see the *Earth Art* show, becoming an empty space again after the end of the show.

In other words, Oppenheim's artistic skill in 'manipulating the web' can be likened to the zoom-function of the camera, constantly changing one's perspective. Through the creation of the photographs, map and floor plan on a panel as a separate, yet linked artwork, it is as if Oppenheim adds a third 'transplant' of the gallery space: this time through the use of two-dimensional media. Through the photographic panel, Oppenheim is able to preserve both the temporal and spatial elements in the actual work: there is the map and floor plan and the actual site, which imply a spatial 'zoom' (drawing close or distancing the view), but then there is also a temporal 'zoom' into the past and the future, through the six photographs of the work.[187] The ultimate impression that the beholder of Oppenheim's *Gallery Transplant #1* is left with, is a transplant that not only concerns the gallery space, but also the beholder self.

[187] This combination of physical and conceptual zooming-in and -out is what differentiates Oppenheim's sculptural work, like the *Gallery Transplants*, from his later more Conceptual works. Although, as Oppenheim himself states, his interest in 'following the processes of [how] a particular medi[um] move[s] in time and place' clearly remains the same. See Oppenheim in an interview with Patricia Norvell, 'Dennis Oppenheim, March 29, 1969', in: Patsy Norvell and Alexander Alberro, *Recording Conceptual Art: Early Interviews with Barry, Huebler, Kaltenbach, Lewitt, Morris, Oppenheim, Siegelaub, Smithson, and Weiner* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2001), 23.

The self is continuously transplanted, and thus questioned, by the artwork: with the decentring of the work, there is also a decentring of the subject that takes place. Indeed, as Germano Celant formulates it, Oppenheim's work can be seen as 'dispersion and displacement, it tends towards a loss of centre. It marks the loss of a certain answer …'[188]

Hence, as already indicated earlier on, it is clear that the artistic idea behind the *Gallery Transplant #1* goes far beyond an institutional critique. Oppenheim's work indicates the larger network of ideas that lie behind all the works made in Land Art. As Oppenheim shows in this specific work of *Gallery Transplant #1*, the Land artists were very interested in exploring ways in which art and life become connected in ways that directly transform the relationship between subject and object, beholder and art, individual and world. This was done by exploring new ways through which the inside exhibition space and the outdoors works could become related – like a photo camera can be used to take both close-ups and overviews – instead of trying to disconnect the artwork from the exhibition space in order to critique the latter. More evidence of this will be given in the next section of this chapter, where it will be shown that the artists working in Land Art conceived of the exhibition space as a much broader phenomenon than the space inside a museum or gallery.

[188] Germano Celant and Dennis Oppenheim, *Dennis Oppenheim* (Milan: Charta, 1997), 11-12.

1.3 At the Threshold: The Space of Printed Matter

> … [E]ventually you have some kind of responsibility to either transmit the ideas so that someone can understand and maybe go look at the work or transmit, you know, the look of the work in a photograph or a drawing. … It's got to come back to the city.
>
> Michael Heizer, Series III: Audio Tapes 1968-1978, of the *Avalanche Magazine Papers* in the Museum of Modern Art Archives.[189]

As has been shown, both De Maria's *Earth Room* and Oppenheim's *Gallery Transplant #1* make clear that the way that the Land artists were using the exhibition space is much more complex and nuanced than the general views expounded by critics or curators. Evidently, from these examples, the Land artists did not see the exhibition space as something that would become redundant (like Dwan suggested), while they definitely also did not agree with Sharp's idea that the indoor exhibition space functioned as the 'nerve centre' for the outside works (which they supposedly would have deemed to be too hierarchical a statement). Instead, they were trying to find a way in between the indoors and outdoors, city and landscape, opening up a path that would allow the beholder of the work to go back and forth. This reciprocal path often starts with a threshold experience inside the artwork itself: in the case of De Maria's *Earth Room,* that threshold was contained both in the restrictions of the physical hallway or 'viewing area', as well as the properties of the earth (especially the scent of moist earth) and the windows inside the exhibition space, all transporting the beholder's gaze and mind into an outdoors situation while viewing the work inside; while with Oppenheim's *Gallery Transplant #1,* this threshold seems to lie in the form/outline of the gallery space, both indoors and outdoors, opening up a path in between the museum and the outside grounds.

[189] MoMA, 'Avalanche Magazine Papers,' folder III.3, 53 and 48.

However, the Land artists were also exploring this experience of a threshold in other media than three-dimensional sculptural forms, and beyond the use of mere soil and dirt: they did not feel that the exhibition space was limited to a physical museum or gallery space. It is in this context that it is important to mention that the Land artists frequently explored magazines or printed matter as an exhibition space – like a 'museum without walls', but one in which artworks could find their primary place (thus transcending the status of being merely a reproduction of the original work of art).[190] Of special interest in this context are the publications of the Land artists in magazines such as *Artforum* (for the American artists) and *Interfunktionen* (for the European ones). In many of the photo-essays, illustrated texts and artists' statements published in these sources, it becomes clear that the Land artists were often making use of the media as yet another exhibition space to show their work.[191] Yet this aim has become convoluted by the many articles and interviews that were also published by the media about Land Art, in which quite a different goal gets attributed to the artists and the entire Land Art movement. It is at this juncture that this chapter started, namely with Hickey's statement how Land Art had been portrayed, by most media at the end of the 1960s and early 1970s, as an agrarian crusade against the art market and the entire museum system.[192]

As this chapter has shown earlier on and as Hickey also points out in his article 'Earthscapes, Landworks and Oz', this image of a new art movement that was working against the art market and the museum system – a view that was promoted by the magazines – does not seem to be consistent with the actual practices of the artists working in Land Art,

[190] André Malraux, Stuart Gilbert, and Francis Price, *Museum without Walls* (London: Secker & Warburg, 1967).
[191] Cf. with De Maria's photo-essay of *The Lightning Field*, for example, accompanied by the artist's text. (Walter De Maria, 'Some Facts, Notes, Data, Information, Statistics and Statements,' *Artforum* 1980.) Also see my MA thesis on this subject: Sajda Van der Leeuw, 'The Glass Plate's Reality: The Infinite Camera without Ego of Walter De Maria's the Lightning Field' (New York University, Institute of Fine Arts, 2014).
[192] See the quote at the beginning of this chapter.

since these artists were often exhibiting their works in indoor exhibition spaces (and continued to do so throughout their careers). The question therefore arises why this radical image was attributed to Land Art by the art magazines, going directly against the intentions of the artists themselves as often expressed in interviews and in their own use of printed matter as an exhibition space. Again, Hickey proposed a possible explanation to this question, when, further on in the same article, he underlines the importance of the shift caused by Land Art in the art world in the late 1960s as a possible motive for this misrepresentation.

As Hickey puts it, Land Art seemed to be 'an art form ideally suited to presentation via magazine', because it expanded its landscape not only through its remote sites, but also through the publication of its documentation – the photographs, films and written statements.[193] Indeed, the sense that this art 'needs an editor, not a dealer' was something absolutely new at the time.[194] Hickey therefore suggests that the magazines decided to reinforce the image of Land Art as a movement aimed *against* the museums and galleries, because this allowed the magazines to 'declare their independence from the art dealers who invented the critical press', by propagating that the artists working in Land Art were no longer in need of the galleries and museums.[195] Hence, according to Hickey, the media's new importance and independence from the art institutions was played out by – and through – the art magazines, in order to strengthen their newly won independence from the museums and galleries (and consequently their own importance), even further. If Hickey's suggestion is correct, it would mean that many of the prevailing myths surrounding Land Art, such as its supposed 'abolition of the object' as a form of institutional critique in reaction to the art world system, were in fact produced by the media themselves, instead of coming forth internally from the artists or artworks of Land Art.[196]

[193] Hickey, 'Earthscapes, Landworks and Oz.'
[194] Ibid.
[195] Ibid.
[196] Ibid.

Avalanche Magazine's Crusade

Hickey's view is, in fact, supported by at least one case: *Avalanche* magazine. *Avalanche* magazine's first issue was published in 1970 by Willoughby Sharp and Liza Béar, shortly after Sharp had organised and curated the *Earth Art* show in Ithaca, New York in 1969. Three of the artists that Sharp had invited to exhibit their work at the *Earth Art* exhibition were Robert Smithson, Michael Heizer and Dennis Oppenheim, and all three had also agreed to have Sharp interview them collectively. It was with these hitherto unpublished interviews, as well as several other interviews and articles on Land artists, that *Avalanche* magazine was founded.[197] As Sharp recalls:

> In a real sense, the first issue of *Avalanche* magazine [Fall 1970] was pretty much my "Earth Art" catalogue, particularly since it had a twenty-six-page interview with Smithson, Heizer and Oppenheim, an eight-page section devoted to the art of Richard Long, a four- or six-page section with my interview with Jan Dibbets … and a section on Robert Morris. The important point is that *Avalanche* started at the same time as the "Earth Art" show, and they were, in a lot of ways, inseparable. So, here's an instance where you could say, legitimately, that my curating of the "Earth Art" show enabled me to curate the first issue of *Avalanche* magazine.[198]

Indeed, Sharp uses the word 'curating' very intentionally here. As Sharp explains further on: '*Avalanche* was the exhibition itself', 'a better exhibition than the "Earth Art" exhibition'.[199] Moreover, the magazine was conceived not only as the exhibition site, but also as an artwork in itself. As Sharp explains: 'The word '*avalanche'* and what it signified to me was very appealing … I wanted this thing, this magazine, to represent a cultural breakthrough … something that an avalanche does. It reconfigures, breaks down the old structure.'[200]

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[197] The original interview tapes with Heizer, Oppenheim, Smithson, Dibbets and Long, which Sharp and Béar conducted in 1969 for the first issue of *Avalanche* magazine in 1970 (and right after the *Earth Art* exhibition) were never published and are only available for study in the Archives of the Museum of Modern Art in New York City. Their mention in this dissertation is – to my knowledge – the first time they are referenced.
[198] Kaiser and Kwon, *Ends of the Earth: Land Art to 1974*, 37.
[199] Ibid., 38.
[200] Gwen Allen, *Artists' Magazines: An Alternative Space for Art* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: MIT Press, 2011), 94.

Of course, it was no coincidence that the new name of the magazine referenced the force of nature and, therefore, Land Art. Indeed, the very nature of Land Art suggested to Sharp and Béar how *Avalanche* could transform the medium of an art magazine and meet the new conditions of contemporary art. Instead of the traditional role that art magazines used to perform, i.e. being either a platform for criticism or functioning as an archive, *Avalanche* was – contrary to that – created as an exhibition space in and of itself.[201] This becomes especially evident in the actual format of the magazine, in which photographs of artworks dominate the pages, sometimes leaving only a very limited space for the accompanying text (fig. 42). Moreover, on many occasions, the photographs take up the entire space of the magazine, like the page with works by Michael Heizer (fig. 43).

Through the use of these impressive photographs that are printed in large format, showing vast landscapes and unusual artworks in the outdoors, a strong statement about a new art movement is conveyed: a new form of art – clearly male dominated – in which the artists use their bare hands and bodies to move the earth (by their use of shovels and pick-axes), strengthening the image that the artists had left the traditional museum and gallery spaces behind in exchange for the wild, uninhabited nature of the American West (figs. 44-47). It is striking that in literally every picture in *Avalanche*'s first issue the artists are portrayed to work outside or are represented by large photographs of their work in the landscape (with the small exception of two photographs in the entire issue, which show an indoor space).[202] Hence, it is evident that the message here is the same as the one that Sharp conveyed in his essay for the *Earth Art* catalogue: 'The new works seem to proclaim the artists' rejection of painting and previous sculptural concerns; the production of artefacts; the commercial art world and its consumer ethos; the urban environment; and the long-standing

[201] Ibid.
[202] These two exceptions are a photograph of Jan Dibbets' work on page 36 and a photograph of Robert Smithson holding a mirror inside an exhibition space on page 55.

esthetic preoccupations with color, composition, illusion, and the internal relation of parts.'[203] In other words: Land Art is portrayed as extremely radical (and thus implicitly valuable), because it is 'against' everything that came before, but foremost against the commercial art world: the museum and art galleries.

Indeed, in the unpublished interviews from 1969-1970 that Sharp and Béar conducted for their first issue of *Avalanche,* Sharp shows himself as committed to exactly the cause that Hickey has pointed out as the objective of the magazines' crusade against the institutions, as transposed upon the newly claimed Land Art movement. In a quite lengthy discussion with the Land artists present, Sharp finally states explicitly what concerns him in this 'new movement' of Land Art:

> … I mean, one of the things that interests me about this whole involvement … if I'm a back to nature person, … is that it kicks the gallery structure in the ass … as a place of showing work. Now the gallery, [which] comes from the obviously 19th century French conception of going down to a gallery and seeing work, well you don't need a gallery to see work … The fact that galleries have taken on museum functions to exhibit, to catalogue and to propagate work is really something, to me that's very unnecessary. A gallery is there simply to sell work and they don't need either to exhibit it or catalogue it or document it, all they have to do is bring the person that has money and the person that has the thing that is to be bought together.[204]

This passage is only a short summary of a longer debate around the gallery and museum space, in which Sharp asks several times why the artists do not simply leave the gallery space behind them altogether and start to exclusively create their works in nature. Hence, it seems clear that Sharp's way of portraying Land Art within *Avalanche* – as a new art movement that is mainly concerned with the outdoors and was rejecting the indoors exhibition space – confirms Hickey's intuitions.

[203] Kaiser and Kwon, *Ends of the Earth: Land Art to 1974*, 16-17.
[204] MoMA, 'Avalanche Magazine Papers,' folder III.3, 54.

This also becomes apparent if one listens to the tape recordings of the unpublished interviews for *Avalanche* magazine's first issue, which reveal opinions and views of the Land artists that were not incorporated in the final published interview. Indeed, the fact that the Land artists often find themselves in a rather heated debate with Sharp – the latter expressing opinions about what Land Art should be or do, with which the Land artists themselves most often do not agree – might explain why these parts of the interviews have not made it into the final cut for the final published interview in *Avalanche* magazine's first issue (examples of this disagreement are quoted in the next chapter).[205] The fact that only a heavily curated, small amount of excerpts of the original *Avalanche* interviews have made it into the final published interview might explain why no-one has thus far noticed the significant discrepancy between the recorded and the published interviews – yet that discrepancy lies at the heart of this chapter (and part of the next). Indeed, the great differences between the view propagated by Sharp and the Land artists themselves, which becomes evident in juxtaposing the original interviews on tapes and transcripts that reside in the Museum of Modern Art archives in New York City to the final published interviews in the first issue of *Avalanche*, can be seen as having heavily influenced the entire conception of Land Art that followed, since the material in *Avalanche*'s first issue – and especially the interview there – is often used as one of the most significant sources regarding the origins of Land Art, quoted in many scholarly works on Land Art or exhibition catalogues about the Land artists themselves.

Although these unpublished interviews for *Avalanche*'s first issue thus seem to underwrite Hickey's explanation about the way that the media were portraying Land Art at the end of the 1960s, this does not explain why the Land artists themselves often chose to publish their photoworks or texts in magazines – something that suggests a specific artistic

[205] See 'Discussions with Heizer, Oppenheim, Smithson', in: Willoughby Sharp and Liza Béar, *Avalanche* (New York City: Avalanche, Fall 1970).

strategy that did not necessarily coincide with the objective of the magazines at that time. It therefore seems necessary to turn to the artists themselves in order to understand how they dealt with this issue and what their actual intentions could have been.

The Permeable Space

In the unpublished interviews of *Avalanche* magazine, it becomes clear how the artists working in Land Art differentiated themselves from Sharp's views. During the discussion that follows Sharp's statement about the galleries (as quoted above), there is no room for doubt about the artists' stance towards Sharp's view on the relation of Land Art to the exhibition space: Oppenheim, Smithson, and Heizer all passionately reply that they do not agree with Sharp on this issue. They all affirm that they do not believe there is any value in leaving the exhibition space all together and they even say to Sharp that they consider it as a dangerous form of utopian idealism to think something like an 'abolition' of the gallery and museum is even possible.[206] Heizer, for example, states that: '… eventually you have some kind of responsibility to either transmit the ideas so that someone can understand and maybe go look at the work or transmit, you know, the look of the work in a photograph or a drawing. … It's got to come back to the city.'[207]

Moreover, the artists also express the belief that the limits that are set up by a museum or gallery space are not something that one can simply escape, or indeed, needs to escape. In another passage, Sharp asks Heizer:

> [Sharp:] … do you think that's the case Mike, … do you think, do you agree with … that you're not more freer [*sic.*] outdoors than you are indoors?'
> [Heizer:] 'Well, as far as limitations you have just as many limitations if not more, because you're in a fresher situation. I mean not even in a fresher situation, you have this, I mean, you have to have them.'
> [Sharp:] 'You have to have limitations?'

[206] MoMA, 'Avalanche Magazine Papers,' folder III.3, 54.
[207] Ibid., folder III.3, 53 and 48.

> [Heizer:] 'Yeah.'
> [And a bit further on Heizer continues:]
> [Heizer:] '… I'm agreeing [with Robert Smithson] that it doesn't matter what's around, it matters that the limitations are ones imposed by the artists.[208]

Indeed, the same goes for Smithson, who emphasises in another reply to Sharp, in that same interview, that leaving the gallery behind does not necessarily entail a difference regarding the limitations of the exhibition space:

> [Y]ou're setting up new limits that don't necessary negate a room or negate an organized exterior space. … No, I think the idea is that everything is basically intact, after all this revolution hoopdala [*sic*.] and tearing down the walls of the galleries and everything, you're going to find that it is all intact.'
> [Sharp:] 'What's intact, the galleries?'
> [Smithson:] 'The room, a room or a circumscribed space. … I cannot see this hostility to museums, because a museum in a sense is a Big Ben that contains fragments that have been collected and I think a very definite human activity is to go out and collect and inspect, and travel, and find these things and to deprive people of this is just simple anti-art …'[209]

The picture that one gets from these unpublished interviews of 1969-1970 (which are, to my knowledge, for the first time discussed in this dissertation) is not that of a bunch of artistic rebels who want to make artworks outdoors in order to free themselves from the institutions, but rather that of a group of well-reasoned, intelligent artists who show that they are historically aware and who define their own possibilities and positions according to their own historical situatedness. It therefore becomes clear that it is much more the idea of the gallery or indoor exhibition space as *part* of the landscape that, in the end, corresponds best to the entirety of the body of works that the Land artists produced.

This is definitely the case in another passage of the unpublished *Avalanche* interviews, which seems to reflect the importance that the Land artists put on the interrelation of the exhibition space and the work of art (and, although formulated here by Smithson, this

[208] Ibid., Folder III.3, 41.
[209] Ibid., folder III.3, 54.

view corresponds to the opinions expressed throughout the unpublished interviews by all of the Land artists):

> [Smithson:] 'Well, I see … the galleries that I know … as units in stratus [*sic*.], they are lodged in a building and there are certain zones and certain locations and you can travel to them. Certain path [*sic*.]. … [T]hey're boxes at the end of a road, they're a configuration. … I see galleries as part of a landscape.[210]

It seems to be this idea of a configuration of different locations – either physical locations or conceptual and visual locations – which connects all the works of Land Art directly to the exhibition space.[211] It is precisely through this relation, where the exhibition space is not simply used but also reflected on, while at the same time expanded into the outdoors (either physically or conceptually), that the complexity of Land Art's sculptures shows itself. Indeed, it now becomes visual what is meant by 'complex sculptures': like travelling between 'boxes at the end of a road' (Smithson), a configuration of many different but related elements is explored in each sculpture, while also reflecting on the dialectical relations that exist between the sculpture and its constellation of different, non-sculptural elements.

Hence, these complex sculptures do not subscribe to any method, nor to any dogmatic ideas about either the artwork or the exhibition space, which ensures that each sculpture is unique and full of critical potential and power. As was shown through the works of Oppenheim and De Maria, there is always this sense of a threshold that is hidden within their artistic idea, which they express in works of art that seem to go beyond the traditional grounds of sculpture. It is through the process in which this threshold is made visible and explored, that an expanded field gets opened up, connecting the different zones and locations between which the beholder of the artwork can travel – sometimes physically, sometimes visually, and sometimes only mentally. As such, it is shown that another objective and

[210] See the Audio Tapes (1968-1978) in Series III. Ibid., folder III.3, 45.
[211] This links to Smithson's concept of Site and Non-Site, as discussed in Chapter III.

aesthetic idea played a great part in Land Art: the interest in a decentred subject, which directly relates to the importance of bringing art and life together (without conflating them) by opening up new landscapes and a new perspective – or vision – on our relation to these landscapes.[212] The move towards outdoor spaces can therefore be explained by the interest of these artists in opening up new possibilities *within* the exhibition space. In doing so, they not only found new possibilities for the expansion of the limits of matter, but also emphasised their search for new ways of looking at and thinking about the Earth and our place on it.

On several occasions in this chapter, this dialectical movement between the outside and the inside, the gallery and the landscape, and the subject and the object has been likened to the operative zoom of a photographic camera. This connects to the search for a path in between a number of places created by the Land artists, not only three-dimensional sculptures or interventions in the landscape, but also other media used for and in their complex sculptures, such as photography and/or film. Indeed, there are many occasions in the unpublished *Avalanche* interviews where the artists remark on their individual use of lens-based media in conjunction with their three-dimensional works or paintings and drawings, as consistent with their overall exploration of landscapes – real and mental landscapes, as well as the landscapes of the media. This will be shown in the next chapter, which explores Land Art's relation to photography.

[212] On the notion of different eras having different kinds of perspective, see Panofsky's seminal book: Erwin Panofsky and Christopher S. Wood, *Perspective as a Symbolic Form* (New York: Zone Books, 2012).

1.4 First Preliminary Conclusion

This first chapter focused on the exhibition spaces of Land Art, in order to support the arguments in the next chapters that Land Art is less focused on 'earth and sod' as is commonly assumed, and to question the sources on which this assumption is based. Furthermore, through the examination of the early exhibitions *Earth Works* and *Earth Art*, Land Art's often presumed disconnection from the art world system was contested, as well as the commonly expressed belief that Land Art's 'return to nature' is fundamentally based on an institutional critique. Through the use of previously unpublished, primary archival materials, especially interviews with the artists themselves and the way they were represented in certain magazines (most importantly, as discussed here, in *Avalanche* magazine), this chapter shows that the Land artists were, in fact, very much engaged with galleries and museums, and often held strong opinions that their Land artworks were not so much meant as an institutional critique. Indeed, it has been shown that they were more interested in a rethinking of art and the position it holds in the world altogether, and ways to connect private spaces with public.

This chapter has made it evident that the artists working in Land Art considered the relation between their outdoor works and the inside exhibition space of paramount importance. Moreover, the chapter also shows that they often used lens-based media, text-based media and other non-sculptural materials as a means to explore this relationship further – in direct opposition to much of the promotional views that the media during the late 1960s and early 1970s expounded. By examining two case studies, Walter De Maria's *Earth Room* and Dennis Oppenheim's *Gallery Transplant #1*, the specific quest of the artists working in Land Art has become clearer, through the broadening of our understanding of their search for a connection between the indoors and the outdoors. Thus, the basis for a first understanding of the *complex sculptures* of Land Art was laid. During our investigation of both works by De

Maria and Oppenheim, not only the actual space and place of the artwork was discussed, but also the different media that were used in conjunction to these sculptures, as well as the threshold experience in both works that allows the beholder to travel beyond the immediate artwork in front of their eyes – i.e. to other places (both real and imaginary) than the place-specific location of the work. This threshold experience was related to a decentring movement initiated by the artworks. It has also become clear that these early works of Land Art put a strong emphasis on time-specificity, putting that on the same level of importance as the site-specificity of the artworks, and opening up new and alternative areas of thought about Land Art as such.[213]

These main arguments that have become clearer in this chapter support the thesis of the next chapter, which will show that there was not a need for other media – especially lens-based media like photography – in order to simply document the Land artworks, but that these lens-based media were often an intrinsic part of the artistic ideas of the artists in Land Art. As this chapter has shown, the dialectical movement between the outside and the inside, the gallery and the landscape, and the subject and the object can be likened to the operative zoom of a photographic camera. This is directly related to the Land artists' search for a path between a configuration of elements – not only the three-dimensional sculpture *in situ,* but also to other media, thus shedding light on the ontology of these complex sculptures. It is therefore a logical step to now turn to the second chapter, which focuses on the use of photography in Land Art.

[213] However, the time-specificity of Land artworks has to be distinguished from the notion of time in modernity, where time was often conceptualised as a 'promise of progress'. On historical time, cf. with: McGill, Gardner, and Barikin, 'Historical Time in Contemporary Art: Longue Durée Revisited.'

Chapter II

An Infinite Camera: The Framing of Land Art through Photography

> It is possible that the fundamental shock that photography caused was to have provided a depiction which could be experienced more the way the visible world is experienced than had ever been possible previously. A photograph therefore shows its subject by means of showing what experience is like; in that sense it provides "an experience of experience," and it defines this as the significance of depiction.
>
> Jeff Wall, 'Marks of Indifference', 1995.[214]

> … A photograph is the twin of an event.
>
> Lawrence Alloway, 'Artists and Photographs', 1970.[215]

The abundant use of photography by the artists working in Land Art remains a topic that has often been set aside. As Tom Holert puts it: 'Photographic documentation remains an inevitable discursive element of Land art that permanently elicits controversy.'[216] Indeed, the inextricable relation between Land Art and documentary photography has often been left out of any discussion on Land Art – let alone the many photographs made *as* Land Art. During the last decade, some critics have dared to venture into this area of inquiry, but the amount of research on this topic has remained very limited.[217] This is why James Elkins noted in his

[214] Jeff Wall, 'Marks of Indifference: Aspects of Photography in, or as, Conceptual Art', originally published in: Ann Goldstein and Anne Rorimer, 'Reconsidering the Object of Art: 1965-1975,' ed. Los Angeles Museum of Contemporary Art (Los Angeles: MIT Press, 1995), 247-267. Jeff Wall's art might not be directly linked to Land Art, but his thinking about landscape in relation to photography is definitely of interest here. Cf. also with his work: Jeff Wall, *Landscape Manual* (Vancouver: Fine Arts Gallery, University of British Columbia, 1970).
[215] Lawrence Alloway, 'Artists and Photographs', 1970, as reprinted in: Douglas Fogle (editor), 'The Last Picture Show: Artists Using Photography 1960-1982,' ed. Walker Art Center (Minneapolis, Minnesota: Walker Art Center, 2004).
[216] Tom Holert in his essay 'Land Art's Multiple Sites' in: Kaiser and Kwon, *Ends of the Earth: Land Art to 1974*, 107.
[217] A few texts that take the role of photography in Land Art into account are: the important *Ends of the Earth* exhibition catalogue, ibid.; McFadden, 'Earthquakes, Photoworks, and Oz: Walter De Maria's Conceptual Art.'; McKee in: 'Land Art in Parallax: Media, Violence, Political Ecology', in: Kelly Baum, *Nobody's Property: Art, Land, Space, 2000-2010* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2010), 45-63.; and some sporadic sentences here and there in: Pamela M. Lee, *Chronophobia: On Time in the Art of the 1960s* (Cambridge MA: The MIT Press, 2004).; and Tufnell, *Land Art*.

book *Photography Theory* of 2013 that still '[m]ore work needs to be done on the involvement of earthwork artists with photography in the 1970s…' (And, one could add, in the 1960s as well.)[218]

It is important to note that this lack of an art historical reflection on the relation of photography to Land Art sculpture does not date back to the origins of Land Art itself. Although buried in history, in sources that are now mainly to be found in archives, the heavy use of photography in relation to Land Art was a significant recurring theme during the debates that took place in the late 1960s and early 1970s, discussed both by critics and by the artists themselves. Proof of this can be found, for example, in several interviews with Michael Heizer, Dennis Oppenheim, Robert Smithson, Jan Dibbets and Nancy Holt, which were conducted in 1969-1970 onwards by Liza Béar and Willoughby Sharp for their freshly launched *Avalanche* magazine. In these so far unpublished interviews (only available for study in the Archives of the Museum of Modern Art in New York City), part of which has been discussed in the previous chapter, photography featured as an important topic in all the conversations: on several occasions in these interviews, the artists reflected on the relation of photography to their sculptural practice of making Land Art. Moreover, they not only discussed photography as a 'documentary necessity', but indeed also as art, and how their on-site sculpture could be transformed, influenced and expanded through an artistic use of photography.[219] This up until now undisclosed archival material will, amongst others, be presented and discussed within this chapter.

Probably due to the fact that these original interviews are only available in the archives of the Museum of Modern Art, no one so far has noticed the significant discrepancy between the original interviews on tapes and transcripts in the MoMA archives and the final

[218] James Elkins (editor), *Photography Theory* (New York: Routledge Taylor & Francis, 2007), 425.
[219] See the *Avalanche Papers* in the Museum of Modern Art archives. Further discussed later in the present chapter.

published interview ‘Discussions with Heizer, Oppenheim, Smithson’ (1970), as was also noted in the previous chapter. With respect to the theme of photography, there is still much more to be said about this discrepancy, as it becomes clear that most responses by the artists on the theme of photography were not included in this ‘final cut’ of the (published) interview. The reason for this exclusion might also be found in the same archival materials.[220] As is evident from some of the tapes in the archives, Sharp himself, as the interviewer, held a personal interest in arguing against the use of photography in Land Art. This becomes especially evident when he exclaims on one of the tapes of the interview (fig. 48): ‘I find it evil and detrimental to the work to take a photograph of it …’.[221]

This radical statement seems to proceed from Sharp’s interest in Land Art as an art movement against the exhibition space and first and foremost as engaged with soil (as discussed in the previous chapter). This might explain why the final published interview with Heizer, Smithson and Oppenheim in *Avalanche’*s first issue only included two short questions on their use of photography, answered with statements where any positive sentiment towards photography, as expressed by the individual artists in the original interview materials in the archives, had been edited out.[222] Indeed, besides the continual and often exclusive focus in the media at the time (and still ongoing) on Land Art’s presumed resistance against reproductive media and art institutions, as well as the tendency to see the movement as a new form of Romanticism that went ‘back to nature’ (even though the artists themselves have opposed these two presumptions, as the previous chapter shows), it seems that the kind of prejudices that Sharp expressed have strongly influenced the reception of photography (and the use of other reproductive media) in Land Art.[223]

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[220] See: MoMA, 'Avalanche Magazine Papers,' especially folder III.3.
[221] Ibid., folder III.3, 55.
[222] See ‘Discussions with Heizer, Oppenheim, Smithson’, *Avalanche*, I, Fall 1970, as reprinted in: *Robert Smithson: The Collected Writings*, 243 and 251.
[223] See for example: Sidney Tillim, 'Earthworks and the New Picturesque,' *Artforum* 7, no. 3 (December 1968). Also cf. with: Gilles A. Tiberghien, *Land Art* (London: Art Data, 1995).

Of course, this is not to deny that some artists did indeed sometimes use photography simply to document their work. Yet even these documentary works often turn out to be much more complex than one initially would expect. Look for example at Richard Long's (1945-) extensive practice of photographing his (often temporary) works, which, according to Lawrence Alloway, presupposes 'a photographic step in the work process'.[224] It only takes a more attentive viewer to notice that many of Long's photographs are very carefully framed, for instance, his famous photograph *A Line made by Walking*, from 1967 (fig. 10). This photograph immediately shows that it is not randomly taken: the straight line is photographed head-on from its beginning, following it into the background of trees or perhaps even a forest in which the end of the line seems to disappear. This strategy strongly emphasises the workings of linear perspective: the original length of the line is extended through the photographic single-point perspective, thus adding a greater depth to the scene.

Moreover, Long probably knelt on the ground to take the picture, since the foreground shows that the camera's perspective is much lower than an average sized, standing person. This low-angle perspective brings the grass clearly into focus and also helps to catch the light on the parts of the grass that have been trampled over, bringing an even stronger emphasis on the line in the middle of that grassy lawn. If one compares this photograph with another photograph taken of this same work by Long from a different position – a photograph that has never previously been published and resides forgotten in the Archives of American Art – the impact that such compositional decisions have on the final result become visible (fig. 49). In this second photograph the line in the grass does not stand out as much as in the first (published) photograph, due to the angle from which the photograph was taken. In 1988, Long himself remarked about the learning process of photographing his works: 'Usually, after I have made the work, I kind of walk around it and somehow find the best place to take

[224] Fogle (editor), 'The Last Picture Show: Artists Using Photography 1960-1982,' 20.

the photograph. A line usually has the characteristic of pointing out of or beyond itself, maybe to the horizon, so often the alignment of the viewer, the line, and something a long way off is important.'[225] Long's artistic idea behind photographing a straight line in the grass thus has been greatly enhanced through his strategic use of the photographic camera, i.e. linear perspective, framing, and cropping.[226]

Hence, even with photographs that are intended to be 'merely' documentary, it is evident that there is much more meaning residing in such images than in a mere document. In other words, photography is always already more than a 'certificate of presence', something that, as Roland Barthes famously stated, 'has been'.[227] The photograph conveys an experience, or, as Alloway once formulated it: 'A photograph is the twin of an event.'[228] That is to say, the photograph brings a moment or event into another – simultaneously conceived – focus, thus generating a new experience with arguably equal significance to the event it is a depiction of: many times, the photograph shows us a view that is not normally seen without the camera. This realisation is especially significant in relation to sculpture and it might be one of the reasons why many earlier sculptors also used photography as part of their creative process – like Brancusi, for example, who would photograph his own sculpture as if to expand its visibility (both the visibility of the artwork, and the expansion of the number of viewers of the artwork) through a multitude of perspectives (for example, as shown in his photographs of *Mademoiselle Pogany,* 1920-21, figs. 50 and 51).[229] Evidently, the relation of

[225] See the transcribed broadcast 'Third Ear', BBC Radio 3, Friday 28 October, 1988, in: Wallis, *Stones Clouds Miles: A Richard Long Reader*, 131.
[226] Elsewhere, Long also remarks on the direct link between photography and his frequent use of maps: 'For me, a map is a potent alternative to a photograph, it has a different function. It can show the idea of a whole work, not a moment.' See Long's short text 'Notes on Maps' in: ibid., 300. This is also important in relation to the discussion of Long's film *Walking a Straight 10 Mile Line Forward and Back Shooting Every Half Mile* in Chapter IV, in which he superimposes a drawn map on the film footage.
[227] Roland Barthes, *Camera Lucida: Reflections on Photography* (New York: Hill and Wang, 1981), 87 and 85.
[228] See the same quote (with footnote) at the beginning of this chapter.
[229] See for a discussion of Brancusi's use of photography Paul Paret essay: 'Sculpture and its Negative: The Photographs of Constantin Brancusi', in: Johnson (editor), *Sculpture and Photography: Envisioning the Third Dimension*, 101-115.

photography to sculpture is not only one of documentation, but also one of interpretation and creation.[230] After all, photographs do not simply represent, but also shape our impression of the very thing that they depict (by making certain details, for example, more visible to the eye) as well as our experience of it.[231] In other words, there is an alternative life of the sculptural object that can be imagined by the photograph.

The frame plays a crucial role in this re-imagining of the sculptural object. Any artist who works with sculpture will acknowledge both the freedom and difficulty of working without a concrete frame. Whereas a painter's beholder can easily be identified as the person standing *in front of* the framed painting, the sculptor has to acknowledge the entire body of the beholder and his or her ability to move around the sculptural object in space. Hence, the viewer of a sculpture is not only seeing the sculpture through the eyes, but also, one could say, experiencing that sculpture through the entire body, which extends the place of the actual sculpture into the surrounding space. It therefore could be that 'viewing' a sculpture may be the wrong word to use in this context: it might be better to use the more general term of 'perceiving', from the Latin *percipere* – to seize or to understand through all the senses, which links to the theory of *embodied perception* in phenomenology.[232] It is this form of perceiving a sculpture that the Land artists were also interested in – a 'new expanded notion of viewing' – and for which their photographic practice became an essential tool that they

[230] Vilém Flusser's 'Towards a Philosophy of Photography' explores this paradox between the technical 'apparatus' of the camera and its resulting freedom further. Vilém Flusser, *Towards a Philosophy of Photography* (London: Reaktion Books, 2018).
[231] Cf. with Geraldine Johnson's essay 'Sculpture, Photography, and the Politics of Public Space: Serra's Titled Arc and Lin's Vietnam Veterans Memorial', in: Johnson (editor), *Sculpture and Photography: Envisioning the Third Dimension*, 213-233.
[232] See for example: Maurice Merleau-Ponty and Claude Lefort, *The Visible and the Invisible: Followed by Working Notes* (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1997). 'Embodied perception' is important throughout the discussion of the complex sculptures of Land Art in this dissertation. However, as explained in the introduction, phenomenology is only one of the several different theoretical approaches often linked to Land Art discussed in this thesis.

used to visualise the experience of beholding the sculpture in full (including the imagined life of the sculpture that only a photograph can show).[233]

It has been argued that it was their understanding of the phenomenological experience of a sculptural object that led the artists of Minimalism to include the physical space in which their sculptures were placed (like the gallery) as an element of the work of art itself.[234] It is this phenomenological expansion of the 'viewing' of a sculptural object to *perceiving* it that can be seen as leading for what has now become known as Land Art. This was, amongst others, due to the choice of the artists working in Land Art to place many of their works in the landscape, which meant an almost complete annihilation of the fixed frame, i.e. the frame that had accompanied traditional artworks from paintings to sculptures (in the latter case the frame can be seen as the context of the sculptural work in the gallery, or its designated place on a pedestal). Due to their place within the landscape of the *in situ* Land Art sculptures, the artists working in Land Art were led to the inevitable acceptance of a great deal of contingency and uncertainty: the movement of the sun, which led to continuously changing perceptions; the weather and its consequences on the surface of the works; and animals, plants and other natural elements that moved around or grew to be a part of their works.[235]

Moreover, the vastness of the landscapes in which Land Art is often placed – a vastness in which every gaze inevitably gets lost – seems to work more like an anti-frame than a frame. These were conditions that had only been part of art in ancient cultures (in art of the Egyptians, the Mayans, etc.) – or, indeed, of the art of East Asian cultures.[236] Yet although different non-western and non-contemporary cultures definitely had a significant

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[233] As quoted before: Potts, *The Sculptural Imagination: Figurative, Modernist, Minimalist*, 3.
[234] See the quote of Krauss in the introduction. Cf. with a selection of primary texts of Minimalism as reprinted in: Gregory Battcock, *Minimal Art: A Critical Anthology* (New York: E.P. Dutton, 1968).
[235] This contingency and uncertainty, as part of the Land Art sculptures, is also the main characteristic in photography, where the 'unseen' is made visible in an instant. (Think for example, of Roland Barthes' concept of the *punctum* - Barthes, *Camera Lucida: Reflections on Photography*.) The theme of contingency also adds another contrast between Land Art and Minimalist sculptures.
[236] Like Rosalind Krauss points out, these conditions are also part of the 'complex', for example in Japanese landscape gardens. See the introduction's opening quote.

influence on Land Art, the Land artists were also very aware of their own historical time and its particular circumstances and possibilities. And one of those possibilities happened to be an easy access to reproductive media, which provided the Land artists with a possible frame that adapted itself around their artistic ideas towards a decentred world – as will be shown throughout this chapter.[237]

That being said, there seem to have been at least three reasons why Land artists turned towards photography. The first is, simply, to document their work, both for themselves and for their dealers. The second has to do with the distribution and dissemination of their artworks beyond the physical borders of a particular site, by getting photographs of their sculptures *in situ* printed in art magazines and catalogues, thus attempting – amongst other things – to influence the reception of their work. But besides these more pragmatic reasons, there was also a third reason that will be the main focus of the current chapter, namely, that the photographs of Land Art often become force-fields of experience in themselves, directly related to the aesthetic ideas that underlie Land Art as such. This is mostly due to the photographic view and the possibilities of the camera's zoom, which will be shown to be an indispensable element of the Land Art sculptures *in situ.* Consequently, this chapter considers the photographs of Land Art as artworks in themselves, while also contextualising these photographs by relating them directly to the sculptural works *in situ*. This leads to a discussion that necessarily encompasses a very complex network of ideas, experiences and impressions, which is continuously pervaded by a strong sense of dialectics, connecting opposites that seem to be irreconcilable. In what follows, this complex relation of photography to Land Art will be explored and visualised by means of four case studies: the photographs of Michael Heizer, Jan Dibbets, Nancy Holt, and Robert Smithson.

[237] Both the artists themselves and art critics have referenced ancient cultures and ancient earthworks, linking them directly to Land Art. See for example: David Bourdon, *Designing the Earth: The Human Impulse to Shape Nature* (New York: Harry N. Abrams, 1995).

2.1 Michael Heizer: The Shape of Vision

> We're living in a world that's technological and primordial simultaneously. I guess the idea is to make art that reflects this premise.
>
> Michael Heizer, 'Interview', 2015.[238]

It may be unexpected to start this chapter with the photographs of Michael Heizer (born 1944) instead of the better-known photographer Robert Smithson. However, alongside the fact that Smithson's work (including his photographic work) has received significantly more attention from scholars than any of the other Land artists, I also want to begin with Heizer in order to emphasise that he is a photographer of the same stature as Smithson from early on in his artistic career.[239] Already in his youth, Heizer was 'his father's camera boy on expeditions and digs' (his father was a well-known archaeologist, travelling the world for his work), thus learning how to use the camera to take documentary photographs, while also 'breaking through the barrier of the amateur's snapshot and [learning how to] command the machine's clarity and precision.'[240] Heizer's early familiarity and abilities with the photographic camera informed his entire career as an artist and even, one could say, helped him in establishing that career. In an unpublished oral history interview in the Archives of American Art, Virginia Dwan recalled her first encounter with Heizer, in 1968, as follows:

> Michael Heizer showed up [in the Dwan Gallery in New York] with a catalog of photographs of his work. … My experience of it was that he just showed up with these astonishing photographs. … This very young man, he wasn't yet twenty-five at that point, came into the gallery with photographs of works that he had already

[238] Michael Heizer and Friedrich Heiner, 'Michael Heizer,' *Interview* magazine.
[239] On Robert Smithson's use of photography, see: Robert A. Sobieszek, *Robert Smithson: Photo Works* (Los Angeles: Los Angeles County Museum of Art, 1993).; Guglielmo Bargellesi-Severi (editor), *Robert Smithson: Slideworks* (Milan: Carlo Frua, 1997). And, last but not least, Ann Reynolds, *Robert Smithson: Learning from New Jersey and Elsewhere* (Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press, 2003).
[240] Samuel Wagstaff, ' Michael Heizer's use of Photography', in: Julia Brown, *Michael Heizer: Sculpture in Reverse* (Los Angeles: The Museum of Contemporary Art, 1984), 72.

> accomplished out on the land when we [Smithson, De Maria, and Dwan] were scurrying about trying to find some land to put some work on.[241]

It was because of these photographs (and Walter De Maria's recommendation) that Heizer was accepted into Dwan's gallery. These early photographs by Heizer initially served simply to document his work, in order to keep some kind of visual record of the things he had done. As Heizer himself commented in 1984 in an interview about his early photographic works: 'At one time I took the photographs only to keep a record.'[242] However, Heizer's use of the medium quickly turned into something more.

In 1969, Heizer travelled to Germany to execute his *Munich Depression* (or *Vague Depression*, as it was first called), which was a commission by Heiner Friedrich, who later co-founded the Dia Art Foundation. This temporary artwork referenced Heizer's earlier 'depressions' in Nevada, yet transformed this category of his oeuvre on a monumental scale: *Munich Depression* consisted of an excavation in the ground, about 100 feet in diameter and 16 feet deep, at a construction site on the outskirts of Munich, with permission from the architect (who owned the land) and the city council of Munich (fig. 52). It was considered part of Friedrich's gallery, yet inside the actual gallery, a visitor would only encounter a small table with a notice on it. As Friedrich recalls in a recent interview in 2016: 'People would come in [the gallery], go to the table to pick up the information, and then leave to see the work of art.'[243] When people got to the actual site of the sculpture, their response to the work was overwhelmingly positive. In Friedrich's words: 'The response [to the on-site work] was exactly the same as happens today when a person witnesses a work of art revealing its presence. It's ecstatic. It was intensely visited, but sadly, it was only there for about a

[241] Smithsonian, 'Virginia Dwan - Oral History Interview, by Charles F. Stuckey,' tape #8 and #9. Note: all transcriptions are by the author, unless stated otherwise.
[242] Heizer cited in an interview with Julia Brown, in: Brown, *Michael Heizer: Sculpture in Reverse*, 43.
[243] Heizer and Heiner, 'Michael Heizer', 3.

month.'[244] *Munich Depression* had to be removed after only one month, because new buildings were about to be constructed at the site.

A New Dimension: As Seen Through A Fish-Eye Lens

It was during that time that Heizer decided to photograph the work, including nine photographs taken from the centre of the crater inside the *Munich Depression,* which he took while rotating on his own axis (see figs. 53-61).[245] The photographs were all taken with a Nikon camera and shot on black and white film, clearly showing the earth and the tractor's imprint in the sand. After the *Munich Depression* was removed, Heizer proceeded to work with these nine photographs, which resulted in several independent photographic artworks, of which *Munich Rotary Interior* (1969) was the first. The *Munich Rotary Interior* is an enormous work of 8.7 metres wide by 1.8 metres high, formed by nine gelatine silver-print photographs that are all mounted on boards that are individually cut and shaped. Most are like trapezoids, so that, when assembled, they are aligned in order to create a continuing horizon: causing a slightly upward rounding curve throughout the work due to the different viewpoint of each individual photograph (fig. 62 and 63).[246] The size of this photographic work, as well as the peculiar shape that is determined by the horizon within the photographs, creates the sense that the photographic work is a sculpture in itself – although a sculpture placed on the wall instead of on the ground. Indeed, the constellation of photographs of the *Munich Rotary Interior* together seem to visually explore the experience of standing within the *Munich Depression* itself.

[244] Ibid., 3.
[245] Heizer himself is slightly vague about the total number of photographs taken of *Munich Depression*. He sometimes refers to only nine photographs, now known as the *Munich Rotary Interior,* while there also exist other photographs, for example of Heiner and Heizer physically present in the *Munich Depression*. The latter photograph, however, was clearly taken by somebody else than Heizer himself.
[246] Although from the start conceived as a work in itself by Heizer, the *Munich Rotary Interior* was not exhibited until 2011 in the exhibition *Light Years: Conceptual Art and the Photograph, 1964-1977* at the Art Institute of Chicago, Chicago.

This experience must have been a rather peculiar one. Instead of a landscape in the traditional sense, i.e. with linear perspective differentiating several levels within the view (the foreground, middle ground, and background), the *Munich Depression* has instead been described by anonymous visitors as a place where the horizon was determined by the depth of the negative space, blocking out a view of its surroundings: 'The soft edges created a floating 360-degree horizon line that played optical tricks with the viewer's sense of scale, space, orientation, and the relationship of land, sky, and self. It was, from reports, religious in its psychogeology.'[247] This was due to the fact that the edges of the crater were 'smoothed out', so as to create a soft, elongated curve outward, which completely altered the sense of space from within the crater: it was as if the horizon was infinitely far, as if there were no limits to the physical size of the excavation. As Heizer recalls in an interview of 1984: 'When I went to the bottom of the *Munich Depression* I looked up and realized the view of the landscape was gone; I realized I had just erased landscape.'[248] It thus makes sense that Heizer stated in his exhibition notice for the *Munich Depression* in situ in 1969: 'This work has no measurements, as its limits are infinite.'[249]

Indeed, the *Munich Depression* was a visual phenomenon unlike anything else. In a personal letter to collector Robert Scull, which has not been published so far and is part of the Scull Papers of the Archives of American Art, an unidentified writer eloquently described the experience inside the *Munich Depression* as follows (fig. 64):

> Michael finished the Munich depression yesterday and what a mind blower it is. … [Y]ou just can't imagine the devastating experience of this work. It's a new dimension. He moved a mountain of earth (about 1.000 tons) for this one depression which is approx. 100 ft. in diameter and 12 ft. deep. Walking into it gives you a queasy feeling in the pit of your stomach because the world around you is disappearing with each step you take until the sky meets the earth – it's like looking through a fish-eye lens into the universe and all that exists is this earthen womb

[247] As formulated by Chistopher Bollen in: Heizer and Heiner, 'Michael Heizer'.
[248] Cited in: Brown, *Michael Heizer: Sculpture in Reverse*, 38.
[249] Heizer and Heiner, 'Michael Heizer', 3.

> around you. It's incredible. You're inside the thing and you're all alone and it's really beautiful. There is nothing around to relate to: nothing to define your physical existence. But for the first time you see the sky which is just 12 ft. above you.[250]

Hence, the *Munich Depression* had nothing to do with creating a picture plane in the sense of a traditional, romantic landscape view. As Heizer emphasized in an interview of 1984: 'It had nothing to do with landscape or the romanticism of the West, I was looking for material.'[251] Indeed, while standing inside the *Munich Depression,* details of material took over: the primacy was inevitably put on the 'washed rocks' and the traces of the rakes and the tires of the earth-moving equipment used (some bulldozers), but foremost the vaulting sky above.[252] In a more recent interview of 2016, Heizer emphasises this aspect again, when he remarks: 'By exposing its materials this sculpture became an analysis of its place.'[253] Evidently, this 'primacy of the object' – the earth, the traces in it, and the sky above – was paramount, above the self who could experience all that.[254] In other words, a distinct decentring of the beholder of the work took place as soon as (s)he would step into the man-made crater, bringing a feeling of smallness and humility of oneself with respect to the operations of the *in situ* sculpture.

The sky was an important part of this overwhelming sense of humility inside the crater and the sense of place it brought. If the visitor was standing in the centre of the crater, looking at the sky and able to relax the eyes, a complete view of the sky as a kind of vaulting chapel would have become visible, as if seen through the fish-eye lens of a photographic camera that curves the space into a sort of cupola. Within the *Munich Depression,* this effect

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[250] Letter to Robert Scull on pink paper, unknown author (some spelling mistakes corrected by the author). Smithsonian, 'Robert Scull Papers,' (Washington DC, USA: Smithsonian Institution, Archives of American Art), folder 'Correspondence - Michael Heizer – Circa 1968, circa 1971'.
[251] Brown, *Michael Heizer: Sculpture in Reverse*, 18.
[252] Heizer further recalls: 'In Munich … all that rock was ground and dragged down into the valley floor in the last Ice Age and filled up full of beautiful washed rock, granitic, good, hard rock—not soft, sedimentary stuff. It's ground-up mountains, good, clean. The ground was beautiful. No clay at all, just pure washed rock. The tactile aspect of that artwork was really, really nice.' Heizer and Heiner, 'Michael Heizer'.
[253] Cited in: Brown, *Michael Heizer: Sculpture in Reverse*, 32.
[254] See the introduction on 'the primacy of the object'.

was established by the creation of the surrounding curving wall of the 'negative' sculpture while standing in its centre. As Heizer himself described this experience, looking back on the *Munich Depression* in 2016:

> If you go to the center, lean your head all the way back so you're just staring straight up, and then relax your eye muscles completely, which is hard to do, and then allow them to relax even more, what happens is you perceive the circle around you. You see this funny shape. It looks kind of like putting an egg in a frying pan with the yolk, the center, bigger than the side. It's actually the shape of an eyeball ... So that is the shape of your vision. You saw the shape of your brain, the perception of your maximized peripheral halative vision.[255]

This perception of a 'vaulting sky', i.e. a sky optically curving like a vault, (which is a term for this phenomenon that was later developed by James Turrell[256]) was something that had also greatly impressed Friedrich Heiner, who has said that the experience of it has never left him for even a minute during his life and that it was like seeing 'Planet Earth' itself.[257] Indeed, this is a significant remark, where it is made clear how the *Munich Depression* was able to bring about a 'big picture' effect as discussed in the introduction to this dissertation: the beholder of the artwork was transported from seeing, to the sense of being seen, as if from the perspective of another.[258]

This remark on how the *Munich Depression* itself functioned as a 'fish-eye lens into the universe' expands the discussion initiated in the introduction and furthered at the beginning of this chapter, which pointed out that the Land artists were interested in photography not only as documentary material, but also because of photography's intrinsic capacities of creating a new vision. The unexpected functioning of Heizer's *Munich*

[255] Heizer and Heiner, 'Michael Heizer'.
[256] This phenomenon is what James Turrell has later termed the 'vaulting of space', which has become one of the main aspects of Turrell's outside works, like his so called 'Skyspaces'.
[257] This seems to be an important analogy that points to the first moon landing by NASA in 1969 and the resulting photographs in which humanity could, for the first time, perceive the planet Earth in space. (Cf. the introduction and with: Sleeman, 'Land Art and the Moon Landing.') Heizer and Heiner, 'Michael Heizer'.
[258] For the 'big picture effect', see the introduction.

Depression as a fish-eye lens draws attention to the other side of this dialectic: the possibility of sculpture to function *as* a photographic camera. In Heizer's *Munich Depression*, the sculpture itself incorporated the function of a fish-eye lens through its material shape and dimensions, thus bringing unexpected insights into the reciprocal relation between photography and Land Art, the technology of reproductive media and directly experienced, human vision. Moreover, it gives important information about the possible reasons why Heizer later decided to create the several photographic works that are based upon the in situ *Munich Depression*: it is now clear that the connection to photography is essential to the sculpture itself, made visible in the mutual investigation of vision and its relation to reality in both the photographic works and the *in situ* sculpture.[259] As Heizer himself has remarked in a recent interview of 2016 about *Munich Depression*: 'It [*Munich Depression*] was an artwork that wasn't about art. It was about serious optical properties of the deprivation of vision, the erasure of landscape and all objects, and forcing your brain to turn your eyeball brain on.'[260]

A Threshold Experience: The Shape of One's Own Vision

Munich Depression thus also revolved around a threshold experience: that of vision and non-vision ('the deprivation of vision'), landscape and non-landscape, and self and non-self ('the other'). This threshold experience sounds familiar: De Maria's *Earth Room* and Oppenheim's *Gallery Transplant,* discussed earlier, similarly incorporated this experience as an intrinsic part of the sculpture.[261] Consequently, it is this threshold experience that one could also postulate as underlying the photographic works that resulted from the on-site sculpture *Munich Depression*: in this case, the threshold of vision – to see the 'shape of (one's own) vision'. This shape of one's vision directly links to the fragmenting, constantly decentring

[259] This is something that was also one of the main points of my MA thesis: Van der Leeuw, 'The Glass Plate's Reality: The Infinite Camera without Ego of Walter De Maria's the Lightning Field.'
[260] Heizer and Heiner, 'Michael Heizer'.
[261] See the introduction and Chapter I.

characteristics of the sculpture itself, as seen in the photographs of the *Munich Depression* (figs. 53-61). Indeed, it is this experience that Heizer also seems to convey in the photographs – as 'the twin of the event' – that he exhibited in forms that were (at least at that time) quite unusual.

For example, in the case of the *Munich Rotary Interior*, the nine photographs that form this work are in themselves not very significant: they seem to be mere documents of a place that now no longer exists (see again figs. 53-61). However, when put together, with the line of the horizon determining their relative positions, these photographs suddenly express a complex visual and physical experience that is clearly directly related to – although by no means the same as – the experience of standing within the original *Munich Depression*, as earlier described by Heizer (figs. 62 and 63). Indeed, the large scale of the entire photographic work *Munich Rotary Interior* brings the rocky ground of the excavation into clear focus, while the sharp contrasts of the ground and the sky are accentuated by the black-and-white photographs and the absence of any other object in this vast space. If one stands close to the photographs, the line of the horizon – curving upwards on both sides of the work – triggers a feeling of the curvature of the actual *Munich Depression* while one was standing in its centre, as it was once experienced in Germany. Yet this experience is now of another dimension – not exactly two-dimensional, while also not completely three-dimensional either: it hovers between dimensions as the enigmatic result of Heizer's intentional focus on that what is in-between these two worlds: lived reality and its photographic depiction.

Hence, *Munich Rotary Interior* provides an experience of the experience of visiting the *Munich Depression.* However, not by simply reproducing the experience of *Munich Depression* (which would be impossible, due to the difference in medium), but by producing this experience anew in a different way. This means that the photographs are not mere reproductions of an event, nor are they some sort of distortion of reality. As Heizer says on

one of the original interview tapes for *Avalanche* of 1969 (a part that was later excluded from the published interview in *Avalanche*'s first issue) in response to a question about whether a photograph is not just a distortion of perception (fig. 65):

> Well, the real experience of looking is altered by the fact that the sun changes its position, so it's one distortion against another. I think photographs offer a more precise way of seeing works. You can take a photograph into a clean white room, with no sound, no noise. You can wait until you feel so inclined before you look at it and possibly experience to a greater depth whatever view you have been presented with.[262]

Hence, instead of thinking of the photographic medium as something that distorts reality, Heizer points out that our perception of any object in the world – or indeed, of the world itself – is always already continuously influenced, or, if one wishes, 'distorted' by the lighting conditions of the day (whether it is sunny or cloudy), or the emotional state that the beholder is in. Because of this knowledge, one can perceive a photograph as something that is not detrimental to the direct experience of the work itself, but rather, as Heizer explains, as a possible tool to experience something in a completely new way. Moreover, Heizer ends his response to the interviewer's question in the same interview as quoted above, by saying that he believes that the photograph is not simply an alternative way of seeing a work of art, but in fact a superior way (fig. 65): 'I think photographs are a more precise and exact way of seeing works.'[263]

This possibility of superseding the actual experience of seeing the *Munich Depression* in situ through photography becomes even more pronounced in a second photo-sculptural work that resulted from the *Munich Depression.* In *Actual Size: Munich Rotary* (1970), the scale of the photographic installation is one to one to the actual scale of the 1969 sculpture

[262] MoMA, 'Avalanche Magazine Papers,' folder I.A.17 to I.A.21, specifically I.A.19 (not paginated). These are the edited transcripts of the interviews of 1968-1969, with handwritten words and sentences by Heizer himself in addition to the typed text of an earlier interview.
[263] Ibid., I.A.19 (n.p.).

itself.[264] *Actual Size: Munich Rotary* developed when Heizer had returned to the United States after the actual *Munich Depression* had been removed. As Heizer recalls in a recent interview of 2016, it was then that ideas about a projection-piece of the work started to grow:

> I have a genius friend named Maris Ambats, whom I talked to about making a projector to project an image at the actual size. … We didn't go out and buy a projector; we created our own. Who could afford to buy one, anyway? … So it was a necessity that we design and build this equipment ourselves.[265]

In the end, they built eight projectors – six to be used, and two extra. The end result is the huge, apparently life-size artwork *Actual Size: Munich Rotary,* consisting of six black and white photographs of the *Munich Depression* that are projected from six glass slides through six projectors. Heizer explains in the same interview of 2016: 'The deal was to let the camera be a translator between reality and replicated reality, which means making the photograph as big as the thing itself. So here it is. It gets squeezed down through the camera, and then it's blown back up to the same size.'[266] The artwork was first exhibited in Detroit in 1971 in a large room in the Detroit Institute of Arts, under the auspices of Samuel Wagstaff, who at that time was the curator of contemporary art of the museum (fig. 66). It was exhibited together with Wagstaff's controversial commission of Heizer's *Dragged Mass Displacement* in an exhibition called *Michael Heizer: Photographic and Actual Work* (fig. 67).[267] *Dragged Mass Displacement,* the 'actual work' part of the exhibition, involved a thirty-five ton block of granite that was dragged across the museum's grounds, which triggered outraged reactions about the museum's destroyed lawn by a number of the trustees of the board of the museum, in the end causing Wagstaff's resignation in the fall of 1971 (fig. 68). The controversy around

[264] Of course, one could question the 'accuracy' of the one-to-one dimensions, but it seems important here to keep in mind that Heizer was concerned with *size,* and not with *scale.* On the difference of scale and size, see Robert Smithson's *The Spiral Jetty,* in: *Robert Smithson: The Collected Writings*, 147.
[265] Heizer and Heiner, 'Michael Heizer', 3.
[266] Ibid., 3.
[267] Paul Martineau, Eugenia Parry, and Weston J. Naef, *The Thrill of the Chase: The Wagstaff Collection of Photographs at the J. Paul Getty Museum* (Los Angeles, California: J. Paul Getty Museum, 2016), 9.

the installation of *Dragged Mass Displacement* was covered extensively in the newspapers at the time, as well as in later writings that consider Heizer's works, which has resulted in the photographic part of this exhibition being almost totally forgotten.

However, forty-five years later the focus was brought back to the photographic part of this historic exhibition. In 2016, *Actual Size: Munich Rotary* was reinstalled in the Whitney Museum in New York City (figs. 69 and 70). The visitors of the exhibition of *Actual Size: Munich Rotary* in the Whitney emphasized the feeling of the enormous sense of space, 'almost lunar', that the photographs conveyed.[268] Heizer retrospectively explains this 'almost lunar' feeling in relation to his effort in sculpting the edge of the *Munich Depression* in situ, that he sees as the shaping force of the feeling of the visitors in seeing the photographs of this work in the Whitney installation. As he says in 2016:

> We did a lot of work on that edge, softening that up so that you couldn't find it. There is no beginning. There is no edge. It wasn't just a negative object, like you'd take a thing and reverse it. … This thing was a whole other deal. This thing began to appear; it was evanescent. Then it began to have the appearance that the ground is subsiding. And then it intensified and dove in deeper. That's sculptural stuff if you're interested in what a sculpture is.'[269]

Here, Heizer describes the *Munich Depression* not only in sculptural terms, but also in an almost filmic sense, underlining the time lapse of the work: the time proceeding from one perception to another while standing within the crater. Again, an analogy with De Maria's *Earth Room* and Oppenheim's *Gallery Transplant #1* can be pointed out, where the time-specificity of the works were also underlined – almost taking priority of the emphasis on the place-specificity of their sculptures. It is this time-specificity and the time lapse which is also of great importance in the projections of the photographs in *Actual Size: Munich Rotary* – yet in them this is visualised through the multiple individual photographic views instead of the

[268] Heizer and Heiner, 'Michael Heizer', 3.
[269] Ibid.

all-inclusive, corporeal perception of what the beholder of the *Munich Depression* must have experienced *in situ*.

This distinction is telling for the entire body of Heizer's post-adolescent photographic works, in which the mutual source of these different works of art are felt, yet never visualised in such a way that would annul their medium-specific difference. In the interview of 2016 about the Whitney's photographic re-installation of *Actual Size: Munich Rotary,* Heizer emphasized this dialectical relationship between the sculpture *in situ* and the photographic works, while warning the beholder not to discriminate between them in terms of value (as 'original' and 'copy'):

> [Y]ou can't separate the film derivation from the real thing. **Munich Depression** [the on-site sculpture] and [*Actual Size:*] **Munich Rotary** [the photographic projection piece] are different works of art, but they come from the real thing. So you can't escape it. … No point in trying to [uncouple them].[270]

Hence, it is this relation to the real – albeit a reality that constantly changes – that shows that the photographs of the *Munich Depression* are not simply photographs *of* an artwork. Indeed, Heizer intended these photographs to be an artwork in themselves. As Heizer stated about the *Actual Size: Munich Rotary*: 'It was really good, and it was intended to be a photographic offering, a photographic artwork.'[271] In this monumental work, sculpture and photography show their affinity: it is clear that the photographs of the original *Munich Depression* carry the same questions within them as the on-site sculpture – questions about self and other, landscape and non-landscape, vision, time and space, the horizon, the material surface of the earth and the spaciousness of the sky. Simultaneously, there are evident differences in terms of the media used and the experience of the beholder, as well as the circumstances in which both are viewed.

[270] Ibid., 3.
[271] Ibid.

A New Infinity: To See Behind the Veil

Through their differences and similarities, one could argue that the photographs that constitute *Actual Size: Munich Rotary* also continue to inform the once existent *Munich Depression* itself, by asking questions about how reality relates to fiction, and whether reality is created through one's personal vision and experience. These questions can be intuited by looking again in more detail at the original installation in Detroit of the photographic work *Actual Size: Munich Rotary***.** The three walls that curve around the visitor lead the eye directly to the photographed horizon, which, like in *Munich Rotary Interior,* seems to be the focal point of the work. In contrast to the actual experience *in situ*, and in contrast to *Munich Rotary Interior,* however, this horizon is broken: it shows the different standpoint from which each photograph was taken, abruptly lowering or raising the horizon for the viewer of the work. Moreover, the presence of the projectors in the same space, probably also making some noise, and sometimes invading the panoramic view of the Land artwork projected for the viewers walking around the space, seems to be a constant reality check for the viewer: it is clear that this is not actually the same experience of what once existed on the outskirts of Munich – this is about the here and now of the photographs and our relation to them.

At the same time, the photographs bring a focus to the work that could not have been experienced *in situ* – they bring a new dimension to the viewing of the *Munich Depression*. Indeed, although the photographs transmit the sculptural characteristics of the actual work, the photographs are not exhausted in this act: they seem to push the act of looking into motion. As Heizer said in 1984: 'I am interested in abstraction as a way to focus and to see. Pictures stop my vision as soon as I recognize the content. I like the camera but not any given image.'[272] Indeed, the photographs of *Actual Size: Munich Rotary* do not stop one's vision. Although the individual photographs are fixed, it is as if they are evading one's look: the

[272] Brown, *Michael Heizer: Sculpture in Reverse*, 33.

details in each photograph seem to be getting slightly out of focus. This is not only due to the somewhat grainy print of the photographs, but also because, basically, there is not much to see in the photographs: there is the ground, the excavated earth of the depression, and then there is the sky. Hence, it is as if photography itself is brought back to an abstraction that – again – was part of the sculpture *in situ*, albeit in different qualities and dimensions. Like the sculpture, the photographs show themselves as both the centre and periphery of vison, 'erasing landscape' as such and bringing the focus back on the act of seeing itself.

The constellation of photographic work to the work *in situ* also raises certain ontological questions. *Actual Size: Munich Rotary* brings the relation between reality and what one could call an image of reality to the forefront. As Heizer emphasized, these photographs are not about an illusion or distortion of reality; they are about the ontological question of what reality *really* is. The question of looking at art, of perceiving art, thereby becomes identical with our lived experience in the world. This is possibly best experienced after one has contemplated the photographs of *Actual Size: Munich Rotary* for a significant amount of time, which allows a certain kind of time lapse to occur – something that was also a key element in the experience of the sculpture *in situ* itself. As Victor Burgin has argued:

> To look at a photograph beyond a certain period of time is to court a frustration; the image which on first looking gave pleasure has by degrees become a veil behind which we now desire to see. … To remain long with a single image is to risk the loss of our imaginary command of the look, to relinquish it to that absent other to whom it belongs by right – the camera. The image then no longer receives our look, reassuring us of our founding centrality, it rather, as it were, avoids our gaze, confirming its allegiance to the other.[273]

Due to the fact that the photographic work *Actual Size: Munich Rotary* is made of images taken from different viewpoints – fragments of vision – it is evident that 'reality' is carefully

[273] Victor Burgin (editor), *Thinking Photography* (London: The MacMillan Press, 1982), 152. Cf. with Michael Fried's interpretation of photography: Michael Fried, *Why Photography Matters as Art as Never Before* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2008).

and self-consciously constructed here. The later photographic works overcome the fixed frame of the photographic picture: although the *Munich Depression* itself is framed by each individual photograph, the multitude of photographs with no clear chronological sequence makes sure that this frame is not the frame of a single-point perspective in either space or time. This results in the construction of a complicated photographic sculpture in which the nature of both time and space are questioned and is therefore also intrinsically linked to – as Burgin calls it – a denying of our founding centrality as the beholder of these photographs. It is this decentring capacity of Heizer's photographs that is of great interest here.

Photography's Existential Question: The Fragmented Self

Hence, one could argue that the photograph is a part of the dialogue about reality: about our reality and the experience of viewing the world. And it is through this that the photograph incorporates an ontological critique of one's relation to this reality – an existential question about how one relates to the world. Indeed, this capacity of photography to give us an insight into the ontological question of being-in-the-world is also how Heizer himself conceived of photography. As he remarks in one of the unpublished interviews with Willoughby Sharp for *Avalanche's* first issue:

> The photograph isn't a substitute for anything. The demands on the artist are great, and that means that there are demands on people as well to get out and look at the work. If they can't, then the photograph is all they get, these are two possibilities. There might be reaction against the photograph as something mechanical, banal or incomplete. It is really an abstraction of a reality, and is considered as part of that dialogue. My work satisfies the fact of existence, if only for short periods of time. The photograph freezes the ~~perfect moment, the locked~~ view, ~~it provides a way to see what I want seen, it is exact~~ and can be seen as a way of seeing, and in the relation of the direct experience of viewing.'[274]

[274] MoMA, 'Avalanche Magazine Papers,' folder I.A.17 to I.A.21, specifically I.A.17, 26. (Edited transcripts of the interviews, with handwritten sentences and crossed out notes by Heizer himself in addition to the typed text, see fig. 71.)

The artist thus makes clear that his photographic works are in no way to be regarded as a substitute for the on-site work, yet – as he said earlier – one can also not separate them: they are both part of reality and offer different, but equally significant, views on that reality.

Hence, with the re-instalment of the piece into a photographic display as *Actual Size: Munich Rotary*, it becomes evident how far Heizer's 'artistic style' and photographic practice had developed by 1970-71, leaving the simple documentary practice of taking photographs far behind.[275] In this monumental work, sculpture and photography show their affinity: it is clear that the photographs of the original *Munich Depression* raise many of the same questions as the sculpture itself. As Wagstaff commented: '[These photographic works] are definitely about photography itself; not the interpretative magic of the photo as art but actual constructions with one or more photographs.'[276] It is this complex, dialectical relation between photograph (or other reproductive media) and the work *in situ*, the relation of self and other, and landscape and not-landscape, which is of central concern in this chapter and will be explored further in the works of Jan Dibbets, Nancy Holt and Robert Smithson.

[275] Brown, *Michael Heizer: Sculpture in Reverse*, 42.
[276] Samuel Wagstaff, 'Michael Heizer's use of Photography', in: ibid., 73.

2.2 Jan Dibbets: Seeing beyond Thought

> I do not make the eternal artwork, but give visual information.
>
> Jan Dibbets, 'Dibbets', *Museumjournaal,* 2013.[277]

Jan Dibbets's work stands in an important relation with Heizer's photographic installations and his interest in the ontology and visual perception of reality. Jan Dibbets (born 1941 in the Netherlands) was one of the European artists who ventured into Land Art in the late 1960s and complemented this with a significant photographic practice. Although still a painter in the mid-1960s, making shaped canvases, Dibbets soon started with 'stacking' his paintings on top of one another, in order to make new sculptural objects. After moving to London in 1967 to attend Central Saint Martins (where he met Richard Long), Dibbets 'consciously wanted it [his painter's practice] to end'.[278] As Dibbets recalls:

> I had given up painting. It came very near to minimal art and it was painful to give up. I had a strange feeling that I was bringing something completely to an end. I ended up stacking white canvases, they became sculpture and there was no place for me in painting anymore. I had to throw everything I learnt out the window, which is not easy of course.[279]

Then, inspired by his walks through Peckham Rye Park, which was close to his house in London, Dibbets set off to make his *Grass Piles* (1967). Clearly some sort of continuation of his early stacked paintings, these piles consisted of a rolled-up section of a grassy lawn, cut in such a way that it followed a precise abstract design within a square picture plane flattened out on the ground (fig. 14). In contrast to the stacked paintings, however, the natural grass was rolled up as if to show the earth from which it had grown, releasing the scent of dark

[277] Online interview with Dibbets, in: Sarah Boothroyd, 'Conversation with Jan Dibbets,' (Photoparley, 2013), n.p.
[278] Edi de Wilde, 'Jan Dibbets,' ed. Stedelijk Museum Amsterdam (Amsterdam: Stedelijk Museum, 1972), n.p.
[279] Boothroyd, 'Conversation with Jan Dibbets,' n.p.

earth and showing that a picture plane is only the surface of what lies underneath. The *Grass Piles* were made in the garden of Dibbets's parents in Weert, the Netherlands and later destroyed, although another grass pile was exhibited in 1968 in Konrad Fischer's gallery in Düsseldorf (fig. 72).

Dibbets's interest in working with natural materials continued in the following years. After making a few so-called 'plough projects', where he drew furrows in the land, he started with his 'beach projects', which were similar to his later work *Flood Tide* of 1969 – the latter was depicted in a series of photographs that showed the lapse of time as the flood comes in, erasing the line in the sand that Dibbets had created (fig. 73). This work prefigures Dibbets's collaboration with Gerry Schum that same year for an art film (which was broadcast on television, see Chapter IV): *12 Hours Tide Object with Correction of Perspective* (1969). All these different media and styles were also reflected in two outdoor interventions that Dibbets created for the now famous *Earth Art* exhibition at Cornell University in Ithaca, New York, in 1969. For the first work, *A Trace in the Wood in the Form of an Angle of 30°—Crossing the Path*, 1969, Dibbets shovelled earth within a V-form approximately 5 feet wide and 100 feet long, while taking care not to touch the path which crossed the V-shape and on which visitors of the *Earth Art* exhibition could venture out to the work (fig. 74). As the text accompanying Dibbets's photograph stated, 'Dibbets considered both the walk to the site and the five black-and-white photographs of the site shown in the 'Earth Art' exhibition to be part of the work.'[280]

In the second work, *A Trace in the Wood in the Form of a Line of Trees Painted White*, 1969 (see fig. 75), Dibbets painted a long line of tree trunks white up to a certain height, thus putting a focus on the human intervention that had once shaped this artificially-

[280] Text accompanying the photograph of Dibbets's *A Trace in the Wood…,* as stated on the website of *Ends of the Earth: Land Art to 1974*: http://landart.greg.org/

created forest, while also underlining the role of linear perspective by means of the photograph. Indeed, both this work and *A Trace in the Wood in the Form of an Angle of 30°—Crossing the Path* clearly show Dibbets's interest in the intersection of two-dimensional, photographic qualities (like linear perspective, straight lines and sharp angles) and the spatial dimension of sculpture. And although both photographs could still be considered as first and foremost documenting the sculptures *in situ*, one can already get a taste of Dibbets's developing interest in the use of the camera: the photographs are intentionally framed according to one-point perspective and clearly draw the eye of the beholder towards an intended, artistic meaning – or certain 'visual information', as Dibbets himself would call it.[281]

Elegant Paradoxes: Reality and the Picture Plane

The *Earth Art* exhibition signals the moment that Dibbets started to take photography seriously as an artistic medium in itself. In the years following the exhibition, he started to experiment with the possibilities of photography, for example by influencing the actual perception of his on-site works through photography. This interest becomes most pronounced in Dibbets's so-called 'Perspective Correction' pieces in which the artist explores the intersection of the depictive power of the camera's lens and the physiology of human vision. All the photographs made by Dibbets in this period seek to undermine what one could call with Roland Barthes the 'analogical perfection' between reality and depiction, questioning the presumed likeness between the two.[282] For example in *Perspective Correction* of 1968 (fig. 76), where Dibbets creates the outline of a trapezium in the grass by means of some white ropes, the shape becomes a perfect square in the final photograph of the work due to

[281] See the quote at the start of this section of the chapter, from: Boothroyd, 'Conversation with Jan Dibbets.'
[282] Roland Barthes, 'The Photographic Message', in: Roland Barthes and Stephen Heath, *Image, Music, Text* (London: Fontana, 1977), 19.

the positioning of the camera. He repeats the same idea a year later for a group exhibition organized by Seth Siegelaub at Simon Fraser University in British Columbia in 1969, where the trapezium is this time dug out in a grass lawn, after which Dibbets again takes a photograph in such a way that the shape of the trapezium appears to be a square in the resulting photograph (fig. 77).

In these works, Dibbets combines both his sculptural practice and his interest in photography, although there seems to be a gradual move towards prioritising photography: one could say that he is working as a sculptor-photographer, or as a sculptor who sculpts in the service of photography – initially settling for photographing the works he has made, then later moving closer to making works that are photographic, or even sculptures produced primarily to be photographed.[283] Indeed, it is evident that Dibbets's interest in digging a hole is different than, for example, Heizer's concerns in his *Munich Depression* or his *Double Negative.* Although Dibbets's physical manipulation of earth or grass is essential to his projects, in the end the sculptural presence of the work itself is totally transformed through the photograph: the actual trapezium shape that one would see while standing at the site of Dibbets's excavation has been lost to history – only the perfect photographic square remains. Hence, instead of using photography to document the reality of the sculpture, he in fact uses the camera to produce a new, purely photographic reality: sculpture here is produced *through* the photograph. As Rudi Fuchs has put it: 'After deciding the type of shape or construction that should appear in a photograph, or rather *on the surface* of a photograph, Dibbets then designed the formal setup needed to produce that shape, thus making not a photograph but a photographic construction.'[284]

[283] Erik Verhagen, 'Jan Dibbets – From the Perspective Corrections to the Perspective Collections', in: E. Verhagen and P. Boswell, 'Jan Dibbets: Perspective Collection,' ed. Miami Art Museum (Miami, Florida: Miami Art Museum, 2007), n.p.
[284] Rudi Fuchs, 'The Eye Framed and Unframed', in: Marcella Beccaria, 'Jan Dibbets: Un'altra Fotografia/Another Photography,' (Turin: Castello di Rivoli Museo d'Arte, 2014), 55.

The result raises certain questions about reality that are, conceptually, close to certain aspects of Heizer's interest in the photographic medium. Like Heizer, Dibbets, too, points out on several occasions that this capacity of the photograph to distort or 'to lie' is not meant as a critique of photography – it is rather an exploration of the many possibilities that photography provides to explore the nature of human vision and the multiple dimensions of reality of which one is usually unaware. Rather than seeing photography as a distortion of reality, Dibbets perceives it as helping to explore the nature of reality itself:

> Photography began for me when I realized I had to document some of my new outdoor work and looked in the camera for the first time. … So, in 1967 I picked up a camera and all these ideas about what is real / not real, abstract / not abstract came together in one machine. It became my thing and I created, over 2 years, the *Perspectives Corrections* series. I really developed an idea about *thinking* about photography.[285]

Hence, for Dibbets, all ontological and artistic questions – the real and the abstract, or fiction and truth – came together in photography: the camera turned into an instrument to explore visual perception itself. While looking at a photograph like *Perspective Correction* of 1969 (fig. 77), it is as if one's beliefs about the reality and the truthfulness of vision are shattered, disrupting one's logical thought. Seeing a perfect square in the grass, while knowing that the laws of perspective force all visible parallel lines to visually converge towards a focal point produces an immediate and strong paradox.

Due to this 'elegant paradox', as Peter Boswell puts it, it is as if daily reality and the photographic reality are suddenly separated – although not lobotomized: there is still a poetic relation between the two opposed truths of these two realities.[286] After all, one cannot say that the square in the photograph is *not* a square, just as one cannot deny that it is also a

[285] Boothroyd, 'Conversation with Jan Dibbets.'
[286] See also Peter Boswell's essay, 'Jan Dibbets's Elegant Paradoxes', in: Verhagen and Boswell, 'Jan Dibbets: Perspective Collection,' n.p.

trapezium. Indeed, as Barbara Reise remarks: 'The reality of a seemingly 'natural' visual observation is counter-posed by a physical or conceptual reality. Which is more real: … the appearance of a square on the photograph's surface plane; or the physically drawn trapezoid marked on ground … to induce that 'square' from the camera's viewpoint …?'[287] As such, it seems to be the very concept of our often taken-for-granted reality that Dibbets wishes to challenge, as well as the assumptions that underlie both photography and our understanding of the picture plane: as Reise points out, there is an 'on-going tension between the 'reality' of the planar surface and the 'illusion' of depth assumed as primary to the success of any 'picture'…'[288] Or rather, one could say that in Dibbets's works, form gets consciously linked to vision, making one aware of a connection that one usually takes for granted between formed reality and that of vision, and especially by showing us the importance of self-perception within this situation: it is crucial to understand one's own position from which vision emanates, in order to understand the final form that is given permanence in the photographic print.[289]

The Ontological Quest and The Photographic Act

The importance of observing oneself in relation to one's own vision and supposed reality continues to play an important part in Dibbets's later works. In the *Dutch Mountain* series of 1971, where Dibbets shows his growing interest in photographic sculpture or constructions, the tension between photographic depiction and reality is alluded to in another way. For example, in *Dutch Mountain, Big Sea* from 1971 (fig. 78), one sees how the slightly angled horizons in the photographs cause the normally flat beach to curve into a 'Dutch mountain'

[287] Barbara Reise, 'Notes on Jan Dibbets's Contemporary Nature of Realistic Classicism in the Dutch Tradition,' *Studio International* 183 (1972): 253.
[288] Ibid., 254.
[289] Erik Verhagen, 'Jan Dibbets – From the Perspective Corrections to the Perspective Collections', in: Verhagen and Boswell, 'Jan Dibbets: Perspective Collection,' n.p.

when the eleven photographs are put together. Here the artist obviously plays with the irony of depicting a 'Dutch mountain' in a country that is almost completely flat.

Immediately, there seems to be a likeness between Dibbets's 'photographic construction' or even 'photographic sculpture' and Heizer's *Munich Rotary Interior*. However, in contrast to Heizer, whose construction of the curved horizon in *Munich Rotary Interior* came by aligning the varying heights of the horizon that happened to appear in the photographs taken of his sculpture *Munich Depression*, Dibbets instead intentionally took his photographs in order to capture the slightly angled horizons, so that they could be cut and put together as a 'mountain' – creating this 'sculpture' without having to touch any actual sand. This prefigures Dibbets's series of 'Comets' of 1973, where his interest in producing sculpture through photography is crystallised (see, for example, *Comet Land / Sky / Land 6 ° – 72 °*, 1973, fig. 79). Clearly, there is a very different aesthetic at work in Heizer's and Dibbets's art, yet they do raise similar questions.

Hence, by moving more and more towards photography and away from, or even beyond sculpture, Dibbets's work starts to become more conceptual in nature: his work becomes about seeing that goes beyond thought, i.e. beyond the conceptual categories usually imposed by the mind. This interest in another kind of aesthetics, which transgresses established categories between media, was already present in Dibbets's works in 1969, when he said about his *Robin Redbreast's Territory/Sculpture* project that he 'was looking [at] making a sculpture which was absolutely not the usual material'.[290] In *Robin Redbreast*, Dibbets placed poles in a Dutch park within the territory of a robin and then, after the bird had become accustomed to the poles and incorporated them into his territory, Dibbets started to move the poles very slowly through the park, so that the robin's territory ended up in a

[290] Jan Dibbets, audio file, Museum of Modern Art, New York City, online source: https://www.moma.org/explore/multimedia/audios/163/1831

very different part of the park. This entire process was photographed by Dibbets (fig. 80). Dibbets considered the territory of the robin as the sculpture, culminating in the photographs, which he consequently used to make an artist's book about the project that he also viewed as part of the sculpture.[291]

Hence, the practice of sculpture and Land Art is here extended to include a domain of materials that are not usually considered to be 'land', yet that are definitely part of the landscape that the Land artists were working with. Photography provided a new and hitherto unexplored territory for the Land artists. As Alloway has pointed out, there was a pervading concern in Land Art about going against the idea of sellable, movable 'art objects', which directly connects Land Art to the ontology of photography: 'The development of Earthworks … is resistant to the possession of art as usually understood and photography resists becoming personal property by its potentially endless reproduction.'[292] Indeed, it is this shared resistance to marketable singularity that creates a key link between Land Art and photography.

At the same time, there are other similarities that jump out when comparing Land Art with photography. As Dibbets recalls, he was struggling to get people to see his photographic works as art.[293] Dibbets explains: 'Photographic art did not exist. Only classical photography was promoted; nineteenth century photographs and maybe Man Ray. Serious thinking about photography hadn't yet taken place.'[294] Indeed, Heizer echoes the same claims, when he remarked that: 'It's become so insidious. Photography is everywhere now. Back then, it wasn't an art-world technique.'[295] Another American artist, Alan Sonfist, shares these

[291] This comes close to so-called 'behavioural aesthetics', except for the fact that the robin is the protagonist here, and not a human being (as is the subject of behavioural aesthetics).
[292] Alloway, 'Artists and Photographs', in: Fogle (editor), 'The Last Picture Show: Artists Using Photography 1960-1982,' 20.
[293] Alan Sonfist interviewed by John F. Grande, in: John K. Grande, *Art Nature Dialogues: Interviews with Environmental Artists* (New York: State University of New York Press, 2004), 167.
[294] Boothroyd, 'Conversation with Jan Dibbets.'
[295] Heizer and Heiner, 'Michael Heizer', 3.

observations, too, when he recalls: 'I showed photographs in my early exhibits in the 1970s. … My first art dealer didn't even want to exhibit my photographs because he did not consider them art. Now, there are several artists who have created works similar to these early photographs.'[296] (All these remarks could, of course, also add to the explanation of Sharp's agenda for leaving out most photography-specific comments by the Land artists in the final published interview in *Avalanche* as mentioned earlier.)

Hence although it is evident that, in the beginning of the 1970s, Dibbets moved more and more towards the practice of photography, it is also clear how his practice remained bound to problems of sculpture. As Edi de Wilde remarks about Dibbets' photographic practice: 'He is aiming at the plastic qualities that he sought in the grass piles, the plough projects and the perspective corrections.'[297] Hence, like Heizer, Dibbets seems to be interested in how photography can articulate certain aspects of reality that complement the questions asked by sculpture. Dibbets's use of photography, however, contrasts with Heizer's in that he brings these aspects out by stretching the capacities of both media as far as possible – almost to the point of breaking their connections altogether. Indeed, it is to this ontological quest that the photographic camera can contribute a great deal, thanks to its inherent paradox of literal depiction and the reality to which that depiction corresponds: the act of photography makes a sort of 'cut' in reality, dividing it into a picture plane of foreground and background and thus exposes the underlying laws of vision that put these elements together into a coherent whole. As Verhagen puts it: 'Dibbets's concern is the photographic *act.* That the ontological quest of photography cannot exclude depiction is … something both irrevocable and ineluctable.'[298] Indeed, it is in this photographic act of fragmenting reality, of separating surface from ground, time from space, and human vision from its unconscious laws, in the

[296] Alan Sonfist, in: Grande, *Art Nature Dialogues: Interviews with Environmental Artists*, 167.
[297] Edi de Wilde in: Wilde, 'Jan Dibbets,' n.p.
[298] Erik Verhagen, 'Jan Dibbets – From the Perspective Corrections to the Perspective Collections', in: Verhagen and Boswell, 'Jan Dibbets: Perspective Collection,' n.p.

process showing the construction of reality itself, that Dibbets finds his material. And it is this relation of the photographic eye to the human ‘I’, from the seen to being seen, that leads us to the works of Nancy Holt.

2.3 Nancy Holt: Sculptures of, and Drawings with, Light

> Through the work, the place is seen in a different way.
> The work becomes a human focal point.
>
> Nancy Holt, 'Sun Tunnels', 1977.[299]

The relation of photography to sculpture, and the relation of viewing while perceiving oneself in the act of seeing, has arguably been explored most intensely by Nancy Holt (1938-2014), although this connection between the two in Holt's work has been left unexplored so far. Yet it is precisely this relation between photography and sculpture, and how both are intrinsically connected in Holt's *Sun Tunnels*, that I will explore here.

Although Holt's early works were often collaborations with her spouse, Robert Smithson, she remarks that 'my own concerns have always been separate [from Smithson's]'.[300] That is not to say that they did not share a number of interests, including a deep interest in photography, which was already explored by both in the later 1960s. In photographic works like *Concrete Visions* (1967, fig. 81) or *Trail Markers* (1969, fig. 82), Holt shows her keen interest in the camera's capacity to capture the gaze and direct it along a certain sightline, in which questions appear about the relation of self and that which is seen. Yet this dialectical relation between the self and non-self, and how a more expanded notion of viewing plays into the experience of that, becomes most evident in her immense Land Art sculpture *Sun Tunnels* (1973-1976) and the subsequent photographic work based on it, *Sunlight in Sun Tunnels* (1976). For it is there that Holt shows her radical rethinking of sculpture through, and in relation to, photography.

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[299] Nancy Holt, 'Sun Tunnels', originally printed in *Artforum* in April 1977, reprinted in: Alena J. Williams, 'Nancy Holt: Sightlines,' (Berkeley, California: University of California Press, 2011), 78-91.
[300] Nancy Holt in an interview with Liza Béar, MoMA, 'Avalanche Magazine Papers,' transcript III-127SAAC, 8.

Sculptures of the Sun

As the name indicates, Holt's *Sun Tunnels* is directly related to the sun: sunlight, the rising and the setting of the sun, solstices and Earth's relation to the cosmos (the constellation of the stars, the planets and the moon) are all part of the work. The artwork is, up to this day, situated in the Great Basin Desert in north-western Utah, close to the Nevada border, and consists of four tunnels, each about 5.5 metres long and with a diameter of about 2.7 metres, so that even a tall person can comfortably stand up inside of any of them. They are made from concrete around a steel construction and left unpainted, thus showing the material as solidified sand and stone (fig. 83). Holt explains in an unpublished interview with Liza Béar in 1976, just after returning to New York after her completion of the *Sun Tunnels*:

> You can see the flat stones on the side of it, and you can see all of the particles that go into the making of the concrete. Which, by the way, the sand and the rocks and the gravel that went into the making of the concrete came from a quarry that was right next to the pipe yard so that it's Utah sand, it's Utah rock. And it's the same color as the land that it's resting on. So that it's all part of the same thing, it seems to be an outgrowth of the Earth. Which is very important.[301]

They are positioned in an open X configuration, with about 26 metres between the openings of the tunnels facing each other. Holt recalls in the same interview that she spent a year at the site, using scale models to find the best position for the final concrete tunnels: 'I took my [scale] models for the work I did out to the desert and watched the sun shine through the holes in it, and I set it up in different configurations and worked out what I thought was the best placement. Also I worked with a helioscope at the university. I was able to set that for any day of the year and see what the work would look like, what the light and shadow would be.'[302]

[301] Ibid., transcript III-127SAAC, 9-10.
[302] Ibid., transcript III-127SAAC, 1.

In the end, the exact angle selected to place the tunnels was calculated with the help of an astrophysicist, so as to take the Earth's imperfect sphere into account.[303] The final result is a perfect positioning of the tunnels in alignment with the rising and the setting of the sun on the days of the solstices each year around the 21st of June and the 21st of December. As Holt explains in another interview for *Artforum* in 1977: 'On those days [of the solstices] the sun is centered through the tunnels and is nearly centered for about 10 days before and after solstices.'[304] At these times of the year, the artwork is literally majestically lit, with the sun perfectly aligned with the tunnels at the moment of sunset and illuminating the tunnels from within (fig. 84). As Holt puts it in that same interview: '… By marking the yearly extreme positions of the sun, *Sun Tunnels* indicates the "cyclical time" of the solar year'.[305]

However, the work incorporates other complexities. In each tunnel, holes are drilled in the upper half in varying sizes, between 7 and 10 inches in diameter. The choice for a smaller or larger size a hole has been made according to the magnitude of the stars 'to which they correspond': 'Each tunnel has a different configuration of holes corresponding to stars in four different constellations – Draco, Perseus, Columba, and Capricorn.'[306] During the day, the sun shines through these holes, which allows the sunlight to produce new kinds of 'constellations' inside of the tunnels' cool shadows, which slowly change position during the day and according to the seasons (figs. 85-86). At night, if the moon is more than a quarter full, the same pattern appears through the illuminating moonlight. Holt describes the range of the experiences of the *Sun Tunnels* during the day and the night as follows:

> The sunlight pours in wherever there are holes in the tunnels. Because of the … thickness of the holes, the shape of the light that reaches the bottom of the tunnels is usually a pointed ellipse, but there are times when the sun is directly over a hole and a perfect circle is cast. Day turns into night, and an inversion of the sky takes place;

[303] The astrophysicist was Les Fishbone. Ibid., transcript III-136A, 5.
[304] Nancy Holt, 'Sun Tunnels', originally printed in *Artforum* in April 1977, reprinted in: Williams, 'Nancy Holt: Sightlines,' 78-91.
[305] Ibid.
[306] Ibid.

> stars are cast down to Earth … At night, even a quarter moon can cast a pattern of light. … In the moonlight the tunnels seem to glow from within their own substance, the rims of the tunnels forming crescents in the night. As you move through the tunnels, the moon and stars and planets can be lined up and framed through each hole. Looking up through the holes on a bright night is like seeing the circles of light during the day, only inverted.[307]

The immense complexity and scale of *Sun Tunnels* is thus inextricably linked to the observation of time – of moments of change in the light and shadows. Indeed, as Holt explains, time was the central idea for the *Sun Tunnels*, which is not only related to the current time of the Earth through the rising and the setting of the sun, but also by placing the *Sun Tunnels* on the bottom of an ancient lake, Lake Bonneville, that gradually receded over thousands of years, with the Great Salt Lake the only part that remains liquid today.[308] The entire artwork is set in a surrounding of distant mountains, which, if seen close-up, reveal the traces of the receding water that once covered what is now the Great Basin Desert.[309] Holt explains that these associations were part of the reason why she chose this particular location for *Sun Tunnels*:

> It's one of the things that attracted me because you can see sort of infinity visually, you know, as a physical fact. … When you're sitting in the tunnels … or walking through the tunnels, you have a sense of agelessness. And also the fact that the tunnels are set up so you can see the rising and the setting of the sun on the solstice, you think of the cyclicalness of time. You're very conscious of the fact that you're on the Earth, on the sphere rotating in space. And you think of the sun, also. And you think of going around that.'[310]

It is this sense of cyclical time and our place in the cosmos that inextricably links *Sun Tunnels* to vision. Not only the embodied vision of the spectator, but also a larger vision on the universe and Earth's place within it. As Holt explains: 'You have an overwhelming sense

[307] Ibid.
[308] This is an unexplored link between Nancy Holt's *Sun Tunnels* and Robert Smithson's *Spiral Jetty.*
[309] Williams, 'Nancy Holt: Sightlines,' 78-91.
[310] Nancy Holt in an interview with Liza Béar, MoMA, 'Avalanche Magazine Papers,' transcript III-127SAAC, 3-4.

that you're on earth, that you think of yourself as being on this sphere… So … there is this sense of being on a planet there. … And it's also the only place where you really think, except a planetarium, where you consider the heavens as being a dome. It just surrounds you.'[311] This important observation comes close to Heizer's description of the 'eyeball-brain', perceiving the 'vaulting sky' above the *Munich Depression* as if seen through a 'fish-eye lens'. Holt, too, relates this feeling to a sense of infinity, while also remarking on a sense that incorporates one's own looking. In Holt words:

> There's also an echo in the tunnel. And that echo also gives you a sense of, you know, that reverberations of the universe somehow. And so there's that-, the place being kind of an infinite place. …These cool tunnels in the midst of the heat, and also, somehow, the proportions, the scale, when you walk through them or stand in the center, bring the land back into full focus … I mean, in a panoramic place like that … to have a few points framed gives you a point of reference. … It's still about framing the landscape and considering looking. … I'm interested in interacting with human scale and human perceptions.[312]

Hence, Holt considers the *Sun Tunnels* as a sort of 'framing device', which brings, in her words, the 'land back into full focus'.[313] Of course, this framing of the landscape is mostly associated with the photographic camera, which directly relates to Holt's own practice at the site of the *Sun Tunnels,* where she would start early in the morning taking photographs, 'watching and shooting every half hour'.[314]

The Eye Framed and Framing the I

This interest in framing the landscape through the *Sun Tunnels*, as if they function as photographic cameras themselves, is already apparent in a preparatory sheet of 1975 through which Holt documented the views in different directions from the centre of the *Sun Tunnels*

[311] Nancy Holt in an interview with Liza Béar, *Avalanche Papers* in the Archives of the Museum of Modern Art, New York City, transcript III-136A, 11-12.
[312] MoMA, 'Avalanche Magazine Papers,' transcript III-127A, 12 and III-136A, 4.
[313] See quote above.
[314] MoMA, 'Avalanche Magazine Papers,' transcript III-127A, 9.

in twelve labelled black-and-white photographs (fig. 87). The views in the four cardinal directions – north, south, east and west – are extended with eight more views in directions that are in between, although all views show more or less the same landscape: a vast plane, with some sparse vegetation, and on the horizon a series of mountains. The idea expressed in this sheet, the basis for the *Sun Tunnels*, is (as Holt herself also acknowledges) directly related to an earlier work by her with the title *Missoula Ranch Locators: Vision Encompassed* (of 1972), located in Montana (fig. 88). In this work, Holt placed eight so-called 'locators' – viewing devices that she created out of short horizontal pipes that were set upon taller vertical pipes – in the landscape on the points of an imaginary compass, through each of which one could see a different view, although all part of the same landscape. The exhibition poster that Holt created for the *Missoula Ranch Locators* in 1972 shows sixteen circular photographs in two circles, as if set on a compass, with the letters 'N, NE, E, SE, S, SW, W and NW' in the middle, indicating the cardinal points (fig. 89a and 89b). The inner circle of photographs shows the individual locators, while the outer circle shows the view that can be seen if one looks through each individual locator. The likeness to Holt's preparation sheet for *Sun Tunnels* is here made explicit, thanks to the directional labelling.

What is of even more importance in this context is the simultaneous experience of looking while also perceiving the very action of looking: seeing through a frame while one is also oneself framed. This is an actual experience that Holt shows in her *Missoula Ranch Locators*, where on the same poster, beneath the collection of photographic images, Holt also includes three further photographs from a greater distance: two with people who are first looking inwards, and then looking outwards through the locators at themselves, after which a third follows without any people at all (fig. 89c). The exhibition poster makes Holt's intention with the work clear:

> Light always was tied very much to sight, to seeing, and so … the viewer was always standing vis-à-vis this sight network that I had set up. And so that your own vision was always relative to another static control vision. And that was what the work became about. It was like always being the only way to see the work was to be in many different positions. There was not taking it in, in a single glance. It was really about walking into your own site. And it's true with the Sun Tunnels also.[315]

It is this artistic idea, in which the decentring of vision is considered paramount, that gets perfected in the *Sun Tunnels.* Instead of a merely visual view, the views of the four *Sun Tunnels* into four different directions gets directly connected to the physical body of the beholder: it is as if the entire being is framed through the act of viewing. Moreover, one can look not only through one tunnel, but through two, due to their precise alignment on the X axes (see fig. 84).

The large size of the tunnels also makes the lapse of time more visible – another sculpture in which the time-specificity equals or outweighs the place-specificity of the Land artwork. As Holt herself states: 'Through the tunnels, parts of the landscape are framed and come into focus. I chose the diameter, length, and distance between the tunnels based on the proportions of what could be seen of the sky and land, and how long the sun could be seen rising and setting on the solstices'.[316] It is the operation of framing that makes the *Sun Tunnels* such an important work to discuss it here, because the frame is quite indeterminate – literally open ended. For *Sun Tunnels* works, like the *Missoula Ranch Locators*, in two directions: one that goes inwards, and one that goes outwards. As Holt puts it: 'From the center of the work, the tunnels extend the viewer visually into the landscape, opening up the perceived space. But once inside the tunnels, the work encloses – surrounds – and there is a framing of the landscape through the ends of the tunnels and through the holes.'[317]

[315] Ibid., transcript III-136A, 4.
[316] Nancy Holt, 'Sun Tunnels', originally printed in *Artforum* in April 1977, reprinted in: Williams, 'Nancy Holt: Sightlines,' 78-91.
[317] Ibid.

Traces of Memory and Art

It is the act of framing the tunnels that Holt has also intentionally (and literally) framed through the photographic camera. In the thirty colour photographs that together constitute the photographic work *Sunlight in Sun Tunnels* from 1976 (fig. 90), Holt was able to capture the sunlight and the shadows in one of the four tunnels every half an hour, starting at 6.30 am and ending at 9.00 pm on the 14th of July that year. Although Holt had an extensive number of photographs of the *Sun Tunnels* in her personal archive, including some sheets with aerial views and others shots of the sculpture without any sun, *Sunlight in Sun Tunnels* is the only photographic work that was intentionally put together by the artist in a sequence and given a title.[318] Here, Holt clearly shows that her photographs are more than mere documentation, or, as she once called it herself (quoting her late husband, Robert Smithson), more than mere 'memory traces'.[319] Indeed, as Ines Schaber asserts, already by studying Holt's archive with its enormous amount of photographs, one can conclude that 'the medium of photography has been integral throughout all stages of her work'.[320] Schaber also sees a parallel here between the actual sculpture of *Sun Tunnels* and Holt's photographs of the work that are brought together in *Sunlight in Sun Tunnels*; as Schaber says, they 'function like her sculptures, as a viewing apparatus'.[321]

In case of the *Sunlight in Sun Tunnels* it is evident that it is not just a question of documentation, but rather a rethinking and reforming of the relation between viewer and sculpture itself. This rethinking comes very close to the concerns of Heizer and Dibbets, as discussed earlier in this chapter. Just like in Heizer's photographic works in relation to his *Munich Depression,* Holt's *Sunlight in Sun Tunnels* capture a similar – almost filmic – time lapse. As Alena Williams states: 'In their exploitation of the indeterminacy of light and

[318] Ines Schaber, 'The Claims She Stakes: A reading of Nancy Holt's Archive', in: ibid., 174.
[319] Nancy Holt, 'Sun Tunnels', originally printed in *Artforum* in April 1977, reprinted in: ibid., 78-91.
[320] Ines Schaber, 'The Claims She Stakes: A reading of Nancy Holt's Archive', in: ibid., 176.
[321] Ibid., 174.

variable viewing positions, these works [expand] the *dispositif* of cinema into contextual relations with real space.'[322] Photograph by photograph, each taken thirty minutes apart, the sun and the shadows, the colours and the intensity of the contrasts change. It is almost as if one can hear the silence that the work emanates: time and space are defined through the experience of the embodied beholder, who starts to listen and see moment by moment. Time becomes present as a continuous moment, because space is located and then expanded through the continuum of the photographic instant. As Holt herself asserts: 'Through the work, the place is seen in a different way. The work becomes a human focal point.'[323] As we have shown, this is explored through the intrinsic connection between photography and sculpture – a link that has never surfaced in any of the texts written on *Sun Tunnels.* Yet it is with this idea of the work as a human focal point that we can turn, at last, to Robert Smithson.

[322] Alena J. Williams, 'Concrete Traces: Nancy Holt's Speaking Media', in: ibid., 193.
[323] Nancy Holt, 'Sun Tunnels', originally printed in *Artforum* in April 1977, reprinted in: ibid., 78-91.

2.4 Robert Smithson: True Fiction Eradicates False Reality

> Noon-day sunshine cinema-ized the site, turning the bridge and the river into an over-exposed picture. Photographing it with my Instamatic 400 was like photographing a photograph. The sun became a monstrous light-bulb that projected a detached series of "stills" through my Instamatic into my eye.
>
> Robert Smithson, 'A Tour of the Monuments of Passaic, New Jersey', 1967.[324]

Like many of the other Land artists, Smithson, too, started with photography out of the necessity of documenting his works *in situ* and the convenience of being able to record ideas or specific sites for his visual archive. And just like other Land artists, Smithson does not fit neatly into the category of photographer, nor was he associated with what was considered to be art photography in the late 1960s. However, what sets Smithson apart from Heizer and some of the other Land artists (although not from Holt or Dibbets) was, as Robert Sobieszek has pointed out, that Smithson's 'photography was not inevitably or exclusively linked to his sculpture'.[325] Or maybe one should say that Smithson's 'sculptures' were so broadly defined that it also included photographs that do not necessarily depict a recognisable sculpture *in situ*. Indeed, the photographs of Smithson include any and every possible theme and format, from a conceptual photographic work that was executed by others – such as his *400 Seattle Horizons* of 1969 (fig. 91) that is no longer existent – to carefully constructed scenes that involved an installation outdoors, such as the so-called 'photo-markers' (figs. 92-95) that were part of the larger project *Six Stops on a Section* in 1968 and which were clearly very much involved with photography itself. It is therefore that there are currently already entire

[324] Smithson, 'A Tour of the Monuments of Passaic, New Jersey' from 1967, in: *Robert Smithson: The Collected Writings*, 70.
[325] Although one could argue against Sobieszek more extreme claims, like his statement that 'Smithson's own photography … differed greatly from and encompassed far more than that of other artists at the same time.' Sobieszek, *Robert Smithson: Photo Works*, 16.

books written on Smithson's photographic works – unlike most of the other artists discussed here.[326]

The Mirrored View

However, many of Smithson's photographic projects go beyond a purely photographic focus, getting close to the sculptural, and they often have a complex relationship to his work *in situ*.[327] A good example is the series *Yucatan Mirror Displacements* and the *Mirror Displacements in England*, both of 1969. In the first series, Smithson took nine colour photographs of nine installations made with an average of twelve mirrors across the Yucatan peninsula in Mexico (fig. 96). Smithson later published these photographs together with an essay, 'Incidents of Mirror-Travel in the Yucatan' in *Artforum* of September 1969, in which he discussed each mirror displacement in one or more paragraphs.[328] In these short texts accompanying each photograph, Smithson names the exact location (a map of the Yucatan with the locations of all the displacements was also printed with the essay) of the mirror displacement, as well as highlighting some visual or material aspects of each temporary installation. They typically include one or more sentences that describe that specific place. Some short excerpts from the first four texts illustrate the general approach:

> **The First Mirror Displacement:**
> … The displacement was *in* the ground, not *on* it. …
>
> **The Second Mirror Displacement:**
> … Timelessness is found in the lapsed moments of perception, in the common pause that breaks apart into a sandstorm of pauses. The malady of wanting to "make" is *unmade*, and the malady of wanting to be "able" is disabled. …
>
> **The Third Mirror Displacement:**
> … A scale in terms of "time" rather than "space" took place. The mirror itself is not subject to duration, because it is an ongoing abstraction that is always available and

[326] See for example Robert Sobieszek's *Robert Smithson: Photo Works*, ibid.
[327] This is something that Sobieszek does not address at all. See: ibid.
[328] The essay is reprinted in: *Robert Smithson: The Collected Writings*, 119-133.

> timeless. The reflections, on the other hand, are fleeting instances that evade measure. Space is the remains, or corpse, of time, it has dimensions. …
>
> **The Fourth Mirror Displacement:**
> … A sense of arrested breakdown prevails over the level mirror surfaces and the level ground. "The true fiction eradicates the false reality," said the voiceless voice of Chalchihuitlicue – the Surd of the Sea. The mirror displacement cannot be expressed in rational dimensions. … Mirrors thrive on surds, and generate incapacity. Reflections fall onto the mirrors without logic, and in so doing invalidate every rational assertion.[329]

Hence, although they were photographic works, the mirror displacements clearly go beyond the photographic: they show Smithson's interest in the intrinsic connections between the visual and the actual, photography and reality, and subject and object.[330] This becomes evident through the reflections, which enable the mirrors to blend into the environment: they become a part of the environment, while still being defined as a sculpture that is about place – both the place of the artwork and the beholder.

This is also clear in the second series, *Mirror Displacements in England*, which was made at various locations in the British landscape (figs. 97-100). The first photograph shows how Smithson created a mirror sculpture out of the eight long, rectangular mirrors that he was using for these displacements. Held upwards on their sides by some stones that seem to belong to the site, these mirrors only reflect sideways, thus showing the same patch of ground that is supporting them. This contrasts the second and fourth pictures, where the mirrors reflect the sky. Or the third photograph, where the mirrors form a sort of trail in the landscape and catch the light in an almost magical way. (This latter photograph comes conceptually close to another one taken by Smithson in the same year, albeit now in the snow: *Mirror Trail, New Jersey*, see fig. 101.) In all of these images, form and vision, self and other, cannot

[329] Ibid., 120-122.
[330] They also denote Smithson's interest in language, cf. with Owens, 'Earthwords.'

be separated: the mirror incorporates both, due to its disappearance in the reflection of the environment in which it is placed.

The continuous reflection of the 'mirror displacements' – both literally and in Smithson's accompanying essay in *Artforum*, in which he 'reflects' through his photographs on his experiences and his photo-sculptural productions – define a specific approach that returns in many of Smithson's subsequent works. The most significant example is definitely the *Spiral Jetty* of 1970 (fig. 102). This Land artwork was built by Smithson with assistance in the Great Salt Lake in Utah, in a part that is called Rozel Point, where the water of the Great Salt Lake is reddish-pink in colour, due to certain bacteria and algae that favour the saline waters of the northern part of the lake where the water salinity is 27 percent.[331] The *Spiral Jetty* itself consists of a massive sculpted spiral that coils counter-clockwise from the shore into the lake – although it has known periods of being submerged entirely underneath the water, while more recently being completely dry due to the receding shoreline of the Great Salt Lake.[332] The spiral was made with about 6650 tons of rocks and earth from the site itself and is about 457 metres long and 4.6 metres wide. The sculpture often would be completely covered by salt crystals, in those times when the water would still submerge the spiral before retreating once again.

In his narrative about the Land artwork, Smithson recalls locating, building and constructing the *Spiral Jetty* in his essay, 'The Spiral Jetty', which he published in 1972.[333] In this text, Smithson reflects (in both pictures and text) on how he first encountered the Great Salt Lake with its red-rosy hue and he then goes on to relate what he claims were his initial

[331] This high salinity (and the water's colour) was the effect of the building of a railroad through the middle of the lake in 1959, thus separating the northern part from the rest of the lake and blocking the movement of the water.
[332] The *Spiral Jetty* was underwater at the end of the twentieth until well into the twenty-first century.
[333] Smithson first published this text in *Arts of the Environment*, edited by Gyorgy Kepes, and it is reprinted in: *Robert Smithson: The Collected Writings*, 143-153.

thoughts about the *Spiral Jetty* before it had even been constructed.[334] Some critics have remarked how Smithson's retrospective storytelling about the making of the *Spiral Jetty* is at odds with the reality of its construction process.[335] An important point in this respect is that the *Spiral Jetty* has had two lives: before the current Jetty with its two inward spirals, there actually was another Jetty with only one spiral. Smithson built this first Jetty, sent all the workers home and then, after contemplating what he had built, called them back to alter the shape of the Jetty into its current form. Smithson subsequently destroyed all drawings, photographs and film material of the first Jetty. However, as some critics have observed, a few documents that show the first version of the Jetty have survived: one is an aerial photograph by Gorgoni of the Jetty, which has often been discussed as a picture of the Jetty 'in progress' but in fact shows the first version (fig. 103), and the other is a photograph showing Smithson with Richard Serra looking at a drawing of the *Spiral Jetty* in which the first version of the Jetty is still visible as a sketch, although crossed out and elongated into the second Jetty version (see fig. 104).[336]

Hence, as Kathleen M. Campagnolo points out, there is a great disparity between Smithson's text in which he writes about his idea of the *Spiral Jetty* 'as though its shape was set from its inception' and the reality of its trial and error history.[337] However, that this 'rewriting of history' is maybe less a result of Smithson's 'fluency … in the handling and distribution of the work through photographic media' (Campagnolo) than the result of Smithson's interest in technology's potential to blend fiction and reality has been left unexplored (but will be investigated in the next chapter, where we will consider the film

[334] I return to this point in the next chapter on film.
[335] See: Jennifer L. Roberts, *Mirror-Travels: Robert Smithson and History* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2004). Compare with: Campagnolo, 'Spiral Jetty through the Camera's Eye.'
[336] Jennifer L. Roberts points out the first version of the Jetty with 'an island at the end', see: Roberts, *Mirror-Travels: Robert Smithson and History*. Kathleen M. Campagnolo mentions the photograph of Smithson and Serra in her text: Campagnolo, 'Spiral Jetty through the Camera's Eye.'
[337] 'Spiral Jetty through the Camera's Eye,' 22.

Spiral Jetty in relation to its 'storyboard' and the text *The Spiral Jetty*).[338] Smithson's intention in rewriting the history of the Jetty as a myth, that is to say, as something constructed turned into that which is presented as the natural result of the actual site, points towards Smithson's larger aesthetic practice, as well as his film *Spiral Jetty* and the story that accompanies the film. Moreover, it also points directly towards Smithson's interest in photography to actualise his aesthetic ideas – after all, photography is probably the medium above all others for making myths, with its ability to both alienate and naturalise the view on reality.[339] This is a view that definitely requests a deeper investigation of the continuous blurring of what one could define 'reality and fiction' in Smithson's work, and therefore needs to be our next step, before progressing to the next chapter.

In between Reality and Fiction

In an interview with Sharp around 1970, Smithson talks about his aesthetic ideas in relation to Land Art. In that discussion, the dialogue revolves around geological time in contrast to contemporary time and how Land Art builds on, in Smithson's words, a 'question of awareness and a question of consciousness'.[340] Smithson explains: '… the more conscious one becomes, the more he becomes conscious of … matter and the great expense of time that has gone into the sculpting of matter. … [T]he last 6,000 years of … culture is a drop in the bucket compared to the geologic time span, and I think that's one thing that most of us here are aware of, is time, and the extent of the time of the earth.'[341] This is an interesting remark in relation to the apparent emphasis of time over place, which relates to the discussion of the

[338] Ibid.
[339] I refer to Theodor W. Adorno's definition of myth here, as something 'constructed made to be seen as natural'. See the section 'Natural History' in: Adorno et al., *Aesthetic Theory*.
[340] MoMA, 'Avalanche Magazine Papers,' folder III.3, 8.
[341] Ibid.

works of De Maria's *Earth Room* and Oppenheim's *Gallery Transplant #1* in the previous chapter. Further on, Smithson explains why this awareness of time is crucial to him:

> [T]he earth has a definite shape, it tends to be illusive, now I'll say this, it gets more elusive because time itself is illusive and we can't accept the uncertainty, we come into an art of uncertainty and the very instability of things become important, I mean Mother Earth …
> Let's say that the site is the center point that you focus on [or] that the non-site is the center point that you focus on and [then] the [other non-site or] site is the unfocused fringe, in other words, when you mind is driven towards the fringe it loses its boundaries and a sense of the oceanic pervades. … The passage of time and the attainment of time through the time; you can't talk about timelessness if you don't know anything about time, so that in order to arrive at the timeless intersection, in order to arrive at the time of intersection you first travel through time.[342]

It is this central importance of time and the necessity of a threshold, a 'framed border', that seems to have led Smithson, like the other Land artists, to his extensive use of photography.

Photography's ability to create a sense of timelessness, of shaping vision through imposing a certain border or frame around the work of art, and its ability to decentralise the single-point perspective of human experience through its multitude of angles and captured moments, was the perfect tool for Smithson to achieve his aesthetic aims. As he remarks, as soon as something is photographed, immediately there are two things instead of one.[343] This leads to a decentralised view that also seems to underlie Smithson's mirror displacements, where there is always the sense of not simply looking at something outside oneself (a landscape, for example), but also looking at oneself looking – the inevitable awareness of one's own presence on that location and in that specific time. One is thus situated in-between two 'selves' in space: oneself and one's reflection, in a way that comes close to the mirroring of the two opposite cuts in the rocks of Heizer's *Double Negative*.[344]

[342] Ibid., folder III.3, 9 and 13.
[343] Ibid., folder III.3, 47.
[344] See the introduction.

Yet Campagnolo observes about the construction of the *Spiral Jetty* that the series of *Mirror Displacements,* too, show 'inconsistencies' in which actual reality and a fictional element coincide – almost as if Smithson is rewriting history. In the photographs of the *Mirror Displacements,* for example, one never glimpses the photographer him- or herself: all one sees in the mirrors is nature – infinitely reflected back upon itself. Every mirror in the photographs shows either a reflection of its natural surroundings, or the sky. It is as if Smithson imbues his photographs with something that hints to the 'uncanny': an element in the work that seems to be slightly off the truth – whatever that truth might be in a particular situation, which is inevitably intuited by the beholder of those works. One could therefore wonder, contrary to Campagnolo's deductions, if Smithson intentionally left the photograph of himself and Serra undestroyed, or even encouraged its dissemination, so as to ensure the unexpected discovery at some point in the future that he had, in fact, 'rewritten' history. After all, Smithson has often expressed his interest in the 'artificial' boundaries of a work of art, that he himself would create as a 'true fiction': 'I'm interested in the artificial limits that I set up'.[345] And, as he stated in his text accompanying the *Mirror Displacements*: 'The true fiction eradicates the false reality'.[346] It is clear that for Smithson, like the other Land artists explored in this chapter, photography directly engages with these ontological questions of the nature of reality and therefore with the boundaries imposed on the artwork by the artists himself.[347] It might be that Smithson engaged himself with leaving clues or certain markings about the boundaries set up by the artist that both fragment and constitute the initial 'coherent' reception of the work.

[345] MoMA, 'Avalanche Magazine Papers,' folder III.3, 40 and 42.
[346] See his text 'Incidents of Mirror-Travel in the Yucatan', in: *Robert Smithson: The Collected Writings*, 123.
[347] Cf. with Paul Ricoeur's 'The Function of Fiction in Shaping Reality', in: Paul Ricoeur and Mario J. Valdés, *A Ricoeur Reader: Reflection and Imagination* (Toronto u.a.: University of Toronto Press, 1991), 117-136.

Once again, however, photography is here not merely used as a mere document or record of the artwork. In this respect, it is meaningful to assess the dialogue between Smithson and Sharp during the interview for *Avalanche* magazine:

> Robert Smithson: 'I can also get back to the idea that the photograph is inadequate, I think it's completely unfounded.'
> Sharp: 'You don't think that the photograph is inadequate?'
> Smithson: 'I've written a theory on photography in my -- [talk over]'
> Sharp: 'Then there's no hierarchy?'
> Smithson: 'Right.'
> Sharp: 'Okay, well, I disagree with that, I think that, I agree that you can –'
> Smithson: 'There's a site selection.'[348]

Smithson then adds a bit later, 'there are two realities, equally viable, the photograph and the work'. [349] In other words, the importance of fiction and reality for Smithson and his use of photography does not hang on a discrimination between 'false' and 'true', but rather on 'site selection': not only the selection of a physical location for the artwork, but also the selection of other 'sites' – the creation of multiple parts of the artwork through different media that exist 'elsewhere': sites created with photographs, texts, or films. There is no hierarchy between one medium or the other – they rather altogether create the complex sculpture on *and off* the sites selected by the artist. This lack of hierarchy links directly to the decentring power of these Smithson's complex sculptures, which is also a characteristic of the photographs here discussed. This decentring power is related to the notion of reality as disconnected from one's personal view, a feature which photography – by its very ontology – allows us to access. As we have seen, it is this capacity of photography that connects the Land artists considered in this chapter in their use of the medium, which is in its turn connected to their search for a different worldview: a different view of the self in relation to the world.

[348] MoMA, 'Avalanche Magazine Papers,' folder III.3, 20.
[349] Ibid., folder III.3, 21.

Similar to the other artists discussed in this chapter, Smithson, too, often talked explicitly about this change of worldview, for example when he says that '[w]e're [the Land artists] involved with a kind of anti-self idea.'[350] In the same interview, Smithson goes on to explain this by saying that in primitive cultures, 'men had no self', since 'their community was a self'.[351] And this specific worldview Smithson also postulates as leading the work done in Land Art, where, as he says, 'the self just sort of dissipates'. In other words, there is less of an involvement with the self because the self is no longer involved with an idea of individuality, and more with that which is 'outside' the self.[352] Smithson therefore emphasises that Land Art brings the feeling of 'self against itself', in which the Ego disappears as the central concern.[353] It is this ideal of an egoless self and the worldview that would result from that, which is enabled by the photographic camera, and it is this worldview that Smithson tries to accomplish in his works. As he says in his essay, 'Art Through the Camera's Eye':

> Under red lights in a dark room worlds apart from our own emerge from chemicals and negative. What we believed to be most solid and tangible becomes in the process slides and prints. … A camera is wild in just anybody's hands, therefore one must set limits. But cameras have a life of their own. Cameras care nothing about cults or isms. They are indifferent mechanical eyes, ready to devour anything in sight. They are lenses of the unlimited reproduction. Like mirrors they may be scorned for their power to duplicate our individual experiences. It is not hard to consider an Infinite Camera without an ego. Somewhere between the still and the movie camera, I postulate the Infinite Camera (no truth value should be attached to this postulation, it should be regarded as something to write about).[354]

This 'Infinite Camera without an Ego' appears to neatly summarise all the different and individual uses of photography in Land Art as discussed in this chapter. Like a mirror, they not only show the context in which they are placed, but also the – visible or invisible –

[350] Ibid., folder III.3, 14.
[351] Ibid., folder III.5, 12.
[352] Ibid., folder III.5, 13.
[353] Ibid., folder III.5, 14.
[354] *Robert Smithson: The Collected Writings*, 372.

beholder, by establishing a path that leads both inwards and outwards, into nature and into self, art and society, yet never getting stuck in one 'box' on that road. As Smithson remarked once:

> It's like the art in a sense is a mirror and what is going on out there is a reflection. There is always a correspondence. The reflection might be the mind or the mirror might be the matter. But you always have these two things – they are always mixed. They are intertwining and they form a dual unity and to say that one is better than another is to go around like a squirrel in a cage.[355]

Hence, it can be said that the 'Infinite Camera' – the lens of an 'unlimited reproduction' of the visible – is thus 'without an Ego', as Smithson's *Mirror Displacements* are without visible beholder, and the *Spiral Jetty* without a single site. Or, as Smithson would say: '[the] center is everywhere and [the] circumference is nowhere'.[356] And it is this latter remark that will become even more visible in the use of film in Land Art, which will be the subject of the next chapter, where we will continue this discussion of Smithson's use of lens-based media in relation to his *in situ* works.

[355] Symposium of *Earth Art*, 1969, transcripts, in: Smithsonian, 'Robert Smithson and Nancy Holt Papers.'
[356] A slightly rephrased quote, as used earlier on this dissertation, by Smithson: *Robert Smithson: The Collected Writings*, 210.

2.5 Second Preliminary Conclusion

After first redefining the parameters of what has to be considered Land Art's 'exhibition spaces' in the first chapter of this dissertation, as well as the relation between the use of different media and the *in situ* artworks, pointing to their complexity, this second chapter zoomed-in more specifically on the use of photography in Land Art. As this is also a subject in the study of Land Art about which not much has been written so far, our first task was to look into the question of why this is the case – especially in the face of the large amount of evidence left by the artists themselves emphasising the importance of photography for and in their work (not only for documentation). This chapter therefore turned to the large, but hitherto unstudied, discrepancy between the original interviews on tapes and transcripts, and the final published interview 'Discussions with Heizer, Oppenheim, Smithson' (from 1970) – with a focus on the use of photography in Land Art as discussed in the taped interviews by the artists themselves. The evidence of the (so far unpublished and never cited) primary materials that resulted from this research showed that the Land artists were, in fact, deeply concerned and intrigued by the possibilities of photography – still an upcoming medium in the art world at their time (during the late 1960s). Moreover, instead of considering the photographs of their works as 'less' (either in quality or meaning) than the actual works *in situ*, we have seen that the artists discussed here were using photography to frame their complex sculptures of Land Art by a constellation of alternative, lens-based media sites – a welcome tool used extensively by all of them to express their artistic ideas towards a decentred world.

By means of four case studies, the photographs taken by Heizer, Dibbets, Holt and Smithson, this chapter then set out to discover what these artistic ideas could be, and how they manifested themselves in the photographs of Land Art. Another concern was the relation between the photographs and the sculptures, and the resulting ontological questions that

issued from that relationship. By means of these case studies it has become evident that one of the main operations of the *in situ* sculptures here discussed often involved an *intrinsic photographic element*, either related to vision as such, or to the zoom-function, framing, and 'cut' of the photographic camera. In other words, not only did it become clear that photography is often used as an artwork in itself in Land Art, complementing the *in situ* sculpture, but the attention has also been drawn to the other side of the dialectic: the possibility of sculpture to function *as* a photographic camera by itself – of course without losing sight of their intrinsic differences. Thus, the affinities between sculpture and photography became evident and through the discussion of specific Land artworks it was shown that the photographs often carried similar questions as the on-site sculptures, and the other way around.

The four case studies discussed in this chapter all brought, albeit in their own distinct ways, what one could call a 'big picture effect' – as the NASA photographs from space did – either by transporting the beholder of the artwork from seeing to the sense of being seen, or by putting the viewer on the threshold where landscape and non-landscape, self and other start to intermingle through specific interventions in one's vision (Heizer's 'deprivation of vision', Dibbets's 'perspective corrections', Holt's 'framing device' or a 'human focal point', and Smithson's 'Infinite Camera without an Ego'). This pointed us into the direction of questions concerning the ontological critique that photography incorporates in its very existence: existential questions about how one relates to the world, what the nature of our reality is, and how our perception of that reality shapes and even enacts our direct environment.

That is to say that, due to the photograph's ability to 'double' existing reality, the photograph itself inevitably brings questions about fiction and the real – in other words, ontological questions regarding the visible world. As we have seen, all of the artists discussed

in this chapter felt strongly attracted to the medium of photography due to this intrinsic characteristic, and they seem to revel in photography's ability to create a sense of timelessness, its ability to 'shape' vision through framing that which is seen, and its ability to decentralise the single-point perspective that we are normally stuck in by providing a multitude of different viewpoint and unexpected angles. Finally, we have started to investigate how this intrinsic photographic capability to question reality seems to intersect the values and artistic intentions of the artists working in Land Art. We have shortly touched upon Smithson's interest in an 'anti-self idea' and the 'dissipation of self' in Land Art and its connected lens-based media – an ideal of an egoless self and the worldview that would come from such a self that the photographic camera enables. We will now continue to explore this further by turning to another lens-based medium often employed by the artists working in Land Art: film.

Chapter III – Land Art's Filmic Reality: An Expanded Landscape

> The fact that in a moving picture successive film frames are fit flush into the fixed screen frame results in a phenomenological frame that is indefinitely extendible and contractible, limited in the smallness of the object it can grasp only by the state of its technology, and in largeness only by the span of the world.
>
> Stanley Cavell, *The World Viewed: Reflections on the Ontology of Film.*[357]

The capacity of film to grasp the different planes of existence, from the microcosmic to the macrocosmic, and to set an exchange in motion between these different levels, thus establishing a dynamic relation between them, can definitely be seen as the medium's most astonishing characteristic. One could claim that this ability is key to understanding why film and Land Art have become so intertwined. Film can simultaneously present the world in its most expanded reality, while relating this immensity to the small details that lie at the basis of this reality, and back again. A facial expression can become a landscape of emotions, quickly intersecting with an overview of a natural landscape – some grassy plains – or even the extra-terrestrial (in the case of science fiction). Hence, film's 'phenomenological frame' enables a connection between subject and object, viewer and world, local and global (and even cosmic) space, visualising (and thus making it possible to experience) the ongoing dialectics that take place on an ontological level between the self and the world.[358]

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[357] Cavell, *The World Viewed: Reflections on the Ontology of Film*, 25.

[358] The intertwinement of film and the microcosmic and macrocosmic was experimentally portrayed in the educational film *Powers of Ten: A Film Dealing with the Relative Size of Things in the Universe and the Effect of Adding Another Zero* by Charles and Ray Eames in 1968 (later released in 1977). This adds an interesting synchronicity to the early experimentation with film in Land Art, in which the relative size of things also played a significant part. It is without doubt that the Apollo Program of the 1960s, culminating with the first man on the moon in 1969, played a huge role in the conception of the Land Art films discussed in this chapter. See for a further discussion of this theme: Sleeman, 'Land Art and the Moon Landing,' 299-328. Another film worth mentioning here is David Lamelas' *A Study of Relationships between Outer and Inner Space*, a black/white film from 1969, which shows an inside exhibition space and then 'zooms out' to the city of London where that gallery is situated, and finally ends with the moon landing.

Cavell remarks that the difference between photography and film is that photography confines the senses, 'leaving room for thought', whereas film emphasises one's passivity: 'I am present not at something happening, which I must confirm [as in theatre], but at something that has happened, which I absorb (like a memory).'[359] Yet Cavell stresses that this passivity and powerlessness engendered by film also empowers the viewer to establish 'our connection with the world' without trying to manipulate it towards one's own desires and wishes: film helps us to 'stop altering it [the world] illegitimately, against itself'.[360] According to Cavell, this aspect of film, which he connects to 'a wish *not* to need power', is directly linked to an experience of displacement while viewing a film: during the screening of a film, one's fixed place in the world becomes uncertain – it is as if one is distanced from it, which enables a certain freedom from one's personal inclinations and preferences that relate all things in the world to one's immediate place in (and use of) that world.[361]

It is precisely this sort of distance that film can evoke, not only through its technical visual apparatus, allowing us to be transported to another place visually, but also through its setting, in which one's physical location is neutralised (and to a certain extent immobilised) by the 'black box' (the cinema or theatre). In Cavell's words: 'The explanation is not so much that the world is passing us by, as that we are displaced from our natural habitation within it, placed at a distance from it. The screen overcomes our fixed distance; it makes displacement appear as our natural condition.'[362]

In this chapter, it will be argued that it is precisely this continuous displacement through film by the use of movement in time (in contrast to the still images of photography)[363] that permits us 'to view the world unseen' (again, in contrast to photography,

[359] Cavell, *The World Viewed: Reflections on the Ontology of Film*, 24 and 26.
[360] Ibid., 25 and 102.
[361] Ibid., 40 (emphasis mine).
[362] Ibid., 41.
[363] On the history of the differences and connections between photography and film, see Anne-Marie Willis's essay 'Photography and Film: Figures in/of History', in: Leslie Devereux and Roger Hillman, *Fields of Vision:*

where one is inevitably drawn into the reflexivity of seeing oneself seeing, as argued in Chapter II).[364] It will also be shown that these crucial characteristics of film spurred interest in this medium by artists working in Land Art in the late 1960s to the late 1970s in both Europe and America. This is a link that has not been fully researched to date, and only a few studies of Land Art discuss film at all, while even fewer see the films as Land artworks in their own right, intrinsically intertwined with the works *in situ*.[365] In this chapter, I would like to show that, by combining film with the Land artists' sculptural practices – either by making films about their own art or by using film *as* Land Art – an expanded landscape was created, in which not only the physical artwork could be expanded (through media like film and photography), but also the very aesthetics of Land Art as such and the ontological questions the artists working in Land Art asked themselves (and, through their work, the beholder). Through film, Land Art's sculptures were able to relate to a vast network of visual possibilities, in which the aesthetic implications of the so-called 'big picture effect' could be explored together with the beholder. That is to say, contrary to the influential critique of Minimalism and Land Art formulated by Michael Fried in his essay 'Art and Objecthood' in 1967, one could argue that these artists were seeking ways through Land Art in which *both* presence and absence, 'presentness' and distance, would become components of their aesthetic vision through their search for a continuous relationship between their artworks on-

Essays in Film Studies, Visual Anthropology, and Photography (Berkeley and Los Angeles, California: University of California Press, 1995), 77-93. Also cf. with Gilles Deleuze's influential works on film, which he distinguishes from photography through their durée: film is a continuum in time, not a 'snapshot' of time. Gilles Deleuze, *Cinema 1* (London: Continuum, 2009).

[364] Cavell, *The World Viewed: Reflections on the Ontology of Film*, 40.

[365] Studies of Land Art that mention film (although almost always limited to Robert Smithson's film *Spiral Jetty*) are: Boettger, *Earthworks: Art and the Landscape of the Sixties*; Kaiser and Kwon, *Ends of the Earth: Land Art to 1974*; Kwon, *One Place after Another: Site-Specific Art and Locational Identity*; Lynne Cooke et al., *Robert Smithson - Spiral Jetty: True Fictions, False Realities* (New York; Berkeley: Dia Art Foundation ; University of California Press, 2005). Studies with a more thorough analysis include: McFadden, *Walter De Maria: Meaningless Work*, where she mentions two of Walter De Maria's films in more detail; Uroskie, 'La Jetée En Spirale: Robert Smithson's Stratigraphic Cinema.'; Campagnolo, 'Spiral Jetty through the Camera's Eye.'

site and the distancing and displacing functions of different media, such as film, photography and texts.[366]

Fried's 'Art and Objecthood', which was published in the June issue of *Artforum* in 1967, evoked humorous yet urgent responses from both Robert Smithson and Dan Flavin in the form of articles (also published in *Artforum*) in the subsequent months: both perceived Fried's critique as misguided in its conclusions.[367] Fried's critique points to the annihilation of distance between viewer and artwork in the 'newer aesthetic' that takes 'relationships out of the work and makes them a function of space, light, and the viewer's field of vision' (Fried quoting Robert Morris) thus creating what Fried has called 'a kind of *stage* presence'.[368] In this chapter, I will suggest that Fried's critique of 'stage presence' in Minimalism (and Land Art) is in fact countered by the so-called 'experiential remoteness' (explained further on in this chapter in relation to Smithson's use of displacement) of the *in situ* artwork of Land Art, which is made perceivable through the use of film (and photography) by the artists working in Land Art. Hence, this chapter also presents a possible interpretation of why and how these artists perceived themselves as being opposed to Fried's notion of 'stage presence'.[369]

This chapter argues that the films and the sculptures of Land Art are engaged in an important mutual, artistic exchange in which both play an indispensable role. Initially, to think about Land Art and its relation to film seems bound to induce an infinite sequel of oppositional concepts: immediately, one focuses on the contradictions that appear between the two. After all, whereas the on-site sculptures of Land Art invite an experience that is directly related to the body of the beholder, which explores and senses the site and context of

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[366] As Erin Hogan argues, 'For him [Fried], land art would be the pinnacle of objecthood.' Erin Hogan, *Spiral Jetta: A Road Trip through the Land Art of the American West* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2008), 23.
[367] See Robert Smithson's 'Letter to the Editor', first published in *Artforum* in 1967 and reproduced in: *Robert Smithson: The Collected Writings*, 66-67.
[368] Fried, 'Art and Objecthood,' 125 and 127.
[369] Kirstie Skinner's essay 'Moving in the Image: Judd's Crystals', where she reads 'filmic values' into Judd's works, could also be seen as supporting this thesis. Kirstie Skinner, 'Moving in the Image: Judd's Crystals,' in *Sculpture and Film*, ed. Jon Wood and Ian Christie (London and New York: Routledge, 2019), 68-81.

the Land artwork in the landscape, film is necessarily bound to a form of absence since what it represents is not actually there to physically engage with. Instead, things are viewed, as it were, from a distance, *mediated*, with the body more or less immobilised while watching the film from within a cinema or gallery space (or in the studio). It is thus that oppositions between the *in situ* artwork and film are often formulated as presence versus absence, materiality versus immateriality, direct experience versus mediation. This has, however, in recent years been contested. As Cavell notes: 'Movies are hard to remember, the way the actual events of yesterday are. And yet … like dreams, certain moments from films viewed decades ago will nag as vividly as moments of childhood. It is as if you had to remember what happened before you slept. Which suggests that film awakens as much as it enfolds you.'[370]

Much more recently, Jon Wood and Ian Christie have argued in their book *Sculpture and Film* (2018) that film and cinema 'reshaped the landscape of art and specifically sculpture and sculptural practice during the twentieth century.'[371] They also point out that film, in the last half century, has become more closely associated with sculpture than with painting or graphic media (as had been the case before), and that filmic representation greatly 'enlarges our understanding of sculptural space'.[372] This suggestion is supported by the history of sculptors using film. One example is (again) Brancusi, who acquired his own 16mm film camera in the early 1930s; another example is found in the many experiments with film undertaken during the first Surrealist movement. By the late 1960s, film was explored in the context of 'Expanded Cinema' (a book by Gene Youngblood and R.

[370] Cavell, *The World Viewed: Reflections on the Ontology of Film*, 67.
[371] Jon Wood and Ian Christie, *Sculpture and Film* (London & New York: Routledge - Taylor and Francis, 2019), xiv.
[372] Ibid.

Buckminster Fuller, in which they expounded film, cinema and television as new artistic mediums).[373]

Many questions and arguments relating both to film and sculpture, as well as their interrelation, emerged in the 1960s, during which artists experimented with film and the context in which films were viewed. At the same time, however, certain preconditions of film remained the same throughout the twentieth century, for example the motionlessness of the beholder of the film. As Man Ray once pointed out: 'You know as well as I do that to look at paintings and sculptures, one must move about. … When art stands still, one must move about. When art moves, one may remain motionless.'[374] These two oppositions – stillness and movement – connect film to the sculptures of Land Art, too. Already from the early beginnings of Land Art, several artists made ephemeral Land Art pieces, which would only exist for a short time, with film often chosen as the medium to document the piece: Alan Sonfist's many films, Peter Hutchinson's *A Day in the Life of Mt. Sopras* (1972), Mary Miss's *Cut-Off* (1974-1975), Dennis Oppenheim's numerous short films, Patricia Johanson's *Stephen Long* (1968), and the work of the many contemporary Land Art practitioners for whom film is often one of the most important mediums, such as for Andy Goldsworthy, whose Land Artworks are almost exclusively seen through photography and film.

In order to begin exploring these interrelated issues, this chapter will start by analysing one of the most significant projects of film in Land Art: Robert Smithson's film *Spiral Jetty* (1970), probably the most famous case of a film of *and as* Land Art. This film was conceived by Smithson as being a part (and thus a primary artwork in itself and not merely a supplementary document) of his Land artwork of the same name in the Great Salt Lake in Utah in the United States. The *Spiral Jetty* is a prime example of a complex sculpture

[373] Gene Youngblood and R. Buckminster Fuller, *Expanded Cinema* (London: Studio Vista, 1970).
[374] Man Ray, in *Art in Cinema: A Symposium on the Avantgarde Film*, ed. Frank Stauffacher (New York: Arno Press, 1968), 25.

and shows how film and Land Art can complement each other through bringing together opposites like closeness and distancing, *in situ* experience and filmic displacement (or, to use the term that is now most closely associated with Smithson's works, dislocation). Moreover, the film *Spiral Jetty* is a far-reaching artistic exploration that raises issues of an ontological, historical, social and cultural nature. Yet as this chapter will suggest, although Smithson's film *Spiral Jetty* can be seen as exemplary, the aesthetics and concerns of his film were shared by most Land artists who used lens-based media in relation to their Land artworks in the late 1960s and 1970s.

Smithson's film is therefore an important starting point for the present chapter and it also continues the discussion of Smithson's photographic work in Chapter II, showing, once again, Smithson's deep engagement with technological and time-based media, which was also reflected in the many other films Smithson made during his life. This chapter will then analyse Walter De Maria's almost unknown film, *Beds of Spikes,* which will be shown to have an intrinsic relation to his *magnum opus* in New Mexico, *The Lightning Field.* Finally, through an analysis of Mary Kelly's *An Earthwork Performed* a more ephemeral type of filmic experience will be considered, one that also explores the fact that the qualities that are inherently related to film as a medium apparently made it easier for women artists to participate in the predominantly male Land Art movement. This chapter thus focuses on the time-based medium of film, which stands in direct contrast to the more common focus on the site-specific materiality of the artworks that has generally pervaded discourses around Land Art.[375]

[375] Cf. with Kwon, *One Place after Another: Site-Specific Art and Locational Identity*. It has to be noted that film makes it hard to distinguish between space and time. As Panofsky said, film can be seen both as the 'dynamization of space' and the 'spatialization of time'. See Erwin Panofsky's 'Style and Medium in the Motion Pictures' (first published in 1937), in: Leo Braudy and Marshall Cohen, *Film Theory and Criticism: Introductory Readings* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2016), 233-248.

This shift in focus more explicitly discussed in this chapter – from materiality and space towards immateriality and time (already touched upon in the previous chapters, when relating place-specificity to time-specificity) – has been explored by a few other scholars working on the art of the 1960s and 1970s.[376] As one such scholar, Andrew Uroskie, has recently noted, there has been 'an exclusive concern with the rhetorical topos of materiality and dematerialization [that] has served to obfuscate a more substantive interest in questions of temporality and process in the art of this period.'[377] This aspect will become especially important in this chapter, where the *time-specific* artworks of Land Art will be discussed, alongside the *site-specific* Land artworks on-site. Finally, it will also become clear in this chapter how film was deployed to provide new kinds of landscapes for Land Art that transcended the possibilities and limitations of the on-site works, as well as the photographs of Land Art. The question that this chapter tries to answer is therefore: In which ways can the films created by the artists working in Land Art be considered an expanded landscape of Land Art itself, and what is the nature of the relation between these filmic works and the on-site Land Art?

[376] Lee, *Chronophobia: On Time in the Art of the 1960s*.
[377] Uroskie, 'La Jetée En Spirale: Robert Smithson's Stratigraphic Cinema,' 56.

3.1 Time and Scale in (and out of) Robert Smithson's *Spiral Jetty*

> The sites in films are not to be located or trusted. All is out of proportion. Scale inflates or deflates into uneasy dimensions. We wander between the towering and the bottomless. We are lost between the abyss within us and the boundless horizons outside us.
>
> Robert Smithson, 'A Cinematic Atopia', 1971. [378]

When thinking of one of the great icons of Land Art, Robert Smithson's *Spiral Jetty* (1970) in the Great Salt Lake in Utah, the first images that come to mind are probably the famous aerial photographs of the work taken by Gianfranco Gorgoni and first made public as a photowork of eight large photographs during the exhibition *Information* (July 2 – September 20, 1970, see fig. 105) at the Museum of Modern Art in New York City.[379] However, in second place is likely to be the film *Spiral Jetty* (1970), which was first made public during the exhibition *Robert Smithson: Great Salt Lake* at the Dwan Gallery in New York City in November 1970, where it was screened once a day during the four weeks of the show, and which has become the best documented film of Land Art.[380] Indeed, during the time that the *Spiral Jetty* was underwater at the end of the twentieth until well into the twenty-first century, some people believed that Smithson had intended that the Land artwork would only be visible through mediation – especially through the film.[381]

However, it is not widely known that Smithson considered the *Spiral Jetty* to incorporate a tripartite constellation of elements: the on-site Land artwork at the Great Salt Lake, the related film and photographic works, as well as an accompanying text written by

[378] Robert Smithson, 'A Cinematic Atopia', in: *Robert Smithson: The Collected Writings*, 141.
[379] See Chapter I for a more extensive discussion of Smithson's photography. *Information*, ed. Kynaston McShine (New York: Museum of Modern Art, 1970).
[380] Cf. 'La Jetée En Spirale: Robert Smithson's Stratigraphic Cinema.'; Campagnolo, 'Spiral Jetty through the Camera's Eye.'; Nora M. Alter, 'Acoustic Shaping: Sound, Film and Sculpture,' in *Film and Sculpture*, ed. Jon Wood and Ian Christie (London and New York: Routledge, 2019); Cooke et al., *Robert Smithson - Spiral Jetty: True Fictions, False Realities*.
[381] Cf. Shapiro, *Earthwards: Robert Smithson and Art after Babel*, 5.

Smithson himself. All these works share the name *Spiral Jetty* and were considered by Smithson to be primary (interrelated) artworks in themselves. Indeed, one could even claim, as Nora Alter does, that 'the earthwork sculpture is in many ways the stage set for the filmic product.'[382] In the text 'The Spiral Jetty' (1972), Smithson refers to this complex intertwinement, and more specifically to the intertwinement of the film and the Land artwork on-site, for example when he considers the film and the sculpted *Spiral Jetty* as both ontologically and aesthetically intertwined: 'a film is a spiral made up of frames'.[383]

Indeed, the haunting images of the film *Spiral Jetty* are difficult to forget once seen and become intrinsically connected to the actual work on-site through the memory of the beholder: from the images of a yellow bulldozer releasing approximately 6,650 tons of heavy basalt rocks into the rosy water at Rozel Point in the Great Salt Lake (fig. 106), thus slowly giving shape to the material form of *Spiral Jetty*, to the Hitchcock-like scene at the end of the movie, in which Smithson himself is filmed from an aerial perspective while running towards the end of the Jetty, as if haunted by the helicopter whose sound one continuously hears and which is occasionally spotted in the film itself through its shadow moving over the water (fig. 107-110).[384] It is this helicopter that was also intentionally used by Smithson as an artistic tool, by instructing the cameraman, who had been sent by the Ace Gallery in Los Angeles to film the process of constructing the Jetty, to manoeuvre 'the sun's reflection through the Spiral Jetty until it reached the center', using 'the water … as a vast thermal mirror' in which the reflection of the sun, the lens of the camera and the shaped earth and rocks of the *Spiral Jetty* visually become one in a 'spiral of collapsed matter' (see fig. 111).[385]

[382] Alter, 'Acoustic Shaping: Sound, Film and Sculpture,' 45.
[383] *Robert Smithson: The Collected Writings*, 148.
[384] Several authors note the similarity of Smithson's running scene in *Spiral Jetty* to the scene in Hitchcock's *North by Northwest* (1959). See, amongst others, K.M. Campagnolo: Campagnolo, 'Spiral Jetty through the Camera's Eye,' 19; Uroskie, 'La Jetée En Spirale: Robert Smithson's Stratigraphic Cinema,' 54-79.
[385] *Robert Smithson: The Collected Writings*, 147-148.

Smithson made this and other ideas about how he wanted the *Spiral Jetty* to be filmed visible through a drawn storyboard in which he visualised the film as a series of 'movie treatments', with the storyboard in its final form used for the exhibition poster for Smithson's show at the Dwan Gallery where the film was first shown (see fig. 112). The use of the storyboard as the basis for an exhibition poster, as well as the acoustics and sound in the movie, already suggests that the film *Spiral Jetty* was meant to be an artwork in its own right and not a documentary film about the on-site work.[386] This intuition is affirmed as soon as the opening shots of the film *Spiral Jetty* appear on the screen: directly after the title the viewer is displaced into outer space, while watching a close-up of flares shooting out of the sun (fig. 113). Then Smithson is heard in the voice-over, stating the name and place of the *Spiral Jetty* in 'the Great Salt Lake in Utah', thus bringing the viewer back to Earth. This is immediately followed by a shot from the front of a car on a road in a vast, dry landscape, without any sense of the exact location of the vehicle (fig. 114). The scene then changes again: the screen is now filled by white pieces of paper whirling down to a cracked, dry ground (fig. 115), accompanied by Smithson's voice: 'The Earth's history seems at times like a story recorded in a book each page of which is torn into small pieces. Many of the pages and some of the pieces are missing.' After this last sentence, the focus returns to the car on the road, although the camera now films the landscape from the car's rear window, showing the large amounts of dust that the car produces because of its movement through the dry desert with most of the landscape seen through a camera lens obscured by this dust (fig. 116).

These first scenes already show the complex aesthetics of the film *Spiral Jetty*: this is a film that continuously alternates between the known and the unknown, the visible and the

[386] In her essay in the recently published collection *Sculpture and Film*, Nora M. Alter argues that it is precisely the sound that 'pushes the film beyond the status of documentary', since the soundtrack is often amplified or certain diegetic sounds are muted, because of which 'the soundtrack … radically transforms the viewer's experience of the earthwork'. In another context, Alter states that sound can also be used 'to sculpt the site of the exhibition and to direct the viewer through the space of the work'. Alter, 'Acoustic Shaping: Sound, Film and Sculpture,' 45 and 47.

invisible – never allowing the viewer to think for a moment that (s)he knows where the film is going, thus working against the ostensible documentary format (and title) of the movie. Moreover, time and space are intentionally disconnected visually, and Smithson seems to use the spatial capacities of film to dislocate the beholder in an abstract landscape (of mere dust, for example) to underline the indeterminacy of time if seen from the perspective of geological time – which is shown in the film itself as fragmented and uncertain, as the 'torn pages of a book' (Smithson). Associations gleaned from unexpected angles and sources continuously permeate the film, while no explanation is given about the intentions that underlie the *Spiral Jetty*: the film is presented as a story that has the on-site *Spiral Jetty* as its protagonist, allowing one to 'meet' the *Spiral Jetty* in a multitude of manifestations while never fully articulating its compound character – many pages seem to be missing there, too. Yet the film nonetheless encompasses a sort of documentary structure, in which the entire film can roughly be divided into three visually distinct sections: an introduction (of the theme), a middle part (an exploration of the theme), and a conclusion.

Indeed, it is this format that is often adapted for documentaries or story-telling movies, to which Smithson seems – at first glimpse – to adhere. First, there is the beginning in which the Jetty is mapped out, which involves many scenes filmed on the road heading towards or close by the *Spiral Jetty*'s site (figs. 114-116). Then there is the middle part, which can be characterized as the making of the Jetty, in which scenes of the bulldozer moving rocks and earth dominate most of the – aestheticised and almost abstract – images (fig. 117). And, last but not least, there is the final section, in which the *Spiral Jetty* is surveyed from the air (also including the running scene with Smithson himself), with many shots that are extremely aesthetically pleasing, either because of their intrinsic beauty (fig.

118) or their unusual perspective (fig. 119).[387] This tripartite structure provides a deceptively neat overview of the film that, when summarised, reminds one once again of a documentary film, in which a coherent story is told around a chosen theme. In fact, however, the film continuously subverts this structure into its opposite: each section of the film can just as well be seen as a visual exploration of its counterpart, as the mapping of the *Spiral Jetty* seems to be more about getting lost in the dust of a desert and could therefore just as well be the *un*mapping of the work. Likewise, the making of the Jetty could just as well be its unmaking, as all that is shown in the middle part of the film is the truck moving soil and heavy, basalt stones, and the rippling of the water of the lake.[388]

Hence, these highly complex scenes, as well as the continuously alternating subject of the film (from the sun to earth's history to a road map) and the – often highly aestheticised – film images, already suggest that the artistic intention behind the film *Spiral Jetty* was, at least in part, likewise aesthetic and that this was emphatically *not* intended to be a straight-forward documentary film from start to finish, despite the fact that its overarching structure follows the conventions of this genre (i.e., the chronological narrative of the mapping, building and surveying of the site). As art historian George Baker formulates it: 'Smithson's film amounts to anything but a simple documentation of the making of his earthwork,' concluding that the film *Spiral Jetty* is 'a complex analogy for and a continuance of the sculpture itself.'[389] The non-documentary nature of the film becomes especially tangible in

[387] I am not alone in perceiving this tripartite structure and I agree with Uroskie, who says: 'We can schematize the film's triadic structure in the following manner, with each stage confronting its own impossibility in turn: I. the mapping/unmapping of the site; II. the building/unbuilding of the monument; III. The surveying/invisibility of the completed work.' Uroskie, 'La Jetée En Spirale: Robert Smithson's Stratigraphic Cinema,' 69-70. Diana Thater perceives this same tripartite structure in 'A Man Becomes Unstuck in Time in the Film that Became a Classic', in: Cooke et al., *Robert Smithson - Spiral Jetty: True Fictions, False Realities*.
[388] Simultaneously, one should not forget that Smithson himself divided the film into only two parts, as suggested on the film poster for the Dwan Gallery, where he noted: 'Part II – Aerial Views – Movie Treatments'. (Smithson does not write anything about a Part I, which however can be deduced as being the 'ground views' mentioned earlier in the poster.)
[389] George Baker, 'The Cinema Model', cited in: Cooke et al., *Robert Smithson - Spiral Jetty: True Fictions, False Realities*, 79 and 82.

the way that the film was edited, a process in which Smithson was directly involved and in which he demonstrates his mastery of the cinematic medium.[390]

On and Off Site

The film *Spiral Jetty* very clearly illustrates Smithson's dialectical theory about Site and Nonsite, nature and culture. Smithson explains this theory in two interrelated texts: 'A Provisional Theory of Non-Sites' from 1968 (conceived in relation to Smithson's film work in the Pine Barrens Plains in New Jersey), which remained unpublished until the 1996 *Collected Writings* of Smithson; and his final (no longer provisional) text on the subject, under the heading 'Dialectic of Site and Nonsite', which was published in Schum's exhibition catalogue *LAND ART* in 1969 (later reprinted as a footnote in Smithson's text *The Spiral Jetty* that was published in 1972).[391] Smithson summarises his theory of Site and Nonsite in the latter text as follows:

> The range of convergence between Site and Nonsite consists of a course of hazards, a double path made up of signs, photographs, and maps that belong to both sides of the dialectic at once. Both sides are present and absent at the same time. The land or ground from the Site is placed *in* the art (Nonsite) rather than the art placed *on* the ground. The Nonsite is a container within another container – the room. The plot or yard outside is yet another container. Two-dimensional and three-dimensional things trade places with each other in the range of convergence. Large scale becomes small. Small scale becomes large. A point on a map expands to the size of the land mass. A land mass contracts into a point. Is the Site a reflection of the Nonsite (mirror), or is it the other way around? The rules of this network of signs are discovered as you go along uncertain trails both mental and physical.[392]

However, the fact that this often quoted theory of Site and Nonsite was published by the author himself *in relation to a film* – in the exhibition catalogue that documented his film

[390] Smithson received help in the technical editing process from Robert Fiore and Barbara Jarvis.
[391] Ursula Wevers and Gerry Schum, 'Katalog Zur Fernsehaustellung Land Art Der Fernsehgalerie Berlin Gerry Schum,' (Berlin: Fernsehgalerie Gerry Schum, 1969), n.p.
[392] Robert Smithson in the first footnote to his text 'The Spiral Jetty', as published in: *Robert Smithson: The Collected Writings*, 143-153.

Fossil Quarry Mirror with Four Mirror Displacements from 1969 – is never mentioned in the extensive literature that now exists on this material. (This film, *Fossil Quarry Mirror with Four Mirror Displacements*, is discussed in detail in Chapter IV.)

The significant convergence between Smithson's films and his ideas of Site and Nonsite, and the continual dialectics between the two as explained in his texts, is also seen in the film *Spiral Jetty*.[393] In *Spiral Jetty* one not only sees a recurrence of Smithson's interest in mirrors (this time using the water of the Great Salt Lake itself as a mirror that reflects the sunlight; see fig. 111), but he also brings in a number of other dialectical concepts, for example that of technology and nature.[394] Images of machine and nature continuously alternate throughout the film, for example in the scene of the bulldozer creating the Jetty: every shot of the bulldozer is followed by a shot of the light reflecting on the pink water of the Jetty (see fig. 120). This sense of dialectics is also evident in Smithson's use of sound, as the loud noises of the bulldozer or that of the helicopter flying over the *Spiral Jetty* are interrupted and contrasted with the gentle sounds of the lapping water. This dialectic – both in sound and vision – was literally drawn out by Smithson on the *Spiral Jetty* film's storyboard, where he comments, underneath the drawn film frames visualising the optical dialectics of the scene in which shots of the bulldozer continuously alternate with shots of the water, that the film's sound should be either 'low' or 'loud' during each designated shot (see fig. 121).

However, probably the most characteristic feature of the film is the way that seemingly contingent images suddenly pop up throughout, which temporarily disrupts these dialectics. At the beginning of the film, for instance, a truck driving on a dusty road is suddenly interrupted by an enigmatic image of some dinosaurs (apparently a page from a

[393] For a more theoretical discussion of the term Nonsite, see: Peter Osborne, *Anywhere or Not at All: Philosophy of Contemporary Art* (London: Verso, 2013).
[394] This is also seen in Smithson's film *Fossil Quarry Mirror with Four Mirror Displacements,* as discussed in Chapter IV.

children's book, see fig. 122, with some likeness to the famous paintings of dinosaurs by Charles Knight). Later, the close-ups of the bulldozer moving rocks and sand abruptly alternate with a picture on a postcard of a lizard (fig. 123). These seemingly contingent images keep infiltrating the film throughout all of its parts, creating unexpected associations with a wide variety of other images, things and ideas. Over the course of the film, such apparently random insertions gradually begin to coalesce into yet another theme, connected to the site of the *Spiral Jetty,* which Smithson states in the film is one of the ancient sites in the world were the dinosaurs would have roamed. Smithson is thus able to expand the scale of the on-site *Spiral Jetty* both through time and space by establishing a continuous relationship between a macrocosmic and a microcosmic view of the artwork itself.

Another theme that cuts across the dialectical pairs emerges from a sequence of close-ups of salt crystals in the middle of the film (fig. 124-127), which are explained by Smithson's voice as spirals in themselves, in that salt crystals grow in clockwise or anti-clockwise spirals. As he writes in his text 'The Spiral Jetty': '… each cubic salt crystal echoes the Spiral Jetty in terms of the crystal's molecular lattice. Growth in a crystal advances around a dislocation point, in the manner of a screw. The Spiral Jetty could be considered one layer within the spiralling crystal lattice, magnified trillions of times.'[395] In the next sequence, Smithson then again zooms out to an overview of the *Spiral Jetty*, by stating that the *Spiral Jetty* itself can be seen as one huge salt crystal, spiralling anti-clockwise. Smithson thus creates visual and imaginary expansions of the on-site *Spiral Jetty* by means of film, through which the smallest, seemingly contingent details that are shown in the film start to make sense in their relation to the whole. A similar thing also happens in the film's closing scene, where one suddenly finds oneself inside the editing studio, with the muffled street sounds of a large city in the background that blend with the soft clicking noise

[395] *Robert Smithson: The Collected Writings*, 147.

of a film projector. In this scene, one's gaze is directed towards a photograph of the *Spiral Jetty* pasted on the wall, surrounded by round film reels and numerous film strips hanging from a rack (fig. 128 and fig. 129).

In this image, the whole film seems to come to its visual and conceptual climax: the on-site sculpture *Spiral Jetty* is here shown through a mixture of media (a photograph and the film itself), highlighting its mediated nature. In Smithson's note underneath his story-board for the film (see fig. 112), he emphasises this last scene with two film frames drawn in full detail, under which is written the short statement: 'Last shot – with photo and editing table' (see fig. 130).[396] The drawing of the penultimate film frame shows a more distanced view of the studio, while the second (final) frame in the storyboard is a close up of the previous frame, suggesting that the camera will zoom in on the photograph, which will also enlarge the closest of the film reels in front of the photograph. In the film itself, this movement is activated when the camera starts to zoom in on the photograph of the *Spiral Jetty* pasted on the wall (see fig. 128 and 129), causing the round reels of celluloid film and their shadows to blend into the framed still photograph, which makes them seem to become the flat (aerial) counterparts of the perspectival oval of the photographed *Spiral Jetty*.[397] The act of zooming-in thus becomes intrinsically connected to a change in scale and allows the viewer of the film, as Baker formulates it, to undergo 'an uninterrupted experience of the zoom, the iris, the vector – a shift in scale and a transformation in vision that produces a pure cinematic figure of connection.'[398] Indeed, it is this 'zoom-function', together with the endless possibilities of the cutting of the film, that are suggested by the celluloid film strips (which evoke the

[396] Lynne Cooke remarks that Smithson 'adjusted his storyboard retrospectively rather than rigorously adhering to any predetermined plan.' See Cooke et al., *Robert Smithson - Spiral Jetty: True Fictions, False Realities*, 54. This would explain the almost too perfectly drawn storyboard, which may therefore have been a post-production summary of the film, rather than its pre-production planning tool. This might have been related to the pre-internet age, where the storyboard could serve as a tool to visually remember the film once seen in the gallery.
[397] This is a view that Ann Reynolds seems to agree with when she says: 'The parallel memory of footage of the *Spiral Jetty* in the process of being constructed and experienced on-site converges with its 'still' presence over the editing table.' Reynolds, 'At the Jetty', in: ibid., 75.
[398] Baker, 'The Cinema Model', in: ibid.

decisions that had to be made during the film's post-production), which transforms this last scene into a dialectical image (in the words of Walter Benjamin), which comprises the full complexity of the *Spiral Jetty* in its multiple forms.

Whereas the zoom relates to scale and space, the cutting/editing of the film relates to time. That is to say, the use of the zoom-function in this last scene seems to focus the viewer's attention on questions of scale within the medium of film itself, from the microcosm of the film strips and their images, to the macrocosm of the full film that is being screened. This is exemplified by the overview photograph of the *Spiral Jetty* at the end of the film, exposing the filmic process as such. The zooming-in on the photograph and the film reels makes one conscious of a tripartite scale or space within the film itself. The first level is encompassed by watching the celluloid film on the reels, through which one starts to reflect on the film-making process as such, which makes the viewer become aware of themselves while watching the film *Spiral Jetty* at that exact same moment. Then, a second level emerges, when one's vision is again directed to a smaller scale, through the zoom that connects these film reels to the photograph pasted on the wall: one now grasps that the basis of these celluloid film strips and the reels of film, silhouetted against the photograph, is in fact a series of still photographs. The third level then emerges, in which this zooming-in is negated: in looking at the photograph of the on-site *Spiral Jetty*, the viewer's sense of scale is suddenly enlarged again thanks to the aerial overview of the entire *Spiral Jetty*.

Indeed, this last scene provides a sense of the film in its totality, where, as Alter says, 'the cinematic machine and the sculpture converge into a single entity'.[399] Scale is thus visualised *en abyme*, i.e. the actual movement of the zooming-in of the camera seems to form an analogy to one's perception of the scale of the on-site *Spiral Jetty*: just as one can zoom in with one's gaze from the entire *Spiral Jetty* as a 'huge salt crystal' to the microscopic spirals

[399] Alter, 'Acoustic Shaping: Sound, Film and Sculpture,' 43.

of actual salt crystals on the rocks, so too does the film function as a spiral in itself, using its technological possibility of zooming-in to transport the viewer to another site within the film itself.[400] It exemplifies Smithson's statement that: 'The movie [*Spiral Jetty*] recapitulates the scale of the Spiral Jetty. Disparate elements assume a coherence. … The disjunction operating between reality and film drives one into a sense of cosmic rupture.'[401] The *Spiral Jetty* is thus intrinsically connected to the so-called 'big picture effect', in which the microcosm gets connected to the macrocosm, and the zoom function of the film camera becomes a symbol of the decentring capacity of art in which a certain humility vis-à-vis the cosmos can enter the work.

In a similar way, Smithson uses the film to make time perceptible: the reminder of the making of the film that is prompted by seeing the film reels recalls the actual time taken to watch the film, which makes the beholder suddenly aware of the fact that the seemingly continuous film is in fact itself made up of slices cut-out of time – like the torn pieces of paper from the history of the on-site *Spiral Jetty* as shown in the movie. Hence, these two aspects – scale and time – allow one to experience the *Spiral Jetty* through its analogous film, while its complex totality is made tangible through the visualisation of its fractal structure. Indeed, a strong sense of the power of analogy is evident in this final shot of the film.[402] Smithson describes film reels as 'a span of time unfinished, a spaceless limbo on some spiral reels'.[403] The reels thus directly connect to the time-span of the film *Spiral Jetty*, to the building of the Jetty and even to the form of the spiral as such, turning this last shot into an

[400] I refer here to Craig Owens' more general exploration of the photographic strategy/technique called *en abyme*: 'It tells us in a photograph what a photograph is – *en abyme*.' See: Craig Owens, 'Photography "En Abyme",' *October* 5 (1978).
[401] *Robert Smithson: The Collected Writings*, 151-152.
[402] Cooke et al., *Robert Smithson - Spiral Jetty: True Fictions, False Realities*, 108.
[403] Ibid.

intentional ‘dialectical image’ that alludes to the different scales of the *Spiral Jetty* that come together in the final scene.[404]

The Movement of the Zoom: Within the Surd State

That the *Spiral Jetty* is about scale and time is not only emphasised in the views on the artwork created by Smithson – on-site, in terms of the overview from the coastal hills that surround the Jetty; on the Jetty itself, while walking on the rocks in the water; and in the photographs and the film – but also in Smithson’s complex and enigmatic text of the same name, written a few months after completion of the film and published in 1972.[405] In the text ‘The Spiral Jetty’, one quickly detects the same use of chronology, dialectics and interruptions as in the film *Spiral Jetty*: it starts, once again, with the surrounding landscape of the Great Salt Lake and the selection of the site for the *Spiral Jetty*, but the language soon changes. Opposites are continuously articulated and annihilated, while many sentences disrupt the logical flow of associations and remain isolated in the text as individual monads of vision (Leibniz) within a stream of otherwise continuous perceptions. As Hikmet Sidney Loe puts it, ‘the essay bends time and history, moving back and forth as place, activity, and themes appear and reappear consequentially’.[406] One of the most striking passages of Smithson’s text reads as follows:

> As I looked at the site, it reverberated out to the horizons only to suggest an immobile cyclone while flickering light made the entire landscape appear to quake. A dormant earthquake spread into the fluttering stillness, into a spinning sensation without movement. This site was a rotary that enclosed itself in an immense roundness. From that gyrating space emerged the possibility of the Spiral Jetty. No ideas, no concepts, no systems, no structures, no abstractions could hold themselves together in the

[404] Benjamin mainly expounds this term in his famous work *The Arcades Project*, although also in other short writings. Walter Benjamin et al., *The Arcades Project* (Cambridge, Mass: Belknap Press of Harvard Univ. Press, 2002).
[405] The text was first published as part of an anthology called *Arts in the Environment*, but was later reproduced in the collected writings of Smithson. *Robert Smithson: The Collected Writings*, 143-153.
[406] Hikmet Sidney Loe, *The Spiral Jetty Encyclo: Exploring Robert Smithson's Earthwork through Time and Place* (Utah: The University of Utah Press, 2017), 6.

> actuality of that evidence. My dialectics of site and nonsite whirled into an indeterminate state, where solid and liquid lost themselves in each other. It was as if the mainland oscillated with waves and pulsations, and the lake remained rock still. The shore of the lake became the edge of the sun, a boiling curve, an explosion rising into a fiery prominence. Matter collapsing into the lake mirrored in the shape of a spiral. No sense wondering about classifications and categories, there were none.[407]

This whirlwind of written associations adds another aspect to the experience of the actual *Spiral Jetty*: the dialectical indeterminacy of language itself, which Smithson 'deemed a material' for artistic use as well.[408] By continuously evoking paradoxes in language, the reader of the text is forced to move beyond language, towards an associative experience that reaches beyond words and into feeling: it is as if one is called to hover between the different concepts, suspended in time and space. This is also engendered by a conscious blending of media, which Smithson evokes through the continuous use of the motif of the spiral: the word 'spiral' blends the actual site ('a rotary that enclosed itself in an immense roundness') with natural history ('the spiralling crystal lattice' found in the salt crystals of the lake), the film ('a spiral made up of frames'), technology (the helicopter 'from the Greek helix, helikos meaning spiral') and, eventually, the text: 'The equation of my language remains unstable, a shifting set of coordinates, an arrangement of variable spilling into surds. My equation is as clear as mud – a muddy spiral.'[409] Hence, through Smithson's use of the motif of the spiral, he is able to invoke a sense of the Land artwork that extends far beyond its actual site – it spirals outwards and inwards at the same time, both expanding and contracting.[410]

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[407] *Robert Smithson: The Collected Writings*, 146.
[408] As Cooke remarks, Smithson 'treated magazines and related publications as equally valid alternatives to the more conventional (anthropological) sites of gallery and museum, the linguistic increasingly became, for him, a building material.' See: Cooke et al., *Robert Smithson - Spiral Jetty: True Fictions, False Realities*, 53 and 62. In this context it is important to also point once again to Owens's essay 'Earthwords', in which he describes the importance of language as matter in Smithson's works (as well as that of many Minimalist artists), and relates this to the beginning of Postmodernism: Owens, 'Earthwords.'
[409] *Robert Smithson: The Collected Writings*, 146-150.
[410] Baker speaks about the 'auditory emblem' in Smithson's film of 'expansion and contraction' in relation to the sound of the hospital respirator that occurs at several moments in the film. Cooke et al., *Robert Smithson - Spiral Jetty: True Fictions, False Realities*, 82.

Evidently, film can be seen as the exemplary medium for visualising this spiralling artwork: the zoom function of film, always in continuous motion to relate the microcosm to the macrocosm and back again, becomes the mechanism that supports the entire – expanded – *Spiral Jetty.* This relates to the actual experience of scale and time in (and out) of the *Spiral Jetty* – that which Smithson, further on in his text, calls the 'surd state' that is evoked by the work.[411] The term 'surd' refers to the irrational, or speechlessness (from the Latin *surdus,* which means deaf and/or mute). This surd state is evoked when a disconnection of scale and size is invoked – which is, as Smithson explained earlier, an intrinsic function of the (photographic and film) camera. As Smithson states, 'Size determines an object, but scale determines art.'[412] That is, in order for something to be art, there has to be an aspect of 'as if' that is automatically invoked by the use of scale (versus size), in which a disconnection (or displacement) between the actual position of the beholder and that of the object seen by the beholder takes place. In the words of Smithson: 'A crack in the wall if viewed in terms of scale, not size, could be called the Grand Canyon. A room could be made to take on the immensity of the solar system. Scale depends on one's capacity to become conscious of the actualities of perception.'[413]

Hence, one sees an object as something else – as if it were the Grand Canyon – only if one is able to 'release scale from size', because of which a certain distance is erected between the object and its meaning.[414] This leads to uncertainty, since certainty – or at least the *appearance* of certainty – is evoked by the connection of size to scale (one believes one *knows* what an object is, if its size is logically related to its scale).[415] It is therefore the

[411] *Robert Smithson: The Collected Writings,* 147.
[412] Ibid.
[413] Ibid.
[414] Ibid.
[415] As Smithson remarks, 'When one refuses to release scale form size, one is left with an object or language that *appears to be certain.'* ibid.

disjunction of these opposites that creates the so-called 'surd state'. As Smithson formulated it:

> For me scale operates by uncertainty. To be in the scale of the Spiral Jetty is to be out of it. On eye level, the tail leads one into an undifferentiated state of matter. One's downward gaze pitches from side to side, picking out random depositions of salt crystals on the inner and outer edges, while the entire mass echoes the irregular horizons. And each cubic salt crystal echoes the Spiral Jetty in terms of the crystal's molecular lattice. Growth in a crystal advances around a dislocation point, in the manner of a screw. The Spiral Jetty could be considered one layer within the spiralling crystal lattice, magnified trillions of times.[416]

It is precisely this scale of uncertainty, a dynamic scale that 'resonates in the eye and the ear at the same time', through which 'one ceases to consider art in terms of an 'object'.'[417] The same happens, according to Smithson, with the *Spiral Jetty* (in its many different media), where 'the surd takes over and leads one into a world that cannot be expressed by number or rationality. Ambiguities are admitted rather than rejected, contradictions are increased rather than decreased – the *alogos* undermines the *logos*.'[418] It is this way of functioning that leads one into the (dislocated) centre of Smithson's complex aesthetics: the experience of a state in which one is forced to reject both objective criticism and subjective concepts because those concepts are unable to truly encompass the artwork.

An Experiential Remoteness

By using the film's technical possibilities – especially the dynamic zoom, which is directly related to scale – Smithson is able to take the beholder of his film into a multiplicity of complex 'elsewheres'. The film *Spiral Jetty* thus increases the distance or gap between details and overview, which nonetheless are put into a dynamic relation to each other. Indeed, it is this distancing effect of the film that allows the world to *be viewed*: the remoteness thus

[416] Ibid.
[417] Ibid.
[418] Ibid.

created increases the perceptiveness and understanding of the beholder, allowing the world to emerge. As Smithson notes: 'Any film wraps us in uncertainty. The longer we look through a camera or watch a projected image the remoter the world becomes, yet we begin to understand that remoteness more.'[419] The scale and time of the *Spiral Jetty* allow questions to appear about one's situatedness in the world. This leads one to consider the aesthetic intentions that lie behind the *Spiral Jetty*, which, as Smithson notes, forces one simply to apprehend 'what is around one's eyes and ears, no matter how unstable or fugitive.'[420] This is why, as Reynolds has remarked, the *Spiral Jetty* is both a human-made and a geological 'monument to instability'.[421]

This brings us back to the beginning of the chapter, where Cavell was quoted as saying that film 'let[s] the world happen' and that it 'stop[s] altering it [the world] illegitimately, against itself'.[422] Indeed, as we have seen, it is now clear how Smithson uses continuous 'displacement', an important theme for Cavell, as the very basis of his work – something that Smithson himself often refers to as *dislocation*.[423] As Cooke remarks, Smithson's governing precept is that 'space and time are accessed only when the spectator is removed from the normal conditions of time-space', or, in other words, displaced – the moment when size and scale become disconnected.[424] It is precisely this displacement that Smithson evokes through his film, text and photographs: the on-site *Spiral Jetty* is multiplied and drawn into 'an experiential remoteness', as Reynolds has called it.[425] Yet it is especially through the film *Spiral Jetty*, thanks to the technical possibilities of the zoom and the cut, that this experience of the disconnection of size and scale is most evident, enabling a strong sense

[419] Robert Smithson, 'A Cinematic Atopia', in: ibid., 141.
[420] Ibid., 147.
[421] Reynolds, 'At the Jetty', in: *Robert Smithson - Spiral Jetty: True Fictions, False Realities*, 76.
[422] Cavell, *The World Viewed: Reflections on the Ontology of Film*, 25 and 102.
[423] Ibid., 41.
[424] Cooke et al., *Robert Smithson - Spiral Jetty: True Fictions, False Realities*, 65.
[425] Reynolds: '… an experiential remoteness, created in part by the *Spiral Jetty* film and other still images but also by historical distance, remains.' Reynolds, 'At the Jetty', in: ibid., 76.

of the world *being viewed.* As Smithson phrased it (and as was quoted at the beginning of this chapter):

> The sites in films are not to be located or trusted. All is out of proportion. Scale inflates or deflates into uneasy dimensions. We wander between the towering and the bottomless. We are lost between the abyss within us and the boundless horizons outside us.[426]

It is this intrinsic uncertainty of film that allows an opening up to that which is simply there: the world itself, inside and outside of us, in all its immense and detailed complexities.

Seen as such, the film *Spiral Jetty* is the ultimate visualization of the complex and continuously changing scale of, and the view on, the sculpture *Spiral Jetty* – with all its related 'elsewheres'. As Smithson states: 'One thing all films have in common is the power to take perception elsewhere.'[427] The film thus transcends any fixed opposites – even Smithson's own theory of the dialectic of Site and Nonsite – through its complex structure and its repeated use of the zoom, which creates a disjunction between size and scale. This is the characteristic of film that Cooke accurately describes as 'a use of metaphor that depends for its vividness and power on the conjoining of unlikely elements effected through the cut; a constantly shifting perspective that is somehow divorced from the predictable and fixed position of an authorial overview; and a temporal dislocation that interlays past and present, future and past in unfathomable trails.'[428]

However, one could go one step further and argue that Smithson conceived the actual Land artwork *Spiral Jetty* also as cinematic. The film then appears to be an intrinsic component of the *in situ* Land artwork, where unlikely elements are brought together, while simultaneously staying apart through the use of the zoom and cut. In other words, the *in situ*

[426] Smithson, 'A Cinematic Atopia', in: *Robert Smithson: The Collected Writings*, 141.
[427] Ibid., 138.
[428] Cooke, 'A Position of Elsewhere', in: *Robert Smithson - Spiral Jetty: True Fictions, False Realities*, 66.

Spiral Jetty can itself be perceived to be *filmic*. This is especially true if one considers Smithson's description of the spiral: 'Growth in a crystal advances around a dislocation point, in the manner of a screw.'[429] To consider the analogy between these crystals and the *Spiral Jetty* (the *in situ* Land artwork) means consequently, that the *Spiral Jetty* (the sculpture) has such a 'dislocation point' as well, which is in fact the case. Even though one is conceptually led to believe that there is a centre in the middle of the *Spiral Jetty,* that centre is in fact the *dislocation point* of the spiral. This is exemplified by Smithson's run to the centre of the sculpture in the film, in which he reaches this centre only to then turn back – an experience that any visitor of the *in situ Spiral Jetty* will recognise. This seems in close analogy to the film reel of a film, as seen in the final scene of the film *Spiral Jetty*, which can – at any time – be rewound and played again.

This last paradox is crucial, as the viewer is in a symbolic way *decentred* by reaching the centre of the Jetty, pointed towards the inherent so-called 'crystallographic defect' of the salt crystal: the dislocation point. In the same way, the film *Spiral Jetty* leads one to this dislocation point as well: the film is not an explanation of the sculpture – it is rather its complexification. By pointing to the experiential and theoretical themes that underlie the sculpture *in situ,* Smithson thus leads the beholder by means of the film, itself made up of spirals, to another dislocation point: the endless making and remaking of the *Spiral Jetty* in the film – which itself could potentially be screened in an endless loop. Therefore, whereas the film *Spiral Jetty* could be seen as an extension of the on-site Land artwork, the on-site sculpture also appears to be an extension of the film itself.

Indeed, Smithson himself stated about the *Spiral Jetty* that it is the uncertainty relating to a scale that is never fixed that lies at the heart of his artwork – which, as has been discussed above, is an intrinsic characteristic of the medium of film too. It is through this

[429] *Robert Smithson: The Collected Writings,* 147.

intrinsic filmic capacity of the *Spiral Jetty* that its expanded landscape is shown as evolving around a dislocation point that, without doubt, decentres the beholder physically, mentally and emotionally – the 'flaw' of the crystal that makes its endless growth possible, because its basis is never absolute or fixed. After all, as Smithson himself remarks, the Land artwork, the film, and the text altogether induce a certain surd state, in which one simply loses trace of any central theme. The *Spiral Jetty* thus shows itself as a complex sculpture, because of which the scale of the Land artwork can extend far beyond its actual site. This cinematic view is intrinsic to the landscape, which in turn encourages the beholder to encounter the landscape in a cinematic mode. This is also what brings us back to Walter De Maria.

3.2 Walter De Maria's Landscape of Spikes

> The double reference is there in all those – the death-life reference.
> Too many of the objects made now have nothing but a relationship to style
> – and that's death, because all style dies.
>
> Walter De Maria, November 1968.[430]

While Smithson's *Spiral Jetty*, in all its various aspects and media, is probably the most multi-faceted example of the entwinement of sculpture and film in Land Art – a truly complex sculpture – another (surprisingly little-known) example is Walter De Maria's *Beds of Spikes* (1968/1969), an 8.33 minute long film. Contrary to Smithson, it is not generally recognised that De Maria was interested in making films. However, as Jane McFadden mentions briefly in her recently published monograph on the artist: '… for De Maria, the other essential medium for Land Art, in addition to drawing, was film'.[431] This is undoubtedly true, as De Maria made several films, amongst others *Two Lines Three Circles on the Desert* and *Hard Core*, both from 1969 and both directly linked to his Land Art sculptures.[432] However, although these two films have occasionally been mentioned in the literature on De Maria, the content of his film *Beds of Spikes* has not yet been analysed.[433] This may be due to the fact that the film has, until recently, long been unavailable to view.[434]

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[430] Walter De Maria, 'Interview with C.D. Bourdon, 1968 (the David Bourdon Papers, Box 27, Folder 4),' (Washington DC: Smithsonian Institution, Archives of American Art, 8 November 1968).
[431] McFadden, *Walter De Maria: Meaningless Work*, 100. Strangely enough, McFadden's otherwise very thorough account of De Maria's work only mentions the film *Beds of Spikes* in one short sentence and a footnote, without elaborating on its content or importance. In fact, she seems to suggest that it is just a documentary film (p. 92 and footnote 19), which might be due to the fact that she may have been unable to view the film for her book.
[432] De Maria also apparently made a documentary film of an exhibition in the Paula Cooper Gallery, but whether it was a film of his own show or that of another artist is unclear. De Maria, 'Walter De Maria - Oral History Interview.'
[433] McFadden, *Walter De Maria: Meaningless Work*, 92 and footnote 19.
[434] I would like to thank Joanna Raczynska at the National Gallery of Art, Smithsonian Institute, for her kind help to let me see this film during the fall of 2016 while I was a Terra Predoctoral Fellow at the Smithsonian American Art Museum, and, after I had returned to England, to provide me with a copy that allowed me to use selected film stills as a reference in this dissertation.

While its exhibition history remains unknown, the film was recently donated by Virginia Dwan to the film department of the Smithsonian National Gallery of Art in Washington DC. Fragments of the film, said to be 'documentation of *Beds of Spikes* at the Dwan Gallery', were then shown for the first time (as far as currently known) during the film programme that coincided with the exhibition *Los Angeles to New York: Dwan Gallery*, 1959-1971 (September 30, 2016 – January 29, 2017).[435] When seen in full, however, the film *Beds of Spikes* shows itself to be anything but mere documentation of the sculpture *Bed of Spikes* (sometimes also named *Beds of Spikes*), although the film – as its title suggests – takes as its subject this notorious sculpture, which was exhibited from March to April 1969 in the Dwan Gallery in New York City (see fig. 131).[436] It is therefore important to first consider this sculpture before the film is further analysed.

The sculpture was advertised in a local New York newspaper in 1969 with the sentence: '"Beds of Spikes", five stainless steel, very sharp sculptures presenting real danger; no children admitted.'[437] Visitors of the Dwan Gallery had to sign a release form that would absolve the gallery of any responsibility in case they were injured while inside the gallery space (fig. 132). In an interview of 2015, Dwan remarked: 'People laughed about that, but the spikes were actually dangerous.'[438] This was no overstatement or invented danger. De Maria himself stated that: 'These are evil pieces, evil. … five large stainless steel arrays of spikes, very sharp spikes, sharp enough so that if you barely touch the tip of one it will really draw blood.'[439]

[435] The National Gallery of Art said that the film fragments they were showing were part of the documentation of the sculpture *Bed of Spikes.* See their seasonal program booklet of Fall 2016.
[436] In an attempt to avoid confusion between the two, I use the title *Beds of Spikes* only for the film, and *Bed of Spikes* only for the sculpture here.
[437] Advertisement in *New York Magazine,* 14th of April 1969, 21-22.
[438] Virginia Dwan, 'Interview with Virginia Dwan,' *Artforum* (February 11, 2014).
[439] De Maria, 'Interview with C.D. Bourdon, 1968 (the David Bourdon Papers, Box 27, Folder 4).'

With their direct allusion to the beds of nails used by Sufi Muslim ascetics known as Fakirs (fig. 133), De Maria's five steel sculptures featured extremely sharp, pointy spikes, distributed over five bases in a series of 3, 15, 45, 91 and 153 spikes (fig. 134). De Maria stated about the pieces: 'I want to put danger back into art. People will really have to see these pieces.'[440] The danger posed by these spiky beds was clearly highlighted by the text on the exhibition poster and card, but the great interest in seeing the pieces in real life was triggered especially because these materials did not show any photographs of the sculpture itself. Instead, they had the words *De Maria Danger Dwan* printed on the lower part of a photograph of De Maria himself, lying on the desert floor inside his *Mile Long Drawing* (April 1968), which consisted of two parallel white chalk lines drawn on the sand of the Mojave Desert (each line was 1.60 km long and 3.5 metres apart, fig. 135). The reason that De Maria had chosen this photograph to announce his *Beds of Spikes* was not only a strategic move, in order to keep the piece visually secret until the visitors would come to the actual gallery. It was also because De Maria perceived an intrinsic relation between the *Mile Long Drawing* in the Mojave Desert and the *Bed of Spikes.*

In an interview with David Bourdon in 1968, Bourdon suggests that the 'intensity of relation to the viewer [for example, the sense of physical danger] is … the equivalent of the presence of human figures in the works [of art by De Maria].'[441] Bourdon then continues with a quote by De Maria himself, who had commented about his own artworks: 'The figure is there – in the viewer himself. With those lines in the desert [*Mile Long Drawing*], you really feel your body. You can walk inside them, or outside, and you're part of it. …'[442] De Maria continues:

[440] Ibid.
[441] Ibid.
[442] See also Chapter IV, where De Maria's film *Two Lines Three Circles on the Desert* is discussed, which is also based on *Mile Long Drawing.*

> The question really is death. It always is in any age, but that's really the only thing going. The marks out on the land [of *Mile Long Drawing*] might have something to do with the pyramids and with the great Wall of China – wow, is that a fantastic work of art. The double reference is there in all those – the death-life reference. Too many of the objects made now have nothing but a relationship to style – and that's death, because all style dies.[443]

Hence, De Maria directly relates the *Mile Long Drawing* to his *Beds of Spikes*, not only because of the physical experience of the beholder, the 'figure' in the artwork who confronts existence as such, but also the specific evocation of death in the experience when one is in front of the artwork. To be aware of oneself in relation to an artwork, in this case the *Mile Long Drawing*, therefore – according to De Maria – brings a reflexivity that goes far beyond art as seen in a museum: it immediately evokes a microcosmic and a macrocosmic view – a scale in which the self is related to a larger context in a way that echoes the experience of Heizer's *Munich Depression*, or Holt's *Sun Tunnels*, or Smithson's *Spiral Jetty.* This links together with a decentring of the subject in front of the *Beds of Spikes*, due to the experience of uncertainty, especially in relation to the very real possibility of danger.

This essential relation, where the self is put into contact with its own life (and even its own possible death), is, for De Maria, crucial. This experience goes far beyond a theatrical, or even sensationalist, concern with art and was especially relevant in the late 1960s. While the Vietnam War and the Cold War were at their peak, death seemed to have closed in on everyday life in an unprecedented way: the nuclear bomb, bringing – for the first time in the history of humanity – the possibility of destroying humankind as such. This was no longer just an abstract idea, but an everyday reality, with fallout shelters and safety drills in the case of an attack a part of everyday life during the 1960s. Yet De Maria – although often explicitly political in his artworks – did not mention anything about either war when he talked about his

[443] De Maria, 'Interview with C.D. Bourdon, 1968 (the David Bourdon Papers, Box 27, Folder 4).'

Bed of Spikes.[444] Instead, he made the connection more ambiguous, for example by stating that the theme of this sculpture was 'the danger that exists in the world today'.[445] Still, it is striking that De Maria chose to refer to ancient artworks and landmarks, such as the Egyptian pyramids and the Great Wall of China, while talking about the *Bed of Spikes* – both a reminder of civilisations that no longer exist (as such), suggesting the possibility of total destruction following a significant event, such as that which could be brought about by a nuclear bomb.[446]

Yet De Maria chose to leave his reference to death more ambiguous than the death of humankind as a whole, for example by referring to contemporary artworks that 'have nothing but a relationship to style', and the fact that 'all style dies'.[447] As he stated in that same interview: 'Think of the basic nature of the art world itself and then think if the Spike Beds don't summarize that situation.'[448] It is in this context, then, in the embodiment of the two extremes of life and death at the same time, that *Bed of Spikes* is not only linked by De Maria to his *Mile Long Drawing,* but also to his *Earth Room* (the large-scale work discussed in the context of Chapter I).[449] Indeed, De Maria himself pointed out that *Bed of Spikes* should be considered in direct relation to the latter project: 'I am so much into the music, land and film now that I don't really foresee when I will be making anything else for the usual channels of presentation. … When I filled the gallery with dirt … I really meant it and so too with the spike sculpture … that spike sculpture is really the last thing I want to show … for a long

[444] I think especially of *Museum Piece* (1966), which according to De Maria was explicitly referring to upcoming elections and Fascism. Smithsonian, 'The Samuel Wagstaff Papers (Folder on Walter De Maria),' letter of January 18, 1969.
[445] Art review section; Unknown author, 'High Priest of Danger,' *Time magazine* May 2, 1969.
[446] Of course, this is a link that Heizer, Smithson, and others have also often referred to in the context of Land Art. Cf. Maureen Korp, *Sacred Art of the Earth: Ancient and Contemporary Earthworks* (New York: Continuum, 1997). Also: Bourdon, *Designing the Earth: The Human Impulse to Shape Nature*.
[447] A critical stance towards 'style' is another approach that De Maria shares with Smithson. The latter once remarked that the new, postmodern art would doubtless 'be falsified into a style'. *Robert Smithson: The Collected Writings*, 49.
[448] De Maria, 'Walter De Maria - Oral History Interview.'
[449] See Chapter I of this dissertation.

time.'[450] In other words, *Bed of Spikes* and the *Earth Room* not only symbolised death in a larger, global sense, but in relation to the artist himself: at this time, the artist saw these works as symbols of his own death within the contemporary art world, and his eventual jump towards a different kind of art. De Maria once wrote to Samuel Wagstaff about his experience in an air balloon: 'Yesterday I went up in a free balloon – over the country side – we crashed into a tree – on landing but managed to throw out SAND and we rose again'.[451] One could say that Land Art, film and music were, for De Maria, in some sense ways to 'throw out sand', i.e. the unnecessary ballast of the art world, in order to be able to rise again and explore new terrains.

Cinema and Movement: Filmic Spikes of Danger

Despite this emphasis on death, the film *Beds of Spikes* seems to almost ridicule this theme. *Beds of Spikes,* too, is clearly not a straight-forward documentary, which becomes evident at the very beginning, after a first shot with De Maria's name and the title *Beds of Spikes*, followed by the date (1968/1969) and the word 'steel' (fig. 136).[452] It is then that the first notes of Johannes Sebastian Bach's fourth Orchestral Suite (no.3 in D Major, BMV 1068: II Air) can be heard – music that does not sound very ominous, or related to an end of the world, even though Bach wrote these musical pieces at the end of his own life.

The surprise of hearing this rather light-hearted musical score is played out in the parts of the film. Like Smithson's *Spiral Jetty*, De Maria's *Beds of Spikes* also consists of three parts separated by the same title page as shown at the beginning. These are all synchronized to Bach's last three parts of the fourth Orchestral Suite (Air, Gavotte, and

[450] Walter De Maria in a letter to Samuel Wagstaff, dated 22nd of August, 1969 (Munster, Germany). Smithsonian, 'The Samuel Wagstaff Papers (Folder on Walter De Maria).'
[451] Walter De Maria in another letter to Samuel Wagstaff, undated. Ibid.
[452] Film fragments of De Maria's *Beds of Spikes*, when shown at the Smithsonian's National Gallery of Art in 2017, were listed as 'documentation of Walter De Maria's installation *Bed of Spikes* (1969)'.

Bourrée). It is not known why De Maria chose the music of Bach for his film, although Bach has been associated with other works by De Maria, especially *The Lightning Field.*[453] However, it is possible that De Maria's filmic interest in classical music is rooted in his more general musical practice (which included being the drummer of the Velvet Underground, before they rose to fame).[454] This might explain the important role that music plays in the film *Beds of Spikes,* as one can easily argue, as Wood and Christie have, that music 'is more closely an inherent and integral part of cinema than the images', since 'music has to move to exist', thus referring back to the etymology of the word 'cinema', rooted in the Greek term for 'movement'.[455]

However, beyond De Maria's literal orchestration of the film into three parts linked to the music of Bach, the film holds other surprises of a more visual nature. The first part of the film *Beds of Spikes* starts with the quiet tones of Bach's 'Air' piece, in an exceptionally slow performance, where the quartet of three violins and one cello follow a subdued second movement. Starting with a shot of the first bed, which has only three spikes (fig. 137), the striding bass of the cello underscores the changing film frames, each shot following an interval in the music. De Maria often intentionally directed the camera's focus to the pointy ends of the spikes, frequently zooming-in on a single spike, trying to capture the way it reflects the light, or, conversely, how it contrasts darkly with a lighter background (figs. 138

[453] In a 2003 article, Cornelia Dean is quoted recalling the different associations that she and her companions, visiting *The Lightning Field*, had while looking at the steel poles: 'For me, it was as if a piece of formal music, a Bach invention, perhaps, had taken material form and was playing before my eyes, not my ears.' Unknown author (online article), 'Drawn to Lightning,' *New York Times* September 21, 2003 (online).

Another example is Mr. A. Zahner, the owner of the steel company with which De Maria worked in order to create his sculpture *Bed of Spikes*, as well as later *The Lightning Field*, who stated that: 'Stainless steel demands precision. I like to say virtuosity – a term usually used in reference to artistic pursuit, but equally well suited to describe what is needed to achieve incredible work out of stainless steel. When you see it done well, like when you hear a great orchestral performance of Bach, you know it. It is the metal of art.' See the website of Stainless Steel World Americas: http://www.ssw-americas.com/webarticles/2019/01/08/pushing-the-boundaries-of-stainless-steel-fabrication.html

[454] Cf. for example: Gavin Delahunty (editor), *Counterpoint: Sculpture, Music, and Walter De Maria's Large Rod Series* (Dallas: Dallas Museum of Art, 2017); Kenneth Baker, *The Lightning Field* (Arizona: Hol Arts Books, 2008), 239.

[455] Wood and Christie, *Sculpture and Film*, 43.

and 139). Sometimes the camera even takes only the pointy end of the spike as its focus (fig. 140), which is again emphasised by the use of a bright, white light, reflected in the steel. This light seems to come from a flashlight: the white light seems to move 'over' the beds, thus showing that it must have been handheld – either by the artist himself or someone else in the room (fig. 141). It seems that the entire film was filmed in a dark gallery space (either at night or with all the lights turned off), since the flashlight's white light is the only illumination in the room.

Yet the most self-consciously aesthetic segments in this first part of the film appear when the camera slowly moves over the bed of spikes, following, for example, two rows of spikes into the distance until the perspective invites a third row of spikes to come in (figs. 142 and 143). Again, the lighting is crucial here, as the camera clearly favours the abstract patterns that arise through the stark chiaroscuro effects. This is also the case when the camera next moves to a shot of the bed with the most spikes and shows the dense glow of the multitude of sharp points reflecting in the dark (figs. 144 and 145). It seems as if De Maria sequences the film so that *Beds of Spikes* recalls the order of the three components as they were exhibited in the Dwan Gallery in 1969 (see fig. 131), starting his film with the bed of three spikes, then jumping to the bed with 91 spikes, 45 and, finally, to the one of 15 spikes. In these shots, the triangular surface of the spiky points that reflect the light often seem to dance in front of the camera, to the slow tones of the music. This is enhanced by the fast-changing shots that are taken from a high perspective above the spikes, when the entire screen is filled with spikes (figs. 146 and 147). Evidently, the film itself is highly aware of the filming process as such, often playing with sudden changes of angle, or slowly turning the camera 90 degrees so that the spikes point towards the right (fig. 148). Shortly after this last particular shot, the musical score is cut off, at a natural stopping point that, for someone who does not know the original music, could be taken as the end of the movement.

The second part of the film starts again with a shot of the title and De Maria's name (fig. 149), after which the third movement of Bach's orchestral suite starts: the so-called 'Gavotte' movement, based on a French popular dance, this time played by an orchestra of piano, violins, trumpets, and clarinets, and emphasised, at certain crucial moments, by a drum (De Maria's favourite instrument).[456] The light, happy tones synchronise with the first shot of the film, now taken from the other side of the room in the Dwan Gallery, showing the middle three spikes of the bed with 3x5 spikes, after which it slowly zooms out to show the complete object (figs. 150 and 151). However, in contrast to the previous part of the film, the camera now moves more continuously around the sculpture, without cuts between the shots, first going up towards a bird's eye perspective, and then slowly circling around the corner of the sculpture. It is here that De Maria once again emphasises the shadows of the spikes on the floor, which are clearly intentionally incorporated into the end of this panning shot (fig. 152). These shadows are even more important in the next shot, where the abstract play of light and shadows is combined with the reflections that are induced by the polished steel of the bed of 5x9 spikes (fig. 153). Again, a zoom outward and a circling around the corner of the sculpture takes place, this time creating a view of the spikes from the side in which they look like soldiers standing in line while looking at their own shadows in front of them (figs. 154 and 155).

It is here that the camera zooms in and out again, to the rhythm of Bach, something that is the start of a whole new series of camera movements that are clearly in no way documentary, but rather follow the playfulness of the music. Starting off with a shot from a very low angle on the tips of the spikes (fig. 156), the second shot shows only the illuminated triangles of these tips (fig. 157). It is then that the camera starts to 'rock' left and right, as if dancing along to the rhythm of the music (fig. 158 and 159). This is followed by a full 15

[456] De Maria was the drummer of the Velvet Underground, before they became famous.

seconds in which only vague shadows and light are shown with a great deal of panning by the camera. The first view after this is a straight shot of the fourth bed of spikes, with 91 spikes in total (fig. 160), after which the second part of the film *Beds of Spikes* comes to an end.

The third and final part is accompanied by the heroic fourth section of Bach's orchestral suite, the so-called 'Bourrée'. The first image of this part is a shot on the bed of 15 spikes (fig. 161), which then turns into a sequence of different shots of this same bed – all changes again coordinated with the rhythm of the music. However, what stands out in this third part are the shots taken from a very low angle, close to the ground, because of which the beds with their spikes are often transformed into a landscape, with the spikes looming like large sculptures that point into the night air (fig. 162 and 163). Associations with De Maria's *The Lightning Field* are inevitable in these instances (as will be discussed further on). This low perspective also sometimes includes the spikes looking remarkably different due to the reflections of the light (fig. 164) or, in the case of shots from a bird-eye perspective, the apparent visual shortening of the spike (fig. 165). These views then alternate with shots from a perspective in which the space in between the spikes plays an important role, either through the shadows of the spikes (fig. 166), or because of the 'avenues' – which act like sightlines – that they create (fig. 167). At these moments the camera seems to position the viewer 'inside' one particular bed of spikes, with the body of the viewer in the process put into a relation with the spiky landscape – a significant feature of the film *Beds of Spikes*, as will be discussed below. The film then ends with a final shot of the tip of one of the spikes, which becomes visible in the foreground through its reflection of the light, while dark, anonymous spikes lurk in the background (fig. 168).

Avenues of Experience

The most striking accomplishment of De Maria's film *Beds of Spikes* is the transformation of a sculptural set of objects displayed within a space into an all-encompassing landscape of experience: instead of an object to be merely looked at, it is actively and intimately explored through the camera's lens. The three different parts of the film, accompanied by the distinctively different atmospheres created by the music (from the slow, more serious first part, to the triumphant, 'dancing' third movement), seem to give colour to the grey metal of the beds, each time experienced differently by the viewer. It is thus that the beds themselves are transformed into both an emotional and a physical landscape: the distinctive use of the camera's capacity to separate scale from size enables the spikes to seem to become enlarged at times – rooted in a space like trees on a piece of land. This interest in the separation of scale from size directly links De Maria's film to Smithson's *Spiral Jetty.* And like Smithson, who linked this separation of scale and size to the loss of (rational) meaning – 'the surd state' – it seems that De Maria, too, is interested in this seemingly irrational component. Louis Aragon once described this loss of one type of meaning, and the relation of size to scale, as follows:

> Poets without being artists, children sometimes fix their attention on an object to the point where their concentration makes it grow larger, grow so much that it completely occupies their visual field, assumes a metaphysical aspect and loses all relation to its purpose. … Likewise on screen objects that were a few moments ago sticks of furniture or books of cloakroom tickets are transformed to the point where they take on new meanings.'[457]

In the case of the film *Beds of Spikes,* the spikes seem continuously transformed by De Maria's use of the camera: sometimes they figure as trees within a landscape, while at other moments it is as if they are parading like the soldiers in an army, or dancing around a pastoral

[457] Louis Aragon, 'On Décor (1918),' in *French Film Theory and Criticism, 1907-1939,* ed. Richard Abel (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1988), 166.

landscape – always with a strong emphasis on the play of light and dark, and the shadows and reflections of the spikes. *Bed of Spikes* – as a sculpture – is transformed into a vast array of experiences and associations: the sculpture itself and its micro-world becomes directly linked to a scale that far transcends its material presence.

This idea of a sculpture as landscape (or a landscape as sculpture) was something that De Maria was extremely interested in, and which defined his later work in Land Art. As he once remarked: 'I drove across the country – which is one of the best experiences a person can have, I would say it's the greatest sculptural experience of my life.'[458] It is clear that the film *Beds of Spikes* forms a crucial link with this experience, and moreover directly connects *Beds of Spikes* (both the sculpture and the film) to De Maria's most important Land artwork, *The Lightning Field*, for which *Bed of Spikes* is often seen as a prototype.[459] Indeed, it seems essential to turn to the *The Lightning Field* (from 1977) in order to understand De Maria's film *Beds of Spike*, made almost ten years earlier.

As far as is known, *The Lightning Field* – De Maria's *magnum opus* – was never filmed, although De Maria himself published a photo essay in *Artforum* to accompany the opening of *The Lightning Field* to visitors. In fact, De Maria prohibited visitors to the field from bringing any cameras to the site of the artwork. *The Lightning Field* is located near Quemado, New Mexico, where visitors can stay at a wooden cabin (with the maximum occupancy of six persons), which provides direct access to the south side of *The Lightning Field.*[460] As De Maria states in his text about *The Lightning Field* (which again has the same title as the artwork itself), published in *Artforum* and also available on site, *The Lightning*

[458] Calvin Tomkins, interview with De Maria, in: Smithsonian, 'David Bourdon Papers.'
[459] There was another smaller scale precursor to *The Lightning Field*, which was later dismantled and is now stored in the Dia Art Foundation in New York.
[460] That only a maximum of six persons can stay at *The Lightning Field* at the same time is part of De Maria's concern with the experience of the artwork. As De Maria stated: 'Part of the essential content of the work is the ratio of people to the space: a small number of people to a large amount of space.' De Maria, 'Some Facts, Notes, Data, Information, Statistics and Statements,', 58.

Field consists of '400 highly polished stainless steel poles with solid, pointed tips', which 'are arranged in a rectangular grid array (16 to the width, 25 to the length) and are spaced 220 feet apart'. As a whole, *The Lightning Field* 'measures one mile by one kilometre and six metres', whereby 'each mile-long row contains 25 poles and runs east-west' while 'each kilometre-long row contains 16 poles and runs north-south'.[461] This means that there are four hundred poles, arranged in rows that are all formed like a grid, which functions like a compass (or wind rose) in that their kilometre-long rows span north to south while the mile-long rows span from east to west.

These numerical specifications remind one of the mathematics underlying the *Bed of Spikes*, as well as the similar use of steel, a large number of poles (with slanted tips), and a grid. De Maria's enigmatic statement, 'The plane of the tips [of *The Lightning Field*] would evenly support an imaginary sheet of glass', strengthens this relation even further.[462] This fact implies that the 400 steel rods could in theory support an enormous glass plate lying on top of them. Again, an association with a Fakir lying on his bed of nails can be made, although, contrary to the sculpture *Bed of Spikes*, the poles of *The Lightning Field* are actually all of a different length, since the ground on which they are standing naturally varies qua surface.[463] Yet it is in the actual experience of a visitor to *The Lightning Field* that the most direct similarity between *Beds of Spikes* (the sculpture as well as the film) and this huge Land artwork is revealed, which makes the more often expounded view that the sculpture *Bed of Spikes* was a prototype for the later *The Lightning Field* even more probable.[464]

[461] Ibid.
[462] Ibid.
[463] As De Maria explains in his text on *The Lightning Field*: 'An aerial survey, combined with computer analysis, determined the positioning of the rectangular grid and the elevation of the terrain. A land survey determined four elevation points surrounding each pole position to insure the perfect placement and exact height of each element. It took five months to complete both the aerial and the land surveys'. Ibid.
[464] Cf. with Aldrich et al., *Artists on Walter De Maria*, 74-76.

Due to the placement of the 400 poles on a grid (there is no pole in the middle of the field, hence no centre), the experience of *The Lightning Field* is often said to incorporate an 'inner landscape' that opens up within the outer landscape. While walking through *The Lightning Field*, a multitude of avenues seem to open up between the poles. As Baker observes:

> Wherever you stand or move within *The Lightning Field*, the ramifying alignment of poles define wide boulevards and inviting avenues into the landscape. The rows tempt you to see the views they frame as destinations, a vision that dissolves as you follow any avenue to its end.[465]

Indeed, these 'avenues of experience', as described by Baker, immediately evoke the film *Beds of Spikes*, where the camera similarly 'walks' through a landscape of spikes, showing the 'avenues' that open up in between the spikes. Moreover, it also links to the experience of the beholder of *Bed of Spikes* in the gallery: the invitation to walk around the beds, and to view them both from the short and the long end, as it is visually explored in the film *Beds of Spikes* in which the camera circles around the five sculptures.

However, it is especially the element of danger that links these two works together. *Bed of Spikes* was De Maria's first actualisation of what it means to 'put danger back into art.'[466] This danger is also a prominent feature of his magnum opus *The Lightning Field*, where the lightning strike is not merely alluded to but a real possibility, as it was with the *Bed of Spikes* and their 'blood-drawing' spikes.[467] Indeed, *The Lightning Field*'s reality

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[465] Baker, *The Lightning Field*, 14.

[466] De Maria, 'Interview with C.D. Bourdon, 1968 (the David Bourdon Papers, Box 27, Folder 4).' Although De Maria had already thought about and executed conceptual pieces, which included language that spoke about danger, the *Bed of Spikes* was his first sculpture that embodies actual danger to the beholder of the work.

[467] On *The Lightning Field*, see: Baker, *The Lightning Field*. Boettger, *Earthworks: Art and the Landscape of the Sixties*; Kaiser and Kwon, *Ends of the Earth: Land Art to 1974*; Kastner (editor), *Land Art and Environmental Art*; McFadden, *Walter De Maria: Meaningless Work*. Alan Sonfist (editor), *Art in the Land: A Critical Anthology of Environmental Art* (New York: E.P. Dutton, 1983). Chris Taylor and Bill Gilbert, *Land Arts of the American West* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2009). Patrick Werkner, *Land Art USA: Von Den Ursprüngen Zu Den Grossraumprojekten in Der Wüste* (München: Prestel, 1992); Jeffrey L. Kosky et al., *Arts of Wonder - Enchanting Secularity: Walter De Maria, Diller + Scofidio, James Turrell, Andy Goldsworthy*

incorporates the possibility of immediate danger to the visitor of the on-site work, which is also stated in the guidebook in the cabin at *The Lightning Field,* warning visitors to not enter the field during the possibility of lightning or thunderous weather, as the steel poles of the field function as an attractor of lightning. Again, like *Beds of Spikes*, the danger of this artwork is not an imagined one, but real: one's very existence is – albeit at certain times – threatened by the artwork, as if it has a life of its own. The 'death-life' reference therefore becomes implicit once again in *The Lightning Field.*

One can therefore argue that the film *Beds of Spikes* is in fact the first filmic exploration of De Maria's later interest in building the monumental *The Lightning Field.* However, there are also distinct differences. The most important one is definitely the question of how one experiences the 'centre' of these artworks. While the film *Beds of Spikes* allows the beholder to visually enter the beds and move in between the spikes, the actual sculptures intrinsically forbid this – underlined by the declaration form visitors needed to sign to not even try to interact with the spikes in a physical way. The beholder of the sculptures is thus forced to the outside, not able to enter the piece, although the fact that De Maria created several beds allows for some sort of experience of an inside – or at least, an in-between from one bed and the next. The film *Beds of Spikes* seems to form the crucial link between the sculpture and the final *The Lightning Field,* however, in that the film makes the sculptures accessible – as if one enters them as a field of exploration, which is later exemplified in *The Lightning Field* itself.

Another point of interest is the decentring force of both the *Beds of Spikes* and *The Lightning Field,* in which there are no centres – the *Beds of Spikes,* through it being a serial work, makes it impossible to define a centre, while *The Lightning Field* literally does not

(Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2017). See also once again my MA thesis: Van der Leeuw, 'The Glass Plate's Reality: The Infinite Camera without Ego of Walter De Maria's the Lightning Field.'

have one central pole. Again, as in Smithson's *Spiral Jetty,* this seems to relate to ontological questions about subjectivity and our relation to the outside world, or, in, the words of Terry Winters (an artist friend of De Maria's): '[T]he scope and scale of Walter's work [is] … to connect the human imagination with the vastness of space.'[468] Moreover, there is also a strong sense of humility involved in both works: *Beds of Spikes* by the very danger of drawing blood and the referral to death, and *The Lightning Field* due to its vast surface and capacity to attract actual lightning. The film *Beds of Spikes* seems to connect these two and offers insights into their intersections, as well as our relationship with the objects when encountering them. The strong sculptural dimension of the film *Beds of Spikes,* as well as its direct connection to *The Lightning Field,* gives significant insights into De Maria's own way of looking at his sculptures. By relating these two works, therefore, the question becomes centred on what film can tell us about sculpture, or maybe one could even say, how these sculptures – *Bed of Spikes* and *The Lightning Field* – are staged in film, and what kind of implications this staging has for our understanding of the sculptures themselves.

A View in the Total Round

De Maria began thinking about film from early on, at least by 1960, when he mentioned to La Monte Young that his conceptual work *Beach Crawl* (1960) could also be turned into a movie.[469] It is also known that De Maria filmed a show at the Paula Cooper Gallery in New York City, shortly after his own exhibition there of his *Invisible Drawings* in 1965.[470] All this was tied in with what De Maria called the 'gaining' of film's 'self-consciousness': 'In the Sixties the notion … that there was film as an art form … was sort of reaching big public consciousness.'[471]

[468] Aldrich et al., *Artists on Walter De Maria*.
[469] McFadden, *Walter De Maria: Meaningless Work*, 39.
[470] De Maria, 'Walter De Maria - Oral History Interview.'
[471] Ibid.

Evidently, De Maria, through various media and styles, linked his own working practice to filmmaking. For example, McFadden notices how many of De Maria's early drawings connected to his work *Walls in the Desert* (1961-1964) seemed intended as instructions resembling 'a kind of storyboard' for the actual experience of the *in situ* artwork *Walls in the Desert.*[472] This reveals an important analogy with Smithson's film *Spiral Jetty* and the storyboard of the movie. There are other similarities alluded to in some of the titles of De Maria's drawings, such as *View [of] Person in the Walls as Seen by a Helicopter* or *View of Walls from an Airplane* (both drawings are from the 1961-1964 series), which seem to foreshadow Smithson's later film. One can only speculate as to the possible influence of De Maria on Smithson's film *Spiral Jetty,* and whether Smithson had seen these drawings by De Maria while they were shown in various exhibitions in New York City during the 1960s. It is striking, however, that, like the *Spiral Jetty,* De Maria's sculpture *Bed of Spikes* had also gained a filmic 'double' through a film of the same name, and that this film likewise seems intrinsically related to the *in situ* Land artwork *The Lightning Field.*

A significant difference between Smithson's *Spiral Jetty* and De Maria's film *Beds of Spikes* is that De Maria did not actually show his movie, posing the question of why this was the case. The idea that De Maria did not like the movie enough to circulate it seems contrary to his other filmic works, especially *Hard Core,* about which he once commented in an oral history interview organised by the Smithsonian: 'I made an edition of a hundred copies of this film; I limited it to a hundred because I just wanted to do it and not think about it anymore, although if I had to do it again I would make it unlimited. So now I'm trying to work out some kind of a distribution system in order to get this film in more people's hands.'[473] This statement goes against received opinion about De Maria in which he is seen as

[472] McFadden, *Walter De Maria: Meaningless Work*, 48.
[473] De Maria, 'Walter De Maria - Oral History Interview.'

adhering to the traditional view that filmic and photographic media and Land Art are irreconcilable opposites, and that De Maria was against the use of mass-media – assertions that are often heard when scholars try to position Land Art as site-specific and therefore against photography and film (or any other mediated images of the artworks).

Other comments by De Maria also made links between Land Art and film. He mentioned, for example, that Land Art comes very close to producing a film: 'I really feel very close to the people that produce film. When you have to raise, you know, fifty, a hundred, two hundred thousand dollars to do a sculpture, you start thinking a lot like a film producer who has to raise a million dollars to make a film.'[474] This statement, from 1972, was made during the construction of *The Lightning Field*, and seems to relate the construction of this enormous Land Art sculpture directly to the making of a film. On another occasion, De Maria commented about his film *Hard Core* (1969) that making this 'very controlled film was very much in the spirit of my sculpture, and I felt it was really part of my work.'[475] Clearly, De Maria viewed his sculptural work as intrinsically related to his filmic work, and vice versa, as he explicitly states about another film, *Two Lines Three Circles on the Desert*, of the same year: 'I used the camera, as I use sculpture, as a structure, as a minimal concept. Basically this film is a minimal sculpture.'[476] The same can be said of the film *Beds of Spikes* and its relation to the later *The Lightning Field.*

The key question raised by films such as Smithson's *Spiral Jetty* and De Maria's *Beds of Spikes* revolves around the notion of sculpture itself: what sculpture actually meant for these artists. It is evident historiographically that Land Art changed conceptions about what a sculpture could be, with the Land artists themselves often remarking on their own changing perspectives on art in general through their engagement with Land Art. It thus makes sense

[474] Ibid.
[475] Ibid.
[476] Quoted in: Gerry Schum, 'Gerry Schum (Exhibition Catalogue),' (Amsterdam: Stedelijk Museum, 1979).

that, even though De Maria's work was predominantly in sculpture, this was not traditional sculpture on a pedestal; it was rather, as McFadden has described it, 'a dynamic and iterative realm'.[477] It is clear that 'sculpture' for De Maria involved many different media, from music and drawing to photography and film, which all deeply inform the conceptual as well as the actual realisation of his sculptures.

This becomes especially apparent in his film *Beds of Spikes* because it is through the film that the sculpture begets its 'expanded field', in the same way that Smithson's film *Spiral Jetty* created this for the actual *Spiral Jetty* located in Utah. At the same time, the material sculptures themselves seem to have incorporated an inherent reflexivity on the medium of film into their very form. This is suggested in a statement by De Maria, where he comments on the quality of the sculpture *Bed of Spikes* as being very successful because it invites the beholder to read it 'in the total round'. As he formulates it:

> … the interesting part is that they are very beautiful works for total looking in the round because the perspective in the files shift and when you're on the short side you see … six passageways, seven rows of spikes, then moving around the other way you see thirteen rows and then you see all of the spatial variations of these diagonal ranks that form too, so that spatially it's really a successful piece in reading it, in reading the sculpture in the total round, especially for an abstract piece.[478]

This account is significant as an indirect reflection on De Maria's *magnum opus The Lightning Field*, where visitors have often commentated on the visual experience of the apparently endless avenues that open up before one's eyes while walking through this large sculpture. But the account is also significant in emphasising the importance of actively 'reading the sculpture' – rather than passively viewing it – in 'the total round'.

Seen through this lens, the film *Beds of Spikes* seems an exercise in how to 'read' the actual sculptures, with the playfulness, the music of Bach, and the strong light-and-dark

[477] McFadden, *Walter De Maria: Meaningless Work*, 52.
[478] De Maria, 'Walter De Maria - Oral History Interview.'

effects all contributing to different interpretations of the sculptures beyond those engendered by viewing the sculptures in the gallery space. The sometimes jubilant, sometimes serious dynamics of the film *Beds of Spikes,* which is emphasised both through the music and the film's visual strategies, often seems quite distinct from the calm atmosphere and contained space associated with viewing the beds – or any artwork – in the confines of a gallery or museum setting. This is especially true if one looks at the relation between the film and the music. As Alter states about this relation: 'The silent forms captured by the camera's eye are amplified and dynamised through direct audible interferences to register a space beyond that which is visible and contained within the mute cinematic frame.'[479] In other words, the visual aspects of the sculpture *Bed of Spikes* are expanded thanks to the use of the music: it goes further into the auditive aspects of the film.

It is through all these aspects of the film in relation to the sculpture *Bed of Spikes* that the relation between viewer and sculpture is redefined. As mentioned earlier, Bourdon was especially aware of this redefinition by De Maria, as seen when he alludes to the 'intensity of relation to the viewer' and how this was 'the equivalent of the presence of human figures in the works'.[480] In the film *Beds of Spikes,* this intensity is brought to its highest level, where the dangerous, blood-drawing points of the spikes are brought so close to the viewer that the sense of their danger becomes a key theme of the film. This intensity is also evoked in De Maria's *The Lightning Field.* To create a field open to visitors, where the main goal was to attract lightning strikes, thereby endangering those same visitors, seems another step further away from the 'safe' space of the gallery in which the sculpture *Bed of Spikes* was exhibited. De Maria often discussed this sense of the extreme reality that is created by the artwork,

[479] Alter, in: Wood and Christie, *Sculpture and Film*, 42.
[480] De Maria, 'Interview with C.D. Bourdon, 1968 (the David Bourdon Papers, Box 27, Folder 4).'

pointing out that ‘real land involvements wouldn’t be easy – and real contact with realities either’.[481] Again, the relation of these views to *The Lightning Field* seems evident.

Hence, it is clear that *Bed of Spikes,* as well as the film *Beds of Spikes,* is directly linked to De Maria’s transition to large-scale Land artworks. In a ‘brief statement concerning what I wish to do in [the] 1969/70 period’, again directed to Wagstaff, De Maria wrote: ‘I wish to continue my work in sculpture, using the earth, or land as the artistic medium. I want to master the ways of making landsculpture and create sculpture of a large scale.’[482] It seems important to note here that De Maria viewed his Land Art explicitly as sculpture – as ‘landsculpture’ or ‘sculpture of a large scale’. It was a new kind of sculpture, a sculpture with which De Maria critiqued the art of his time by bringing back reality – experience of life and death – into his own art. De Maria talked about the ‘old art’ as ‘machines that entertain you, trying to do the tap-dance for you’. In an interview with Bourdon in 1969, he stated:

> Another thing we’re changing [with Land Art] is time. There’s a hole or a trench. There’s the sun, just the natural light as it slowly changes during the day. The old art is machines that entertain you, trying to do the tap-dance for you. Our art is simply there, fourteen hours sunup to sundown. But this is not going back to nature like Thoreau. What we’re interested in, coming out of the hard New York background, it’s going to be an art of hard places – we’re not looking for the lake by the mountain like the pretty postcard. The question really is death.[483]

Evidently, De Maria’s works communicate something different to the art world, to the artists making art merely based on an interest in style, and to all the visitors who might have been attracted by the idea of a sensationalist – even entertaining – work of art, when they read Dwan’s advertisement for *Bed of Spikes.* It would only be a decade later, with the construction of *The Lightning Field* in 1977, that the visitors who had encountered those

[481] Walter De Maria in a letter to Samuel Wagstaff, dated 24th of October, 1968 (Munster, Germany). Smithsonian, 'The Samuel Wagstaff Papers (Folder on Walter De Maria).'
[482] Walter De Maria in a letter to Samuel Wagstaff, undated. Ibid.
[483] De Maria, 'Interview with C.D. Bourdon, 1968 (the David Bourdon Papers, Box 27, Folder 4).'

spiky beds in the Dwan Gallery might have understood what had happened there. In a world on the brink of death by nuclear war, De Maria's *Beds of Spikes* seemed to clearly summarise the situation: it simultaneously draws our attention to the reality of danger, death, and the current situation – while also pointing to the possibility of life. Our own fragility in the face of lightning or blood-drawing spikes brings an inevitable humility: these aspects cannot be fixed by the rational mind, or solved by our practical engagement with the artworks – they resist any sense of commodification, therefore remaining extremely powerful and immeasurably complex sculptures.

3.3 Ephemeral Land Art: Mary Kelly's *An Earthwork Performed*

> I am … interested in the way the spectator can be drawn into the space and involved in the experience of real time.
>
> Mary Kelly, 1971.[484]

Mary Kelly's interest in time-specificity is something that provides a direct link between her works and those of Smithson and De Maria.[485] As we have seen, film was an important medium to visualise the interest in scale, space and – foremost – time that formed the foundation of the Land Art movement (and sometimes became as significant as making actual sculptures or Land Art as such). Most of these films are not merely documentary, however, as we have seen in De Maria's film *Beds of Spikes* and Smithson's film *Spiral Jetty.* Rather, they should be seen as performative sculptures in themselves, where a direct link is made between the tangible Land artwork and the performative aspect of the sculpture. It is an important point that it is through this aspect of performativity and ephemerality that the highly gendered, masculine aspects of Land Art could be repurposed to engage women artists who could use media like photography and film to break through the cultural and physical barriers associated with creating Land Art. Many women artists saw opportunities to create Land artworks that did not necessarily require monumental labour to be undertaken in remote locations.[486]

Indeed, with the exception of Nancy Holt's later works, all of the women artists associated with Land Art made many more ephemeral, transient pieces of work than male artists, often using wood or other organic materials that would deteriorate over time. This was

[484] Mignon Nixon (editor), *Mary Kelly*, October Files (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2016), 116.
[485] Important in this context is also, of course, Gilles Deleuze conceptualization of the film as a 'time-image' in his books on cinema. See: Deleuze, *Cinema 1*; *Cinema 2: The Time-Image* (London: Bloomsbury Academic, 2013).
[486] Cf. with: Boettger, *Earthworks: Art and the Landscape of the Sixties*, 147-150.

especially the case in the early days of Land Art, for instance in Mary Miss's *Battery Park Landfill* (figs. 169-170).[487] Many of these artists also used film (and they all used photography), a seemingly necessary approach in order to retain the actual (yet ephemeral) work of art. Yet one of the most complex examples of this use of film in *and as* Land Art is probably Mary Kelly's *An Earthwork Performed* of 1970.

Modes of Seeing and the Transience of Time

Unlike most other artists who developed an interest in Land Art during the late 1960s and early 1970s, Kelly came from a painting background, and had previously worked mostly with relief painting. However, she 'extended her studies in abstraction and the female form, moving entirely into three-dimensional works' by the time she moved to London in 1968, to start her postgraduate training at St Martin's School of Art.[488] She became fascinated with the performative aspects of soil and other natural materials when creating *An Earthwork Performed,* which included what Kelly called 'an obscure allusion to the miner's strike', but it was above all 'a systematic series of actions'.[489] This 'series of actions' is summed up by a text with details about the event, which was hung in the exhibition space close to the physical elements of the Land artwork.[490] It reads:

> Event.
> Duration … one hour ten minutes.
> Equipment, shovel, microphone, two eight millimetre film projectors,
> tape recorder, video tape, amplifier, loudspeaker, coke.
> Four hundred weight of coke is heaped on floor.
> First film projector starts running off film of coke being shovelled.
> (after 5 minutes)

[487] Other notable artworks in this context worth mentioning are Agnes Denes's *Rice/Tree/Burial*, 1968 (figs. 171-173), Alice Aycock's *Maze*, 1972 (fig. 174), and Patricia Johanson's *Stephen Long* (1968, which also exists as a 5-minute-long film, figs. 175-176).
[488] Griselda Pollock and Joyce Zemans, *Museums after Modernism: Strategies of Engagement* (Malden: Blackwell, 2006), 181.
[489] Online article; Unknown author, 'Mary Kelly ' *ArtSpace magazine* (June 10, 2017).
[490] Compare with Mary Kelly's own view on language. Mary Kelly, 'Re-Viewing Modernist Criticism,' *Screen* 22, no. 3 (1981): 49.

Tape recorder, tape of coke being shovelled.
(after five minutes)
Microphone in shovel is switched on and shovelling started.
(after five minutes)
Video tape is started
(after 5 minutes)
Second film projector is switched on
Tape recording amplification switched from recorder to loudspeaker.
(same for duration of film, 20 minutes)
Film ends.
(5 minutes)
Video ends.
(5 minutes)
Tape ends
(5 minutes)
Microphone in shovel switched off
Shovelling ends one hour ten minutes after start of event.
End event.

The work was originally an 'untitled event', and one of the only performance pieces that Kelly ever did (in this case, together with Stephen Rothenberg).[491] It was performed at the London New Arts Lab in November 1970 and was filmed and taped, although initially it was only (post-event) exhibited by means of the text and one photograph – very much in line with conceptual works or, indeed, as Siona Wilson has also observed, the works shown in the initial *Earth Works* exhibition at the Dwan Gallery a year before.[492]

In later exhibitions *An Earthwork Performed* developed into a very complex multi-media piece that would feature all the original materials and elements – except for the actual part of performance undertaken by the artist herself: besides an 8mm film projector, a televised movie, and a sound recording, 448 pounds of coke (a coal by-product) were shown together with a shovel – the coke which was originally shovelled by the artist (although never again in later exhibitions), live, during a set amount of time during the performance in the

[491] As Pittman has noted: 'The film and installation are the existing piece, but it was initially a performance, one of the only performance pieces that Mary has ever made.' Ariel Lauren Pittman in correspondence with the author.
[492] Siona Wilson, *Art Labor, Sex Politics - Feminist Effects in 1970s British Art and Performance* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2015), Chapter 2: 'The Spectator as Reproducer: Mary Kelly's Early Films', 55.

gallery space in London (figs. 177 and 178).[493] As Kaiser and Kwon described it: 'The work … follows a scripted event score that combines the noise of the artist's shovelling with other audio and visual components such as the film projections and the amplification of pre-recorded sounds.'[494]

As was also the case with the other complex sculptures discussed previously, *An Earthwork Performed*, too, is just as much about time as it is about space. Every part of the event was meticulously timed and overlapped with another part of the event, because of which one could say that, besides the actual performance by Kelly herself, the film and video images and the sounds were also 'performed' at different moments in time. As Wilson describes it:

> Each recorded element is layered over the next: 8 mm film (the quintessential home movie form), then video (a medium that then evoked televisual transmission), followed by recorded sound, and the piece culminated in live performance. For the final twenty minutes of live action, a microphone was attached to the shovel so that *An Earth Work Performed* must have concluded in a cacophony of laboring noise.[495]

The simple act of shovelling coal by Kelly herself was thus broken up and fragmented into many different events during the actual performance: the entire piece lasted for one hour and ten minutes, showing the apparently simple action of the shovelling of coal to be much more complex than one would initially think. The action itself, multiplied visually, audibly, and physically, seems to pose many questions about time, space, synchronicity and dislocation. This might remind one of something Kelly once wrote herself: 'Gesture, … even the most minimal action, retains a certain residue of figuration. The play of presence and absence within the pictorial space turns on gesture; its materialisation sustaining texture, matter; its

[493] Alexander Alberro and Blake Stimson, *Conceptual Art: A Critical Anthology* (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 1999), 13.
[494] Kaiser and Kwon, *Ends of the Earth: Land Art to 1974*, 212.
[495] Wilson, *Art Labor, Sex Politics - Feminist Effects in 1970s British Art and Performance*, Chapter 2: 'The Spectator as Reproducer: Mary Kelly's Early Films', 55.

dematerialisation transporting colour, light, to the field of the signifier.'[496] Yet, most importantly, the protagonist of this action – Kelly herself, i.e. a woman artist – clearly subverts the assumed gender associated with such manual labour and clearly contradicts (and definitely critiques) masculine images associated with early Land Art (as discussed in Chapter I).[497]

Contrary to the masculine connotations of coal, which is usually produced by the labour of (male) miners, the coke that Kelly used for her performance was in fact coal that has been processed into coke for household use.[498] This seemingly insignificant fact immediately brings out the complexity of Kelly's performance. With the title of the piece directly referring to the *Earthworks* exhibition of 1968 at the Dwan Gallery in New York City, *An Earthwork Performed* seems to counter the all-male show with a strong statement about the other side of manual labour, as well as the transmission of that labour through various media. As Wilson puts it: 'In Kelly's performance, the suggestion of labor associated with the construction site is replaced with the evocation of a domestic coal cellar, and the question of mediation and transmission is also constitutive for the work.'[499] Hence, *An Earthwork Performed* seems closely connected in its critique to the first issue of *Avalanche* magazine in Fall 1970, where all of the – only male – Land artists were portrayed individually within their artworks: either shovelling, pickaxing, bulldozering, or stone-moving.[500] So even though Kelly's artwork also alludes to particular political issues and events, for example, British labour activism and the first national miners' strikes in Britain in 1972, the emphasis is also intentionally placed on the gendered and performative aspects of

[496] Kelly, 'Re-Viewing Modernist Criticism,' 44.
[497] See Chapter I.
[498] There is an interesting link here between Kelly's use of domestic coal and the material used for the *Earth Room*, as De Maria had bought the soil from a local store, instead of using dug up earth from a specific location. Cf. with Chapter I.
[499] Wilson, *Art Labor, Sex Politics - Feminist Effects in 1970s British Art and Performance*, 55.
[500] See Chapter I.

the piece itself.[501] The fact that the final twenty minutes of the film consist of Kelly herself shovelling the heap of coke inside the gallery, with a microphone attached to the shovel, results in a convincing reversal of masculine/feminine assumptions about Land Art: the loud noise of the shovel with which the piece culminated would have put the emphasis on the action itself – an action performed by the woman artist – and would have made a strong statement about the role of women in Land Art and in the wider world in general. (It is important to note that Kelly was an active member of the Women's Liberation movement.)[502]

This emphasis on the action is also evident in later exhibitions of Kelly's *An Earthwork Performed*, in which the performative aspect is conveyed entirely through film and video since Kelly would no longer be present herself at the exhibition to shovel the coke. Instead, film and video provided up-close, but visually mediated views of the shovelling of the coke at different moments of the performance, drawing attention once more to this gendered action. Through Kelly's intentional use of the zoom-function of the camera, zooming-in on her own performance, she also uses the ability of film to dislocate the viewer of her work: showing how 'the spectator can be drawn into the space' (and actual time) of the piece by lens-based media.[503] Through the film, the beholder is transported into the materiality and physicality of the coke, the same coke that is lying on the floor next to the projector and television screen in the actual exhibition space, while the televised video explores the human interaction with the physical material. While watching the footage, the physical coke on the floor of the gallery seems to acquire gendered associations: a history of actions that unfolds from the invisible woman artist-as-performer. From being a kind of minimal sculpture or installation, it is thus transformed into a performative sculpture through the film, in which systems and social structures (between seeing and being seen, women and

[501] Wilson, *Art Labor, Sex Politics - Feminist Effects in 1970s British Art and Performance*, 53.
[502] Pollock and Zemans, *Museums after Modernism: Strategies of Engagement*, 181.
[503] Nixon (editor), *Mary Kelly*, 116.

men, and different social classes) are questioned. As Griselda Pollock notes, this would become a characteristic 'Kelly move: to stage in a created artwork a commentary on the modes of seeing and knowledge typical of our cultures and media ….'[504]

It is this interest in different, sometimes gendered, modes of seeing that Kelly makes visible in her artwork *An Earthwork Performed.* As she noted, this was definitely influenced by the focus in the 1970s on 'a move away from an emphasis on positive images to a psychoanalytically informed concern with spectatorship.'[505] Yet another theme of the piece is time and the ways in which time intersects with looking, hearing, sensing, and perceiving reality in general. Immediately, this brings up questions about the subject who beholds and interprets the artwork, as well as the subject who performs the artwork (either by creating or (re-)staging it) – thus raising the question of how gender is *performed* (enacted), instead of assuming that gender is fixed and stable.

Time and the Fragment

An Earthwork Performed was – until recently – only shown in gallery contexts in the form of a text and a photograph, until the entire work was restaged in 2012 at the Museum of Contemporary Art in Los Angeles as part of the *Ends of the Earth* exhibition. This restaged version of the work, which included all the original elements except for the live performance (the film and video projector, sound recording, heap of coal and shovel with microphone) has since been exhibited a number of times (fig. 178). The incorporation of the film into the exhibition format, which shows in close-up the coke being shovelled and moved, while the televised video nearby shows the artist herself shovelling the coke, also asks questions about time. Evidently, filmic time and the time involved in viewing the piece are set in a new

[504] Ibid., 133.
[505] Ibid., 65.

relation with each other, articulating the revolutionary force of the time-moment, what Benjamin once called the revolutionary force of the dialectical image.[506]

This is brought to the fore through the way that Kelly curates time in her artwork: instead of a single stretch of time, the entire performance is cut up into different moments and pieces – literally fragments of time. This stands in stark contrast with other Land art films, such as, for example, Peter Hutchinson's *A Day in the Life of Mt. Sopris* (of 1972, fig. 179), which features almost twenty hours of unbroken time in footage taken with a static camera: ideal for documenting the slow changes of the weather, the moving clouds, and the slight wind around Mount Sopris in Colorado. Yet in Kelly's work, the usual director's 'cut' of the original film footage becomes very important symbolically: it is as if Kelly uses the filmic cut as the basis for *An Earthwork Performed* itself, literally cutting the known and general assumptions about what is known (our system of beliefs) by fragmenting the time-lapse of the performance. The importance of 'the cut' in film is a theme that Mary Miss, another woman artist also involved in Land Art, once remarked on in an interview of 1993 (while discussing a key moment in the making of her film *Cut-Off* from 1974-1975):

> Something that has interested me since my earliest work is trying to get physicality expressed … that is not about looking at the sign but is physically, emotionally and psychologically engaging and compelling. … At a certain point I made a couple of films, and I found that you could get a kind of physicality that you couldn't get through a single image … I could barely afford to build the pieces, so I did not do any more films. But as I proceeded with the work, the idea of breaking things up, instead of trying to put everything in a single object, in some ways came out of the experience of making films.[507]

For Miss, the experience of working with film directly influenced her interest in what she calls 'physicality', and it was film (in this case her film *Cut-Off*) that brought this physicality

[506] Most famously in his *Angelus Novus*, about an artwork by Paul Klee. See Walter Benjamin, *Angelus Novus* (Frankfurt a.M: Suhrkamp, 2011).
[507] Sandro Marpillero, 'An Interview with Mary Miss,' *Progex* no. 9 (January 1993).

to the forefront. This brings an emphasis on the 'physicality' that film shares with sculpture – an important yet often overlooked connection between film and sculpture. As Hollis Frampton once stated: 'As for sculpture, I think a lot of my early convictions about sculpture, in a concrete sense, have affected my handling of film as a physical material. My experience of sculpture has had a lot to do with my relative willingness to take up film in hand as a physical material and work with it. Without it, I might have been tempted to more literary ways of using film, or more abstract ways of using film.'[508]

For Kelly, too, her experience with filmmaking informed her sculptural works: she has admitted that she was often looking for a kind of physicality in her works.[509] However, in contrast to male Land artists, where physicality often seems to relate to labour, machines, and materials, *An Earthwork Performed* dissects this physicality in order to then recodify it through filmic techniques of editing and viewing: the possibility of the cut and the zoom. Seen as such, the importance of the filmic 'cut' can be related to both a physical act (in sculpture or film), and to a specific conceptual move. As Melissa Ragona formulates it, the cut is 'a way of ordering the seemingly inordinate amount of information suggested by each medium'.[510] Yet it is also about systems of beliefs: the demystification of truth as something that gets retold and reformulated, something that is biased by the viewer who looks at it and interprets it. When what is looked at is not one single object, but rather 'a systematic series of actions', the underlying system of beliefs is revealed by exposing the beholder's expectations of what will happen next, and – according to Kelly – a sort of chain of delayed reactions gets unleashed in the viewer.[511] As Kelly herself puts it:

[508] Hollis Frampton and Michael Snow, 'Hollis Frampton on Hollis Frampton: An Interview with Michael Snow,' *Film Culture*, no. Spring 1970 (1970): n.p.
[509] Wilson, *Art Labor, Sex Politics - Feminist Effects in 1970s British Art and Performance*, 53.
[510] Mellisa Ragona, 'The Cut: Hollis Frampton and Carl Andre in Dialogue', in: Wood and Christie, *Sculpture and Film*, 82.
[511] Unknown author, 'Mary Kelly '.

> What I am aiming at … is to get something which is not about style and not about a gestalt of form but an accumulated sense of these different visual events that really hits you later, a kind of delayed reaction. I think this also comes from film and my interest in what I call the "narrativization of space." It's not just that I use narrative in the work; I am also interested in the way the spectator can be drawn into the space and involved in the experience of real time. Only secondly am I concerned about the way a conventional narrative can operate in that space.[512]

Hence, Kelly herself sees her interest in film as directly related to the possibility of a 'narrativization of space' – a space that is cut up and thereby reveals its innumerable layers of meaning. Since also sculpture can be seen as a 'cut' in space (think of Carl Andre's famous quote that 'A thing is a hole in a thing it is not')[513], the link between *An Earthwork Performed* – an intrinsically ephemeral work – and the sculpture of *in situ* Land artworks gets reinforced even further.[514]

Hence, the coke that gets shovelled by the artist herself in *An Earthwork Performed* seems almost literally a decodifying of the meanings of that material through the action inflicted upon the material itself – simultaneously generating a new index, and thereby a new visual and physical experience in relation to coal. As Kelly once stated (about a different work than *An Earthwork Performed*), she was interested in exploring 'the possibilities of material indexicality as a visual experience'.[515] All of this might have been strongly influenced by Kelly's move to London's St Martin's School of Art, where ideas about 'art as an event structure' were still prevalent in 1968.[516] Moreover, the dematerialisation of the art object, and its consequential emphasis on time over space, might also have led Kelly to adopt this new artistic path, which was the first in a series of works in film and photography.[517]

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[512] Kelly on her work *Gloria Patri.* Nixon (editor), *Mary Kelly*, 116.
[513] C. Andre and J.S. Meyer, *Cuts: Texts 1959-2004* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2005), 84.
[514] Cf. Melissa Ragona's essay in: Wood and Christie, *Sculpture and Film*, 83.
[515] Nixon (editor), *Mary Kelly*, 145.
[516] Cf. Lisa Le Feuvre (editor), 'A Lesson in Sculpture with John Latham,' ed. Henry Moore Institute (Leeds: Henry Moore Institute, 2016), 88. Also cf. with George Kubler's iconic work *The Shape of Time. George Kubler, The Shape of Time: Remarks on the History of Things (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1962).*
[517] Cf. Lucy R. Lippard, *Six Years: The Dematerialization of the Art Object from 1966 to 1972* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1997).

Land Art Reloaded: Delayed Reactions

Even though one could label *An Earthwork Performed* as more of a performance or conceptual piece than a Land artwork (as some writers have done), it is clear from the title that the work is meant to be linked to the category of Land Art as such. Although one could not say that Dwan's selection of artists for her *Earthworks* exhibition (or Sharp's selection for *Earth Art*) was deliberately discriminatory, it is still evident that there is an issue regarding the gendering of Land Art patronage. As Suzaan Boettger emphasises: 'the practice of making earthworks was intimately entwined with the support of patronage. And the sex of all of the sculptors whom all of these patrons – Dwan, Friedrich, Scull …– invested in was male.'[518] It is precisely this point that Kelly seems to have wanted to highlight through her *An Earthwork Preformed*, by distinctly pulling the attention away from the male dominion of early Land Art (as here it is a woman artist who is at the centre of attention), while also making a statement about the *way* Land Art can be created – if necessary, without the financial support of patrons that seemed to prefer male artists only.[519]

One could also see this critique of Land Art's masculinist practices and assumptions highlighted by Kelly's use of a televised film in her later installation of *An Earthwork Performed.* The restaging of the performative aspect of *An Earthwork Performed* – the shovelling of the coke – makes sure that 'an event [is] not a recovered history, but … a performative iteration: physical … and discursive …'[520] The television with its associations with the domestic sphere of the house – the living room – brings a revolutionary potential to the entire artwork: the suggested potential of *An Earthwork Performed* seen by the large public as a television broadcast. Moreover, in later installations of the work, both the

[518] Boettger, *Earthworks: Art and the Landscape of the Sixties*, 148.
[519] Many male Land artists were also struggling with obtaining patronage. John Coplans remarks, for example, that 'patronage became a thorny issue for Smithson', even after having become part of the Dwan Gallery. Robert Hobbs, *Robert Smithson: Sculpture* (London: Cornell University Press, 1981), 47.
[520] Maria Balshaw and Janet Wolff, *Mary Kelly: Projects, 1973-2010* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2011), 9.

television itself and the film projector are placed centrally in the gallery space where they were encountered by the beholder and would acquire the same sculptural quality as the heap of coke on the ground. The film projector and television thus become a sculptural object by themselves; a practice that had been initiated by another woman artist, Valie Export (of Austrian descent), who exhibited her *Abstract Film No. 1* in 1967, which consisted of a projector placed on a white pedestal and presented it as a sculpture in itself, while simply projecting white light unto the wall.[521]

This transformation of these (at that time) 'new' media of film and television into sculpture could also indicate Kelly's progressive stance as a woman in relation to the (still largely male-dominated) society as such. The presence of a television seems to indicate the intrinsic link between 'public' and 'private', between the domestic sphere and society's progress towards emancipation and equality and the public sphere in which all of that could happen. The television in Kelly's work could thus be read as the 'threshold' element in this complex sculpture, where the beholder is transported to an elsewhere visually or invited to 'travel', possibly into the future – albeit only imaginatively.[522] This marks an essential turning point in the work, where more or less private spaces – the gallery, and the private domestic sphere of the house – are explicitly 'opened up' and related to public spaces and society as such. This also seems a direct continuation of the question, as indicated by Krauss and originating in Minimalism, about meaning: 'asking that meaning be seen as arising from … a public, rather than a private space.'[523]

Again, a strong decentring effect results from Kelly's use of these media in the later restaged installation: there does not seem to be a 'centre' of the piece, except for the 'empty centre' that was once occupied by Kelly herself whilst performing the shovelling of the coke

[521] See for a short discussion of this work: Alter, 'Acoustic Shaping: Sound, Film and Sculpture,' 48.
[522] See Chapter I and Chapter II.
[523] Krauss, *Passages in Modern Sculpture*, 262.

during the original ‘event’. Instead, a constellation of elements is all that is left in the gallery display: only the materials and media that recall the actions that once shaped them remain – leaving questions about the identity of the artist and the artwork. In the words of Rosalyn Deutsche: ‘Literally and figuratively, Kelly’s work is a visual remix: a recording produced by bringing together ingredients in a new formation that modifies their identities.’[524] *An Earthwork Performed* is undoubtedly a complex sculpture that reflectively points to its reasons for being so, which brings the potential of an infinite reconfiguration of its existence in different material and immaterial forms. This is how Kelly’s complex sculpture brings us from film to the next chapter on television, where this discussion will beget more nuance and a broader context – for many of the Land artists, surprisingly perhaps, were engaged with television.

[524] Rosalind Deutsche (and others), 'Mary Kelly: Words Are Things,' ed. Ujazdowski Castle (Warsaw: Centre for Contemporary Art, 2008), 8.

3.4 Third Preliminary Conclusion

As we have seen in this chapter, film and Land Art could be intertwined in many different ways, with film often being an important component of the complex sculptures of Land Art – sculptures that go well beyond 'mere' documentation. In this chapter it was suggested that film not only enlarges 'our understanding of sculptural space' (as Christie and Wood have argued in their recent book), but also creates a distance, displacement, or 'experiential remoteness' – something that has been shown to be indispensable for a number of Land Art sculptures. Together, film and sculpture can create a complex network of viewpoints, which was first exemplified by Smithson's *Spiral Jetty.* By considering this famous Land artwork through the film *Spiral Jetty,* as well as the text with the same title, it became evident how film and Land Art can complement each other by bringing together opposites like closeness and distance, *in situ* experience and filmic displacement or dislocation.

These issues were further explored in De Maria's film and sculpture *Beds of Spikes.* In this work a radical decentring experience of the subject takes place, due to the uncertainty related to the possibility of danger and even death. This connects the sculpture *Bed of Spikes* directly to De Maria's monumental *The Lightning Field,* where this sense of danger and death is always present thanks to the possibility of lightning strike. Moreover, through the film *Beds of Spikes,* it was shown how a decentring force is operative in both works. Subjectivity is here, once again, questioned through these artworks' complex aesthetics. Like Smithson, De Maria radically reformulated his sculpture through film.

Whereas Land Art changed conceptions about what a sculpture could be, the use of film by Land artists changes our conception of what *kind of sculpture* Land Art can be. Instead of an immersive, bodily experience in the landscape, the use of film as part of the sculptures of Land Art shows the works to be highly mediated, immensely complex, and infinitely extendable into a mediated landscape and several dimensions. Moreover, by an

investigation of Mary Kelly's *An Earthwork Performed,* which not only refers to contemporary social and political circumstances, but also asks complex questions about time and space, the use of film *as* Land Art was given another turn: towards a Land artwork that is explicitly *not* 'out there' in the landscape. Kelly's work undermines the gendered assumptions of manual labour and critiques the masculine images originally associated with early Land Art. Especially through the use of film and television, *An Earthwork Performed* enables social structures and systems of vision (between seeing and being seen, as well as women and men, and different social classes) to be questioned. Kelly's *An Earthwork Performed* provided a visual remix of elements – with direct implications for the restructuring of the public and private space of our culture, as symbolised, among other things, by the television in the artwork. And it is with this leap from film to television, and the intrinsic similarities and differences between the two, that we will now turn to the fourth and last chapter of this dissertation.

Chapter IV – Time-specific Art: Land Art and Television

> Entering … into the spirit of a mechanized process, with the same intimacy as the manual craftsman felt for the tool in his hand, they [the artists] project their imagination into every part of the mechanism, and thus render mechanization itself expressive. In such cases we do not have a 'mechanization of art', but on the contrary an artistic use of mechanics...
>
> Edgar Wind, 'The Mechanization of Art', in: *Art and Anarchy*.[525]

This quote stems from Wind's book *Art and Anarchy*, published in the 1960s, which originated in his series of live lectures on radio for the BBC in 1960 (the 'Reith lectures').[526] As Wind emphasised during these lectures: mechanization and creation seem to be, by definition, direct opposites and their supposed antithesis creates a tension that one can trace back throughout history (and not only in art). When a certain process is mechanized, for example the printing of books, in general one no longer thinks of the reproduction as an artistic creation: every new book that is mechanically produced is simply brought forth, copied from that which was already there (the 'original'). This is why artistic creation is most often associated with something new and unprecedented – something brought into the world that was not yet there and thus has an 'aura' of originality and presence.[527] As Edgar Wind formulates it: 'An artistic performance is a creative act, unique and unrepeatable, whereas it is of the very essence of a mechanical event that it can be repeated, and often is.'[528] However, despite the fact that Wind's perspective on this matter in *Art and Anarchy* was often highly critical of mechanization processes, this was only the case in those instances where art is mechanically produced *without* 'an artistic use of mechanics', which he calls one of the

[525] Edgar Wind, *Art and Anarchy* (London: Faber and Faber, 1963), 72.
[526] Wind was the first professor of the History of Art at the University of Oxford, from 1956-1967, which could explain why he was invited to deliver these lectures on radio.
[527] Of course I refer here to the canonical text by Walter Benjamin, 'The Work of Art in the Age of Its Technological Reproducibility [First Version],' *Grey Room*, no. 39 (2010).
[528] Wind, *Art and Anarchy*, 68.

'fundamental dangers of mechanization': where 'the medium of diffusion tends to take precedence over the direct experience of the object and in the end the object itself is sometimes conceived with this purpose in view'.[529] In a Platonic allusion, Wind likens this to the perception of a shadow instead of the thing itself, which causes a risk that 'in the end we live among shadows and not only believe that things are made for the sake of their shadows, but … that this is actually the case.'[530]

This raises a critical point in Land Art's use of time-based media, one that many would voice in later discussions (not only surrounding Land Art) about art's relation to technology – including lens-based media. It is therefore an important starting point for this chapter as well, which is concerned with Land Art for *and as* television, in which one of the earliest Land artworks will be analysed: the television broadcast *LAND ART* of 1968/1969, produced by the German filmmaker Gerry Schum, who had founded his so-called 'Television Gallery' (*Fernsehgalerie*) in Berlin in the late 1960s. As Robyn Farrell notes, *LAND ART* has not received a lot of attention: 'Access and authorship are two reasons why this project is continually overlooked in the larger view of art history.'[531] However, Schum's *LAND ART* was in fact the first Land Art exhibition in Europe – a significant feat – and consisted of eight short fragments of Land artworks filmed on location and directed by their creators (four Americans and four Europeans): Robert Smithson, Walter De Maria, Michael Heizer, David Oppenheim, Barry Flanagan, Richard Long, Jan Dibbets and Marinus Boezem. This broadcast was one of Schum's first attempts to transmit artworks through public television – a radical gesture that moved art into the living room, without the need for a mediating institution or gallery space.[532] *LAND ART*, as the first 'television exhibition', can therefore in

[529] Ibid., 79.
[530] Ibid.
[531] Farrell, 'Network(Ed) Tv: Collaboration and Intervention at Fernsehgalerie Gerry Schum and Videogalerie Schum,' 19.
[532] This was not necessarily meant as institutional critique though, as Schum did organize a so-called 'gallery-vernissage', where live transmission of *LAND ART* could be viewed on a television in a gallery that was rented

many ways be taken as a radical attempt to move art away from the object and into the uncertainty of a dynamic film image (the photograph in flux) that continuously unfolds in time, only visible when screened or broadcast.

In *LAND ART,* 'the medium of diffusion', as Wind calls it, definitively takes over the direct experience of the object, as the artworks in the series were specifically made for television. Yet it is also clear that this does not mean that the viewers of the television exhibition were given the 'mere shadow' instead of the actual work. Rather, as Wind proposes in the opening quote of this chapter, one could say that the television exhibition *LAND ART* shows how artistic creativity can transform the medium of television itself and turn it into an artwork. Jean Leering, in his opening speech for the television exhibition *LAND ART,* formulated it as follows: 'To what extent does a normal TV set differ from a TV set as a work of art? In the normal TV experience, your interest is directed to the matter about which one receives information. In the work of art, the process of information is itself the centre of attention: the usual function of information therefore falls away.'[533]

This project was one of the key early examples of the new so-called 'television art' of the 1960s, an art form that needs to be distinguished from lens-based media like photography and film. As Christine Mehring explains:

> Television art can be defined as encompassing art made for or with broadcast television, or as involving essential characteristics of the medium (such as transmission through space) or components of its hardware (such as the cathode ray tube). If television art historically preceded the invention of video and therefore video art, it can be distinguished from it conceptually as well – through its engagements with transmission, live capability, and broad reach, for example. At least in television art's early years, such conceptual aspects – along with the medium's electronic makeup, poor resolution, small-scale images, casing, and different viewing conditions – also set it apart from avant-garde film.[534]

for the occasion. Cf. with Chapter I for a more thorough discussion of Land Art and its supposed institutional critique.

[533] Translated from the German by the author. Ulrike Groos, Barbara Hess, and Ursula Wevers, 'Ready to Shoot: Fernsehgalerie Gerry Schum/Videogalerie Schum,' (Cologne: Snoeck Verlag, 2003), 73.

[534] Christine Mehring, 'Television Art's Abstract Starts: Europe Circa 1944-1969,' *October* 125 (2008): 30.

The films of the television exhibition *LAND ART* should thus be studied within a different context than the films and videos of Land Art that were considered in the previous chapters.[535] At the same time, however, it will become evident in this chapter that Land Art and television were from the very beginning involved in a similar search for a means of creating new perspectives and ways of seeing – testified by the complex artworks that the present chapter will discuss.

During the end of the 1950s and the beginning of the 1960s, television was considered by many artists to be 'the new frontier': the ability of television to transmit (sometimes live) images to a potentially unlimited number of people endowed the medium with a visual and cultural authority that the world had not known until that time – something difficult for us to imagine today. As John Alan Farmer writes:

> By the beginning of the 1960s, television had become the primary technology for the production, distribution, and consumption of images. …The dominance of the photographic and filmic image was giving way to a technology in which images were produced by the phosphorescence of electronic signals transmitted simultaneously by electromagnetic waves or coaxial cables from a sender to multiple receivers in real time, effectively integrating sender and receiver into a circuit. … Through these images [transmitted on television], fluid structures of power, systems of truth, and strategies of desire were continuously shaped, reshaped, and integrated seamlessly into the rhythms of everyday life. Television's rising cultural authority during this pivotal period resided in its capacity to legitimate the new modes of perception, consciousness, and behaviour it was putting in place. And in the work of the artists who engaged with this medium at this time, the effects of television's reconfiguration of the relationship between image and reality were emerging in a variety of artistic media, including painting, sculpture, performance, and intermedia.[536]

[535] I am aware there is a difference between film and video, which, however, lies outside the scope of this dissertation. For a history of video art, see: Chris Meigh-Andrews, *A History of Video Art: The Development of Form and Function* (London: Bloomsbury Academic, 2013).
[536] John Alan Farmer, *The New Frontier: Art and Television, 1960-65* (Austin, Tex.: Austin Museum of Art, 2000), 17-18.

Indeed, for Land artists, too, it seems to have been this effect of television's reconfiguration of the relationship between image and reality that shaped their own interest in using the medium for their artistic endeavours.

The new possibilities for artistic exploration that television provided, as well as its particular technical qualities, appealed to Land artists and triggered their interest in the potential of using television for Land Art. This is exemplified by Smithson, who wrote as early as 1967 that he was thinking about using television, which 'could transmit such activity', like the use of 'the actual land as a medium', 'all over the world'.[537] Yet the fact that it was possible for artists to create such a new aesthetics by using televisual transmission is due to a number of specific historical factors. As Raymond Williams explains: 'Unlike all previous communication technologies, radio and television were systems primarily devised for transmission and reception as abstract processes, with little or no definition of preceding content. When the question of content was raised, it was resolved, in the main, parasitically … It is not only that the supply of broadcasting facilities preceded the demand; it is that the means of communication preceded their content.'[538] It is precisely this characteristic, according to Mehring, which opened 'the door for artistic explorations of its material and technical makeup.'[539] Moreover, television, as a medium, was also closely intertwined 'with a variety of historical and cultural meanings specific to the contexts from which early television art arose – including National Socialism and World War II, geographical shifts in the postwar art world, Europe's delayed economic growth, and the Cold War …'[540]

This is one of the crucial dynamics that underlies television art as well: the intersection of the private and public domain. As Alex Potts has stated: 'The viewing of art,

[537] Smithson in his text 'Towards the Development of an Air Terminal Site', first published in *Artforum* in 1967 and reprinted in: *Robert Smithson: The Collected Writings*, 56. However, except for his participation in *LAND ART*, Smithson did not make any further use of television
[538] Raymond Williams, *Television: Technology and Cultural Form* (London: Routledge, 2003), 17.
[539] Mehring, 'Television Art's Abstract Starts: Europe Circa 1944-1969,' 30.
[540] Ibid., 30-32.

whether in a traditional gallery or in an intimate modernist interior or in a present-day art space, is both a private and a public affair. …With television in particular, people are engaged in modes of visual consumption that take place in a private, domestic space while being plugged into a public distribution network.'[541] Since the majority of the American people could now watch the coverage of events such as John F. Kennedy's funeral and the horrors of the Vietnam War on the TV in their own living rooms, private and public events and opinions became increasingly intertwined. The Vietnam War has therefore even been referred to as the first 'living-room war': it infiltrated people's lives with the most gruesome images that, on one level, seemed to be only passively received, emphasising the powerlessness of the people at home to change anything about the events happening on the other side of the world.[542] However, at the same time it also allowed for more positive effects, such as the realisation of the power generated when people's 'central nervous system[s]' (a term that was used by both Marshall McLuhan and Gene Youngblood when talking about television), and thus their emotional and socio-political concerns, could become connected through television.[543] The many protests of the 1960s (for example, those of the Civil Rights Movement) are often directly linked to the power of the images spread by television, connecting the private sphere to the public one, in the process connecting disparate people.[544]

Indeed, this relation between the private and public sphere, inside and outside, and self and other, is a theme that is, as we have seen throughout this dissertation, of central importance for the complex sculptures of Land Art produced in the 1960s and 1970s.[545] This

[541] Potts, *The Sculptural Imagination: Figurative, Modernist, Minimalist*, 22.
[542] The first 'living-room war' is a term that Michael Arlen used as a title for his book on the Vietnam War. Arlen, *Living-Room War*.
[543] Youngblood and Fuller, *Expanded Cinema*, (Chapter 4); Marshall McLuhan and W. Terrence Gordon, *Understanding Media: The Extensions of Man* (Berkeley, Calif.: Gingko Press, 2015).
[544] See, for example, Henry Taylor and Carol Dozier, 'Television Violence, African-Americans, and Social Control 1950-1976,' *Journal of Black Studies* 14, no. 2 (1983).
[545] See also the introduction, where Heizer's *Double Negative* is discussed to illustrate this theme.

relation became perhaps even more pronounced in the case of television art, in which this relationship between private and public is always already implied in the very medium itself. Bruce Nauman, for example, when commenting on his corridor pieces (around 1970, fig. 180) which involved television sets that showed the visitors inside the artwork 'live', said:

> I was thinking a lot about the connection between public and private experiences. … You tend to try an experience with art, but protect yourself in some way. You have to learn to shut yourself away from the rest of the public. So in those corridor pieces which were about the connection between public and private experience, the video helps the private part even though it's a public situation. The way you watch television is a private kind of experience.[546]

Through this private experience of watching television, the medium could also beget a strong political effect, precisely because it was integrated into an individual's daily domestic life. This realisation led to a heightened awareness about the power of commercial advertising on television, which was increasingly exploited in order to influence viewers' consciousness of themselves as citizens and consumers. Jean Baudrillard coined the term 'hyperreality' to describe this phenomenon, which he criticised: the television world and the real world seemed to become increasingly intertwined and ambiguous in problematic ways.[547] This negative view was also voiced by Andy Warhol in an article published in the *San Francisco Chronicle* (May 3, 1966): 'Television has done it. You don't have to read anymore. Books will go out, television will stay. Movies will go out, television will stay. And that is why people are really becoming plastic: they are just fed things and formed …'[548]

However, television also had great positive potential, associated with the democratic possibilities of a medium (or art form) that could reach people without regard to place, time, financial circumstances (beyond the initial cost of buying a television), education, or physical

[546] Potts, *The Sculptural Imagination: Figurative, Modernist, Minimalist*, 22.
[547] As most famously expounded in Jean Baudrillard, *Simulacres Et Simulation* (Paris: Galilée, 1981).
[548] Farmer, *The New Frontier: Art and Television, 1960-65*, 23.

abilities. Throughout the 1960s, art on television was not only a broad practice, but also a broadly received practice, with enormous numbers of people (in the tens of thousands)[549] sharing the same event: from Robert Rauschenberg, filmed while painting his new piece *Barge* in his studio and broadcast on CBS television in 1965, to Brian O'Doherty giving his lectures on art on the Boston public television station WGBH.[550] Television art could therefore be likened to a sculpture without a place, a painting without a frame, or an artwork seen outside an institutional or commercial context (for free) – even though the broadcast images were often very low black-and-white quality and liable to interference in the signal.

Yet the strength of the televisual image, according to McLuhan, lies precisely in its para-material presence that allows it to be touched – in other words: a sculptural, rather than a painted image. 'The TV image is not a *still* shot', says McLuhan, 'It is not a photo in any sense, but a ceaselessly forming contour of things limned by the scanning-finger. The resulting plastic contour appears by light through, not light on, and the image so formed has the quality of the sculpture and icon, rather than of picture.'[551] This sculptural aspect of television was apparent from the very beginning of television art, for example with Edward Kienholz's *The Big Eye (Homage to H.S.)* from 1961, which featured a painted television console, some plastic, a newspaper, and a figurine (see fig. 181). Most famously, Nam June Paik's artworks often featured entire television sets, starting with the exhibition *Exposition of Music – Electronic Television* at Galerie Parnass in Wuppertal, Germany, in 1963 (see fig. 182).[552]

It is therefore not too big a step to see why the Land artists, who favoured an art that would not be a mere object, were interested in using television. Yet what is the difference

[549] Ibid., 24.
[550] Ibid., 24 and 69.
[551] McLuhan and Gordon, *Understanding Media: The Extensions of Man*, 272-273.
[552] Paik allegedly claimed that his idea for television art stemmed from his tutor, K.O. Goetz. See Mehring, 'Television Art's Abstract Starts: Europe Circa 1944-1969,' 29-30.

between, as Wind calls it, the 'mechanization of art' and an artwork like the television exhibition *LAND ART*? The crucial point here, in the case of *LAND ART*, is that the artists working in Land Art were making their artworks *for* the reproducible medium of film. As Schum remarked about these Land Art works for television: 'the reproduction by the medium [of] film or TV is part of the realisation of the object itself'.[553] The on-site works, created by the artists, were already determined and constructed by their thinking through the medium of television, thus making the border between 'artwork' and 'reproduction' unclear and permeable. Hence, although the eight films of the television exhibition *LAND ART* do not show objects 'in reality', like the Land artworks that one can experience on-site, this distinction between the 'original' and the 'reproduction' was eliminated altogether because the Land artists were making their artworks *for and through* the medium of television. In the end, these 'objects' only exist in a mediated form through the medium of film televised as an exhibition in low resolution images, although transmitted in colour (except for some films that were meant to be seen in black-and-white only).[554]

This apparent opposition between the *in situ* Land artworks and films broadcast on television has arguably led most critics and scholars to exclude *LAND ART* from almost all of the comprehensive books about Land Art.[555] As Eric de Bruyn states, 'In the literature LAND ART and IDENTIFICATIONS [the second television exhibition by Schum made a few years after *LAND ART*] are enshrined […] as a germinal moment in the emergent discipline of "video art" or demoted to the status of a footnote in the development of an artistic movement,

[553] Gerry Schum in his letter to Gene Youngblood, as reprinted in: Wevers and Schum, 'Katalog Zur Fernsehaustellung Land Art Der Fernsehgalerie Berlin Gerry Schum,' n.p.
[554] Unlike the later video tapes that Schum would sell, which were completely black/white.
[555] In the best cases, they are mentioned very briefly, without acknowledging these films as significant Land Artworks in themselves. Suzaan Boettger, for example, only briefly mentions the television gallery, with very brief descriptions of only four of the films (De Maria, Flanagan, Oppenheim and Boezem), while these descriptions are directly taken from Dorine Mignot and Ursula Wevers, 'Gerry Schum,' ed. Dorine Mignot (Amsterdam: Stedelijk Museum, 1979). Boettger, *Earthworks: Art and the Landscape of the Sixties*, 176-178.

such as "earth art".'[556] In fact, in most of the monographs on the individual artists who participated in *LAND ART*, their contribution of a film to Schum's television exhibition is not even mentioned, while this is also left out from the exhibition histories that often are found in these books.[557] Yet this apparent hierarchy of reproductive media (the artists' films in *LAND ART*) and the on-site Land Art (the actual sculptures) is nonetheless contested by the artists themselves in their works for the *LAND ART* television exhibition, in which the reproduction is seen on the same level as a site-specific artwork. For the 1979 exhibition catalogue 'Gerry Schum', Dorine Mignot asked some of the artists who had participated in the television exhibition *LAND ART*: 'Do you regard your work [the film made for *LAND ART*] primarily as a form of documentation or as an independent work of art?' to which all the respondents answered that they considered it: 'An independent artwork'.[558]

In other words, the *in situ* Land Art sculptures and television do not only complement each other, precisely through the ways in which they are opposites, but they should also be perceived to stand as direct analogies to one another. In order to understand this analogy better, one should take a closer look at the films that were part of the television exhibition *LAND ART.* In doing so, it will become clear that the participating artists used these films to convey a broader vision – indeed: a bigger picture – of the central aesthetic ideas embodied in their Land artworks *in situ*. Hence, in this first part of the chapter it will be shown how these eight films, as part of the *LAND ART* television exhibition, provide us with new insights into the relation between the move into the 'expanded landscape' of Land Art and its use of television in doing so; and the *direct link* between time-based media – the use of television –

[556] English translation from the German text of Eric de Bruyn, 'Land Art in der Medienlandschaft: Anmerkungen zur Politik der Gegenöffentlichkeit im Jahr 1969', in: Groos, Hess, and Wevers, 'Ready to Shoot: Fernsehgalerie Gerry Schum/Videogalerie Schum,' 148 (144-157).
[557] For example, there is no mention of Long's film in: Richard Long, *Richard Long: Walking the Line* (London: Thames & Hudson, 2002). The same goes for most exhibition catalogues on Long, for example: Paul Moorhouse, *Richard Long: A Moving World* (Tate St. Ives, 2002).; R.R. Brettell and D. Friis-Hansen, *Richard Long: Circles, Cycles, Mud, Stones* (Contemporary Arts Museum, 1996); Richard Long, *From around a Lake* (Art & Project, 1975).
[558] Mignot and Wevers, 'Gerry Schum,' 75.

and the importance of a viewpoint or perspective that relays a bigger picture by connecting the microcosmic to the macrocosmic.

4.1 Transmitting Land Art: An Intentional Paradox

> Artists are not concerned primarily with exploiting the possibilities of communication by the mass media. A more important consideration, I think, is that the greater part of our visual experience is induced by way of reproduction.
>
> Gerry Schum, 'Einführung in die Sendung Fernsehgalerie Berlin Gerry Schum', 1967.[559]

This realisation by Schum is a crucial one, since it shifts the emphasis from the massive power of television to communicate, to a potentially even more important domain: the change in the 1960s to a mediated world more generally, in which the reproduced image starts to dominate visual culture. Moreover, this also points to a shift in the traditional hierarchical relationship between the original and a reproduction. In the mediated world that Schum alludes to, in which most visual experiences are encountered by way of reproduction, one's perception of the world is clearly influenced by this change. Wind states something similar in *Art and Anarchy*, where he says 'that our vision of art has been transformed by reproductions', since 'our eyes have been sharpened to those aspects of painting and sculpture that are brought out effectively by a camera.'[560] Hence, Wind believed that human vision had been modulated by the technological innovation of the film camera, with a direct effect on our perception of reality and the world.

Schum, too, refers to this change, albeit in a slightly different way, for example when he states that: 'We live in a time in which the world, that is to say our environment, is experienced through new dimensions.'[561] As he explains in the same text, satellites enable us to view the Earth from the perspective of outer space, while the view from an airplane

[559] Gerry Schum, 'Einführung in die Sendung Fernsehgalerie Berlin Gerry Schum', in: Groos, Hess, and Wevers, 'Ready to Shoot: Fernsehgalerie Gerry Schum/Videogalerie Schum,' 70.
[560] Wind, *Art and Anarchy*, 76.
[561] Gerry Schum, in: Groos, Hess, and Wevers, 'Ready to Shoot: Fernsehgalerie Gerry Schum/Videogalerie Schum,' 70.

transforms every road or farmland into an aesthetic form, thus losing its function through abstraction. Indeed, this is something that links to a view that Oppenheim expressed as well:

> I'm to the point now where I see the earth as sculpture – where flying over the earth is like viewing existing painted area['s] or pictorial, painterly surfaces. … Like the earth becomes a piece of wood or a tree in which you are carrying into or placing something on it. The limits you have to refer to in this case is always the sphere – it's always the globe – so when you dig a hole in the ground your periphery becomes the spherical shape. Now the spherical sphere, of course, is relational to the cosmos. So at this point I'm concerned with an art that rides above the frequency of pictorial or compositional treatment.[562]

This is the change of perspective that Schum refers to. According to Schum, the (post-) modern person starts to perceive every operation in the environment as an act that transcends any purely practical function by also perceiving it as a (more or less) artistic modulation of the world.[563] This indirectly causes both the original and the reproduction to lose their value: what is now more important is the effect (either visually or otherwise) that they have on our world and therefore also the effect that they have on our perception (of that world) – no matter if this effect is caused by an original or a reproduction.

During the 1960s the shaping force of reproductions thus for the first time in history started to reach the same level as that of the 'original' artwork, as also confirmed by the development of Pop and electronic art.[564] The same is true for *LAND ART*: rather than being only seen as forms of documentation, the eight short films for Schum's television exhibition were created as art objects in themselves and were seen by the artists as an expression of Land Art as such. None of these films refers to an existing Land artwork or sculpture –

[562] Symposium, the *Earth Art* exhibition, 1969, transcripts (3), in: Smithsonian, 'Robert Smithson and Nancy Holt Papers.'
[563] Groos, Hess, and Wevers, 'Ready to Shoot: Fernsehgalerie Gerry Schum/Videogalerie Schum,' 70.
[564] Another important development was *Art & Technology.* Cf. Art Los Angeles County Museum of et al., *Art & Technology: A Report on the Art & Technology Program of the Los Angeles County Museum of Art, 1967-1971* ([Los Angeles]: Los Angeles County Museum of Art, 1971).

instead, all the works shown were made specifically for each film. As Schum explains in a letter to Youngblood written in June 1969:

> … [T]he TV exhibition LAND ART is no documentation of an art-event that exists in any way out of the exact time and place of transmission. … [I]n the TV gallery everything is specially planned according to the medium of film or TV. … After normally 6 months of working with artists and TV there is nothing left but a 1500 feet film reel. There is no object that can be seen 'in reality' or could be sold as an object. The work of art is the film itself.[565]

This statement suggests an important correlation between the *LAND ART* television exhibition, only visible during the 'exact time and place of transmission', and what has often been stated about Land Art sculptures on-site, namely, that these were not ordinary objects and could not be as easily sold (or transported) as most other kinds of artworks.[566] Hence, one could say that these eight films for television were conceived by the participating artists as site-specific artworks – or rather *time-specific* artworks that could only be experienced at the moment of transmission of the live television exhibition.[567]

Televised Artworks: Present or Absent?

On April 15, 1969, the televisions of about 100,000 people in what was then West Germany were temporarily transformed into private art galleries when, at 10:40 in the evening, the SFB channel started to broadcast *LAND ART*.[568] Before the eyes of the viewers, on their very own television screens, images of the newest developments in contemporary art appeared: a sequence of eight short films (ranging from between four and eight minutes). These films

[565] Gerry Schum in his letter to Gene Youngblood, as reprinted in: Wevers and Schum, 'Katalog Zur Fernsehaustellung Land Art Der Fernsehgalerie Berlin Gerry Schum,' n.p.
[566] Suzaan Boettger quotes McShine on the sculptures' large sizes: 'It's really anti-collector, anti-museum art.', Boettger, *Earthworks: Art and the Landscape of the Sixties*, 37.
[567] It has to be stated, however, that this original idea was later completely undermined by Schum's financial needs, because of which he started to sell the original television films on video. However, the films all became black/white during the process of transferring them to video, while the original films were often (if sometimes only partially) made in colour and transmitted in colour on television as well.
[568] Wevers and Schum, 'Katalog Zur Fernsehaustellung Land Art Der Fernsehgalerie Berlin Gerry Schum,' n.p.

were made by four American and four European contemporary artists, who had all contributed an artwork, shot on 16mm film, to be screened only on television (although the television exhibition was initiated by the 'gallery-vernissage', where visitors could attend a talk by Schum before viewing the live transmission of *LAND ART* on a television in the gallery).[569] The total transmission lasted for about half an hour, starting with Richard Long's *Walking a Straight 10 Mile Line Forward and Back Shooting Every Half Mile* (colour,[570] sound, 6:03 minutes, filmed in Dartmoor, England, January 1969); then continuing with Barry Flanagan's *A Hole in the Sea* (colour and black/white, sound, 3:44 minutes, filmed in Scheveningen, Holland, February 1969); Dennis Oppenheim's *Timetrack* (black/white, sound, 2.05 minutes, filmed while following the border between two time zones close to Fort Kent, USA/Canada, March 1969); Robert Smithson's *Fossil Quarry Mirror with Four Mirror Displacements* (black/white, sound, 3.05 minutes, filmed in the Cayuga Lake Region, New York State, March 1969); Marinus Boezem's *Sand Fountain* (black/white, sound, 4.00 minutes, filmed in the Camargue, France, January 1969); Jan Dibbets's *12 Hours Tide Object with Correction of Perspective* (black/white, sound, 7.30 minutes, Netherlands, February1969); Walter De Maria's *Two Lines Three Circles in the Desert* (black/white, sound, 4.45 minutes, filmed in the Mojave Desert, California, USA, March 1969); and ending with Michael Heizer's *Coyote* (colour, sound, 4:20 minutes, filmed at Coyote Dry Lake, California, at an unknown date in 1969).

One can easily imagine the surprise – both positive and negative – and, as the television station itself complained, the incomprehension (and even aggressive reaction) of

[569] The gallery was in fact the studio of the SFB, which Schum had rented for the evening. Cf. with Mignot and Wevers, 'Gerry Schum.'

[570] Today, these films are no longer available in their original colour and black/white mixtures: only some video tapes exist that Schum made later on, which are completely in black/white. Consequently, I have not seen the original colours, although some fragments of footage was shown recently in the film *Troublemakers: The Story of Land Art*, directed by James Crump (2015). One can imagine the difference with the viewing experience of the people who watched the original films in colour on their televisions. See the *LAND ART* catalogue for the exact use of colour in each film: Wevers and Schum, 'Katalog Zur Fernsehaustellung Land Art Der Fernsehgalerie Berlin Gerry Schum.' (Not paginated).

many of the viewers that evening to this art exhibition.[571] With only a short statement by Schum about the television gallery that preceded the showing of the films, the viewers at home were plunged into artworks that must have been highly confusing: no words of explanation were spoken during any of the films. Moreover, these were artworks that were completely new at that time: besides the fact that these were films *as* artworks (rather than documentaries), the filmic interventions in a landscape through either an object, the body or, even more simply, the moving camera, were unprecedented, even in the time of the Fluxus *happenings* and television broadcasts of artists working in their studios. The unprecedented nature of the televised artworks of *LAND ART* was widely recognised in the press, both before and after the transmission. As Klaus Ulrich Reinke stated in an article for the German newspaper, the *Düsseldorfer Hefte*, in July 1969: 'No art transmission on television has ever before triggered such a large echo from the press.'[572] Yet despite a few voiced complaints, the television exhibition got an overwhelmingly positive response from the art world and fellow artists – for example from art collector Robert Scull who sent a telegram from New York City to Schum stating 'Congratulations!' (while also mentioning that he wanted to buy the entire television exhibition *LAND ART* at once). This type of response was also seen by artists such as Vlado Kristl, who remarked a decade later: 'When I saw *Land Art* on television I was very impressed, moved even, the medium cannot speak more clearly than in that way.'[573]

[571] Ursula Wevers relates that this was the main argument of the television station *Sender Freies Berlin* to close the television gallery. See the exhibition catalogue, Mignot and Wevers, 'Gerry Schum,' 78.
[572] Author's translation. The original German text reads: 'Noch keine Kunstsendung vorher im Fernsehen hat ein so groβes Presse-Echo ausgelöst.' As reprinted in: Groos, Hess, and Wevers, 'Ready to Shoot: Fernsehgalerie Gerry Schum/Videogalerie Schum.'
[573] See Scull's and Kristl's full remarks in: Mignot and Wevers, 'Gerry Schum,' 69.

Richard Long's *Walking a Straight 10 Mile Line forward and back …*

The innovative character of these artworks-as-films, as well as their time-specific qualities, already becomes apparent in the first film televised in the *LAND ART* exhibition: *Walking a Straight 10 Mile Line forward and back, shooting every half Mile* by Long.[574] The film shows the landscape of Dartmoor over the course of Long's walk every half mile for about six seconds at a time (without filming Long himself, except for at the beginning of the walk). As Schum explains: 'To mark his [Long's] ten mile line he used neither chalk nor digged a trench' – Long only used the camera to produce his artwork.[575] The ostensibly simple nature of this piece, however, is countered in the film itself, in which the time and space evoked in the film defy any previously known conceptual framework, which distinguished it from a *happening*, performance or event.

This already becomes apparent at the beginning of the film. While the film's title and then the name of the artist and the location of the artwork subsequently appear in white letters on the screen, read aloud in a German translation by Schum himself, the camera circles around, in a clockwise direction, through a hilly landscape (figs. 183-184). Once these texts disappear, the camera continues to revolve in the landscape, until suddenly a map is drawn on the film, with its upper edges ending on the same line as the horizon (fig. 185). This sketched, rugged white line of the contours of the map of England, drawn over the footage of the landscape itself, stands in a strong contrast to the rigidity of the short, straight line in the middle of the map, indicating Long's walk through that same landscape. This contrast first seems to underline the conceptual tone of the piece, by making the tension visible between a human-imposed idea on nature (the straight line) and nature itself (the rugged line of the

[574] See for a more comprehensive account of Richard Long: Long, *Richard Long: Walking the Line*.
[575] Letter to Gene Youngblood by Gerry Schum, in: Wevers and Schum, 'Katalog Zur Fernsehaustellung Land Art Der Fernsehgalerie Berlin Gerry Schum,' n.p.

contours of England).[576] However, after a short moment in which the word 'forward' appears in white letters on the screen (fig. 186), the walk begins and slowly the sharp contrast between the idea and the actual experience of 'walking a straight line' through the rough Dartmoor landscape becomes clear to the beholder as a viewed experience of the walk.

The walk starts after the word 'forward' disappears, as the rotating camera comes to a standstill to focus on a figure walking in the landscape, apparently Long himself (fig. 187). The sounds of someone panting and a pair of feet stepping through vegetation, crushing the grass underneath, become audible. In the next shot, the figure has disappeared, replaced by the camera itself that slowly moves forward, as if impersonating the protagonist's perspective. Hence, the person in the landscape now seems to be replaced by the camera itself, while its lens subsequently becomes identified with the vision of the viewer watching the film, allowing the viewer to walk through the Dartmoor landscape – albeit only visually. The camera now only shows the Dartmoor landscape, filming each part of the landscape for a few seconds (ranging from 3 to 8 seconds per shot), while the camera slowly zooms in as if it is walking forward (figs. 188-189). As the title states, the landscape is thus shown after every half mile of the walk. All of this is accompanied by the sounds of steps that alternate in volume, dependent on the ground on which the person is walking (when stepping on rocks there is only a soft, muffled sound, and when stepping on the dry, sturdy grass of the moors one can hear a louder, crushing sound). This also relates to the increase in the panting of the person walking, with the breathing increasing while walking up a hill and decreasing while walking downhill or across a flatter landscape.

[576] Long himself notes the importance of the map for his artistic practice in a short text 'Notes on maps' (1994), where he says, amongst others: 'A map is an artistic and poetic combination of image and language. For me, a map is a potent alternative to a photograph, it has a different function. It can show the idea of a whole work, not a moment. A map can show time and space in a work of art. Distance, the days of walking, the campsites, the shape of the walking, can be shown in one concise but rich image.' Cited in: *Long, Richard Long: Walking the Line, 84.*

Finally, the end of the 10-mile line is reached, marked by a river, which is filmed facing downstream (fig. 190). It is here that the screen goes dark and the word 'back' appears in white letters (fig. 191), after which the walker turns around, as evidenced by a shot of the same river but now seen facing upstream (fig. 192). This reversal in direction and viewpoint comes to symbolise the entire structure of Long's film: a walk that does not have a clear goal, but just 'streams' into one direction, following the rigid line drawn up or down the map. And yet, this purposelessness allows the remarkable visual diversity of the landscape to become visible, which, after the turning point, is seen from the opposite direction: what was first filmed while going uphill, is now filmed while going downhill, revealing a different landscape altogether.

Through this reversal, it is not only made evident that perspective changes the experience – with the walk doubling itself into two different, albeit related walks – but also that no one is able to walk a genuinely straight line through a hilly landscape. The strong contrast between the neatly drawn, straight line on the map (which can be likened to the concept), which is connected to the distance (10 miles), and the actual walk (the actual experience) through the rugged landscape in which it is practically impossible to continue in a straight line without hitting trees, jumping fences or having to wade through a stream, is thus made visible.[577] As such, the work 'falls outside the definition of Conceptual art', as Paul Moorhouse has remarked, since 'The idea is vital in that it defines the structure for a walk. But the walk is equally important in that it realises the idea, actualising the structure as physical movement through time and space, so that the work of art has a *real* – if transient – existence.'[578] Indeed, one could ask if it is the walk, the idea, the film, or the eventual transmission of the film which is the actual artwork itself.

[577] Paul Moorhouse, 'The Intricacy of the Skein, the Complexity of the Web: Richard Long's Art', ibid., 36.
[578] Ibid. This is in contrast to other authors, who see Long's walk as belonging to something one could call 'non-object art', or the 'art of powerful ideas', as Dieter Roelstraete has called it. (See: Dieter Roelstraete, *A Line Made by Walking: Richard Long* (London: Afterall Books, 2010), 3.)

The entire film was conceived by Long himself in minute detail: in a series of sketches, which are like a storyboard, he outlined his ideas about the film in both time and space (fig. 193). In a sketch of a '60 sec pan', Long shows how he conceived the beginning of the film, with the drawing of the white line in the landscape as well as the end of the camera's rotation in the beginning of the film (just when the figure in the landscape becomes visible) clearly indicated in the sketch.[579] He also comments on the font of the texts that are used within the film (the words 'forward' and 'back'), by saying: 'All writing small, simple, upright lettering' and states underneath these words that it should be 'black on white'. Equally significant is the small sketch of the turning point in the film, where Long has quickly drawn three film stills, the first and third showing the river upstream or downstream (the direction of the stream indicated with an arrow) and the word 'back' in the middle frame (bottom of fig. 193).[580]

All these drawn and written specifications on Long's storyboard make visible that his film has a clearly outlined aesthetic programme: it indicates his intention to show the walk as the film, and the film as the walk – in other words, the film-walk as the artwork itself. Moreover, instead of an artist's walk, it becomes the walk of the beholder of the film: the viewer can experience the walk vicariously, due to the fact that the camera often takes over the protagonist's point of view. This also leads to a blending of the identity of the artist with that of the viewer through the artistic use of the film camera and its lens.[581] Indeed, Long was very concerned with this possible transition, in which the identity of the person walking remains unoccupied by a fixed character: Long believed that the film should instead be seen by the audience as something that stands by itself, separated from the identity of the artist or

[579] Wevers and Schum, 'Katalog Zur Fernsehaustellung Land Art Der Fernsehgalerie Berlin Gerry Schum.' (Not paginated.)
[580] Ibid. (n.p.)
[581] Paul Moorhouse, 'The Intricacy of the Skein, the Complexity of the Web: Richard Long's Art', in: Long, *Richard Long: Walking the Line*, 36.

creator. He insisted that his film incorporated the fact that 'all the knowledge of the film becomes exclusive to seeing the film as it was intended to be seen'.[582]

This understanding of the film is supported by the fact that Long wrote to Schum to ask him to please stop using any existing 'work photographs', that documented the process of filming *Walking a Straight 10 Mile Line…* (as Schum had done with the other films in the catalogue that accompanied the television exhibition), so that the artistic intention behind the film – as conceived by Long – would remain unspoiled. Long believed that otherwise, the photographs would add to the 'knowledge of the film', which went against his intentions to let that knowledge solely arise through the actual watching of the film.[583] As Long wrote to Schum:

> The whole walk was a precise unit, self-contained, self-explanatory, with a particular design & purpose. Any attempt to use 'idle' photographs in connection with the film works in opposition to this, & demonstrates a complete misunderstanding of the real idea. One of the merits of the film was that it had things like artist on location, jumping a river designed out of it, so they should be kept out.[584]

Hence, although Long was not necessarily against using photographs of his works – indeed, he used photographs quite regularly as his main exhibition materials[585] – he did protest against using 'idle photographs' like the 'work photographs' (*Arbeitsfotos*) that Schum published in the catalogue that accompanied *LAND ART,* which functioned as documentary material to show the making of the films within the catalogue.[586]

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[582] See Long's handwritten letter to Gerry Schum, as printed in: Wevers and Schum, 'Katalog Zur Fernsehaustellung Land Art Der Fernsehgalerie Berlin Gerry Schum,' not paginated.
[583] Ibid.
[584] Long in his letter to Gerry Schum. Ibid.
[585] One of Long's most famous works, *A Line made by Walking,* from 1967, in fact only exists now as a photograph, due to the transient nature of the artwork (the trampled grass in an English landscape). For more on this artwork and the related photograph, see: Roelstraete, *A Line Made by Walking: Richard Long*. See also Chapter II.
[586] These photographs were published before the stills from each individual film in the catalogue of *LAND ART*. See: Wevers and Schum, 'Katalog Zur Fernsehaustellung Land Art Der Fernsehgalerie Berlin Gerry Schum,' n.p.

Schum honoured Long's request by omitting the 'work photographs' that he had taken of Long during the making of his film from the catalogue. However, instead of using such documentary photographs, he decided to publish Long's handwritten letter to him (in which Long asked Schum to leave out the 'work photographs') in the exhibition catalogue, which indicates the significance that Schum ascribed to Long's request. This also becomes evident in another letter – this time by Schum himself to Youngblood, who had asked Schum about his television gallery in relation to the book he would publish shortly after the *LAND ART* television exhibition (Youngblood's *Expanded Cinema,* 1970).[587] In his reply to Youngblood (a typed letter that was also published in the *LAND ART* exhibition catalogue), Schum claimed that Long's film could be seen as a prototype for his own intentions behind the entire *LAND ART* television exhibition.

That Schum singled out Long's film as a prototype is related to Long's refusal to be in the film himself or to publish the photographs that showed him 'jumping a stream'.[588] This resonated with Schum's own approach to the television exhibition, for which he absolutely refused to add any explanatory commentary (even after the television station insisted that he do so).[589] Another significant reason was that Schum saw his own aesthetic ideas reflected in Long's film and artistic approach. As Schum stated: 'I believe, regarding the ideas of the TV gallery, Richard Long created the most consequent object in the LAND ART show.'[590] This was because Long, in the making of his film, did not use anything but the camera to 'mark his ten mile line', thereby drawing attention to the technological mediation of the screened image and the passage of time in which the film unwinds and the entire story becomes

[587] An interesting remark here is that in this letter, Schum refers to the films by the Land artists as 'objects'. Ursula Wevers also remarks on Schum's significant use of the term 'Objekte' for the artworks, in her text in: Mignot and Wevers, 'Gerry Schum,' n.p.
[588] See Ursula Wevers's text in: ibid. (Not paginated.)
[589] Ibid. (n.p.)
[590] Letter to Gene Youngblood by Gerry Schum, in: Wevers and Schum, 'Katalog Zur Fernsehaustellung Land Art Der Fernsehgalerie Berlin Gerry Schum,' n.p.

perceivable.[591] This, according to Schum, is a use of film that directs the viewer's attention to the filmmaking process as such, through which the film itself becomes the art object: drawing attention to film's reproducibility and encouraging the viewer to reflect on the changes that were taking place in visual (and thus also aesthetic) experiences during the late 1960s.

[591] Ibid.

4.2 One Step Beyond: Segmentation and Contingency

> In the places where subjective reason senses subjective contingency, the primacy of the object is shimmering through – that in the object, which is not a subjective addition.
>
> Theodor W. Adorno, *Stichworte*.[592]

The philosopher Theodor W. Adorno had a theory of what he called the 'primacy of the object', which was especially relevant for works of art. Instead of human reason determining the world, artworks allow the outer world to enter and appear as part of their very material – a possibility that Adorno called the primacy of the object. Moreover, he emphasised the importance of those moments in which the primacy of the object 'is shimmering through', since without such a primacy of that which is 'not self' (not subject), everything is always already subjective, without leaving space for anything 'other' than the narrow, subjective personality and its emotions, likes and dislikes, which simply project themselves outwards and never question the centre of the subject itself.[593]

Long's emphasis on excluding the subject as much as possible and only using the film to reproduce a walk as a 'visual experience' that would otherwise remain an ephemeral event, can be seen as an attempt to let the primacy of the object shine forth. Yet while Long's film did not make use of any objects, thus drawing attention to the process of filming itself, other artists in the series explored the specific possibilities of film (and drew attention to that) through the use of perspective, filmic technologies such as 'the cut' (segmenting both time and space), and the exploration of tensions between the mechanised processes of technology

[592] Free translation by the author from the German (since the text is not yet translated into English): 'An den Stellen, wo die subjektive Vernunft subjektive Zufälligkeit wittert, schimmert der Vorrang des Objekts durch; das an diesem, was nicht subjektive Zutat ist.' Theodor W. Adorno, *Stichworte: Kritische Modelle 2* (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 1998), subsection 'Zu Subjekt und Objekt', 162.

[593] The philosopher Theodor W. Adorno has based his entire late philosophy on this concept of 'the primacy of the object', which he especially expounded in relation to art. See, amongst others: Adorno et al., *Aesthetic Theory*; Adorno, *Negative Dialectics*. See also the introduction of this dissertation.

and contingency. Barry Flanagan (1941-2009), another British artist, was one of those who took the opportunity to use *LAND ART* to explore an angle that was not normally available for anyone looking at an artwork or sculpture under normal conditions: the aerial perspective.[594]

A Visual Experience: Barry Flanagan's *A Hole in the Sea*

In the second film broadcast as part of the *LAND ART* exhibition, *A Hole in the Sea*, Flanagan used the technological possibilities of the camera in many innovative ways, starting with the beginning, which shows a beach and the sea with a strange, rectangular blur in the middle that is not easy to define. One then sees the title, name of the artist and the location of the work in – this time – black letters on a white background become visible (figs. 194-197): *A Hole in the Sea*, Barry Flanagan, Scheveningen, Holland (February 1969). The sound of the breaking waves is perceptible while these texts appear on the screen, after which the camera slowly zooms back to focus on the blur in the background (fig. 198): it is almost as if part of the landscape has been erased. The next shot is preceded by a dark screen and the number 13.15, which – as one later understands – states the time of the moment of filming. The camera then takes a bird's eye perspective from above and suddenly the blur in the landscape becomes evident: it is, in fact, a cylinder made of transparent material, stuck into the sand of the beach (figs. 199-200). One now understands that Flanagan is using the camera's perspectival flattening of the transparent cylinder in order to create the 'blur' in the first shots of the film.

As the film continues, one sees from a bird's eye view how the cylinder, almost completely invisible at the beginning of the film, is more and more revealed thanks to the

[594] See for a good overview of the early works of Barry Flanagan: C. Wallis, A. Wilson, and J. Melvin, *Barry Flanagan: Early Works, 1965-1982* (London: Tate, 2011).

incoming tide of the sea: when the water gets obstructed by the cylinder it starts to move around the circular form, thus making it visible (especially after another 10 minutes have passed, see figs. 201-202). Hence, the film's title, *A Hole in the Sea*, slowly starts to make sense: the hole segments the large mass of the sea into a much smaller compartment. After a few more minutes, while the tide keeps increasing, waves start to move over the top of the cylinder into the hole (figs. 203-204) so that by the end of the film the hole is completely filled with water – although it is still perceivable as a 'hole' in the sea because of its dark contour within the water (fig. 205-206). Finally, the film comes to an end at 16.38 in the afternoon, after almost 3.5 hours of filming (while the film itself only lasts for 3.45 minutes), at the very moment that a person walks into the shot – presumably the artist himself – to remove the 'hole' from the sea. In doing so he reveals it as a three-dimensional object of medium size, against the backdrop of two lighthouses visible on either end of a dam, their lights flickering in the afternoon sky (figs. 207-210). In fact, these lights are the last things visible as the screen gradually fades to black at the end of the film (fig. 211).

Flanagan stated that part of the inspiration for *A Hole in the Sea* was the Beatles' song *Fixing a Hole* (from the album *Sgt. Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club Band* of 1967).[595] Yet, whereas the Beatles' song is about the relation of a practical (rather than a creative) act of fixing things in and around the house, and the imaginative freedom that such practical engagements can induce that allows the mind to start, as the lyrics put it, 'wandering – where it will go', Flanagan uses this metaphor to visualise the creative act itself. After all, Flanagan's 'hole in the sea' cannot be fixed like something that is damaged in a house and the entire enterprise seems a senseless endeavour from the start, since one anticipates the final conquest by the tide of the relatively small cylinder. However, it is precisely this fragility of the artistic act that gives the film its poetic meaning: the artist brings the cylinder

[595]Ibid., 139.

into the sea in an attempt to create a 'hole' in it, while the sea is continuously 'fixing the hole' through the incoming tide.

Inevitably, this reminds one of Carl Andre's famous saying of 1968 that 'A thing is a hole in a thing it is not'.[596] Yet this definition by Andre seems here contested by Flanagan, who shows that an object – while starting out as 'a hole in a thing it is not' – can never remain neatly divided into a negative and a positive space: that which it is (the hole) and that which it is not (the sea).[597] In *A Hole in the Sea*, Flanagan thus shows how the hole and the sea turn from untenable opposites into an organic whole: the hole clearly stands no chance against the increasing tide of the sea. Hence, the film shows how the force of nature breaks down the conceptual idea that separates one thing from another and seems to favour the holistic experience over the conceptual idea – an experience in which segmentation gets blurred within the relationship of subject and object. Negative and positive space are visually annihilated by Flanagan's experiment, especially after the hole is filled by the sea water, through which the hole and the sea are shown as being part of each other's identity instead of as the two opposites they were initially. It is this entropic process that Flanagan was able to capture in this intriguing film, which is also related to the rest of Flanagan's oeuvre. As Clarrie Wallis remarks: 'this fascination with apparent opposites is … persistent throughout Flanagan's work. Beyond opposed couplets such as ground/figure, subjective/objective, and so on, Flanagan again and again explores the means to go beyond such dualisms.'[598]

A Hole in the Sea is an artwork that could only be captured by the film camera (a work, in other words, created for reproduction), as it necessitates a bird's-eye view – a position that a viewer on the beach encountering the same artwork could never have. Filming

[596] Andre and Meyer, *Cuts: Texts 1959-2004*, 84.
[597] This 'motto' of Carl Andre's, as Robert Smithson once called it, came into existence through Andre's experiments with positive and negative space in his floor sculptures. See, for example: Boettger, *Earthworks: Art and the Landscape of the Sixties*, 8.
[598] Clarrie Wallis, 'The Business is in the Making', in: Wallis, Wilson, and Melvin, *Barry Flanagan: Early Works, 1965-1982*, 24.

A Hole in the Sea was done by renting a tall crane, from where the cameraman was suspended above the sea. This produces a significant contrast between Flanagan's *A Hole in the Sea* and Long's *Walking a Straight 10 Mile Line …,* while it is also evident that there are many similarities and a continuation of Schum's aesthetic concept of the television gallery. After all, it is clear that Flanagan's intended to create the work for the medium of film, despite the fact that his idea of the film started as a sketch on paper and that he later decided to also produce a photographic work based on *A Hole in the Sea* (fig. 212).[599] Yet the use of a prop (the plastic cylinder) suggests a more active sculptural involvement than Long's film, in which the sculptural dimension of television itself, as intuited by McLuhan, is played out. Moreover, Flanagan's use of perspective implies a different viewpoint than the traditional phenomenological stance associated with Land Art – something that connects Flanagan's *Hole in the Sea* to the third film of the series.

Beyond Dualism: Dennis Oppenheim's *Timetrack*

Dennis Oppenheim (1938-2011) seems to continue Flanagan's experimentation, in that his film *Timetrack* only uses a snowmobile with a rider and a camera, once again filming from above. In this film from March 1969, Oppenheim (on a snowmobile) follows the border between two time zones (what he calls the 'timeborder' in the film) by tracing the frozen Saint John River (the physical border between this part of Canada and the United States), which is situated north of Fort Kent, Maine (fig. 213). However, the film starts on the ground, like Flanagan's film, with a shot of the snow beneath the moving snow mobile and the traces made by the snowmobile in the snow all tracked by the camera's lens. After a while, following the snowmobile through the snow in this way, the name of the artist, the title of the

[599] Even though '[t]his work existed on paper until Flanagan was asked by Gerry Schum to realize it on film for the television-exhibition Land Art.' (This makes Flanagan's film the only pre-conceived film of the eight.) As stated in the exhibition catalogue: Mignot and Wevers, 'Gerry Schum.'

work and the location appear on the screen, while the voice of Schum is heard once again reading these words aloud in a German translation (figs. 214-216). The film continues with a shot that now shows the trace of the snow mobile in the snow from an aerial perspective, showing the line it makes as it divides the screen diagonally in two, while the words 'Canada' (in the upper-right part of the screen) and 'USA' (in the lower-left) appear in black letters on the snow (fig. 217). The strong conceptual force of a border and a 'time zone' is thereby made visible: the concept of the 'time border' as a man-made reality, imposed on nature and on the earth.

After this shot, however, this idea also gets connected to a larger sense of the landscape: the camera still follows the trace in the snow, made by the snow mobile (which itself remains out of view), but it now also expands the focus by slowly bringing the surrounding landscape into the lens's vision (fig. 218). The vastness of this landscape – which does not show any signs of human interventions such as houses or roads – lets the trace of the mobile in the snow appear on a scale through which the insignificance of this little line on the earth's crust is felt. Then, suddenly, the sun emerges from behind the clouds – illuminating the landscape (figs. 219-220) – and is captured flickering on the screen, which they slowly move towards the left corner (figs. 221-222). The scale of the scene thus becomes connected to a cosmic sense of the earth's relation to the sun, through which the viewer's sense of place also becomes more clearly defined: while not fully sublime (because of the inevitable limitations of the small television screen on which it was viewed), there is still a distinct perception of the smallness of the 'timeborder' in relation to the vastness of the land itself.[600]

[600] I refer here to philosopher Immanuel Kant's notion of the sublime, as stated in his *Critique of Judgment* from 1790, as that which is 'absolutely great', i.e. greater than us as human beings (either mathematically, dynamically or morally).

This is also the moment when the snow mobile itself comes into view for the first time: the helicopter has by now caught up with the snowmobile racing through the snow at the end of its track. The sound of the motor of the snowmobile and the airplane becomes less loud while the camera unexpectedly (and presumably unintentionally) films part of the airplane from where the landscape is being filmed (see fig. 223). Then the film comes to an end with a last shot focusing on the vastness of the landscape in front of the snowmobile, the landscape where the snowmobile has not yet traced the 'timeborder' and the snow remains unspoiled (fig. 224). The sound has completely disappeared by this shot and everything becomes still, similar to a winter day when all sounds are muted by the snow on the ground. The film thus silently comes to an end after approximately two minutes, making it the shortest work in the series.

Timetrack shows an intervention in the landscape which, like the earlier two films, denies a concept-centred approach – in this case the human-imposed, rigid idea of mechanical time.[601] Tracing the river which marks the 'timeborder', Oppenheim in fact materialises time itself, not only by following the 'timeborder' with his snowmobile, as such marking time by engaging with it in physical terms, but also by the process of the unfolding film itself. As Boris Groys has remarked, film is a celebration of movement: 'From its very inception, film has celebrated all that moves at high speeds—trains, cars, airplanes—but also all that goes beneath the surface—blades, bombs, bullets.'[602] This is echoed by Oppenheim himself, who has remarked that:

> I believe that *Timetrack* required, in a sense, a strong cinematic interest as it had to do with an object that moved quickly: a vehicle that moved over land. For that film was very suited, especially for aerial photography. From the point of view of Land Art, aerial photographs were very interesting at this time, because many things could only

[601] Cf. with Vanessa Ogle, *The Global Transformation of Time: 1870-1950* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2015).
[602] Boris Groys, 'Comrades of Time,' *E-Flux* #11 (December 2009).

> be seen well from the air. This diverged from the way we were used to look at monolithic, objectified sculptures.[603]

Yet, by tracing the time border in the landscape and thus literally moving between two different time zones, Oppenheim not only makes time visible through his film, but this act simultaneously denies the time difference as it is imposed on the landscape, by showing how the two different time zones are cancelled out by the present time of the film. Hence, a dualism is established while at the same time contested.

In an illuminating excerpt from a text that was written by Oppenheim himself for publication in the catalogue that accompanied *LAND ART's* television exhibition, Oppenheim commented on his artistic strategy as something that could only be achieved by rejecting what he calls 'media distance':

> The recent shift to terrain has evaporated the importance of discrete objects, and rejects what could be called "media distance", a force of indirect energy, compounded by allowing mobility, rigidity, and permanence a major position in scribing aesthetic boundaries. … Rather than the objectification of aesthetic impetus through physical media, the actual exterior framework which delivers stimulus will house and project the art. This allows the sculptor to work within the media. … The aesthetic transaction is a constant force operating between polarities that affect major or minor change … the sculptor is now occupied by his material.[604]

This short excerpt not only illuminates certain aspects of Oppenheim's own film, but it also seems to capture very clearly the artistic intentions underlying the television exhibition's other films. Indeed, these films are engaged with the opposite of 'discrete objects' (in the words of Oppenheim): instead of permanence, there is the impermanence of time elapsing, both in that what is shown and in the moving film frames itself, as well as a link to nature and the Earth as such. One could say that the artwork functions as an 'aesthetic transaction … operating between polarities', which is signified by the very subject of the film: the snow

[603] Translated from the German by the author. Groos, Hess, and Wevers, 'Ready to Shoot: Fernsehgalerie Gerry Schum/Videogalerie Schum,' 87.
[604] See the 'Text by Dennis Oppenheim' in: Wevers and Schum, 'Katalog Zur Fernsehaustellung Land Art Der Fernsehgalerie Berlin Gerry Schum.' (Not paginated.)

which symbolises the polarity of matter itself and the possibility of water being both a solid and a fluid.

Oppenheim's film also shows an important link between the body and the landscape. This interest in the relation of the human body to the landscape (or even the human body as landscape, as Oppenheim would explore in many of his later films) is in fact a characteristic of Oppenheim's oeuvre in general.[605] As art critic Thomas McEvilley states: 'Oppenheim's oeuvre as a whole is characterised by a long, slow series of shifts in scale, from huge to tiny and back again. The first of these is the shift from the macrocosmic scale of Earth Art to the microcosmic scale of Body Art.'[606] Indeed, *Timetrack* is an early example of how earth art and body art merge in Oppenheim's artistic practice: both his Land artworks, such as *Directed Seeding/Cancelled Crop*, from 1969 (fig. 225), and his later works of Body Art are engaged with the possibility of turning objects (and subjects) into a landscape that can be explored, manipulated, traced and/or performed. In his 'Hand' pieces (fig. 226), for example, which are Body artworks on film, Oppenheim covers his hand with pieces of glass, rocks, or leaves, thus emphasising the interrelatedness of the human body and the natural world, as well as situating the human body as an object amongst other objects (whether animate or inanimate). This draws attention to the seemingly contingent nature of our existence amongst other seemingly contingent existences: humankind is shown as only one part of a much larger ecosystem of intertwining life-forms and forces, in which human, conceptual ideas seem rather fragile in the face of the power of nature.

[605] In Oppenheim's films from 1970, like *Material Interchange*, *Identity Transfer* (1970), *Rocked Hand*, *Pressure Piece*(s), *Glassed Hand* and *Leaved Hand*, as well as his *Compression* films, he explores the human body in close up, turning his own skin into a landscape of vision.
[606] Thomas McEvilley, Brenda McParland, and Sean Kissane, *Dennis Oppenheim: Land & Body* (Dublin: Irish Museum of Modern Art, 2001). (Not paginated.) Another good source on Oppenheim's 'body work' is: Nick Kaye and Amy van Winkle Oppenheim, *Dennis Oppenheim. Body to Performance: 1969-73* (Milano: Skira Editore, 2016).

As McEvilley accurately observes, it becomes clear that Oppenheim's guiding principle seems to be his 'requirement that any element be justified by some external or found index … [So] they had to have some real world, semantic context from which they were being appropriated into the "creative", or recontextualizing, act.'[607] Oppenheim shows that by exploring a landscape, one does not only explore the external world, but also one's perspective of that world and even one's position within the 'made world' – the world of human concepts and ideas. This intrinsic relation between the external landscape and what one could call the imaginative landscape is a significant characteristic of Oppenheim's film that is reflected in the other films of *LAND ART*.

[607] McEvilley, McParland, and Kissane, *Dennis Oppenheim: Land & Body*.

4.3 Endless Reflections and Re-Enactments: Technology as Analogy

> The appearance of the mirror already introduced into the world of perception an ironical effect of "*trompe-I'oeil"* and we know what malefice was attached to the appearance of doubles…. The immense majority of present day photographic, cinematic and television images are thought to bear witness to the world with a naive resemblance and a touching fidelity. We have spontaneous confidence in their realism. We are wrong. They only seem to resemble things, to resemble reality, events, facts.
>
> Jean Baudrillard, 'The Evil Demon of Images', 1987.[608]

For Jean Baudrillard, 'technological images', by which he meant those images that issue from photographic, cinematographic and televisual processes and systems, play a central role in his theory of hyperreality, simulation and the simulacrum.[609] Although Baudrillard calls the power to 'double' (like a mirror) or even infinitely reproduce an image 'diabolical', one might also question the power of technological images in a more positive way – after all, as Benjamin once remarked, 'in principle, the work of art has always been reproducible'.[610] Indeed, it seems to be the force of reproduction through television that the Land artists discussed in this chapter found highly interesting: not only because it would involve an extension of their *in situ* works by electronic transmission that would reach a potentially unlimited number of people, but especially because they were aware of the power of images and their transformational impact on perception. In other words, by transmitting their Land artworks, the artists were consciously shaping the aesthetics of Land Art itself, modulating the prevalent (already at that time pushed by the media and many art critics) approach to Land artworks as involved with only 'earth and sod', while also pointing towards larger issues such as the relation of human beings to their environment and the Earth.

[608] Jean Baudrillard, *The Evil Demon of Images* (Sydney: Power Institute, 1987).
[609] As most famously expounded in his study *Simulacres Et Simulation*.
[610] Benjamin, 'The Work of Art in the Age of Its Technological Reproducibility [First Version].'

That is not to say that the massive distribution of their artworks via television was not a highly valued element of *LAND ART.* The direct extension of a local work on a potentially global scale, and the sense of global scale being perceived at the local place of reception (the living room of a viewer), once again recalls the zoom function of a camera, albeit now in different dimensions through the electronic possibilities of television. This reverence for technology is also mirrored in the films of *LAND ART,* which show the power of imagination coupled with technology: a hole in the sea, filmed from an aerial view, becomes a landscape of thoughts about man and nature; a snowmobile that makes a line in the snow while tracing a border defined by humans instead of by nature symbolizes the point of intersection between concepts and reality, culture and nature. Particularly significant is the very force of the reproduced images themselves. After all, these Land artworks did not continue to exist after they had been filmed for *LAND ART.* It is therefore without doubt that the films of *LAND ART* inevitably continue to shape our thoughts about these individual works. Indeed, one could say that whereas the film *Spiral Jetty* continued to have an impact on the actual on-site *Spiral Jetty,* the *LAND ART* films affected viewers' imaginary landscapes, which were created through the visualisation of specific artistic ideas in each film.

Each of these films seems to operate on a much larger scale than the location where the film was shot. They all create a landscape of tensions in which the local and global, the close-up and overview, and the macroscopic and microscopic are connected. This is the extended landscape – which is both physical and conceptual, human-made and nature-made – that becomes perceivable (or better: one can imaginatively experience this landscape oneself) while watching these films on television. Yet there is the question, as Baudrillard emphasised, of what is then reality and what is fictive: when does the artwork merely resemble something outside itself, and when is it an autonomous reality itself? This involves an ontological question that precedes any discussion about reproduction and original –

something that reaches all the way back to the ontological doubt expressed by the philosophers of antiquity, questioning what is real and what is not.[611] In an age in which photography, film, and television were producing a seemingly endless number of images, this ontological uneasiness seems predictable – and even sometimes necessary, as the consumers of these images slowly became more aware of the ideological power of the media and the possible fiction of the images seen. However, it is the act of questioning that lies at the heart of this ontological uneasiness that is important: what exactly leads a human being to question her or his own reality, and what does this questioning serve?

Smithson is an artist who has become renowned for his seemingly perpetual conflation of the real and the fictive – as we have already seen during the discussion of *Spiral Jetty* in the previous chapter. In one of his most famous texts, 'A Sedimentation of the Mind: Earth Projects (1968)', Smithson writes: 'The earth's surface and the figments of the mind have a way of disintegrating into discrete regions of art. Various agents, both fictional and real, somehow trade places with each other – one cannot avoid muddy thinking when it comes to earth projects, or what I will call "abstract geology".'[612] It is because of Smithson's interest in the conflation of the fictional and the real that he often used mirrors in his works – as he states himself, 'the mirror is a symbol of illusion, as immaterial as projected film.'[613] One could add that the mirror is also the symbol of a kind of ontological questioning of mankind – and mankind's existence. Yet Smithson does not separate this type of questioning – coming from 'the figments of the mind' – from the 'earth's surface': the two are closely related in Smithson's film, *Fossil Quarry Mirror with Four Mirror Displacements,* made for *LAND ART.*

[611] Of course, Plato's *The Republic* (especially the so called 'Allegory of the Cave') is a good example of this. See Plato, *The Republic of Plato*, ed. Allan Bloom (New York: Harper Collins Publishers, 1968). Another example – in the realm of art – is the famous story of Zeuxis and Parrhasios.
[612] *Robert Smithson: The Collected Writings*, 100.
[613] Ibid., 64.

Robert Smithson's *Fossil Quarry Mirror with Four Mirror Displacements*

Fossil Quarry Mirror with Four Mirror Displacements was filmed in the Cayuga Lake Region of New York State in March 1969. This film by Smithson starts completely silently, only interrupted by some cracking noises (which are not in the original but are due to the aging of the film itself). This silence corresponds with the floating sensation of the first shots, taken from an aerial view, apparently from an airplane, as at certain moments one can see the reflection of a window in the filmed landscape – when the light hits the window of the airplane or helicopter from where the film is shot. Then the name of the artist (given here as 'Bob Smithson'), title and location are shown, while Schum's voice states the same in German once again (figs. 227-229). After this, the screen goes black and a triangle with the word 'North' underneath it appears (fig. 230). In the next shot, the beholder is suddenly brought back to earth, where one sees a few piled up stones, laid in the form of a quadrangle, with something in between them within a landscape where heaps of snow are scattered all around (fig. 231). Alongside this return from the sky to the earth, there is also the return of sound, which seems to be the sound of a road: one can hear motorbikes and car traffic in the distance.

The camera then slowly starts to zoom in on the quadrangle, until one sees that the object in focus is in fact a mirroring box, compiled from four rectangular mirrors with stones on the inside and outside, seemingly supporting the mirrors. The mirrors reflect the stones that surround and support them, because of which the mirrors seem to dissolve into the landscape as a part of the heap of stones itself (fig. 232). During this scene, the noise of cars and traffic alternates with the sounds of birds singing in the background. Then the screen goes dark once again and the word 'East', with a triangle above it, appears (fig. 233). Again, the focus is on what looks at first glance like a pile of stones (fig. 234), but after the camera zooms in, it becomes evident that this is another quadrangle of stones and mirrors, created in

a similar manner to the first object (fig. 235). More or less the same shots are subsequently repeated for 'South' (figs. 236-238) and 'West' (figs. 239-241), with the sound still alternating between the loud noise of traffic and that of birds in nature.

Then the screen goes dark yet again, and the word 'North' appears anew, however now without the triangle above it (fig. 242). The subsequent shot shows some snow on the ground, but no visible object (fig. 243). Yet after a split-second the camera moves to the left in a swinging motion, keeping the focus on the ground and without the clean movement of a zoom shot (making it apparent that the camera is now hand-held), until suddenly an upright mirror comes into view (fig. 244). There are no rocks here that visibly support the mirror, instead, it is almost as if the mirror is cleanly 'inserted' into the earth itself. The mirror reflects the high rocky riff on the opposite side from where the camera is pointing, because of which it becomes unclear if one actually looks 'North' (the place where the mirror is positioned), or if 'North' is in fact 'South' (i.e. that what one sees inside the mirror as a reflection). Subsequently, after this initial shot, the same idea is repeated for 'East' (figs. 245-247), 'South' (figs. 248-250) and 'West' (figs. 251-253), with the camera alternating between a swinging (or zigzagging) motion and a tracing movement while filming the ground until a mirror comes into view. Notably, during the filming of and into these mirrors, no human figure is visible in any of the shots, suggesting a great deal of skill on the part of the operator of the camera in filming these mirrors. During all these scenes, the sound keeps alternating between the birds and traffic noise, which is strikingly similar to the sound that was used for the film *Spiral Jetty,* where the sound of the waves alternated with the sound of a tractor moving stones and earth to build the *Spiral Jetty*.[614]

In his film for *LAND ART*, Smithson relates space to time in a highly intricate manner, by implying a specific location (a fossil quarry in the Cayuga Lake Region) while

[614] See Chapter III.

also connecting this to a larger sense of place on the Earth through the clockwise – indeed, the clock-like – movement of the film over time and between the cardinal points: filming North to East to South to West, with the cardinal points alluding to Earth's globe itself. In the first move around the four cardinal points – the series in which triangles are drawn above the directions that appear on black screens ('North', et cetera) – it often seems as if Smithson is referring to the act of using a compass. In fact, it seems as if the camera's movement, which also goes straight ahead in this first series of shots, implies that the beholder is walking forwards as if in the direction suggested by a compass, thanks to the camera zooming-in towards the North, East, South or West.[615]

This is clearly opposed to the second series of shots of the cardinal points (which do not have a triangle above the directions), where the camera no longer films straight forward but introduces a zigzagging or swinging movement, as if the compass has been abandoned and the beholder is now searching 'blindly' for the mirrors. Smithson thus visualises an intriguing paradox between technology (the compass) and lived experience (a human body), certainty and chance, the seen and the invisible. As Schum describes Smithson's film:

> A landscape becomes a landscape because it is seen by people. This landscape is always connected to the viewpoint of a human being. However, this point of view is variable. Being conscious of this, Smithson made his work *Fossil Quarry Mirror with Four Mirror Displacements* for the television gallery. With mirrors he realised a system of multiple viewpoints within the viewing angle of the television set.[616]

In other words, Smithson was interested in making visible how one viewpoint can be mirrored into its opposite, with 'North', in the mirror, turning into 'South', and so forth. Clearly, this relates to a larger question than just viewing an artwork. For example, in one of

[615] This in contrast to an abstract depiction of the cardinal points that presented merely an overview (as seen, for example, in a wind rose, where North, East, South and West are drawn around a central axis).
[616] Translated from the German by the author. Groos, Hess, and Wevers, 'Ready to Shoot: Fernsehgalerie Gerry Schum/Videogalerie Schum,' 74.

Smithson's own texts, he remarks that 'only when art is fragmented, discontinuous and incomplete can we know about that vacant eternity that excludes objects and determined meanings. The mirror and the transparent glass bring us to those designations that remain forever abolished in the colorless affinities of a static perception.'[617] In other words, in this complex – even at first glance ostensibly simple – film by Smithson, questions about viewing points, situatedness, and the relationship between a human being and its world are asked.

Indeed, the displacements that are visualised in Smithson's film *Fossil Quarry Mirror with Four Mirror Displacements* are directly related to Smithson's broader ideas set out in his short text 'Dialectic of Site and Nonsite'.[618] In fact, it is a very significant, but hitherto unmentioned fact, that most of Smithson's ideas about the dialectic of Site and Nonsite were developed and published at the same time as, and in direct relation to, his first film *Fossil Quarry Mirror with Four Mirror Displacements* for the *LAND ART* television exhibition of 1969.[619] It is also not commonly known that Smithson's text 'Dialectic of Site and Nonsite' was conceived and written in order to accompany Smithson's film for Schum's television exhibition *LAND ART*: the text was first published by Smithson in the catalogue for the television exhibition.[620] (It was later reprinted as the first footnote in Smithson's text 'The Spiral Jetty'.)[621] Smithson had previously already written some notes on his ideas about Site and Nonsite before that, a text that is now known as 'A Provisional Theory of Non-Sites' from 1968, which was conceived in relation to Smithson's film work in the Pine Barrens Plains in New Jersey, USA. This text remained unpublished until it appeared in 1996 as part

[617] *Robert Smithson: The Collected Writings*, 333.
[618] Wevers and Schum, 'Katalog Zur Fernsehaustellung Land Art Der Fernsehgalerie Berlin Gerry Schum.' (Not paginated.)
[619] It is remarkable that this is not even mentioned in Jennifer Roberts' monograph on Robert Smithson. See: Roberts, *Mirror-Travels: Robert Smithson and History*.
[620] See Smithson's text as printed in: Wevers and Schum, 'Katalog Zur Fernsehaustellung Land Art Der Fernsehgalerie Berlin Gerry Schum,' n.p.
[621] See the text 'The Spiral Jetty' in: *Robert Smithson: The Collected Writings*, 143-153.

of Smithson's collected writings.[622] In retrospect one can now say that Smithson's text 'Dialectic of Site and Nonsite' of 1969 reads as a more mature version of the earlier notes in 'A Provisional Theory of Non-Sites' of 1968.

Indeed, when one reads these two short but very influential texts, the relation between Smithson's ideas of Site and Nonsite and his film *Fossil Quarry Mirror with Four Mirror Displacements* becomes immediately apparent.[623] It becomes clear that Smithson's dialectic of Site and Nonsite was conceived as directly related to his film work for Schum's television exhibition.[624] Throughout the film, Smithson positions the viewer in front of an unresolved dualism: in the second series of shots of the cardinal points, for example, the mirrors reflect that which is absent from the direct focus of the camera (the Site), while they also make this absence present (the Nonsite). In Smithson's words:

> the nonsite [is] functioning as a mirror and the site [is] functioning as a reflection. Existence becomes a doubtful thing. You are presented with a nonworld, or what I call a nonsite. The problem is that it can only be approached in terms of its own negation.[625]

Indeed, the viewer is continuously displaced (albeit only visually): the location or place that one views is negated as one moves between the Site and the Nonsite, the mirror and its reflection, North and South, East and West. The same holds true for the sound of the film, which continuously alternates between the noise of traffic and the singing of birds.

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[622] It should be noted that *The Collected Writings* mentions that this text had been partially excerpted by Lawrence Alloway in 1979. See: ibid., 364.
[623] See Chapter III. An excerpt of the quote cited in that chapter, which explains Smithson's theory of Site and Nonsite, reads: 'The range of convergence between Site and Nonsite consists of a course of hazards, a double path made up of signs, photographs and maps that belong to both sides of the dialectic at once. Both sides are present and absent at the same time. The land or ground from the Site is placed in the art (Nonsite) rather than the art placed on the ground. … Is the Site a reflection of the Nonsite (mirror), or is it the other way around? The rules of this network of signs are discovered as you go along uncertain trails both mental and physical.' 'Katalog Zur Fernsehaustellung Land Art Der Fernsehgalerie Berlin Gerry Schum,' n.p.
[624] That is not to say that Smithson perceives this dialectic as an exclusive property of film: he also talks about mirrors, photography and maps as Nonsites. See for example 'Fragments of an Interview with P.A. [Patsy] Norvell (1969)' in: *Robert Smithson: The Collected Writings*, 192-195.
[625] Ibid., 193.

Evidently, *Fossil Quarry Mirror with Four Mirror Displacements* was of great importance for Smithson and his development as one of the most influential artists of the 20th century. When one compares this film to his later film, *Spiral Jetty* (1970), which was discussed in Chapter III, one can find a direct link between Smithson's interest in the simultaneity of opposites (like the enigmatic relation between absence and presence, Site and Nonsite) and the great complexity of Land Art's aesthetics in relation to the use of time-based media as laid out in this dissertation.

A Processual Indeterminacy: Marinus Boezem's *Sand Fountain*

Marinus Boezem (1934-), a Dutch artist, was also interested in this disjunction of the real and the fictive – especially in art. As Boezem himself states: 'The matters of fact are not reality for me. … I'm a medium to promote renewed experience…'[626] It is this interest that he explores in the fifth film of the series, *Sand Fountain* (the title already indicates a conceptual opposition: water and sand), filmed in the Camargue region in France in January 1969. The focus of Boezem's film is on a 'fountain' of sand erupting from a dune, with the sand being sprayed into the air from an unknown source.[627] However, in contrast to Smithson, who focused his film on the visual simultaneity of opposites, Boezem chose to visualise a conceptual dualism through the *processual* display of opposites (where the opposites are shown one after another over time).

This film, too, starts with Schum's voice announcing the title and name of the artist, against a shot of sand dunes with trees in the background (figs. 254-256). After this, a round hole in one of the sand dunes comes into view, out of which sand erupts as if from a fountain. This is the moment that a voiceover announces (again in German): 'International wind force

[626] From 'Boezem – Pieces of a Talk', as reprinted in: 'Katalog Zur Fernsehaustellung Land Art Der Fernsehgalerie Berlin Gerry Schum.' (Not paginated.)
[627] From the exhibition catalogue one learns that the sand is forced upwards by means of a compressor. See: ibid., (section Marinus Boezem, not paginated).

scale after Beaufort with officially specified examples'.[628] Subsequently, the fountain of sand slowly increases in force and density (figs. 257-259), while the wind that disperses the sand into the air also becomes stronger. What follows is a vocalised sequence of wind force definitions (in German, with a voice-over which might be by the artist), as described in the official Beaufort wind force scale register, a standard way of measuring wind conditions on the land or at sea (figs. 260 and 261). The voiceover occurs as the force of the wind increases around the sand fountain. The sequence begins with 'wind force 0', where the wind is 'calm' and in which 'smoke rises in a perpendicular or almost perpendicular line' (fig. 262) – in this case, linked to the sand fountain forcing the sand straight upwards. Slowly the wind increases while the scale grows towards wind force 11 (figs. 263-265). Finally, the voice-over announces wind force 12: 'Hurricane' – 'wind causes extensive damage', which is accompanied by a shot in which the sand fountain is simply obliterated by the wind and in which nothing is visible other than a monochrome cloud of dispersed sand, with the sand fountain itself apparently having disappeared into what looks like a sand hurricane (fig. 266). After a while the wind suddenly stops. The last shot of the film confirms that the sand fountain has ceased to exist; we return to the first shot where only the sand dune is visible (fig. 267), after which the screen goes black.

The wind force scale was invented by Sir Francis Beaufort for the British navy in 1805 and is still used worldwide to objectively measure the force of the wind. The descriptions that accompany the different wind forces in relation to the 'sea conditions' or the 'land conditions' are still widely used, like wind force scale 3, where the land conditions are described as: 'wind felt on exposed skin. Leaves rustle. Wind vanes begin to move.' (See again figs. 260 and 261.) Yet Boezem's *Sand Fountain* shows that these apparently objective and meaningful scales used to describe wind force are shown to result, eventually, in a lack of

[628] Translated by the author.

visibility and a lack of sense. The more sand is dispersed, the less visual clarity there is, and the seemingly precise and scientific nature of the Beaufort scale become increasingly senseless as visualised in the film, with the sand fountain eventually becoming nothing more than a monochromatic blur of sand. Indeed, it is this focus on the production of meaning and its intrinsic connection to meaninglessness that seems to be the basis of *Sand Fountain*, which links it to Oppenheim's film *Time Track.*

In a written text for the exhibition catalogue that accompanied *LAND ART,* Boezem explains that the mechanism producing the effects seen in the *Sand Fountain* is a compressor hidden beneath the sand that is able – when put into motion – to force the sand upwards.[629] A drawing by Boezem, also printed in the exhibition catalogue of *LAND ART,* shows the set up for an earlier installation of the *Sand Fountain* piece indoors (fig. 268), together with other works that were conceived during the same time period. *Sand Fountain* thus clearly linked to other works Boezem made in the 1960s and 1970s, which all evolve around themes like 'ephemerality, immateriality, cognition and site specificity', such as his so-called 'skywriting' works (fig. 269).[630] Whereas these works are predominantly conceptual, Boezem also always includes references to nature and emphasises the work's materiality (or immateriality): the sand of the fountain, the vapour of the skywriting. Hence, despite the apparent contradictions – how can there be a 'fountain' of sand or 'writing' amongst the clouds? – there is also a strong sense of each work's existence in nature. This became even stronger in Boezem's later works of Land Art, for example in his 'Groene Kathedraal' (*Green Cathedral*) of 1978-1987 in the Flevopolder in the Netherlands (fig. 270), which consists of 178 trees planted by Boezem himself in the shape of a cathedral's foundations.

[629] Wevers and Schum, 'Katalog Zur Fernsehaustellung Land Art Der Fernsehgalerie Berlin Gerry Schum,' n.p.
[630] Thomas McEvilley, *Sculpture in the Age of Doubt* (New York: School of Visual Arts (Allworth Press), 1999), 229-236.

Boezem's *Sand Fountain* also brings a strong lyrical element to it, which he himself recognises as an essential part of his oeuvre. In a text that is also reproduced in the *LAND ART* catalogue, Boezem says:

> The work contains a lyrical factor, it is 'lyrically factual': it is connected with my world of perception. The matters of fact are not reality for me. … Reflecting on the skin of time, not tied to a form or a material from which you can be recognized. I'm a medium to promote renewed experience – a micro emotion. All this out of a disgusting contentment – indifferent as to sales, but interested in the dissemination of ideas.[631]

Lyrical qualities are very evident in *Sand Fountain*, where the words of the Beaufort scale almost seem to be transformed into the lyrics of a song, which accompanies the gradual annihilation of vision itself by the end of the film. Boezem also always includes self-referential elements in his work, comparable to Smithson's use of mirrors: by erasing the visual through the act of zooming-in on the sand until it fills the whole screen, he effectively completely undermines television's function as an all-seeing eye on the world. Boezem himself remarks that this blurring of the image on the television screen was meant as an act against rational thought and its meaning-making: it 'is not a mystification, but you make it meaningless'.[632]

Even many decades later, Boezem looked back at *Sand Fountain* and the television exhibition *LAND ART* as a particular successful project, and he even deemed the latter a 'visionary work of art' when he wrote in October 2003:

> To experience the physical time of a work of art, as experienced in music – this was one of the possibilities that aroused my interest in the medium of film / video. In addition, the confrontation with a socially indeterminate mass or a socially non-definable space: millions of people who can at the same time look at a work of art, while the work of art previously had to cover its own topographical path, from gallery to gallery, from museum to museum. This confrontation, which becomes an

[631] From 'Boezem – Pieces of a Talk', as reprinted in: Wevers and Schum, 'Katalog Zur Fernsehaustellung Land Art Der Fernsehgalerie Berlin Gerry Schum,' not paginated.
[632] Ibid., n.p.

> anonymous reality through the sound waves and video frequencies that can be caught in millions of screens in people's own environment, was for me the most fascinating aspect of the Gerry Schum television gallery back then. The moment in the history of art, in which Schum and Wevers offered the artists this possibility, can be regarded [as] visionary.[633]

Especially Boezem's emphasis on the wide distribution range made possible through the medium of television comes close to Schum's own intentions: *LAND ART* as a 'new way to show art'.[634] However, the aim was not just to make visible, but to change a mentality. As Boezem emphasises: 'I'm not concerned about the honour and glory of the artist, but about changing a mentality. … That mentality, the simple increase of visibility, that feeling of freedom …' [635] Ironically, this 'simple increase of visibility', ended by literally blurring the image on the television screen, thus increasing an inner perception in the viewer. This leads us to the final participants in the *LAND ART* television exhibition.

[633] Translated from the German by the author. Groos, Hess, and Wevers, 'Ready to Shoot: Fernsehgalerie Gerry Schum/Videogalerie Schum,' 96.
[634] For the exhibition catalogue 'Gerry Schum' of 1979, Dorine Mignot asked some of the participating Land artists: 'Do you regard your work [the film made for *LAND ART*] primarily as a form of documentation or as an independent work of art?' after which all the respondents answered that they considered it to be 'An independent artwork' (although some use slightly different phrases to make essentially the same point). Mignot and Wevers, 'Gerry Schum,' 75.
[635] From 'Boezem – Pieces of a Talk', as reprinted in: Wevers and Schum, 'Katalog Zur Fernsehaustellung Land Art Der Fernsehgalerie Berlin Gerry Schum.' (Not paginated.)

4.4 The Vision from Above: A Landscape of Tensions

> We live in a time when the world, that is our environment, can be experienced from new dimensions. It has become possible, by means of satellites, to experience the earth from extraterrestrial points of view, be it direct or indirect (as in photographic reproduction). If we see a motorway from 3,000 metres high, it loses its purely functional character. It becomes first of all an artificial mark in the landscape. It is time that we consider each hole we dig, every road we build, and every field that is plotted as a process in which we shape our environment, which should go further than giving it purely practical functions.
>
> Gerry Schum, 'Introduction in the Television Gallery Berlin Gerry Schum', 1967.[636]

A focus on visuality through the use of mirrors, maps, a bird's eye view or even the blurring of vision itself is evident throughout the *LAND ART* project. All the films depict an intervention in nature, whether on the land or in the sea, or an act of transformation, in which the dualities between abstract thought and physical experience become visible. However, this focus on visuality seems to point to a bigger picture that goes beyond the individual artworks – towards a visuality, as Schum formulates it, that directly relates to our human presence on Earth and our manipulations of the environment, the continuous – often while unaware – shaping of the environment by human actions. It is therefore in this context that Schum refers to Harald Szeemann's concept of '*Bewußtseinskunst*': an art that creates awareness and makes one conscious about this fact.[637] Indeed, it is this ultimate aim that *LAND ART* was able to materialize through the use of immaterial means: it was about the changing of a mentality, as Boezem formulated it.

The fact that these films were broadcast on television, a medium that literally enters into people's homes, is therefore significant in more ways than one: it seems to abolish any

[636] Translated by the author from the German text by Gerry Schum, 'Einführung in die Sendung Fernsehgalerie Berlin Gerry Schum', in: Groos, Hess, and Wevers, 'Ready to Shoot: Fernsehgalerie Gerry Schum/Videogalerie Schum,' 70.
[637] Ibid.

kind of border, with all viewers now being equally and without discrimination interconnected. In a way, television as a medium does exactly what Schum describes in the quote cited above: it flattens all functions and differences, as if seen from above in an aerial view. Hence, one could question how far Baudrillard's 'technological images', including those shown on television, can in fact be seen as analogies to help to visualise this type of vision from above – possibly even from outer space, as discussed in the introduction. In such a situation, as Schum has said previously, the usefulness of objects disappears and a sense of existing within a single, large, interconnected environment, which is continuously shaped by our daily actions, remains.[638]

Perspectival Plays: Jan Dibbets's *12 Hours Tide Object with Correction of Perspective*

This shaping of the environment, including a particular interest in views taken from above or, more generally, in perspective as such, is especially played out in the last three (out of eight in total) films made for the television exhibition. Indeed, in all three of these films, there is a shared interest in exploring the working of (linear) perspective itself. This is evidently the case in the sixth film by another Dutch artist, Jan Dibbets, *12 Hours Tide Object with Correction of Perspective*, which was filmed in the Netherlands in February 1969.

This film opens with a shot of the sea, after which the title, name of the artist and location are once again stated by Schum's voice translating the text into German (figs. 271-273). The camera then slowly zooms out and the beach comes into view, filmed from a high perspective on the top of a sand dune, while the camera moves downwards until the sea has disappeared from view and only the sandy beach is visible (figs. 274 and 275). Seagulls can be heard in the background, together with the murmur of the sea. In the next shot, however, these meditative sounds and views are abruptly shifted towards their opposites: the loud

[638] Ibid.

sound of an engine now pervades the film while a dark shadow moves in the left lower corner of the screen.

After a few seconds, one sees it is in fact a tractor, driving slowly backwards, away from the camera, whilst it pulls a rake through the sand thereby creating a sequence of vertical lines on the ground (figs. 276-278). After having finished this track, the tractor then reappears in the lower right side of the screen, after which it again drives away from the camera, its rake producing more vertical lines in the sand (figs. 279-281). The loud noise of the tractor continues as the soundtrack of the film. Subsequently, the tractor comes into the lower right side of the frame once again, but now rakes the sand with horizontal lines, from right to left (figs. 282 and 283). It then repeats this action moving from the far upper right corner towards the far upper left corner of the screen (fig. 284). The tractor remains in the upper part of the screen, where it continues to make horizontal lines in the sand, once from left to right and then from right to left, until the entire upper screen is filled with horizontal lines raked into the sand (figs. 285 and 286).

After completing this fascinating drawing in the sand, the tractor disappears – and with it, the loud noise of its engine – and for a short moment the beholder witnesses the result of this process: a perfect quadrangle has been formed by the tractor in the middle of the screen, as cut out of the landscape by the horizontal and vertical rake lines methodically drawn by the tractor. However, this is not the conclusion of the film. Instead, the next shot shows the high tide of the sea coming in, slowly moving towards the sand drawing until, in just a few minutes, the sea wipes out the traces of the rake in the sand until nothing is left (figs. 287-290). The film then shows a long shot of the sea, accompanied by the sounds of seagulls as heard at the start and now also clearly visible on the screen (fig. 291), after which the film ends by returning to a shot taken from the top of the dune, also as shown at the beginning of the film (fig. 292). The total time that the film covers is in fact a complete tide

span of 12 hours (going from low tide, six hours, to high tide, six hours), even though the film itself is cut so that it lasts for only 7.30 minutes (still the longest film in the *LAND ART* television exhibition). The close connection of the film to the tide of the sea recalls Flanagan's *A Hole in the Sea*. However, Dibbets adds something to the tension between conceptual idea and the realities of nature and the material world by demonstrating a particular concern with perspective, which was not apparent in the earlier films in the series.

As its title suggests, a 'correction' of perspective occurs in this film. What is meant by 'correction' takes some time to sink in, but while one watches the film, one starts to intuit its conceptual complexity. One then realises that the drawing in the sand, made by the traces of the tractor's rake, uses the laws of linear perspective to undermine its effects: through precise calculations, Dibbets established the length of the lines that the tractor needed to draw in order to annihilate the usual working of linear perspective. Specifically, rather than allowing parallel lines of the same length to appear to recede to a vanishing point, the tractor instead draws an enormous trapezoid in a '\ /' shape into the sand. This shape then serves to 'correct' the usual working of linear perspective: instead of seeing the parallel lines getting closer together as they appear to proceed towards the horizon, here the lines are transformed – from the position of the viewer and the camera – into a perfect quadrangle. The laws of perspective have been used to 'correct' the normal effects of perspective itself.

With this project, Dibbets takes up a theme that he also explored in other works. As discussed in Chapter II, in a series entitled *Perspective Corrections* produced from 1967 to 1969, Dibbets similarly focused on the question of how the normal functions of perspective could be reversed.[639] In the words of art critic Brian Wallis, 'instead of making the square appear trapezoidal when projected in depth, Dibbets makes the trapezoid appear square'.[640]

[639] See Chapter II.
[640] Brian Wallis, 'Jan Dibbets: A Third Way for Photography', in: Brian Wallis, *Jan Dibbets: Land, Sea, Colour (21 March-20 April 2013)* (London: Alan Cristea Gallery, 2013). (Introduction, not paginated.)

Through these successful 'perspectival corrections', Dibbets was able to show that the camera lens can remake reality, in the process suggesting that fiction (or illusion) and reality are actually inseparable, as was also the case in *12 Hours Tide Object with Correction of Perspective.*[641] Dibbets thus emphasises the power of the camera lens 'to demonstrate that reality is an abstraction', as he himself put it.[642]

Hence, by countering the natural working of the photograph or film, which is normally assumed to replicate or simulate human vision, Dibbets temporarily undermines the laws of vision, by deconstructing linear perspective as a model for vision (one that has dominated Western culture since the Renaissance), in the process raising fundamental questions about how one perceives the world. As the art critic Barbara Reise observed: 'A consistent theme in Dibbets's work is the paradoxical nature of illusion and reality immediately and directly perceived. Thus, the reality of a seemingly 'natural' visual observation is counter-posed by a physical or conceptual reality.'[643] Hence, it is no wonder that Dibbets – who always considered himself foremost a photographer – refers to his photographs and, in this case, his film, as the actual works of art, which supersede any incidental sculptural forms: it is only through technological mediation that fiction/illusion and reality are reversed, because of which we begin to question our assumptions about the supposedly 'natural' ways in which we perceive the world.[644]

[641] I disagree with what Wallis calls Dibbets's 'third way', which Wallis believes is about demonstrating 'the fundamental fictions of the photograph.' Instead, I think Dibbets is interested in the point where fiction and reality come together. Cf. with Brian Wallis, 'Jan Dibbets: A Third Way for Photography', in: ibid.
[642] Jan Dibbets, interview with Georg Jappe, quoted in Erik Verhagen, Jan Dibbets, and John Tittensor, *Jan Dibbets: The Photographic Work* (2014), 9.
[643] Reise, 'Notes on Jan Dibbets's Contemporary Nature of Realistic Classicism in the Dutch Tradition.'
[644] Brian Wallis, 'Jan Dibbets: A Third Way for Photography', in: Wallis, *Jan Dibbets: Land, Sea, Colour (21 March-20 April 2013).*

Walter De Maria's *Two Lines Three Circles in the Desert*

This important role played by a technical apparatus in creating a self-reflective awareness of the act of perception also forms the basis for the seventh film of the series: Walter De Maria's *Two Lines Three Circles in the Desert*, filmed in the Mojave Desert in California, in March 1969. As with Dibbets' film, De Maria was highly interested in the technical possibilities of film and its use of perspective (as already seen in Chapter III, where De Maria's film *Beds of Spikes* and *The Lightning Field* are discussed). In contrast to the other films, however, De Maria's film starts with a still image, in which one sees a man looking over his left shoulder towards the camera. It is over this image that De Maria's name, the title of the work and the location are written in black letters (figs. 293-295). The film then continues with a white screen, accompanied by a sharp, high electronic sound. This high sound continues while the lens of the camera, as if looking through the air vibrating with heat, gradually sharpens its focus and a person comes slowly into view – as if seen through the convection that causes the air to vibrate – standing in contrapposto with one hand on his side and his back towards the viewer. He stands between two white lines on the ground that give the semblance of infinite extension – as if they go on until they reach the horizon (figs. 296 and 297).

This figure then begins to move and starts walking between the two lines, away from the viewer (fig. 298). After twenty-four steps, the camera suddenly starts to rotate towards the right, after which the landscape slowly comes into view, while the figure walking between the two lines disappears out of view on the left side of the screen (figs. 299-301). The camera keeps turning to the right, following the landscape, until it has made a full 360 degrees circle and the two lines become visible again (figs. 302-304). In the far distance, the walking figure is still recognisable between the two white lines. However, the camera keeps turning clockwise – again, the viewer is taken on a tour through the desert landscape, still accompanied by the high, uncomfortable electronic sound. After another full rotation, the

camera returns to the two white lines once more. The figure has now almost disappeared – only a small, black speck gives away the presence of someone walking in the distance (figs. 305 and 306). Again, the camera keeps turning towards the right for a final (third) sweep around the desert landscape, until, finally, the camera returns to its fixed starting point and shows that the walking figure has now completely disappeared out of view – only the two white lines remain visible (fig. 307).

The complexity of De Maria's film, which coordinates the moving camera's speed very precisely to the walking speed of the figure between the two white lines (both ending at the same moment), relates directly to the title of De Maria's film, *Two Lines Three Circles in the Desert.* This title is precisely, yet quite unexpectedly, realised in the film: the visual rotation of the camera on its tripod – the unexpected 'three circles' – and De Maria's white chalk drawing of the more obvious 'two lines' in the desert landscape, like a train track towards the horizon. In all this, the optical illusion of the vanishing point is emphasised by the disappearance of the walking figure by the end of the film. However, at the same time, the 'three circles' draw one's attention away from the effects of linear perspective created by the two lines towards the endless desert landscape. This sense of endlessness is reinforced by the rotating movement of the camera itself, which shows nothing else but a limitless horizon in all directions. Hence, the rotating camera's horizontal orientation seems to annihilate the effects of the linear perspective formed by the two white lines, with their focus on verticality – with the lines seeming to stretch upwards towards the horizon when viewed on the screen. As Eva Ehninger puts it: De Maria's use of perspective in this film, just like in most of his artworks, is based on 'a critique of the conventional linear perspective of an image and its claim of universality.'[645]

[645] Translated from the German by the author. Ehninger, 'Die Land Art Als Film. Parallelen Der Raumkonstruktion in Land Art Und Film Bei Walter De Maria Und Robert Smithson,' 10.

The tension between the ‘two lines’ and the ‘three circles’ is made tangible: every time the rotating camera movement draws our gaze away from the two lines and the walking figure, we experience the urge to stop the camera’s circular movement: there is a strange desire to keep watching the figure walking between the two lines, as it seems the only stable point of orientation in this empty desert landscape. It is therefore quite ironic that during the longest part of the film, one’s vision is directed away from this point of focus. Instead, the camera’s lens focuses repeatedly on the rather monotonous landscape of the desert, with the landscape itself never really becoming familiar to the viewer, due to the absence of any recognisable landmarks. The viewer’s vision is thus focused on the two lines drawn in the desert and the moving figure between them.

In the *LAND ART* exhibition catalogue, the two lines were also listed as an independent artwork by De Maria with the title *Half Mile Long Drawing in the Desert* (fig. 308). In a reprinted newspaper article in the catalogue, De Maria describes these lines as ‘two mile-long walls – a narrow corridor in the desert where the spectator will be trapped on a long morning or afternoon walk’.[646] In the film, the two lines become a kind of ‘trap’ for the eyes of the beholder, with the walking figure demanding one’s continuous attention. However, in this context it is significant that De Maria does not focus his film exclusively on this pre-existing artwork, but instead decided to add another element to it. By including the unseen (but implicit) rotating camera as a second sculptural element, De Maria is able to create a tension between two interrelated worlds: the reality of the ‘two lines’ (an on-site Land Art work) in the desert and the concept of the ‘three circles’ of the rotating camera movement on its tripod. The natural world and technology, concept and experience, sculpture

[646] See ‘Imagination takes Command’ in *Domus*, Nr. 471, Febr. 1969, as reprinted in: Wevers and Schum, 'Katalog Zur Fernsehaustellung Land Art Der Fernsehgalerie Berlin Gerry Schum.' (Not paginated.)

and film are thus interwoven, one with the other. Moreover, the film itself is linked to the *in situ* Land artwork, with the result that time-specific and place-specific elements collide.

At the heart of these oppositions lies linear perspective. De Maria's film visualises the tension between the effects of linear perspective as embodied by the two lines and the figure who walks slowly towards a single vanishing point on the horizon, and the rotating camera (the three circles) that counters the normal unfolding of what can be termed perspective's usual linear 'narrative' from start to finish. The implied beholder and the unseen camera thus become the central focal point of the film. At the same time, the beholder's lack of agency is simultaneously denied by their inability to stop the camera's continuous motion and fix their eyes on something stable, such as the two lines. The rotating camera thus functions in the same manner as Dibbets's 'perspective correction' in the sand: it goes against established visual models associated with linear perspective. In the case of De Maria's film, instead of presenting unfolding linear perspective, he has chosen a circular movement that seems to have no obvious beginning and no end.[647] Hence, De Maria's film, in which he intentionally opposes many of the conventions of traditional narrative films thanks to his use of a rotating camera, shows not only his interest in using film (including the camera itself) as a sculptural object that produces geometric forms – three circles – but also his commentary on the underlying assumptions of the medium of film.

This interest in playing with the established narrative rules of filmmaking is linked to an analogy that De Maria makes elsewhere about the production of a film and the making of his own Land Art projects:

> By starting to work with land sculpture in 1968 I was able to make things of scale completely unknown to this time, and able to occupy people with a single work for periods of up to an entire day. … So what happened, though, which was very interesting in connection with the idea of theater or film is that to build one of these

[647] This circular movement is also found in another film by De Maria, *Hard Core*, also of 1969, which lasts for almost 30 minutes.

> pieces becomes a major logistical economic undertaking. Like if a person wants to make a movie, we all now that it takes sixty or eighty thousand dollars to make a feature film of any kind, black and white, not too much original music and not too many name stars, and it takes four or five hundred thousand dollars to make any medium size picture and a million to two million dollars to make any decent type of major film. Well, the notion that maybe a piece of sculpture might take an investment of forty or fifty thousand dollars and . . . when it's finished, it gives the person an experience with could take him several hours or several days to experience is something I've been fighting now for the last four years, starting now the fifth year…. Fighting because there is no gallery structure or museum structure set up to finance major works of art like this.[648]

De Maria's observations about the similarities between the making of Land Art and making a film are linked to a more general development in which film itself began to be viewed as an art form in its own right. As De Maria recalls, the 1960s saw for the first time the emergence of 'the notion of the whole history of film, that there was film as an art form'.[649] De Maria's interest in Schum's idea of a television exhibition is undoubtedly connected to this phenomenon. However, this was not the case for the last film of the series.

The Missing Link: Michael Heizer's *Coyote*

The eighth and final film in the *LAND ART* series was Michael Heizer's *Coyote,* filmed at Coyote Dry Lake in California in March 1969. The entire film lasts 4.20 minutes, and – according to the information found in the catalogue – included colour film as well as black and white. However, after the first screening of this film on television, Heizer decided to pull his film out of the project, with only photographic material related to the film surviving.[650] These photographs were, along with photographs from the other artists, published in the *LAND ART* exhibition catalogue (figs. 309-314). From these pictures, as well as a short description of the film in a later catalogue *Ready to Shoot,* about Schum's entire oeuvre, one

[648] Walter De Maria in: De Maria, 'Walter De Maria - Oral History Interview,' tape one, side two.
[649] Walter De Maria in: ibid., tape two, side four.
[650] Apparently, the reason for Heizer's withdrawal was a dispute with Schum about his inclusion of aerial shots of the *Coyote.* Farrell, 'Network(Ed) Tv: Collaboration and Intervention at Fernsehgalerie Gerry Schum and Videogalerie Schum,' 18.

can deduce that the lost film showed several painted, geometrical forms in the desert sand created by Heizer himself.[651] This work was given the title of *Primitive Dye Painting No. 2,* the first iteration – No. 1 – being a previous attempt at a similar project in the same period, probably also commissioned by Schum. The materials used were anoline dyes bound with lime powder, with the final painting covering an impressive 13.72 by 22.86 metre area.[652] The first iteration, *Primitive Dye Painting No. 1*, also made in 1969, was 22.86 x 91.44 metres in size and was painted on the same location in the Coyote Dry Lake. Both works have now deteriorated, indeed had already done so shortly after their construction.

Schum published the photographs of the second version, together with a text by Robert F. Heizer, Michael Heizer's father, who was an archaeologist. The text appears in an appendix with the title 'Additional Surface Intaglio and Boulder Outline in the New and Old Worlds' (fig. 315). The text discusses so-called 'boulder outlines' attributed to aboriginal people and also mentions the 'intaglio designs' incised on the ground near Nazca, Peru, while also referring to similar designs in South Dakota, Iowa and Minnesota. Hence, the paintings that Heizer made in Coyote Dry Lake for his film are put in a direct relation to these supposedly 'primitive' designs in the landscape. As Heizer himself commented on his two versions of *Primitive Dye Painting*:

> In an attempt to amalgamate "concepts" of primordial artistic activity and conditions, these modernistic paintings were attempted. Rather than being "destroyed" by weather, they simply altered, eventually becoming invisible.[653]

Evidently, Heizer thought of such 'primordial' intaglio designs when he conceived and executed the paintings for his film *Coyote.*

[651] Groos, Hess, and Wevers, 'Ready to Shoot: Fernsehgalerie Gerry Schum/Videogalerie Schum.'
[652] Zdenek Felix, *Michael Heizer: Museum Folkwang Essen, Rijksmuseum Kröller-Müller Otterlo, 1979* (Essen: Otterlo: Rijksmuseum Kröller-Müller, 1979), 20.
[653] Wevers and Schum, 'Katalog Zur Fernsehaustellung Land Art Der Fernsehgalerie Berlin Gerry Schum,' n.p.

From the photographs that still exist of Heizer's film, one can deduce that the paintings were probably first filmed from the perspective of a person walking through the landscape, followed by aerial views of the paintings. One can imagine that the views filmed from ground level would not have clearly depicted the forms as a whole, while the aerial perspective would have given a sense of coherent meaning to the piece in its entirety. This is emphasised in the description of the film by Schum: 'For the television gallery, [Heizer] made a sand painting in Coyote Dry Lake, which in its entirety can only be viewed from an airplane. The resulting tension between the vision, standing on the ground, and the vision from the airplane is essential.'[654] However, this overview might also have been one of the reasons why Heizer decided to withdraw his film from the exhibition after viewing it in its final form, since his work was perhaps too fully revealed when seen from the air.

However, this remains mere speculation since the reasons why Heizer withdrew his film after its first screening on television remain unclear. We can only assume that Heizer must have been dissatisfied with one or more aspects of the final result, possibly even with the use of film itself as a medium. The use of photographs, as seen in the images published in the *LAND ART* catalogue, was presumably not as much of an issue for Heizer given that he often participated in exhibitions that included huge photographs or even projections of his on-site artworks (see, for example, the discussion of *Actual Size: Munich Rotary* in Chapter II, or his work for the *Information* exhibition, which included a slide projection).[655] Yet it is evident that the mythology that has grown, beginning in the 1970s, around Heizer (and is also the case for De Maria, Smithson and Long), in which he is portrayed as a revolutionary artist who rejected the museum and the commercial art world by constructing Land Art far away

[654] (Translated by the author.) Groos, Hess, and Wevers, 'Ready to Shoot: Fernsehgalerie Gerry Schum/Videogalerie Schum,' 75.
[655] The exhibition *Information* was curated by Kynaston McShine in 1970 at the Museum of Modern Art, New York City.

from civilisation, does not hold given his use of potentially marketable photographs.[656] The romanticised notion of Land Art as the 'flight of a number of young Americans and Europeans … out of the city and civilized environment into the landscape', as Zdenek Felix once commented, is thus only partially true.[657]

With Heizer's *Coyote* we can thus say that all the films made for the television exhibition *LAND ART* should be considered independent artworks in themselves. The same, however, holds true for the television exhibition itself, which was presented in its entirety as an artwork by Schum at the so-called 'gallery vernissage'. For this 'vernissage', Schum had rented a gallery space in which he not only installed several television sets that transmitted that event in real time, but he also hired a cameraman to film his speech.[658] It is significant that the technical equipment used to film Schum's speech could be seen on the live footage: microphones and other equipment were all clearly visible in the live television transmission during the 'gallery vernissage', although this footage was never broadcast outside that gallery space. This was documented by two still photographs of the scene by an unnamed photographer (figs. 316 and 317). In the first photograph, which was published in the subsequent *LAND ART* exhibition catalogue, Schum is doubled: shown once in the act of being filmed and again as a televised image in the background, thus creating a kind of *mise-en-abyme.*

This recalls the famous photograph *Democratic National Convention* (1960) by Garry Winogrand, in which John F. Kennedy is seen from behind, standing at the Democratic National Convention in Los Angeles accepting his party's nomination as its presidential

[656] The fact that institutional critique was not a direct interest of Heizer's has also become increasingly clear since the early 1990s, when he began to make so-called 'object-sculptures' specifically for the art market. See the interview with Michael Heizer by David Whitney in: Michael Heizer, *Michael Heizer* (London: Waddington Galleries, 1990), 5-7.
[657] Zdenek Felix, 'Mass, Time and Space', in: ibid., 46.
[658] The gallery was in fact the studio of the SFB, which Schum had rented for the evening. For more on the vernissage, see the contribution of Ursula Wevers in: Mignot and Wevers, 'Gerry Schum.'

candidate, while a television screen is visible behind his back showing the live broadcast of the same speech (fig. 318). The photograph of Schum's speech being filmed live during the gallery vernissage of *LAND ART* thus emphasises, even revels in the technical apparatus that makes such interventions possible: film and television. Through Schum's doubling, which took place inside an art gallery (rented for the vernissage), Schum made apparent that the apparatus of film and television should be regarded as an art form – and that *LAND ART* was just as suited to be exhibited in an art gallery as any other artwork. Moreover, as Wind had proposed in the quotation discussed at the start of the present chapter, the television exhibition *LAND ART* shows how artistic creativity can transform the medium of television itself and turn it into an artwork. Television and landscape, time-specific and site-specific works, and fiction and reality become intertwined – they no longer stand in opposition but seem to be part of a single continuum. In the television exhibition *LAND ART*, the artists themselves turned these ostensible opposites into affinities, discovering the intrinsic links between *in situ* Land artworks and lens- and time-based media such as film and television.[659]

[659] Already in 1979, Dorine Mignot raised this issue, without, however, exploring it in any depth. See: ibid., 68.

4.5 Fourth Preliminary Conclusion

The discussion of the eight films that formed the *LAND ART* television exhibition has brought new insights about the relation between the move into the expanded landscape of Land Art through the use of film and television, and the necessity that these artists perceived in using 'technological images' (in Baudrillard's words) in order to show the tensions that exist between idea and experience, fiction and reality. Yet these dualisms are consistently shown as dialectical, intrinsically connected opposites, which dissolve in the experience of the artworks themselves: through the televised film, the viewer is guided to a perspective that includes its opposite.

But what are the reasons that may underlie this strategy? One possibility is that the artists were engaging with the ideological power of television that many people had already started to perceive by the late 1960s and were already beginning to critique through the medium of television itself. But *LAND ART* was not a straightforward form of institutional critique. Firstly, it is evident that the viewer of the films is continuously asked to connect his or her conceptual ideas to a component of reality – either the natural world or a specific object. Secondly, the films raise the question of ontology: what is fiction and what is reality? As we have seen, Smithson's interest in the conflation of the fictional and the real was skilfully played out by his use of mirrors, as 'symbols of illusion'. Through Smithson's mirrors, the question of fiction and reality becomes connected to questions about our own perception of the world: 'Existence becomes a doubtful thing', as Smithson himself remarked.[660] As was shown in this chapter, this is intrinsically related to Smithson's theory of Site and Nonsite, and the continuous displacement of the beholder as (s)he is led by the film from Site to Nonsite, from the mirror to its reflection, from North to South, and from East to West. As Boezem emphasised, this shift is intended to 'change a mentality' and to 'increase

[660] *Robert Smithson: The Collected Writings*, 193.

visibility' from a narrow, one-point perspectival form of vision, to a sense of 'a view in the total round' (De Maria).

This interest in showing the 'bigger picture' is played out in a number of the *LAND ART* films. Dibbets's intriguing, real-time 'correction' of perspective itself makes the viewer aware of the fictive capacities of the camera – its ability to create reality anew, but also to change it or influence it. His film seems to speak directly against the ideological power of the media and could be interpreted as another form of institutional critique. However, here, too, another explanation seems possible. The fact that Dibbets leads the viewer to question supposedly natural ways of perceiving reality may be linked to Schum's argument that these artists were not so much interested in the massive power of communication embedded in television as a medium, but rather in the shift that occurred in the 1960s into an ever more mediated world in which the reproduced image began to dominate visual culture: a world in which most visual experiences are induced by way of reproduction of one kind or another. Dibbets's film points to this shift by making one aware of one's own habits of vision, which in turn can be linked to the anti-ideological art of awareness that Schum refers to.

Hence, Dibbets's film intuits a theme that seems present throughout the *LAND ART* exhibition: the importance of showing the power of reproduced images themselves, not necessarily as something negative, but as a fact of the new, postmodern world. This important role of the technical apparatus in creating a self-reflective awareness of our perception reappears in De Maria's film. However, in *Two Lines Three Circles in the Desert* this goes hand in hand with another overarching theme of Land Art: that of the decentring capacity of these complex sculptures. While the viewer can experience a sense of centring in De Maria's film, due to the rotating film camera, this centrality is simultaneously destroyed by the fact that the viewer is continuously cast out into the vastness of the desert landscape, passively obeying the camera's movement. This brings an unparalleled sense of uncertainty while

watching the movie. Coupled with the slowly disappearing figure in between the two lines with each rotating movement of the camera, viewers ask themselves whether the figure will still be there when the lines come back into view.

Heizer's film, which he later withdrew from the television exhibition, also seems to be concerned with this kind of uncertainty, induced by art, about our position in the world. Heizer's large sand paintings that could only be seen in their entirety from an airplane were linked to the uncertainty of the gaze and an awareness that perception is inherently unstable and shifting, for example, when something is seen from a viewing position on the ground or in the air. This also connects these artworks to a shift from public to private space – after all, it is clear that each of these films operate on a much larger scale than the locale in which the film itself is viewed: they all create visual landscape of tensions in which the local and global, the close-up and overview, and the macroscopic and microscopic are connected.

In contrast to the Land Art sculptures on-site, these films transmit a heightened sense of the experiential remoteness of the time and place (and activity) that is shown on the screen, bringing the outdoors into the indoors, the land into the domestic sphere of one's living room. The absence of tangible objects would have been mitigated by visual engagement experienced by the beholder of *LAND ART*, an engagement experienced through mediation. It is through this combination of absence and presence that Land Art presents new meanings. However, this is not art that envisions a late Romantic escape into the countryside. It is, in fact, a highly critical type of artistic practice, in which the artists are always reflecting on their own use of media, as well as their own artistic ideas in relation to these media. The *LAND ART* television exhibition created particular kinds of experiences that could be traced throughout the eight films (despite their great diversity at first glance): in their individual ways, they all locate an abstract concept within a landscape of competing natural and conceptual tensions.

This extended landscape full of tensions – which is both physical and conceptual, man-made and natural – becomes visible while watching these films on television. The film's focus on visuality and acts of transformation recall Schum's interest in viewing the Earth from a satellite so that one becomes aware of how every human action shapes the environment.[661] The fact that these films were broadcast on television, a medium that connects the private sphere to the public domain, is therefore significant. Indeed, one could say that Land artworks broadcast on television do exactly what an aerial view does to our perception of our planet: the everyday functions of individual objects disappear and instead one gains a sense of encountering a large, interconnected environment. The *LAND ART* television exhibition thus demonstrated the power of television to transform the viewers' perceptions about both their immediate environment, the wider landscape, and perhaps even the Earth itself.

[661] See the quotation by Schum earlier on in this chapter.

Conclusion

Caught Between Two Worlds

> You're always caught between two worlds, one that is and one that isn't.
>
> Robert Smithson, 1970.[662]

The British astronomer Fred Hoyle predicted in 1948 that: 'Once a photograph of the Earth, taken from the outside, is available… a new idea as powerful as any in history will be let loose.'[663] For millennia, human beings could only imagine what the Earth might look like as seen from the viewpoint of the heavens. Some ancient Greek philosophers suspected that the Earth was probably a sphere and Plato even thought the Earth might be a brightly coloured sphere.[664] By the second century AD, the astronomer Ptolemy knew from scientific observations and measurements that the Earth was indeed round. Yet knowing is not the same as seeing. The impact that the sight of Earth in NASA's colour photographs of 1968 had is suggested by the many ecological, cultural and political movements that emerged in the years afterwards that used these images of Earth from space both to instigate positive changes and for commercial (or even ideological) purposes.[665] Hoyle was thus undoubtedly right in predicting that such an image would produce new and powerful ideas about the world and our relationship to its limited resources.[666]

Yet this 'big picture effect' of seeing Earth from space has culminated in two very different directions of travel. One direction focuses on the Earth as Gaia, or Mother Earth, as

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[662] *Robert Smithson: The Collected Writings*, 249.
[663] David Macauley, *Minding Nature: The Philosophers of Ecology* (New York; London: The Guilford Press, 1996), 113.
[664] Poole, *Earthrise: How Man First Saw the Earth*, 54.
[665] Macauley, *Minding Nature: The Philosophers of Ecology*, 112-113.
[666] These images also underlie the so-called era of the Anthropocene, in which it is said that 'the most important force shaping the Earth [is] that of humanity *taken as a whole and as a single unit*'. Bruno Latour, *Facing Gaia: Eight Lectures on the New Climate Regime* ([Polity]: [United Kingdom], 2017), 111. (Emphasis in the original text.)

discussed by James Lovelock in his iconic book *Gaia, A New Look at Life on Earth* (put forward as a hypothesis in the 1960s and published in 1975), in which a holistic view of our planet as a living, single organism is expounded, which has led to more engagement and care towards its maintenance.[667] Yet this God-like look from above can also lead to a second direction: towards what Hannah Arendt has called 'world alienation', in which it is believed that an Archimedean viewpoint has been reached where everything is known and nothing escapes the human intellect.[668] Such a viewpoint can lead to the creation of what Arendt calls a 'human artifice' in which nothing escapes subjectification: 'The modern age, with its growing world-alienation, has led to a situation where man, wherever he goes, encounters only himself.'[669]

As shown in this dissertation, it is this paradox that also lies at the very heart of the strategy that Land artists developed in the late 1960s and early 1970s through their complex sculptures. Aerial views of the landscape as seen in the photographs and films produced by Land artists and others, as well as sculptures that were not only *site-specific*, located within the landscape or in an exhibition space, but which were also *time-specific*, mediated through photography, film, and even television, thus seem to directly reflect on this important theme.[670] It is these two elements that together show the truly critical power of Land Art given that *both* the 'look from outside (or above)' and the 'experience on the ground', both the mediated and the phenomenological viewpoint are incorporated. In order to bring this new perspective on Land Art to the fore, this dissertation has introduced the notion of *complex sculptures,* and set out to map Land Art's hitherto unmapped, mediated domain of

[667] James Lovelock, *Gaia: A New Look at Life on Earth* (2016).
[668] Hannah Arendt, *Between Past and Future: Six Exercises in Political Thought* (New York: Viking Press, 1961), 54 and 89.
[669] Ibid.
[670] Schum's statement discussed in Chapter IV about how human actions shape the Earth, which became much more evident when the Earth was viewed from an aerial perspective, thus seems to anticipate more recent discussions such as environmental activism, climate change and the Anthropocene, as did the works of Land Art in the late 1960s and early 1970s.

photography and film (and even television). By means of this mapping, we were also able to point to the ontology of Land Art, which was shown to always include a certain reflection on both the visual, constellational elements of its artworks, and their relation to the perception of the beholder – again, the look from 'above' and the experience 'on the ground'.

In Chapter I, 'Land Art and the Exhibition Space: An Intentional Paradox', which focused on the exhibition spaces of Land Art, it was shown that instead of a romantic notion of going back to nature, Land Art was much less focused on 'earth and sod' as is commonly assumed, by investigating the sources on which this assumption is based. We also examined two of the first exhibitions of Land Art, *Earth Works* and *Earth Art*, through which the commonly expressed belief that Land Art is fundamentally based on an institutional critique was contested. Instead, it became clear that the Land artists were very much engaged with galleries and museums and that they were more interested in a rethinking of art and the position it holds in the world altogether, and ways to connect private spaces with public. Throughout the first chapter, the dialectical movement between the outside and the inside, the gallery and the landscape, and the subject and the object was shown as lying at the heart of Land Art's relation to the exhibition space – a dialectical movement that was likened to the operative zoom of a photographic camera.

This brought us to the second chapter, 'An Infinite Camera: The Framing of Land Art through Photography', which focused on the use of photography in Land Art. As this is a subject about which not much has been written so far, our first task was to look into the question of why this is the case – especially in the face of the large amount of evidence left by the artists themselves emphasising the importance of photography for and in their work. Through a closer look at four case studies, the photographs taken by Heizer, Dibbets, Holt and Smithson, we then set out to discover the nature of the relation between these photographs and the sculptures, and the resulting ontological questions that issued from that relationship. By means of these

case studies it was shown that the photographs often carried similar questions as the on-site sculptures, and the other way around. Moreover, the four case studies discussed all brought, albeit in their own distinct ways, what one could call a 'big picture effect' – as the NASA photographs from space did – either by transporting the beholder of the artwork from seeing to the sense of being seen, or by putting the viewer on the threshold where landscape and non-landscape, self and other start to intermingle through specific interventions in one's vision. This pointed us into the direction of questions concerning the ontological critique that photography incorporates in its very existence: existential questions about how one relates to the world, what the nature of our reality is, and how our perception of that reality shapes and even enacts our direct environment.

In Chapter III, 'Land Art's Filmic Reality: An Expanded Landscape', this theme was broadened to also include film, where it was suggested that film not only enlarges our understanding of sculptural space, but that film and sculpture can create a complex network of interrelated viewpoints, through which a certain decentring force becomes operative in both works. Subjectivity was here, once again, questioned through these artworks' complex aesthetics. Moreover, it was also suggested that while Land Art changed conceptions about what a sculpture could be, the use of film by Land artists changes our conception of what *kind of sculpture* Land Art can be. Instead of an immersive, bodily experience in the landscape, the use of film as part of the sculptures of Land Art shows the works to be highly mediated, immensely complex, and infinitely extendable into a mediated landscape and several dimensions.

Finally, in the fourth and last chapter 'Time-Specific Art: Land Art and Television', the discussion of the eight films that formed the *LAND ART* television exhibition brought new insights about the use of 'technological images' in Land Art. It was suggested that the use of televised film *as* Land Art allowed the artists to show the tensions that exist between

idea and experience, fiction and reality, while simultaneously, through the televised film, the viewer is guided to a perspective that includes these dualisms. In contrast to the Land Art sculptures on-site, these films transmit a heightened sense of the experiential remoteness of the time and place (and activity) that is shown on the screen, bringing the outdoors into the indoors, the land into the domestic sphere of one's living room. The *LAND ART* television exhibition created particular kinds of experiences that could be traced throughout the eight films (despite their great diversity at first glance): in their individual ways, they all locate an abstract concept within a landscape of competing natural and conceptual tensions.

This paradox underlies the expansion of landscape effected by Land Art's varied explorations of lens-based media, which consider different perspectives and undermine the assumptions of traditional one-point linear perspective. As we have seen, this is true for almost all the complex sculptures of Land Art that we have considered in this dissertation: it is this essentially outward-looking movement which is bend back upon the self, like in a mirror, which has be shown is the defining factor, or the very ontology, of Land Art. Such a decentring goes hand in hand with uncertainty, given that a fragmented view and a constellation of elements can never lead the beholder to believe that they have grasped the totality of the work (Arendt's Archimedean view). It is this which makes Land Art, as Smithson suggested, *an art of uncertainty*.

This uncertainty is crucial, as it increases any artwork's ability to resist ideologies through the fact that the artwork's meaning is never only determined by the artist's (or beholder's) intentions, because of which the so-called 'primacy of the object' can shine forth. Without the primacy of that which is 'not self', humankind will always only encounter itself, as Arendt remarked. It is therefore thanks to the intrinsic uncertainty embedded in the complex sculptures of Land Art that the necessary 'primary humility', in Krauss's words, can become part of the encounter between subject and object. Not in the sense of a sublime

experience that overwhelms reason completely, but in a channelled experience of multiple, constellational elements that places the beholder of the artwork back in a natural relationship with the surrounding world, as one element that is part of a very large whole, which is shaped by every action of each element. In other words, it is through this 'primary humility' (as one element that is part of a larger whole) that one gains an awareness – through lived experience – of the inherent *reciprocity* of our lives.

The sculptures of Land Art have throughout this dissertation been located within different categories of art making, such as sculpture, drawing, text, film, photography, and television. Yet the main reason that these artworks can be called complex sculptures is the fact that they reflect on the way that these different components are necessary for a shift in focus and vision. Land artists thus showed a genuine interest in the expanded field of lens-based and time-based media, but they did not explore these media merely for the sake of creating something different, original or 'new' – rather, their exploration was directly linked to the possibility of gaining new insights about how to immanently shape (or even transform) the power of these media through their practice, and through that, vision itself. It is therefore that the complex sculptures of early Land Art, and the artists' specific use of lens-based and time-based media, are still relevant and important. The increasingly blurred border between reality and fiction induced through various contemporary technologies that were developed at the end of the 20th century often posits questions to artists that are directly related to the aesthetic ideas of these early Land artworks.[671] Other recent developments in Land Art today can also be related to themes discussed in this dissertation.[672]

[671] A good example of this is Ai Wei Wei's and Olafur Eliasson's *Moon*, an interactive digital 3D model of the moon, on which people could leave their mark between November 2013 and September 2017. See their website 'MoonMoonMoonMoon.com': http://www.moonmoonmoonmoon.com

[672] For example, in light of internet art such as a recent project in the Netherlands with a website where one can see all the Dutch Land artworks, from Smithson's *Broken Circle / Spiral Hill* to James Turrell's *Hemels Gewelf (Celestial Vault)*, from Google Earth. See the website of Metropolism: https://www.metropolism.com/en/features/23431_land_art_in_the_netherlands

The discussion of works produced by Land artists in this dissertation can therefore be seen as a foundation for talking about postmodern art. By using media like photography, film, and television, these artists intensively explored the relation between seeing and being seen, self and other, forming the landscape and being formed by the landscape, and, moreover, shaped these relations in new ways. The photographs and films of Land Art, as well as the television exhibition *LAND ART*, can therefore be understood as *learning manuals* for engaging the actual Land artworks *in situ*: they teach us *how* to see these works and, in the process, teach us how to see ourselves in relation to the world itself. Clearly, these artists were seeking ways through Land Art in which *both* presence and absence, 'presentness' and distance, would become components of their aesthetics through their search for a continuous relationship between their artworks on-site and the distancing and displacing qualities of media such as film, photography and television (and even texts, as was the case with Robert Smithson). Such an approach is directly linked to Land Art's ontological and aesthetic ideas (or in Krauss's words, 'the conditions of possibility' of Land Art itself), which relates to a search for a different worldview, pointing to 'the bigger picture' of the relation of self to our planet. Hence, by thinking through the complex sculptures of Land Art and by considering them through the mediated domain of photography, film, and television, this dissertation simultaneously presents a 'bigger picture' of Land Art in general, which leads to the realisation that we are always caught between two worlds: one that is, and one that is not (yet).

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Michael Heizer, *Dragged Mass Displacement,* as part of the exhibition *Michael Heizer: Photographic and Actual Work,* at the Detroit Institute of Arts, 1971. Photograph © Museum of Modern Art, New York City / Michael Heizer.

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Figs. 69 and 70
Michael Heizer, *Actual Size: Munich Rotary,* 1970– reinstalled in the Whitney Museum of Art, 2016. Dimensions variable. © Whitney Museum, New York City / Michael Heizer.

Fig. 71
Michael Heizer in an interview with Willoughby Sharp. From the Museum of Modern Art Archives, *Avalanche Magazine Papers*, folder I.A.17, p. 26. Transcript of interview with hand edited notes by Heizer © Museum of Modern Art, New York City.

Fig. 72
Jan Dibbets, *Construction Two Rolls of Grass*, 1967. Black-and-white photograph, ink, pencil on graph paper, 27,5 x 37 cm. © Kröller-Müller Museum, the Netherlands.

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Jan Dibbets, *Flood Tide (Vloed),* 1969. Ten black/white gelatin silver prints on board (installation shot). Photographer and original dimensions unknown. Photograph © Jan Dibbets / Herbert Collection, Ghent.

Fig. 74
Jan Dibbets, *A Trace in the Wood in the Form of an Angle of 30°—Crossing the Path*, 1969. Executed for the *Earth Art* exhibition at Cornell University that year. Photograph © Jan Dibbets / Herbert F. Johnson Museum of Art, Cornell University.

Fig. 75
Jan Dibbets, *A Trace in the woods in the form of a line of trees painted white,* 1969, Ithaca, NY. Photograph © Jan Dibbets / Herbert F. Johnson Museum of Art, Cornell University.

Fig. 76
Jan Dibbets, *Perspective Correction,* 1968. Black/white photograph by Jan Dibbets. Original dimensions variable. Photograph © Jan Dibbets.

Fig. 77
Jan Dibbets, *Perspective Correction,* 1969. Photographer unknown (possibly Jan Dibbets himself); original dimensions variable. Photograph © Jan Dibbets.

Fig. 78
Jan Dibbets, *Dutch Mountain, Big Sea,* 1971. Colour photographs on aluminium, original dimensions unknown. Photograph © Jan Dibbets.

Fig. 79
Jan Dibbets**,** *Comet Land / Sky / Land 6 ° – 72 °*, 1973. Installation shot, original dimensions: 315 x 318 cm. Photograph © Jan Dibbets.

Fig. 80
Jan Dibbets, *Robin Redbreast's Territory/Sculpture,* 1969. Booklet – original dimensions unknown. © Jan Dibbets.

Fig. 81
Nancy Holt, *Concrete Visions*, 1967. Composite inkjet from original 126 format black and white negatives in 2012, original dimensions unknown. Photographs © Holt-Smithson Foundation.

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Nancy Holt, *Trail Markers*, 1969. 20 inkjet prints on archival rag paper, printed in 2012 from original 126 format transparencies. Photographs © Holt-Smithson Foundation.

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Nancy Holt, Sun Tunnels, 1973-76. Photograph © Holt-Smithson Foundation.

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Nancy Holt, *Missoula Ranch Locators: Vision Encompassed*, 1972. Photograph © Holt-Smithson Foundation.

Fig. 89a
Nancy Holt, poster of *Missoula Ranch Locators*, 1972. Poster © Smithsonian Archives of American Art, Washington DC / Holt-Smithson Foundation.

Fig. 89b
Detail of Nancy Holt, poster of *Missoula Ranch Locators*, 1972. Poster © Smithsonian Archives of American Art, Washington DC / Holt-Smithson Foundation.

Fig. 89c
Detail of Nancy Holt, poster of *Missoula Ranch Locators*, 1972. Poster © Smithsonian Archives of American Art, Washington DC / Holt-Smithson. **Foundation.**

Fig. 90
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Robert Smithson, *Spiral Jetty*, photograph by Smithson. Gelatin-silver print (reprint), original dimensions unknown. Photograph © Holt-Smithson Foundation.

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Robert Smithson, *Spiral Jetty*, first version. Photograph © Holt-Smithson Foundation / Gianfranco Gorgoni.

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Robert Smithson, *Spiral Jetty* (32 minutes, colour), 1970. Film still, with bulldozer releasing stone and rock into the Great Salt Lake. © Electronic Arts Intermix, New York City.

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Robert Smithson, *Spiral Jetty* (32 minutes, colour), 1970. Film stills from the *Spiral Jetty* film: Robert Smithson running towards the end of the jetty, filmed from helicopter overhead. © Electronic Arts Intermix, New York City.

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Robert Smithson, *Spiral Jetty* (32 minutes, colour), 1970. Film still from the film *Spiral Jetty,* with sun reflecting in the water. © Electronic Arts Intermix, New York City.

Fig. 112
Exhibition poster Dwan Gallery New York, showing Smithson's 'storyboard' for his film *Spiral Jetty.* Poster © Smithsonian Institution, Archives of American Art.

Fig. 113
Robert Smithson, *Spiral Jetty* (32 minutes, colour), 1970. Film still from *Spiral Jetty,* with sun and sun flares in the opening shots of the film. © Electronic Arts Intermix, New York City.

Fig. 114
Robert Smithson, *Spiral Jetty* (32 minutes, colour), 1970. Film still of the film *Spiral Jetty,* with view from the front of the car on the desert road. © EAI, New York City.

Fig. 115
Robert Smithson, *Spiral Jetty* (32 minutes, colour), 1970. Film still of the film *Spiral Jetty,* with paper snips whirling down to the earth. © Electronic Arts Intermix, NYC.

Fig. 116
Robert Smithson, *Spiral Jetty* (32 minutes, colour), 1970. Film still of the film *Spiral Jetty,* with view from the back of the car on the desert road. © Electronic Arts Intermix, New York City.

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Robert Smithson, *Spiral Jetty* (32 minutes, colour), 1970. Film still of the film *Spiral Jetty,* with the abstracted bulldozer moving rocks. © Electronic Arts Intermix, New York City.

Fig. 118
Robert Smithson, *Spiral Jetty* (32 minutes, colour), 1970. Film still of the film *Spiral Jetty,* with light effect as seen from above. © Electronic Arts Intermix, New York City.

Fig. 119
Robert Smithson, *Spiral Jetty* (32 minutes, colour), 1970. Film still of the film *Spiral Jetty,* with artistic effect through vertical horizon. © Electronic Arts Intermix, NYC.

Fig. 120
Robert Smithson, *Spiral Jetty* (32 minutes, colour), 1970. Film stills of the film *Spiral Jetty,* with dialectics of bulldozer and water. © Electronic Arts Intermix, NYC.

Fig. 121
Detail (with dialectic of sound noted) of exhibition poster Dwan Gallery New York, showing Smithson's 'storyboard' for his film *Spiral Jetty.* Poster © Smithsonian Institution, Archives of American Art.

Figs. 122-123
Robert Smithson, *Spiral Jetty* (32 minutes, colour), 1970. Film stills from the film *Spiral Jetty,* with shots of the dinosaurs (fig. 122) and the lizard (fig. 123). © Electronic Arts Intermix, New York City.

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Robert Smithson, *Spiral Jetty* (32 minutes, colour), 1970. Film stills from *Spiral Jetty,* with details of salt crystals on rocks of the jetty. © Electronic Arts Intermix, NYC.

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Robert Smithson, *Spiral Jetty* (32 minutes, colour), 1970. Film stills from *Spiral Jetty*, last scene/two shots with editing studio, photograph and film reels (depicting zoom-in movement). © Electronic Arts Intermix, New York City.

Fig. 130
Detail exhibition poster Dwan Gallery New York, showing Smithson's 'storyboard' for his film *Spiral Jetty.* Poster © Smithsonian Institution, Archives of American Art.

Fig. 131
Walter De Maria, *Bed of Spikes*, 1969. Installation view, unidentified photographer. Dwan Gallery (Los Angeles, California and New York, New York) records, 1959-circa 1982, bulk 1959-1971. © Archives of American Art, Smithsonian Institution.

Fig. 132
Unconditional release form for gallery entrance Dwan Gallery during the *Bed of Spikes* exhibition by Walter De Maria, 1969 (with close up detail). Dwan Gallery (Los Angeles, California and New York, New York) records, 1959-circa 1982, bulk 1959-1971. © Archives of American Art, Smithsonian Institution.

Fig. 133
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Fig. 134
Exhibition colour photograph, Walter De Maria's *Bed of Spikes*, 1969. (Photographer unknown.) © Archives of American Art, Smithsonian Institution.

Fig. 135
Exhibition announcement, *Bed of Spikes*, Walter De Maria in the Dwan Gallery. © Archives of American Art, Smithsonian Institution.

Figs. 136 and 137
Opening shot (title page) and first image of the film *Bed of Spikes* by Walter De Maria, 1968-69. Colour, sound, 8.33 minutes. © Smithsonian National Gallery of Art, Washington DC.

Figs. 138 and 139
Emphasis on the pointy end of the spikes – stills of the film *Bed of Spikes* by Walter De Maria, 1968-69. Colour, sound, 8.33 minutes. © Smithsonian National Gallery of Art, Washington DC.

Figs. 140 and 141
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Figs. 142 and 143
Other beds of spikes – multiple spikes and their contrast, steel, chiaroscuro effect. Stills of the film *Bed of Spikes* by Walter De Maria, 1968-69. Colour, sound, 8.33 minutes. © Smithsonian National Gallery of Art, Washington DC.

Figs. 144 and 145
A multitude of spikes – chiaroscuro effect. Stills of the film *Bed of Spikes* by Walter De Maria, 1968-69. Colour, sound, 8.33 minutes. © Smithsonian National Gallery of Art, Washington DC.

Figs. 146 and 147
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Camera moves – chiaroscuro effect. Stills of the film *Bed of Spikes* by Walter De Maria, 1968-69. Colour, sound, 8.33 minutes. © Smithsonian National Gallery of Art, Washington DC.

Figs. 152 and 153
Camera moves – chiaroscuro effect. Stills of the film *Bed of Spikes* by Walter De Maria, 1968-69. Colour, sound, 8.33 minutes. © Smithsonian National Gallery of Art, Washington DC.

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More camera moves – an army of spikes. Stills of the film *Bed of Spikes* by Walter De Maria, 1968-69. Colour, sound, 8.33 minutes. © Smithsonian National Gallery of Art, Washington DC.

Figs. 156 and 157
A camera that catches the light – the tips of the spikes. Stills of the film *Bed of Spikes* by Walter De Maria, 1968-69. Colour, sound, 8.33 minutes. © Smithsonian National Gallery of Art, Washington DC.

Figs. 158 and 159
A camera that dances – the tips of the spikes. Stills of the film *Bed of Spikes* by Walter De Maria, 1968-69. Colour, sound, 8.33 minutes. © Smithsonian National Gallery of Art, Washington DC.

Figs. 160 and 161
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Figs. 162 and 163
First part of the third part of the film. Stills of the film *Bed of Spikes* by Walter De Maria, 1968-69. Colour, sound, 8.33 minutes. © Smithsonian National Gallery of Art, Washington DC.

Figs. 164 and 165
First part of the third part of the film. Stills of the film *Bed of Spikes* by Walter De Maria, 1968-69. Colour, sound, 8.33 minutes. © Smithsonian National Gallery of Art, Washington DC.

Figs. 166 and 167
First part of the third part of the film. Stills of the film *Bed of Spikes* by Walter De Maria, 1968-69. Colour, sound, 8.33 minutes. © Smithsonian National Gallery of Art, Washington DC.

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Figs. 169 and 170
Mary Miss, *Battery Park Landfill*, 1973. © Mary Miss.

Figs. 171-173
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Mary Kelly, *An Earthwork Performed*, 1970. Film still and an installation view of the whole piece in the Henry Moore Institute, Leeds, Spring 2016. © Mary Kelly / Henry Moore Institute, Leeds.

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Peter Hutchinson, *A Day in the Life of Mt. Sopris*, 1972. 16mm film transferred to DVD; colour, silent, 19:52 minutes. © Peter Hutchinson.

Fig. 180
Bruce Nauman, *Live-Taped Video Corridor*, 1970. Corridors / sculpture plus television sets. © Bruce Nauman.

Fig. 181
Edward Kienholz, *The Big Eye (Homage to H.S.),* 1961, installation with television and several objects. © Edward Kienholz.

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Nam June Paik, *Exposition of Music – Electronic Television*, 1963. Galerie Parnass in Wuppertal, Germany. © Medien Kunst Netz / Nam June Paik.

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Film stills of Richard Long's film 'Walking a Straight Line…', as part of the television exhibition *Land Art* in 1969, by Gerry Schum. The first still shows the title of the film, while the second shows the name of the artist and the location of the film – while the landscape keeps circling around. © Stedelijk Museum Amsterdam / Gerry Schum.

Figs. 185 and 186
Film stills of Richard Long's film 'Walking a Straight Line…', as part of the television exhibition *Land Art* in 1969, by Gerry Schum. © Stedelijk Museum Amsterdam / Gerry Schum.

Fig. 187
Film still of Richard Long's film 'Walking a Straight Line…', as part of the television exhibition *Land Art* in 1969, by Gerry Schum. The still shows the figure at the beginning of the 'walk'. © Stedelijk Museum Amsterdam / Gerry Schum.

Figs. 188 and 189
Film stills of Richard Long's film 'Walking a Straight Line…', as part of the television exhibition *Land Art* in 1969, by Gerry Schum. The still shows the zoom-in motion of the camera shots during the walk, starting as above and ending as below. © Stedelijk Museum Amsterdam / Gerry Schum.

Fig. 190
Film still of Richard Long's film 'Walking a Straight Line…', as part of the television exhibition *Land Art* in 1969, by Gerry Schum. The river view, downstream, at the end of the line. © Stedelijk Museum Amsterdam / Gerry Schum.

Fig. 191
Film still of Richard Long's film 'Walking a Straight Line…', as part of the television exhibition *Land Art* in 1969, by Gerry Schum. The word 'back' after the end of the line. © Stedelijk Museum Amsterdam / Gerry Schum.

Fig. 192
Film still of Richard Long's film 'Walking a Straight Line…', as part of the television exhibition *Land Art* in 1969, by Gerry Schum. The river, as seen upstream, at the beginning of the way back of the walk. © Stedelijk Museum Amsterdam / Gerry Schum.

Fig. 193
Drawn directions, as a 'storyboard', by Richard Long for his film 'Walking a Straight Line…', which was part of the television exhibition *Land Art* in 1969, by Gerry Schum. © Gerry Schum.

Figs. 194 and 195
Film stills of Barry Flanagan's film 'A Hole in the Sea', as part of the television exhibition *Land Art* in 1969, by Gerry Schum. The first shot of the film with cylinder, and then with the name of the artist. © Stedelijk Museum Amsterdam / Gerry Schum.

Figs. 196, 197 and 198
Film stills of Barry Flanagan's film 'A Hole in the Sea', as part of the television exhibition *Land Art* in 1969, by Gerry Schum. The first shots of the film with the title, the place of filming and then a zoomed in shot of the cylinder again. © Stedelijk Museum Amsterdam / Gerry Schum.

Figs. 199 and 200
Film stills of Barry Flanagan's film 'A Hole in the Sea', as part of the television exhibition Land Art in 1969, by Gerry Schum. The first time frame and first shot of the 'hole in the sea'. © Stedelijk Museum Amsterdam / Gerry Schum.

Figs. 201 and 202
Film stills of Barry Flanagan's film 'A Hole in the Sea', as part of the television exhibition *Land Art* in 1969, by Gerry Schum. The second time frame and second shot of the 'hole in the sea'. © Stedelijk Museum Amsterdam / Gerry Schum.

Figs. 203 and 204
Film stills of Barry Flanagan's film 'A Hole in the Sea', as part of the television exhibition *Land Art* in 1969, by Gerry Schum. The seventh time frame and seventh shot of the 'hole in the sea'. © Stedelijk Museum Amsterdam / Gerry Schum.

Figs. 205 and 206
Film stills of Barry Flanagan's film 'A Hole in the Sea', as part of the television exhibition *Land Art* in 1969, by Gerry Schum. The eleventh time frame and eleventh shot of the 'hole in the sea'. © Stedelijk Museum Amsterdam / Gerry Schum.

Figs. 207, 208 and 209
Film stills of Barry Flanagan's film 'A Hole in the Sea', as part of the television exhibition *Land Art* in 1969, by Gerry Schum. The thirteenth (and last) time frame and last shots of the film. © Stedelijk Museum Amsterdam / Gerry Schum.

Figs. 210 and 211
Film stills of Barry Flanagan's film 'A Hole in the Sea', as part of the television exhibition *Land Art* in 1969, by Gerry Schum. The final shots of the film. © Stedelijk Museum Amsterdam / Gerry Schum.

Fig. 212
Barry Flanagan, *A Hole in the Sea*, triptych, film stills, 1967-1970. © Barry Flanagan.

Fig. 213
Photograph of Dennis Oppenheim during the making of his film *Timetrack*, as part of the television exhibition *Land Art* in 1969, by Gerry Schum. Showing Oppenheim in a snow mobile. © Gerry Schum.

Figs. 214, 215 and 216
Film stills of Dennis Oppenheim's film 'Timetrack', as part of the television exhibition *Land Art* in 1969, by Gerry Schum. The first shots of the film with the name of the artist, the title and the location. © Stedelijk Museum Amsterdam / Gerry Schum.

Figs. 217 and 218
Film stills of Dennis Oppenheim's film 'Timetrack', as part of the television exhibition *Land Art* in 1969, by Gerry Schum. The shot with the countries' names and first landscape shot. © Stedelijk Museum Amsterdam / Gerry Schum.

Figs. 219 and 220
Film stills of Dennis Oppenheim's film 'Timetrack', as part of the television exhibition *Land Art* in 1969, by Gerry Schum. Two shots with the sun coming out of the clouds, and reflection on the water. © Stedelijk Museum Amsterdam / Gerry Schum.

Figs. 221 and 222
Film stills of Dennis Oppenheim's film 'Timetrack', as part of the television exhibition *Land Art* in 1969, by Gerry Schum. Two shots with the sun flickers in the camera's lens, slowly moving towards the left of the screen, and with the snow mobile clearly visible (where the 'track' ends). © Stedelijk Museum Amsterdam / Gerry Schum.

Figs. 223 and 224
Film stills of Dennis Oppenheim's film 'Timetrack', as part of the television exhibition *Land Art* in 1969, by Gerry Schum. Shot with part of the airplane visible on the left side and the last shot of the film showing the landscape in front. © Stedelijk Museum Amsterdam / Gerry Schum.

Fig. 225
Photograph of Dennis Oppenheim's artwork *Direct Seeding/Cancelled Crop*, 1969. Photographer unknown. © Dennis Oppenheim.

Fig. 226
Film stills of Dennis Oppenheim's *Leafed Hand* (one of his 'Hand' pieces), 1970. © Dennis Oppenheim.

Figs. 227, 228 and 229
Film stills of Robert Smithson's film 'Fossil Quarry Mirror with Four Mirror Displacements', as part of the television exhibition *Land Art* in 1969, by Gerry Schum. First shots with name, title and location. © Stedelijk Museum Amsterdam / Gerry Schum.

Figs. 230, 231 and 232
Film stills of Robert Smithson's film 'Fossil Quarry Mirror with Four Mirror Displacements', as part of the television exhibition *Land Art* in 1969, by Gerry Schum. Shots with the first word 'North' and a triangle, the overview shot and the zoomed-in shot. © Stedelijk Museum Amsterdam / Gerry Schum.

Figs. 233, 234 and 235
Film stills of Robert Smithson's film 'Fossil Quarry Mirror with Four Mirror Displacements', as part of the television exhibition *Land Art* in 1969, by Gerry Schum. Shots with the first

word ‘East’ and a triangle, the overview shot and the zoomed-in shot. © Stedelijk Museum Amsterdam / Gerry Schum.

Figs. 236, 237 and 238
Film stills of Robert Smithson’s film ‘Fossil Quarry Mirror with Four Mirror Displacements’, as part of the television exhibition *Land Art* in 1969, by Gerry Schum. Shots with the first word ‘South’ and a triangle, the overview shot and the zoomed-in shot. © Stedelijk Museum Amsterdam / Gerry Schum.

Figs. 239, 240 and 241
Film stills of Robert Smithson’s film ‘Fossil Quarry Mirror with Four Mirror Displacements’, as part of the television exhibition *Land Art* in 1969, by Gerry Schum. Shots with the first word ‘West’ and a triangle, the overview shot and the zoomed-in shot. © Stedelijk Museum Amsterdam / Gerry Schum.

Figs. 242, 243 and 244
Film stills of Robert Smithson’s film ‘Fossil Quarry Mirror with Four Mirror Displacements’, as part of the television exhibition *Land Art* in 1969, by Gerry Schum. Shots with the second word ‘North’ (now without a triangle sign above it), the ground shot and the final mirror shot. © Stedelijk Museum Amsterdam / Gerry Schum.

Figs. 245, 246 and 247
Film stills of Robert Smithson’s film ‘Fossil Quarry Mirror with Four Mirror Displacements’, as part of the television exhibition *Land Art* in 1969, by Gerry Schum. Shots with the second word ‘East’ (now without a triangle sign above it), the ground shot and the final mirror shot. © Stedelijk Museum Amsterdam / Gerry Schum.

Figs. 248, 249 and 250
Film stills of Robert Smithson’s film ‘Fossil Quarry Mirror with Four Mirror Displacements’, as part of the television exhibition *Land Art* in 1969, by Gerry Schum. Shots with the second word ‘South’ (now without a triangle sign above it), the ground shot and the final mirror shot. © Stedelijk Museum Amsterdam / Gerry Schum.

Figs. 251, 252 and 253
Film stills of Robert Smithson’s film ‘Fossil Quarry Mirror with Four Mirror Displacements’, as part of the television exhibition *Land Art* in 1969, by Gerry Schum. Final shots of the film, with the second word ‘West’ (now without a triangle sign above it), the ground shot and the final mirror shot. © Stedelijk Museum Amsterdam / Gerry Schum.

Figs. 254, 255 and 256
Film stills of Marinus Boezem’s film ‘Sand Fountain’, as part of the television exhibition *Land Art* in 1969, by Gerry Schum. First shots of the film, with name, title and location. © Stedelijk Museum Amsterdam / Gerry Schum.

Figs. 257, 258 and 259
Film stills of Marinus Boezem’s film ‘Sand Fountain’, as part of the television exhibition *Land Art* in 1969, by Gerry Schum. First shots of the film, first without the sand fountain and then the beginning of the sand fountain, with the wind slowly increasing in force. © Stedelijk Museum Amsterdam / Gerry Schum.

Fig. 260
'Beaufortskala und Windgeschwindigkeit' (Scale of Beaufort and Wind Speeds). Register used by Boezem for his film 'Sand Fountain', as published in the accompanying exhibition catalogue of the television exhibition *Land Art.* (For English translation, see fig. 261.) © Stedelijk Museum Amsterdam / Gerry Schum.

Fig. 261
Scale of Beaufort and wind speeds. Register used by Boezem for his film „Sand Fountain', as published in the accompanying exhibition catalogue of the television exhibition *Land Art.* © Stedelijk Museum Amsterdam / Gerry Schum.

Figs. 262, 263 and 264
Film stills of Marinus Boezem's film 'Sand Fountain', as part of the television exhibition *Land Art* in 1969, by Gerry Schum. First shots of the film, with the sand fountain and the wind slowly increasing in force. © Stedelijk Museum Amsterdam / Gerry Schum.

Figs. 265, 266 and 267
Film stills of Marinus Boezem's film 'Sand Fountain', as part of the television exhibition *Land Art* in 1969, by Gerry Schum. First shots of the film, with the sand fountain and the wind slowly increasing in force. © Stedelijk Museum Amsterdam / Gerry Schum.

Fig. 268
Marinus Boezem, *Zandfontein* (*Sand Fountain*), drawing, as reprinted in the exhibition catalogue *LAND ART* by Gerry Schum, which accompanied the actual television exhibition. © Marinus Boezem / Gerry Schum.

Fig. 269
Marinus Boezem, *Skywriting*, 1969. Signing the sky above the port of Amsterdam with an aeroplane. Photographer unknown. © Marinus Boezem.

Fig. 270
Marinus Boezem, *Green Cathedral*, 1978-1987 (ongoing). 178 trees planted by Boezem himself in the shape of a cathedral's foundations, close to Almere, the Netherlands. Photographer unknown. © Marinus Boezem.

Figs. 271, 272 and 273
Film stills of Jan Dibbets' film '12 Hours Tide Object with Correction of Perspective', as part of the television exhibition *Land Art* in 1969, by Gerry Schum. First shots of the film, with name, title and location. © Stedelijk Museum Amsterdam / Gerry Schum.

Figs. 274 and 275
Film stills of Jan Dibbets' film '12 Hours Tide Object with Correction of Perspective', as part of the television exhibition *Land Art* in 1969, by Gerry Schum. First shots of the film, with a shot of the sea and the dunes. © Stedelijk Museum Amsterdam / Gerry Schum.

Figs. 276, 277 and 278
Film stills of Jan Dibbets' film '12 Hours Tide Object with Correction of Perspective', as part of the television exhibition *Land Art* in 1969, by Gerry Schum. First shots of the tractor (and its shadow) and the trace it leaves behind. © Stedelijk Museum Amsterdam/ Gerry Schum.

Figs. 279, 280 and 281
Film stills of Jan Dibbets' film '12 Hours Tide Object with Correction of Perspective', as part of the television exhibition *Land Art* in 1969, by Gerry Schum. Shots of the tractor (and its shadow) while making the traces. © Stedelijk Museum Amsterdam / Gerry Schum.

Figs. 282, 283 and 284
Film stills of Jan Dibbets' film '12 Hours Tide Object with Correction of Perspective', as part of the television exhibition *Land Art* in 1969, by Gerry Schum. Shots of the tractor while making the traces. © Stedelijk Museum Amsterdam / Gerry Schum.

Figs. 285, 286 and 287
Film stills of Jan Dibbets' film '12 Hours Tide Object with Correction of Perspective', as part of the television exhibition *Land Art* in 1969, by Gerry Schum. Shots of the tractor while making the traces and first shot of the sea erasing the traces in the sand. © Stedelijk Museum Amsterdam / Gerry Schum.

Figs. 288, 289 and 290 Film stills of Jan Dibbets' film '12 Hours Tide Object with Correction of Perspective', as part of the television exhibition *Land Art* in 1969, by Gerry Schum. Shots of the tide coming in: the sea erasing the traces in the sand made by the tractor. © Stedelijk Museum Amsterdam / Gerry Schum.

Figs. 291 and 292
Film stills of Jan Dibbets' film '12 Hours Tide Object with Correction of Perspective', as part of the television exhibition *Land Art* in 1969, by Gerry Schum. Final shots of the sea with some flying and fishing seagulls and then a similar shot to the opening shot, with an overview of the beach and sea. © Stedelijk Museum Amsterdam / Gerry Schum.

Figs. 293, 294 and 295
Film stills of Walter De Maria's film 'Two Lines Three Circles in the Desert', as part of the television exhibition *Land Art* in 1969, by Gerry Schum. First shots with name, title and location. © Stedelijk Museum Amsterdam / Gerry Schum.

Figs. 296, 297 and 298
Film stills of Walter De Maria's film 'Two Lines Three Circles in the Desert', as part of the television exhibition *Land Art* in 1969, by Gerry Schum. First shots with overexposed image of De Maria standing in between the two lines, and then starting to walk towards the horizon. © Stedelijk Museum Amsterdam / Gerry Schum.

Figs. 299, 300 and 301
Film stills of Walter De Maria's film 'Two Lines Three Circles in the Desert', as part of the television exhibition *Land Art* in 1969, by Gerry Schum. Shots with De Maria standing walking towards the horizon, and then the camera circling slowly to the right, towards a view of a mountainous landscape. © Stedelijk Museum Amsterdam / Gerry Schum.

Figs. 302, 303 and 304
Film stills of Walter De Maria's film 'Two Lines Three Circles in the Desert', as part of the television exhibition *Land Art* in 1969, by Gerry Schum. Shots of the landscape and then the first return to the white lines and De Maria as a black speck towards the horizon (after the first 'circle'). © Stedelijk Museum Amsterdam / Gerry Schum.

Figs. 305, 306 and 307
Film stills of Walter De Maria's film 'Two Lines Three Circles in the Desert', as part of the television exhibition *Land Art* in 1969, by Gerry Schum. Last shots: start of the third and last 'circle', with still a black speck on the horizon, and return to the white lines after the third circle, in which De Maria has now completely disappeared. © Stedelijk Museum Amsterdam / Gerry Schum.

Fig. 308
Exhibition catalogue photograph with cover of text of Walter De Maria's film 'Two Lines Three Circles in the Desert', as part of the television exhibition *Land Art* in 1969, by Gerry Schum. © Walter De Maria / Gerry Schum.

Fig. 309
Exhibition catalogue photograph of Michael Heizer during the making of his film *Coyote*, as part of the television exhibition *Land Art* in 1969, by Gerry Schum. The drawn figures in the desert can be seen in the background on the sand. © Michael Heizer / Gerry Schum.

Figs. 310 and 311
Exhibition catalogue 'work photographs' (*'Arbeitsfotos'*) of Michael Heizer during the making of his film *Coyote*, as part of the television exhibition *Land Art* in 1969, by Gerry Schum. © Michael Heizer / Gerry Schum.

Figs. 312-313
Film stills of Michael Heizer's film *Coyote*, as part of the television exhibition *Land Art* in 1969, by Gerry Schum. The film was withdrawn from the exhibition after the first screening on television and is now no longer extant. © Michael Heizer / Gerry Schum.

Fig. 314
Film still of Michael Heizer's film *Coyote*, as part of the television exhibition *Land Art* in 1969, by Gerry Schum. The film was withdrawn from the exhibition after the first screening on television and is now no longer extant. © Michael Heizer / Gerry Schum.

Fig. 315
Article by Robert F. Heizer, Michael Heizer's father, about boulder outlines. Accompanied the exhibition catalogue materials for Heizer's film *Coyote*, as part of the television exhibition *Land Art* in 1969, by Gerry Schum. © Robert F. Heizer / Schum.

Figs. 316 and 317
Photographs of Gerry Schum's vernissage (official opening) of the *Fernsehgalerie* (television gallery) of the exhibition *LAND ART*, Studio C of the SFB, 28-3-1969. © Gerry Schum/Ursula Wevers.

Fig. 318
Garry Winogrand, *Democratic National Convention*, 1960. Gelatin silver print, black/white. Dimensions: 46.8 x 31.4 cm. © Museum of Modern Art, New York City.

Illustrations

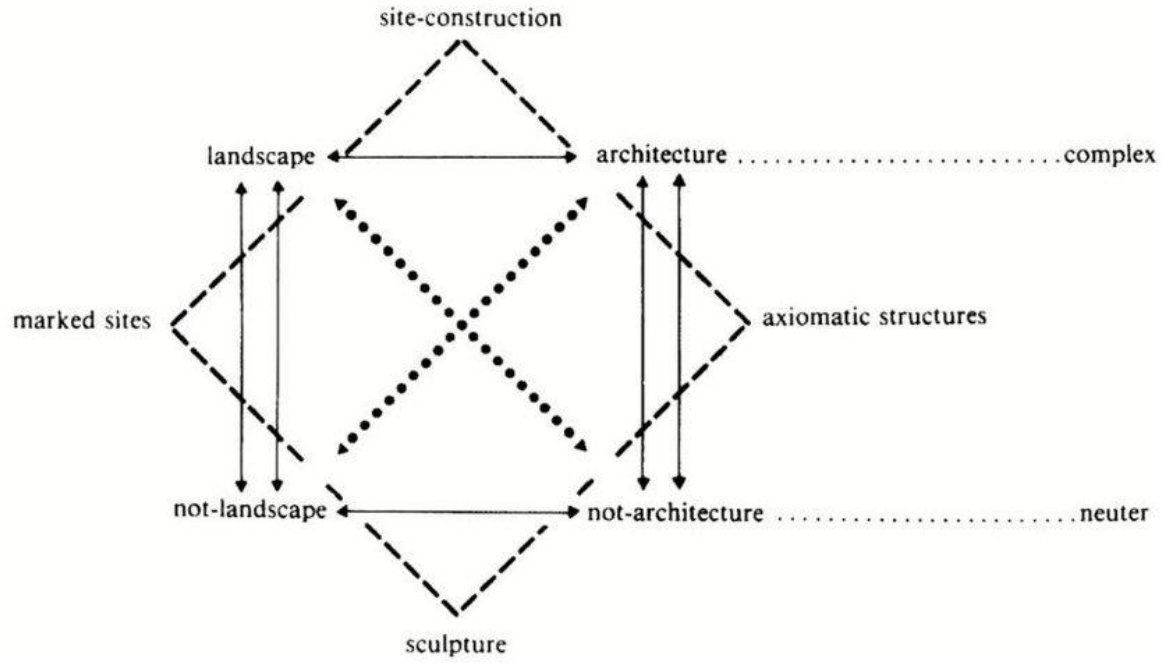


Fig. 1

Rosalind Krauss's Greimas square as published in her essay 'Sculpture in the Expanded Field' of 1979. *October*, Vol. 8 (Spring, 1979), pp. 30-44.

© Rosalind Krauss and *October*.



Fig. 2

‘Earthrise’: The Earth rises into view over the lunar horizon for the astronauts aboard Apollo 8 in 1968. First colour photograph of Earth from space, image taken by Bill Anders on Christmas Eve 1968.

© Photograph: Corbis/Getty and Bill Anders.





Figs. 3 and 4

Michael Heizer, *Double Negative,* 1968 (near Overton, Nevada).

© MOCA & Michael Heizer.



Fig. 5

Gianfranco Gorgoni, *Michael Heizer standing on Double Negative, North Las Vegas, Nevada*, 1970. Gelatin silver print, 25.6 × 37.1 cm (10 1/16 × 14 5/8 inches).

© Photograph Gianfranco Gorgoni & Michael Heizer.

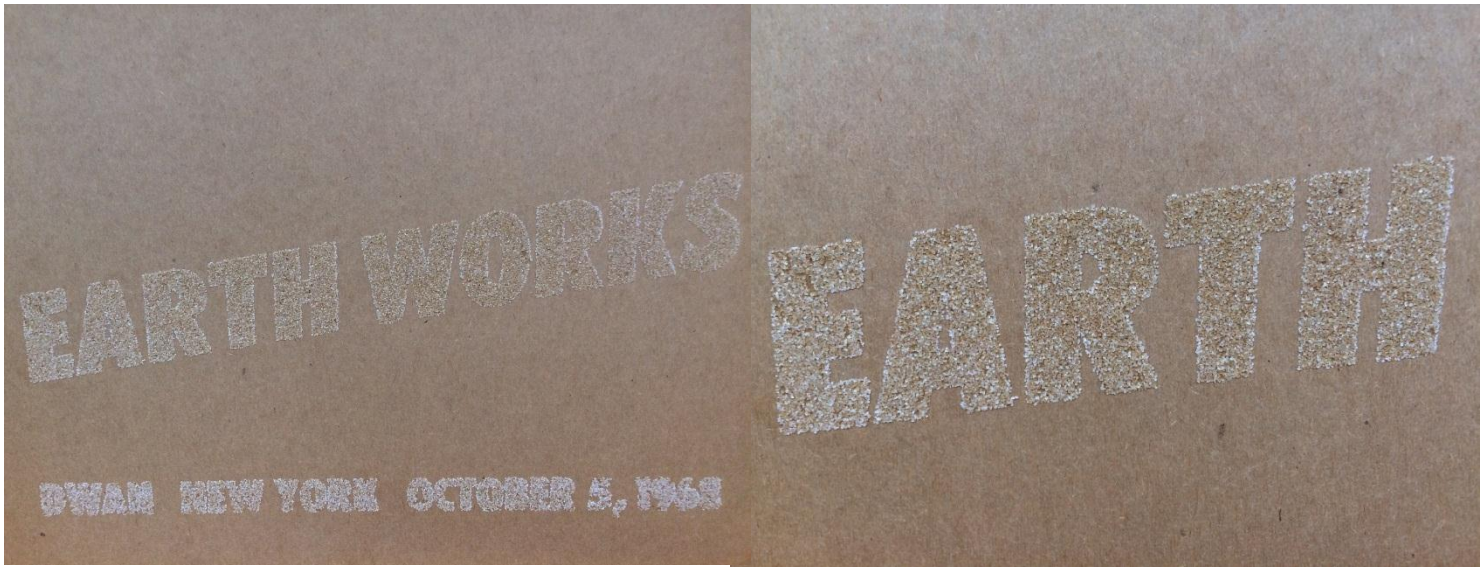


Fig. 6-8

Invitation Card for the exhibition *Earth Works*, Dwan Gallery, October 1968.

A sheet of heavy-stock cardboard flocked with sand, dimensions 22.8 x 31.1 cm.

Figures 7 and 8 are details of the sand pasted onto the paper.

© *Avalanche Magazine Papers*, Museum of Modern Art Archives, New York City.





Fig. 9

Announcement *Earth Works* exhibition in *Artforum*, October 1968.

Photograph from the exhibition poster in the *Avalanche Magazine Papers*.

© *Avalanche Magazine Papers*, Museum of Modern Art Archives, New York City & Virginia Dwan.

Fig. 10

Richard Long, *A Line Made by Walking,* 1967.

Photographer: Richard Long. Print original black/white (original dimensions unknown).

Photograph © Richard Long.



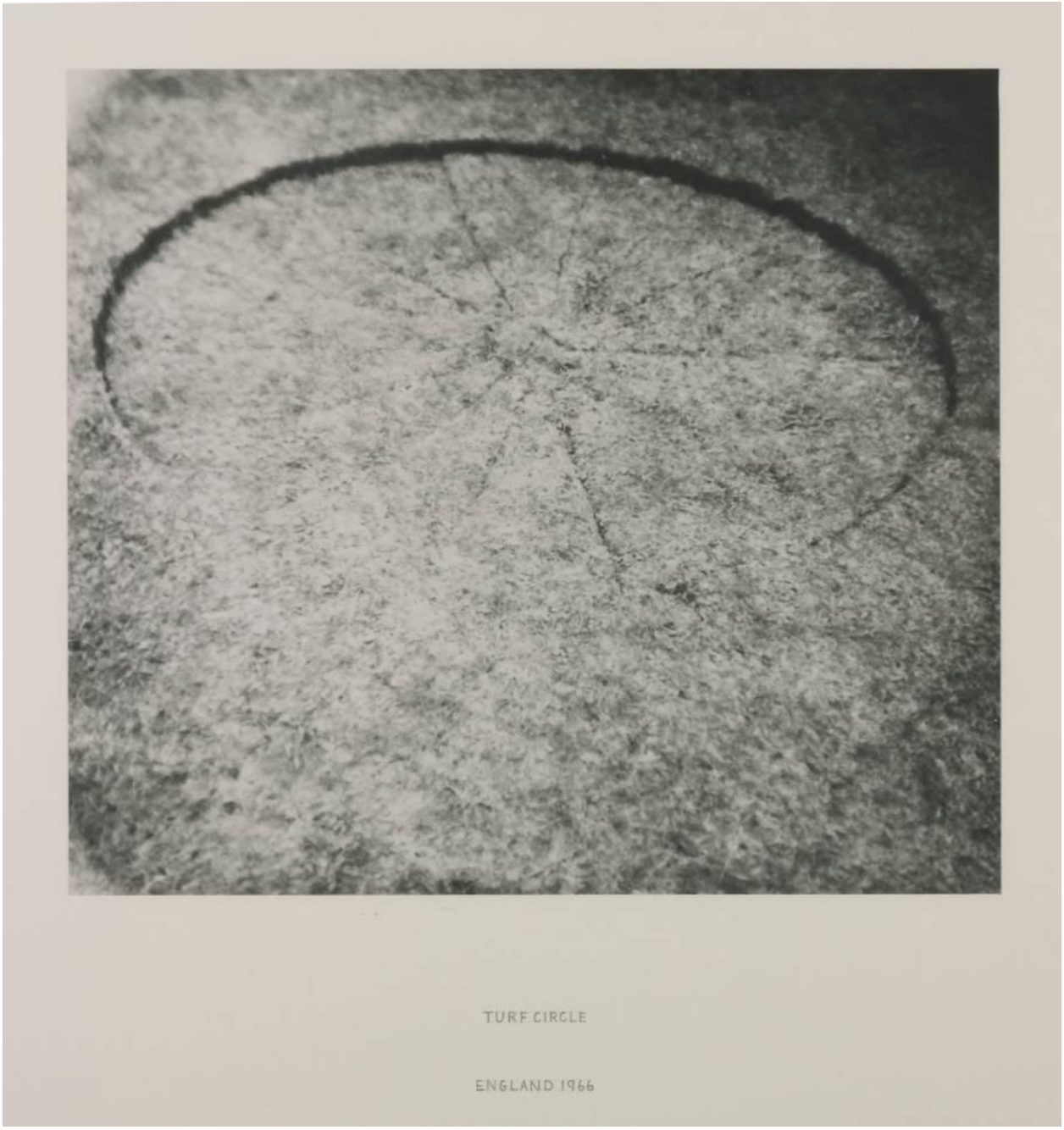


Fig. 11

Richard Long, *Turf Circle,* 1966.

Photograph, gelatin silver print on paper; dimensions: 270 x 305 mm.

Photograph © Tate / Richard Long.

Fig. 12

Robert Smithson, *Tar Pool and Gravel Pit*, 1966. Model, dimensions unknown.

Photograph © Robert Smithson.

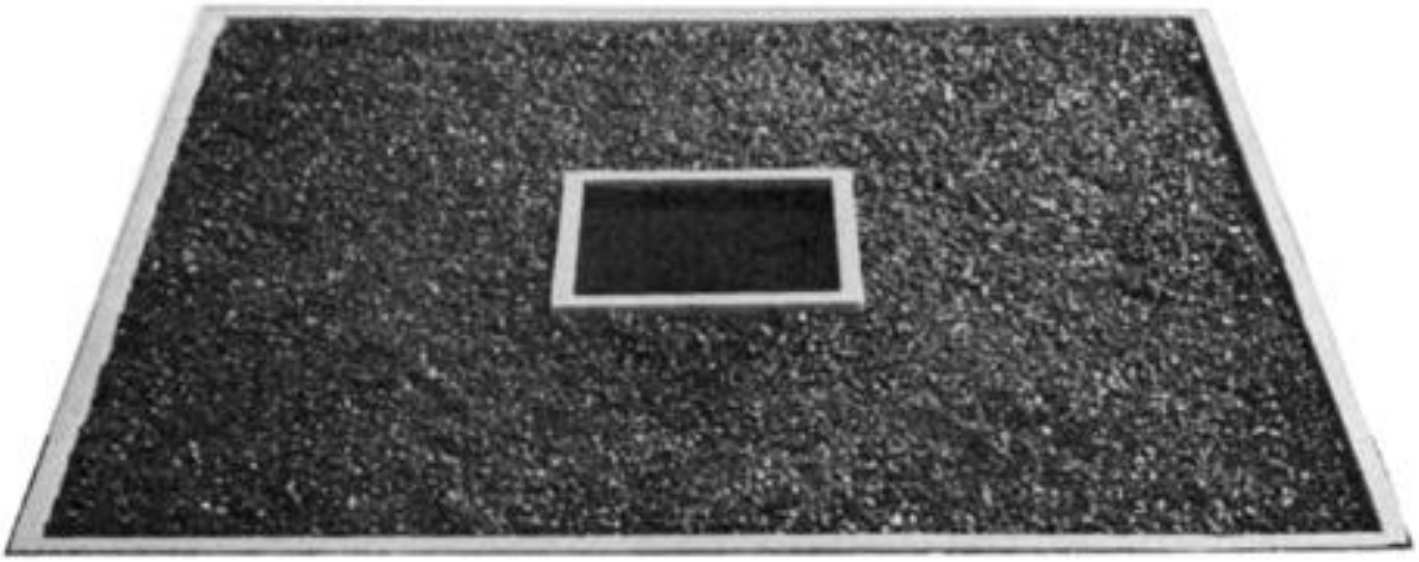


Fig. 13

Walter De Maria, *Earth Room* in Munich, 1968.

Photographer and original dimensions unknown.

Photograph © Estate of Walter De Maria/ Archives of American Art, Smithsonian Institution.



Fig. 14

Jan Dibbets, *Grass Roll,* 1968.

Exhibition photograph Konrad Fischer Gallery, Düsseldorf. Dimensions unknown.

Photograph © Kröller-Müller Museum, the Netherlands, and Jan Dibbets.

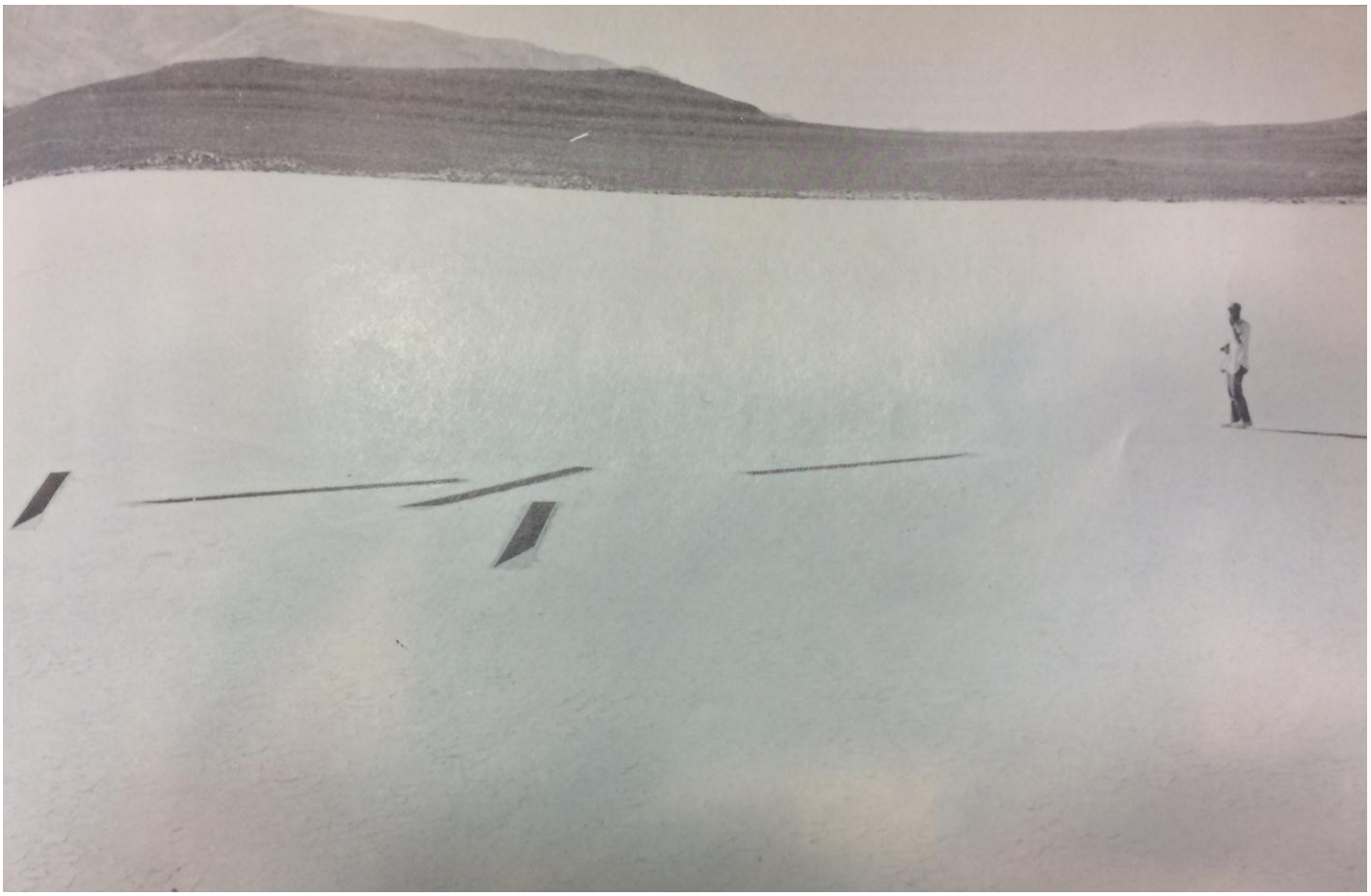


Fig. 15

Michael Heizer, one of the nine ‘Nevada Depressions’ called: *Dissipate (Wood)*, 1968.

Commissioned by Robert Scull. Dimensions variable.

Photograph © Michael Heizer / Robert Scull.





Figs. 16 and 17

Photographs of the *Earth Works* exhibition installation of Robert Morris (with Robert Smithson's work in the background) inside of the Dwan Gallery in New York City, October 1968. Photographer and dimensions unknown.

Photographs © Robert Smithson/Virginia Dwan/ Archives of American Art, Smithsonian Institution

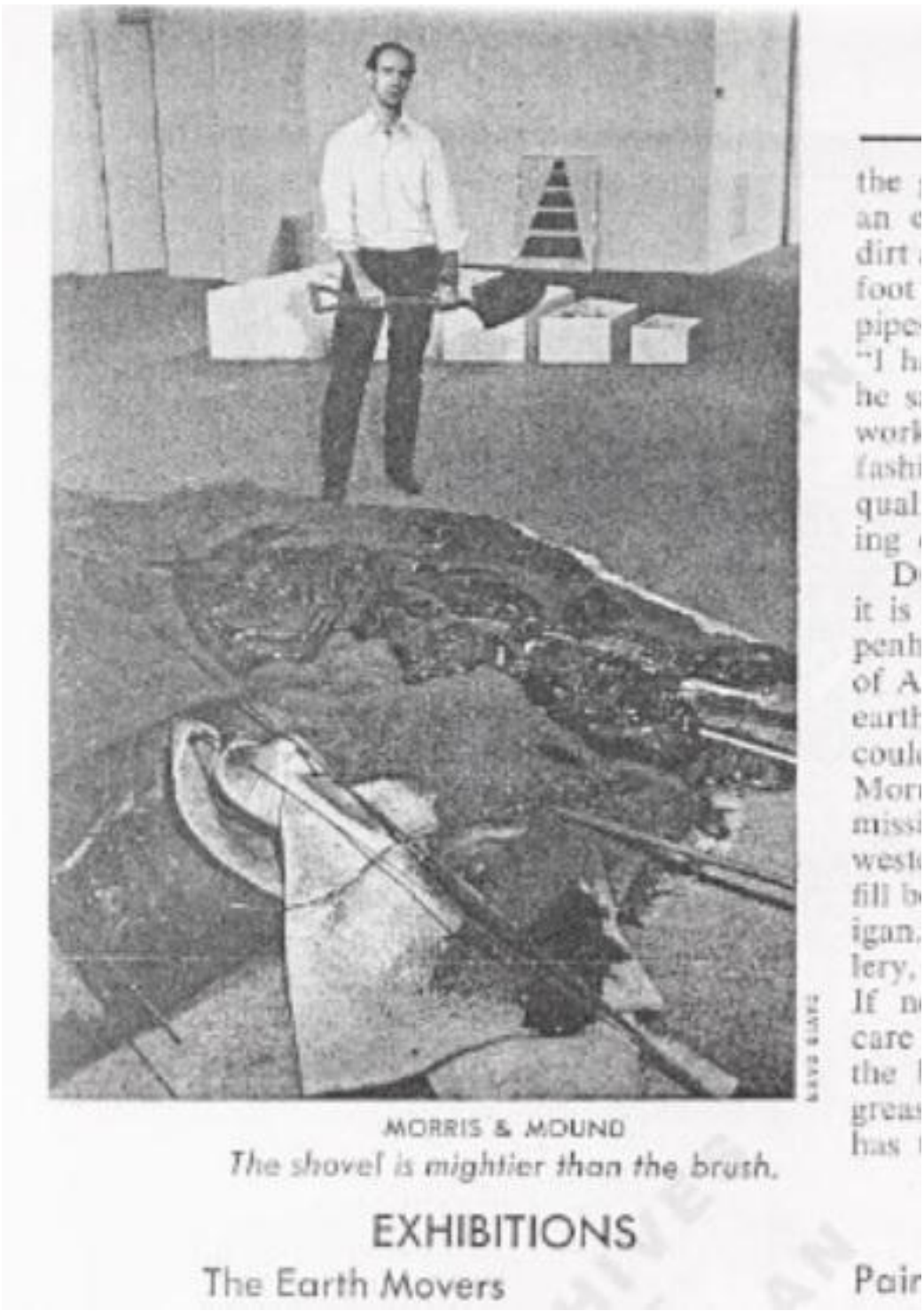


Fig. 18

Photograph accompanying review in *Time* magazine, 11 October 1968, with the caption: ‘MORRIS&MOUND – The shovel is mightier than the brush.’

Taken during the *Earth Works* exhibition at the Dwan Gallery in New York City, October 1968.

© Archives of American Art, Smithsonian Institution.



MORRIS & MOUND

The shovel is mightier than the brush.

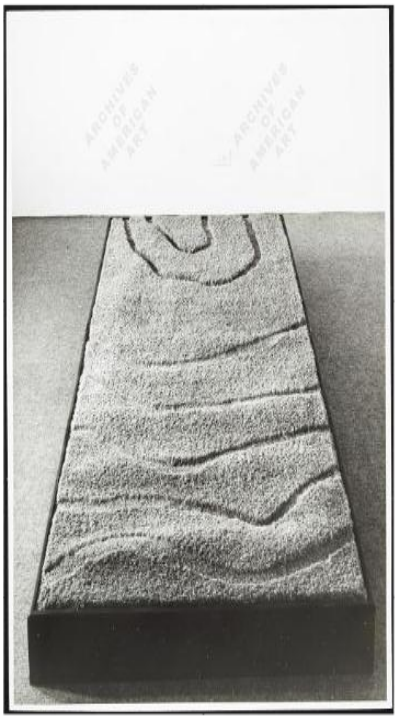
EXHIBITIONS

The Earth Movers

Fig. 19

Herbert Bayer, *Earth/Grass Mound,* 1955.

Photograph © Aspen Institute/Herbert Bayer.



Figs. 20 and 21

Dennis Oppenheim, *Untitled,* 1968.

© Archives of American Art, Smithsonian Institution/Dennis Oppenheim.

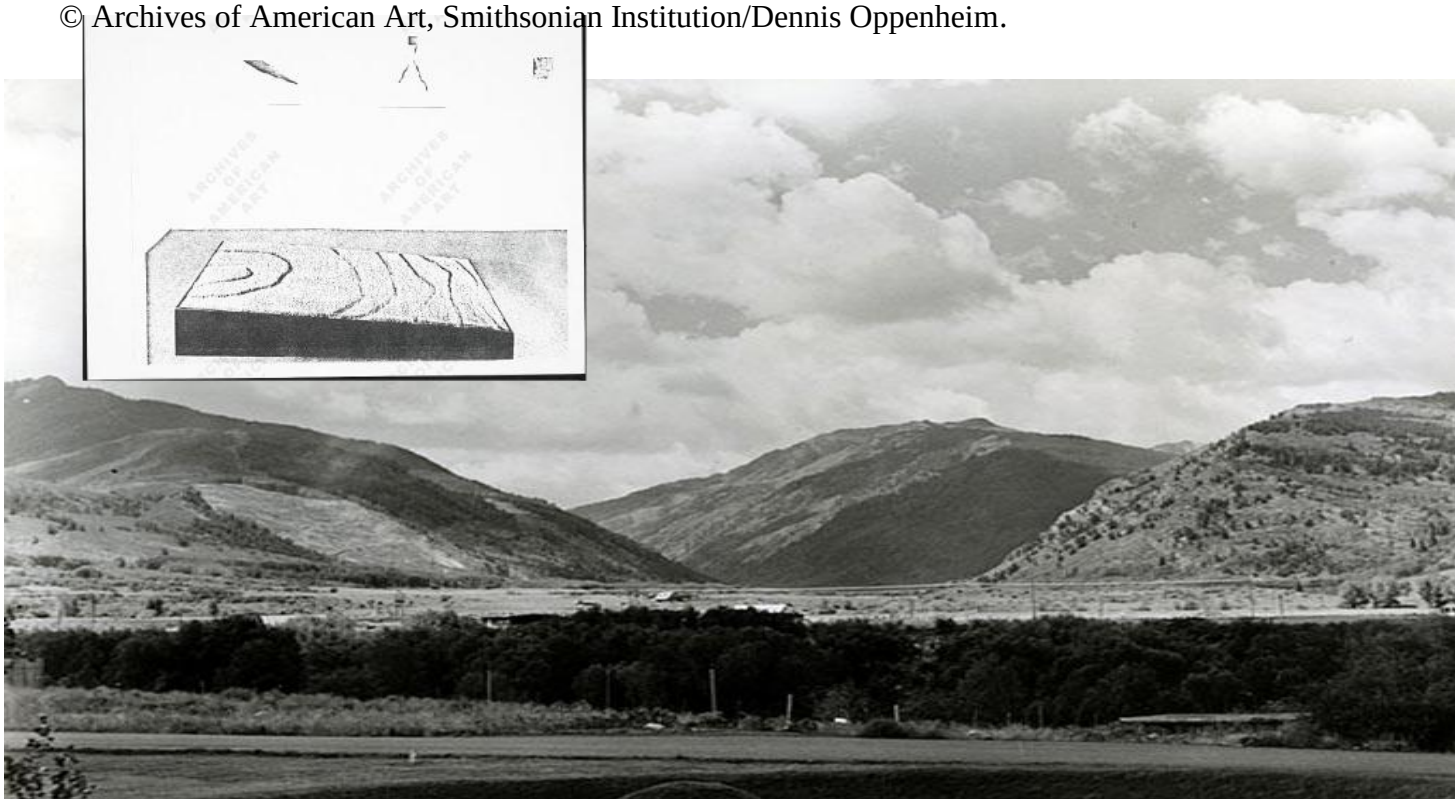


Fig. 22

Walter De Maria, *The Color Men Choose When They Attack the Earth,* 1968, oil on canvas. Installation shot (by unknown photographer), Dwan Gallery Records, 1959–ca. 1982, bulk 1959–1971, Archives of American Art, Smithsonian Institution.

Photograph © Archives of American Art, Smithsonian Institution/Virginia Dwan.





Fig. 23

Michael Heizer, *Gesture*, 1968

Photograph exhibited at *Earth Works,* Dwan Gallery New York, 1968.

(This version is the reproduced picture in the article ‘Earthworks and the New Picturesque’ in: *Artforum,* December 1968.) Dwan Gallery Records, 1959–ca. 1982, bulk 1959–1971.

© Archives of American Art, Smithsonian Institution/Michael Heizer.



Figs. 24-27

Walter De Maria, photographs of the installation of *Earth Room* in Munich, 1968.

Photograph © Estate of Walter De Maria/ Archives of American Art, Smithsonian Institution.

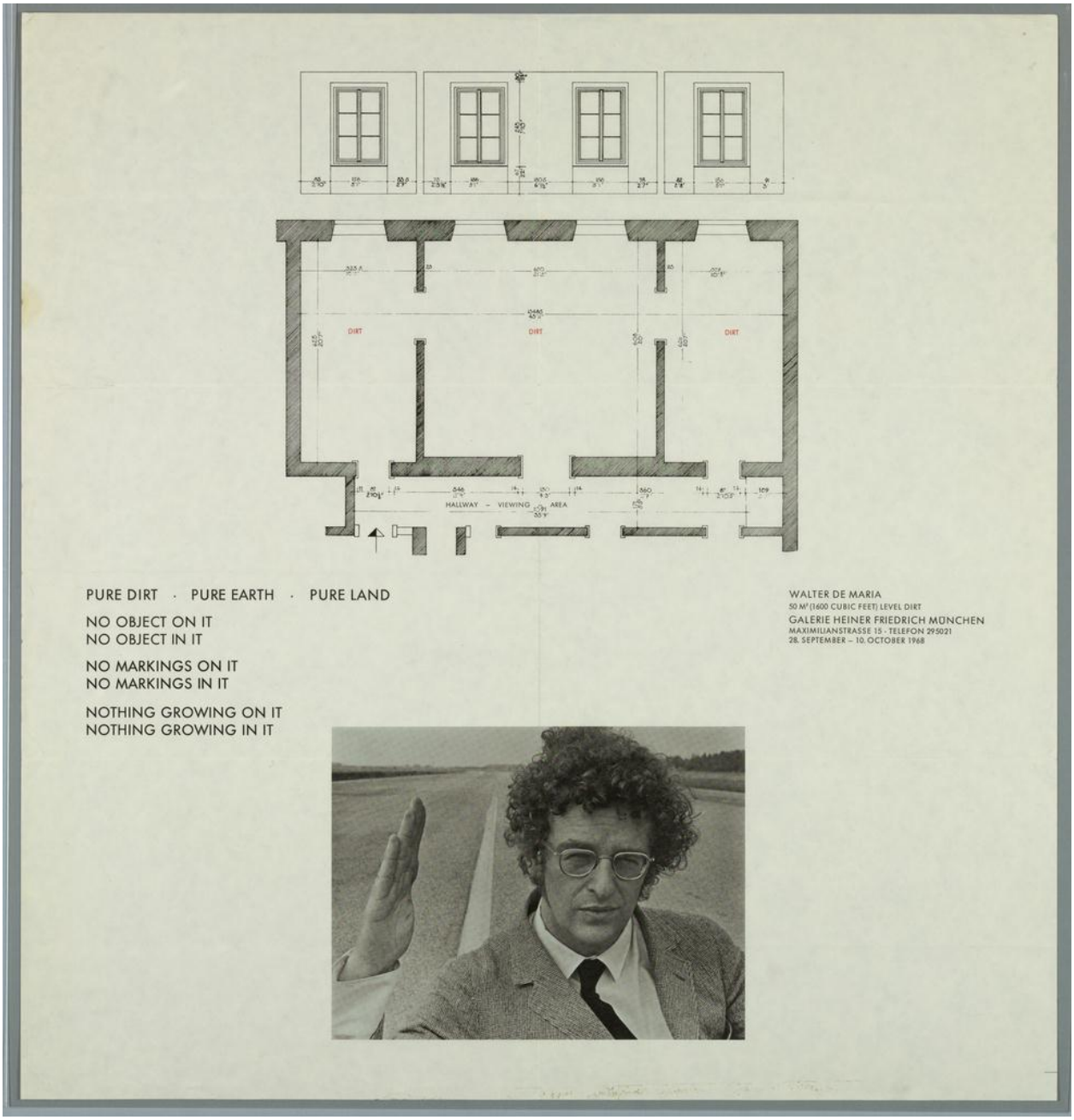
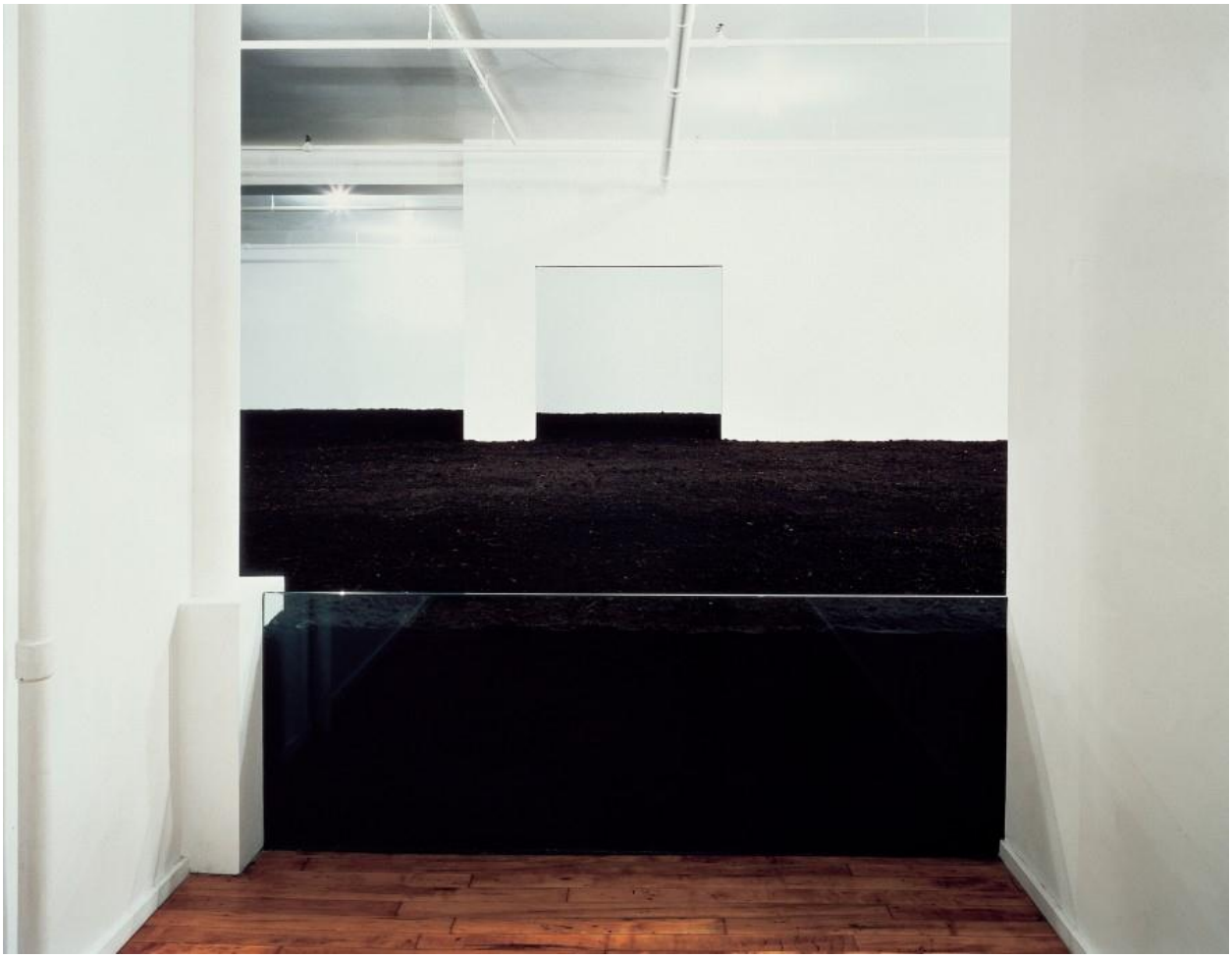


Fig. 28

Walter De Maria, Exhibition poster of *Earth Room* in Munich, 1968-69.

Original dimensions unknown.

Photograph © Estate of Walter De Maria/ Archives of American Art, Smithsonian Institution.





Figs. 29-30

Walter De Maria, *Earth Room* in New York City, 1977.

Photograph by John Cliett © Estate of Walter De Maria/ Archives of American Art, Smithsonian Institution.

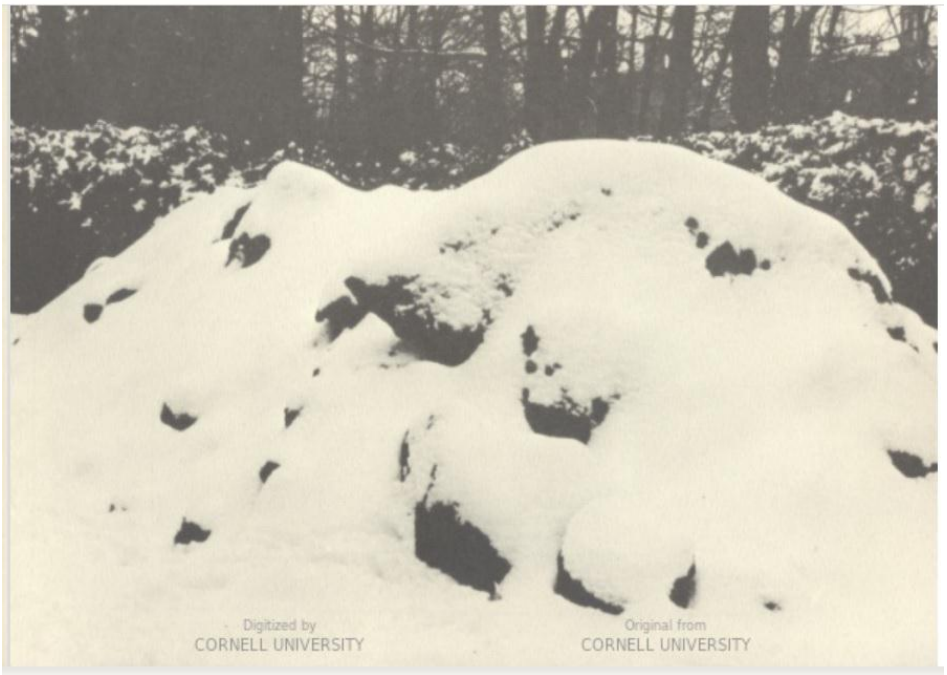


Fig. 31

Dennis Oppenheim, *Beebe Lake Ice Cut,* 1969.

© Catalogue of the exhibition *Earth Art,* Andrew Dickinson White Museum of Art, Cornell University, Ithaca, New York; Dennis Oppenheim.





Figs. 32-33

David Medalla, *Untitled*, 1969.

© Catalogue of the exhibition *Earth Art*, Andrew Dickinson White Museum of Art, Cornell University, Ithaca, New York; David Medalla.





Figs. 34-35

Richard Long, *Untitled*, *27 East Avenue, Ithaca New York*, 1969.

© Catalogue of the exhibition *Earth Art*, Andrew Dickinson White Museum of Art, Cornell University, Ithaca, New York; Richard Long.





Figs. 36-37

Jan Dibbets, *A Trace in the Wood in the Form of an Angle of 30° Crossing the Path,* 1969.

© Catalogue of the exhibition *Earth Art,* Andrew Dickinson White Museum of Art, Cornell University, Ithaca, New York; Jan Dibbets.



Fig. 38

Michael Heizer, digging a hole (helped by an earthmover) for the *Earth Art* exhibition (later withdrawn), 1969.

© Cornell University Library – Digital Collections; Michael Heizer.



Fig. 39

Walter De Maria, work for the *Earth Art* exhibition (later dismantled), 1969.

© Cornell University Library – Digital Collections; Walter De Maria.



Fig. 40

Dennis Oppenheim, *Gallery Transplant #1,* 1969 (part of the series, 1969 - 2011). Poster of unknown dimensions. © Johnson Museum of Art, Cornell University; Dennis Oppenheim.

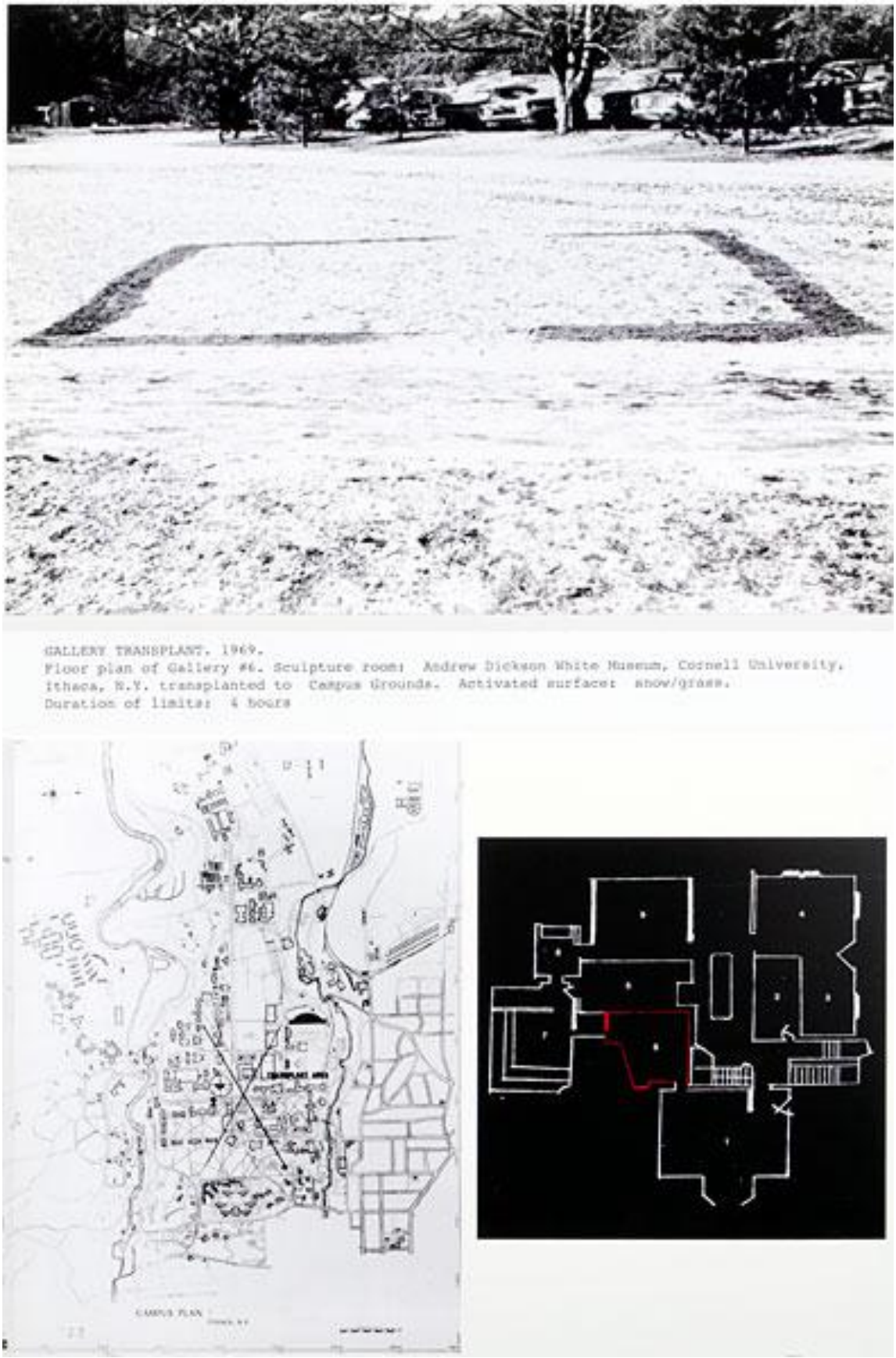


Fig. 41

Dennis Oppenheim, *Gallery Transplant #6,* 1969 (part of the series, 1969 - 2011). Collage of unknown dimensions.

© Johnson Museum of Art, Cornell University; Dennis Oppenheim.

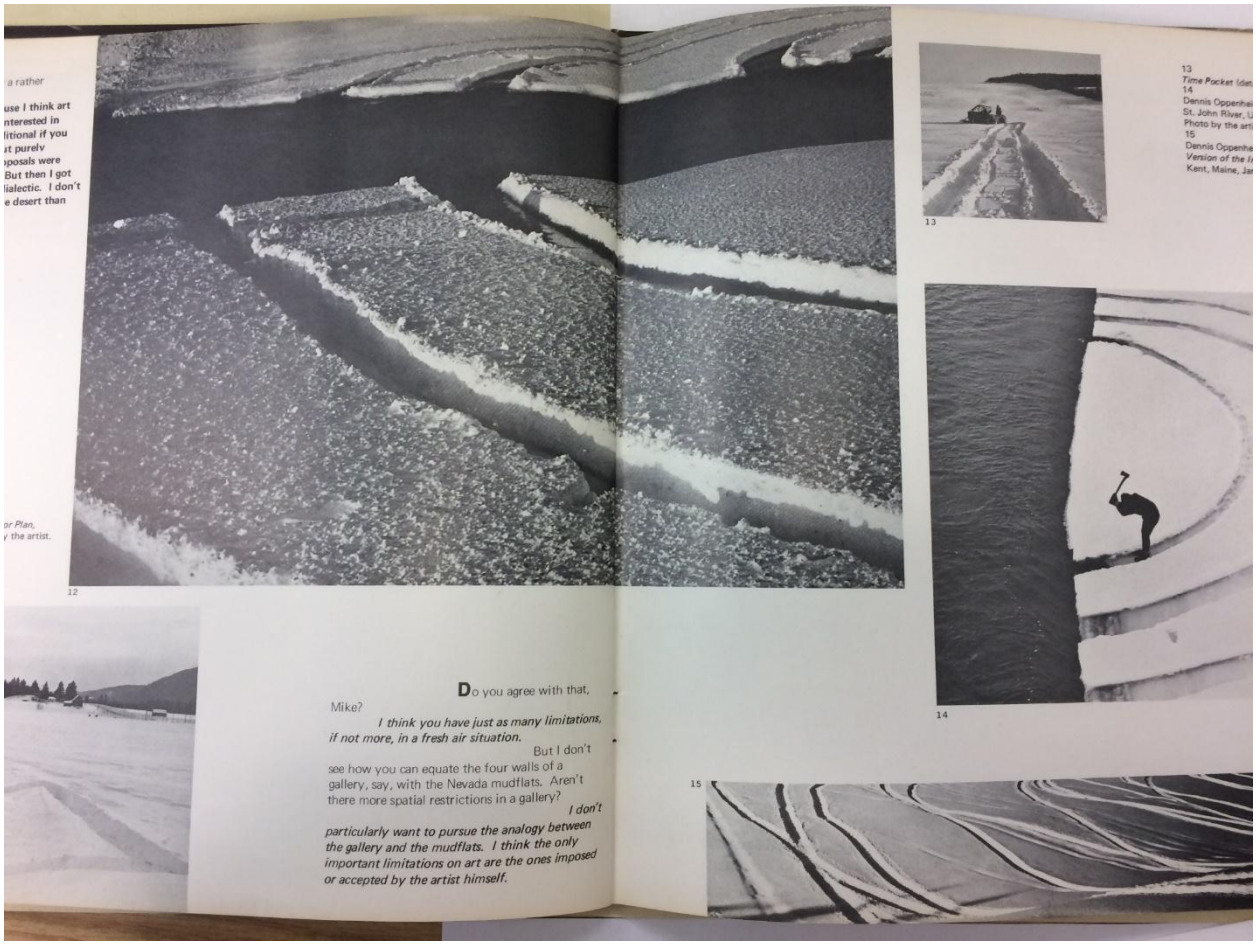


Fig. 42

Photographs of Dennis Oppenheim´s *Annual Rings*, 1968, in *Avalanche* magazine (Fall, 1970).

© Smithsonian Archives of American Art; Dennis Oppenheim.

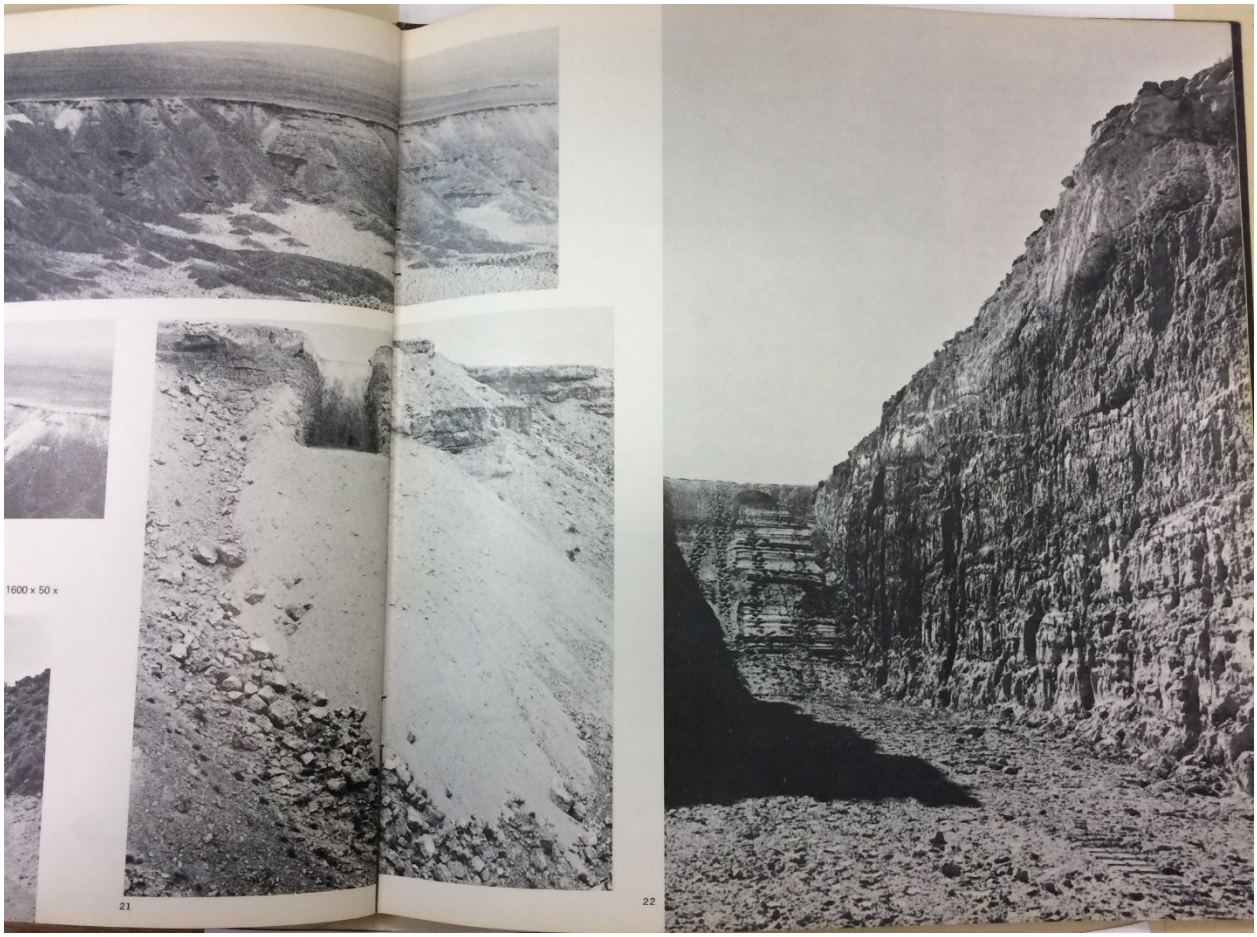


Fig. 43

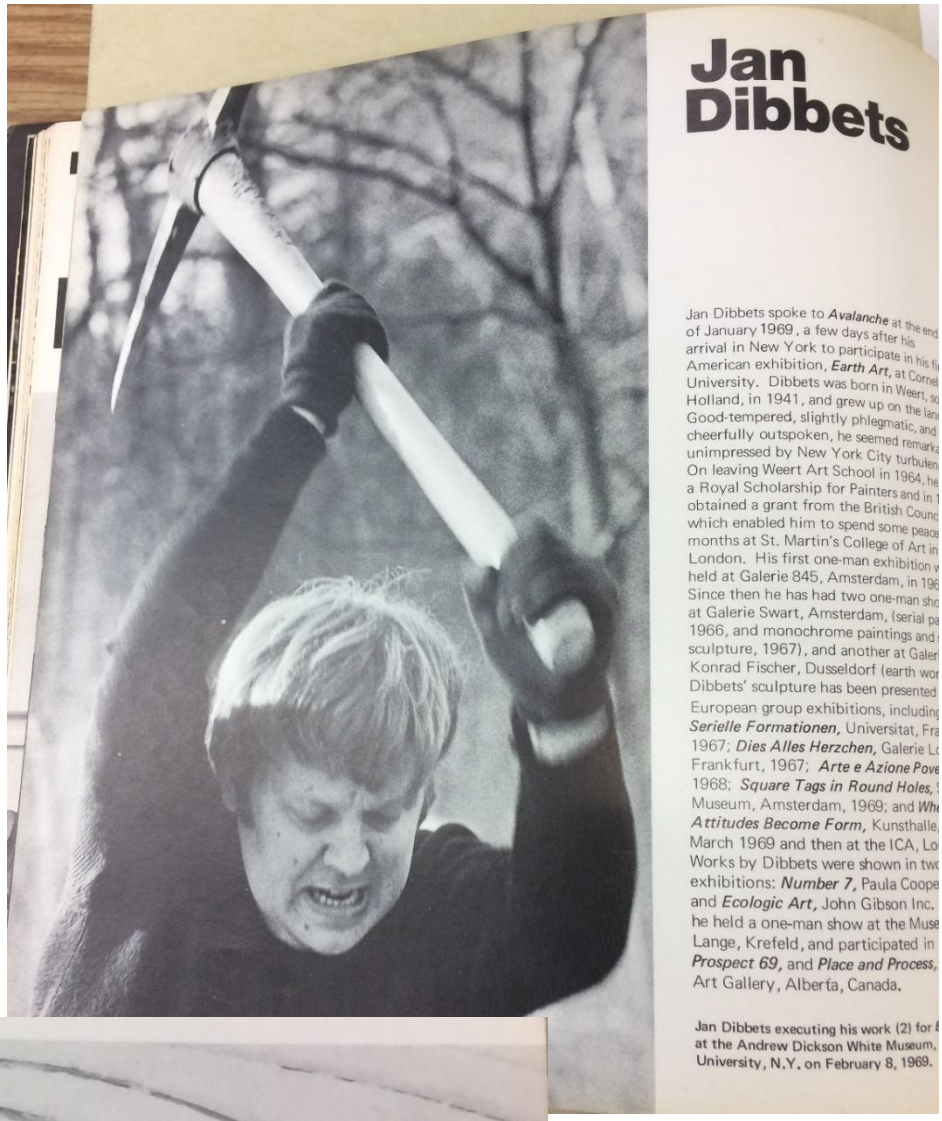
Photographs of Michael Heizer's *Double Negative,* 1970, in *Avalanche* magazine (Fall, 1970).

© Smithsonian Archives of American Art; Michael Heizer.

Figs. 44-47

Photographs of Land artists with shovels/tools outside in the landscape in *Avalanche* magazine (Fall, 1970).

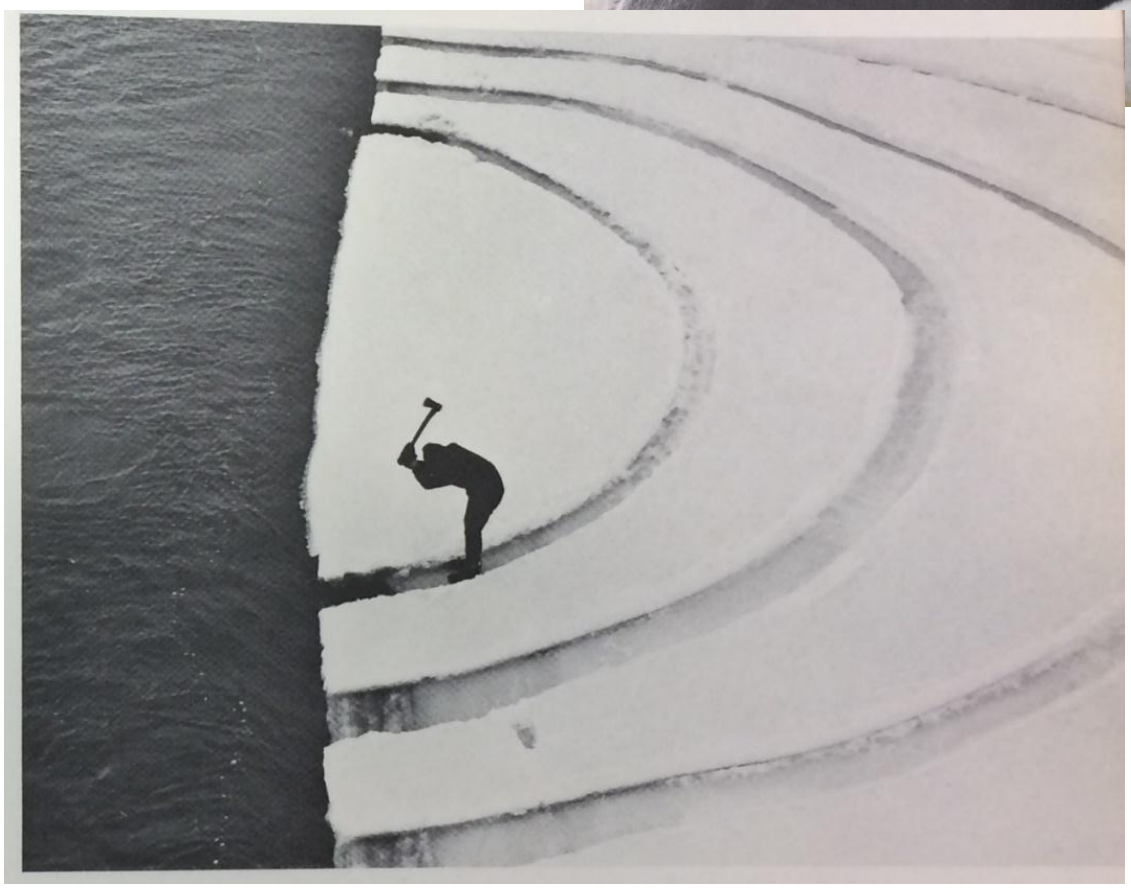
© Smithsonian Archives of American Art; *Avalanche* magazine.

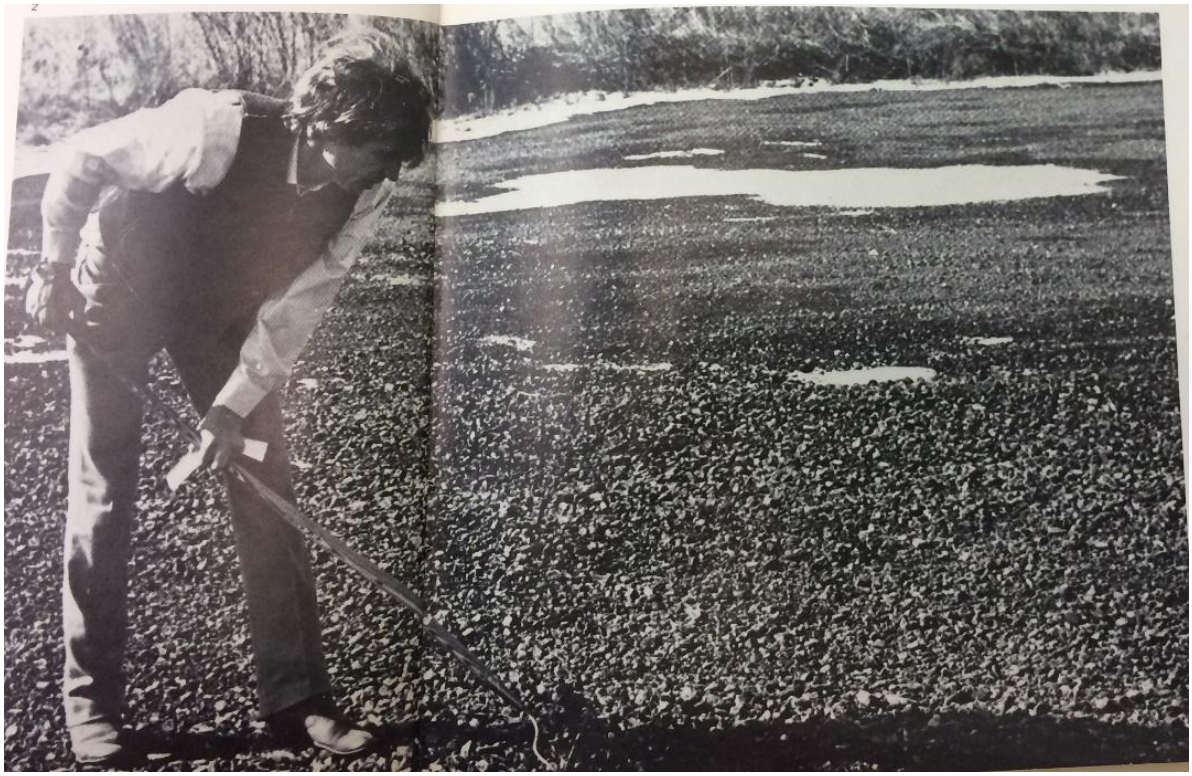


Jan Dibbets

Jan Dibbets spoke to ***Avalanche*** at the end
of January 1969, a few days after his
arrival in New York to participate in his fi
American exhibition, ***Earth Art,*** at Cornel
University. Dibbets was born in Weert, so
Holland, in 1941, and grew up on the lan
Good-tempered, slightly phlegmatic, and
cheerfully outspoken, he seemed remarka
unimpressed by New York City turbulen
On leaving Weert Art School in 1964, he
a Royal Scholarship for Painters and in
obtained a grant from the British Counc
which enabled him to spend some peace
months at St. Martin's College of Art in
London. His first one-man exhibition
held at Galerie 845, Amsterdam, in 196
Since then he has had two one-man sho
at Galerie Swart, Amsterdam, (serial pa
1966, and monochrome paintings and
sculpture, 1967), and another at Galer
Konrad Fischer, Dusseldorf (earth wor
Dibbets' sculpture has been presented
European group exhibitions, including
Serielle Formationen, Universitat, Fra
1967; ***Dies Alles Herzchen,*** Galerie L
Frankfurt, 1967; ***Arte e Azione Pove***
1968; ***Square Tags in Round Holes,***
Museum, Amsterdam, 1969; and ***Wh***
Attitudes Become Form, Kunsthalle,
March 1969 and then at the ICA, Lo
Works by Dibbets were shown in two
exhibitions: ***Number 7,*** Paula Coope
and ***Ecologic Art,*** John Gibson Inc.
he held a one-man show at the Muse
Lange, Krefeld, and participated in
Prospect 69, and ***Place and Process,***
Art Gallery, Alberta, Canada.

**Jan Dibbets executing his work (2) for E
at the Andrew Dickson White Museum,
University, N.Y. on February 8, 1969.**





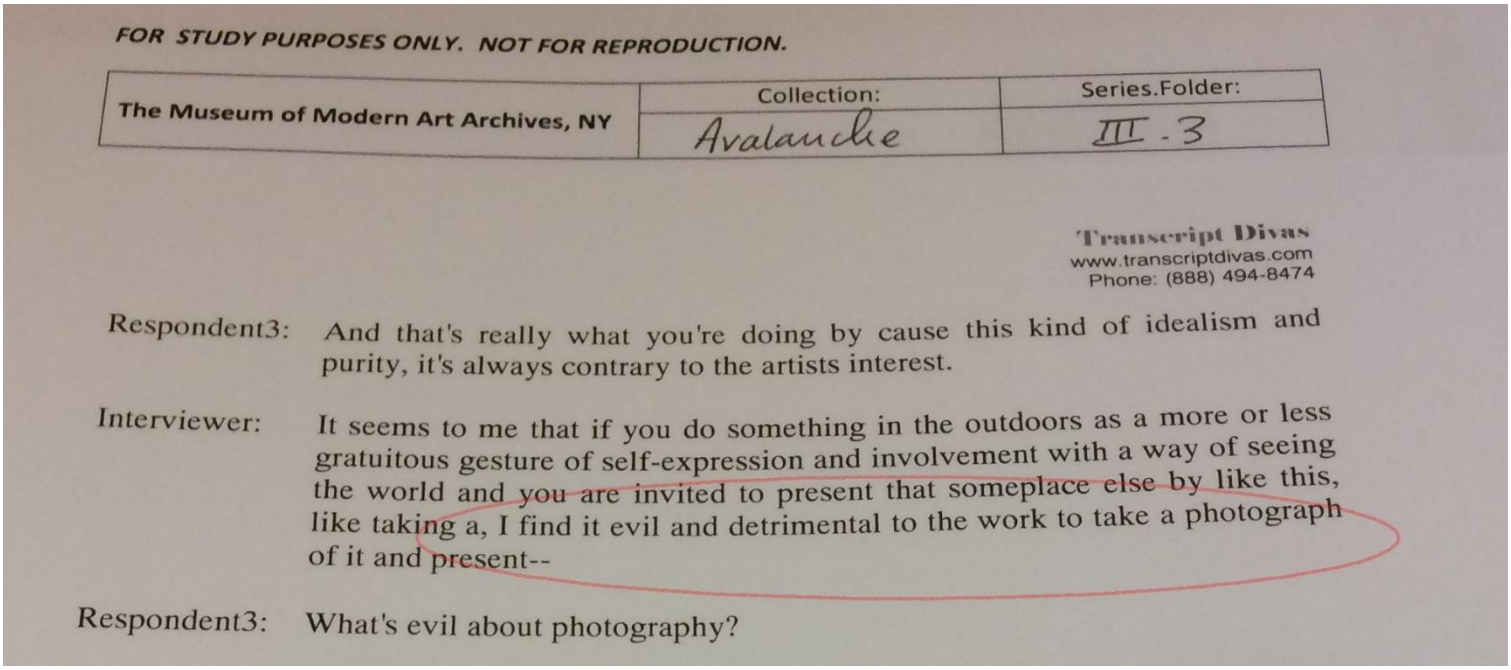
Richard Long

Born in Bristol, England
St. Martin's School of Art, London

One-Man Exhibitions
Middlesex
Oxfordshire
Buckinghamshire
Bedfordshire
Northamptonshire
Leicestershire
Cambridgeshire
Hertfordshire
Suffolk
Essex
Konrad Fischer, Düsseldorf
John Gibson, New York City
Konrad Fischer, Düsseldorf
Haus Lange Museum, Krefeld
Yvonne Lambert, Paris
Yvonne Lambert, Milan
Dwan, New York City

Group Exhibitions
Bethnal Green Institute, London
Gallerie Loehr, Frankfurt
Young Contemporaries, London
Festival of Free Expression, Amalfi
Earth Art, Cornell University,
Andrew Dickson White Museum of
Art, Ithaca, N.Y.
and Art, TV film, Fernsehgalerie
Gerry Schum, Berlin
Number 7, Paula Cooper Gallery, N.Y.
July, August, September, Seth
Siegelaub, New York
When Attitudes Become Form,
Kunsthalle, Bern; Museum Haus
Lange, Krefeld; ICA, London
Place and Process, Edmonton Art
Gallery, Alberta, Canada
Long Beach Island, New Jersey
Evidence of the Flight of Six
Captives, Museum of Contemorary
Art, Chicago

Richard Long selecting schist for a
sculpture at *Earth Art*, Andrew Dickson
White Museum, Ithaca.
Moveable sculpture, white-painted
wood, c. 12' dia., Ireland, Summer 1967.
Set in different location, Ireland,
Summer 1967.
Removal of daisy heads, c. 20' long,
Durham Downs, near Bristol, England,
detail of 4.
Sculpture, c. 14' long, Redcliff Bay,
Bristol, England, 1968.
Detail of sculpture, c. 8 x 20', Flat
Holy, Africa, August 1969.
Sculpture made from turf, c. 3 x 1½',
Bristol, England, 1967.
Earth and gravel on roof of St. Martin's
College, London, England, 1967.



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The Museum of Modern Art Archives, NY	Collection:	Series.Folder:
	Avalanche	III.3

Transcript Divas
www.transcriptdivas.com
Phone: (888) 494-8474

Respondent3: And that's really what you're doing by cause this kind of idealism and purity, it's always contrary to the artists interest.

Interviewer: It seems to me that if you do something in the outdoors as a more or less gratuitous gesture of self-expression and involvement with a way of seeing the world and you are invited to present that someplace else by like this, like taking a, I find it evil and detrimental to the work to take a photograph of it and present--

Respondent3: What's evil about photography?

Fig. 48

Quote (marked out in red by the author), showing a comment by Willoughby Sharp (as 'Interviewer') in a transcript of the interview: *Avalanche Magazine Papers* of the Museum of Modern Art Archives, folder III.3, p. 55.

© Museum of Modern Art, New York City.

Fig. 49

Richard Long, *A Line Made by Walking* (unpublished photograph), 1967.

Photographer: Richard Long. Copy, original dimensions unknown.

Photograph © Smithsonian Archives of American Art, Washington DC / Richard Long



Figs. 50 and 51

Constantin Brancusi, *Mademoiselle Pogany II, Profile View* and *Three-Quarter View*, 1920-21. Gelatin silver prints, printed c. 1921. Profile view: 9 x 6 1/2 inches / Three-Quarter View: 10 1/16 x 7 1/4 inches.

Photographer: Constantin Brancusi.

Photographs © Silverstein Gallery, NYC / Constantin Brancusi.





Fig. 52

Michael Heizer, *Munich Depression* (originally: *Vague Depression*), 1969.

(Michael Heizer standing inside *Munich Depression* during the final stage of creation**.)**

Photographer and dimensions of the photograph unknown.

Photograph © Städtische Galerie im Lenbachhaus und Kunstbau, Munich.



Figs. 53 to 61

Individual photographs that constitute Michael Heizer's *Munich Rotary Interior,* 1969.

Black/white large copies, original dimensions unknown.

Photographs © Museum of Modern Art, New York City / Michael Heizer



Fig. 53



Fig. 54



Fig. 55



Fig. 56



Fig. 57



Fig. 58



Fig. 59



Fig. 60



Fig. 61

Figs. 62 and 63

Michael Heizer, *Munich Rotary Interior*, 1969.

Dimensions are 8.7 metres wide by 1.8 metres high, formed by nine gelatine silver-print photographs that are all mounted on boards that are individually cut and shaped.

Photograph © Smithsonian Archives of American Art, Washington DC / Michael Heizer.

Installation view, unknown photographer © Art Institute Chicago, 2011.





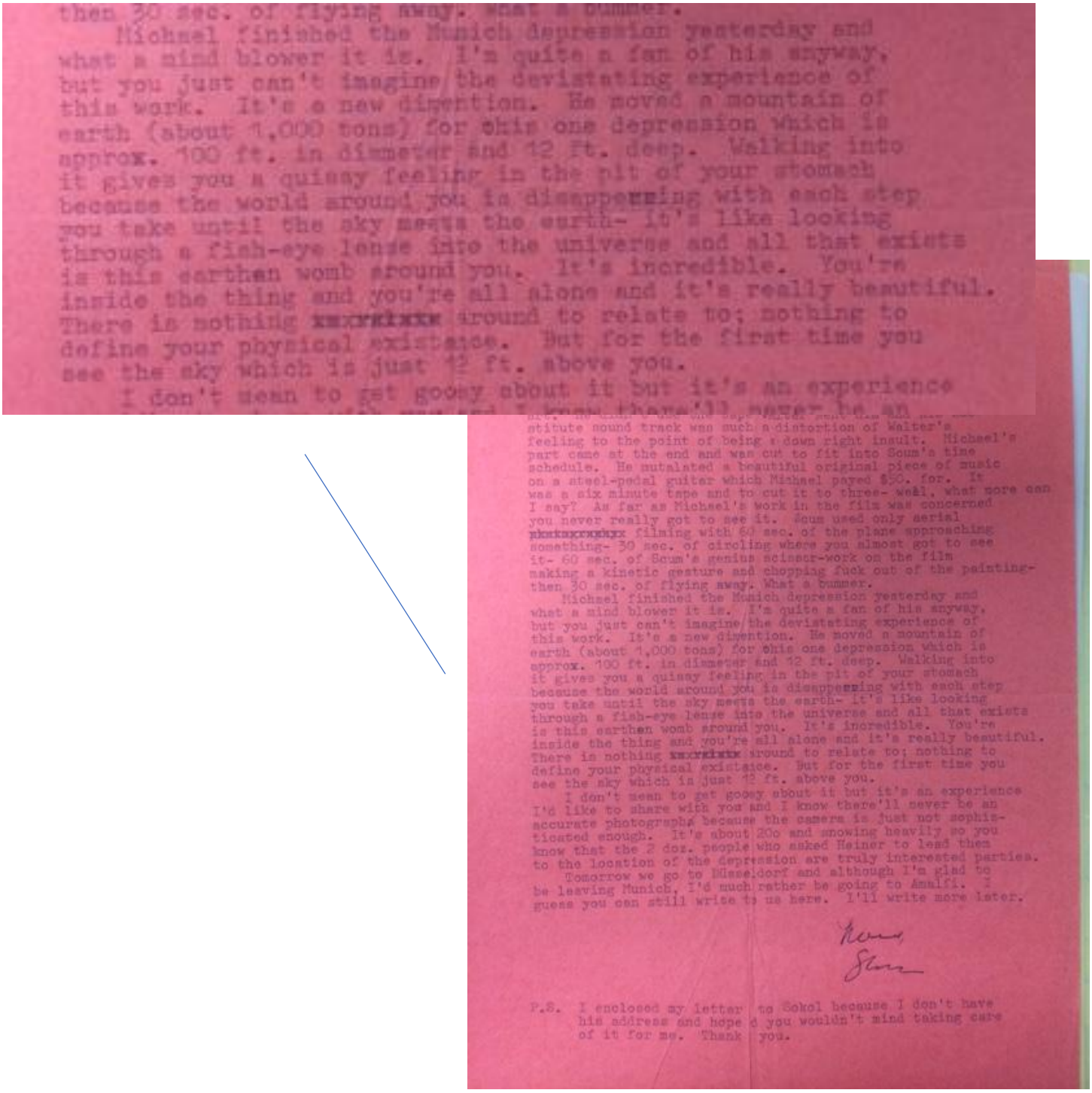
Fig. 64

Letter to Robert Scull on pink typewriter paper, unidentified author (signed name illegible).

From the Smithsonian Archives of American Art, *Robert Scull Papers*, folder

'Correspondence - Michael Heizer – Circa 1968, circa 1971'.

Typewritten letter © Smithsonian Archives of American Art.



then 30 sec. of flying away. What a bummer.
Michael finished the Munich depression yesterday and what a mind blower it is. I'm quite a fan of his anyway, but you just can't imagine the devistating experience of this work. It's a new dimention. He moved a mountain of earth (about 1,000 tons) for this one depression which is approx. 100 ft. in dimeter and 12 ft. deep. Walking into it gives you a quisay feeling in the pit of your stomach because the world around you is disappearing with each step you take until the sky meets the earth- it's like looking through a fish-eye lense into the universe and all that exists is this earthen womb around you. It's incredible. You're inside the thing and you're all alone and it's really beautiful. There is nothing around to relate to; nothing to define your physical existence. But for the first time you see the sky which is just 12 ft. above you.
I don't mean to get goosy about it but it's an experience

stitute sound track was such a distortion of Walter's feeling to the point of being a down right insult. Michael's part came at the end and was cut to fit into Scum's time schedule. He mutalated a beautiful original piece of music on a steel-pedal guiter which Michael payed $50. for. It was a six minute tape and to cut it to three- well, what more can I say? As far as Michael's work in the film was concerned you never really got to see it. Scum used only aerial filming with 60 sec. of the plane approaching something- 30 sec. of circling where you almost got to see it- 60 sec. of Scum's genius scissor-work on the film making a kinetic gesture and chopping fuck out of the painting- then 30 sec. of flying away. What a bummer.
Michael finished the Munich depression yesterday and what a mind blower it is. I'm quite a fan of his anyway, but you just can't imagine the devistating experience of this work. It's a new dimention. He moved a mountain of earth (about 1,000 tons) for this one depression which is approx. 100 ft. in dimeter and 12 ft. deep. Walking into it gives you a quisay feeling in the pit of your stomach because the world around you is disappearing with each step you take until the sky meets the earth- it's like looking through a fish-eye lense into the universe and all that exists is this earthen womb around you. It's incredible. You're inside the thing and you're all alone and it's really beautiful. There is nothing around to relate to; nothing to define your physical existence. But for the first time you see the sky which is just 12 ft. above you.
I don't mean to get goosy about it but it's an experience I'd like to share with you and I know there'll never be an accurate photograph because the camera is just not sophisticated enough. It's about 20o and snowing heavily so you know that the 2 doz. people who asked Heiner to lead them to the location of the depression are truly interested parties.
Tomorrow we go to Düsseldorf and although I'm glad to be leaving Munich, I'd much rather be going to Amalfi. I guess you can still write to us here. I'll write more later.

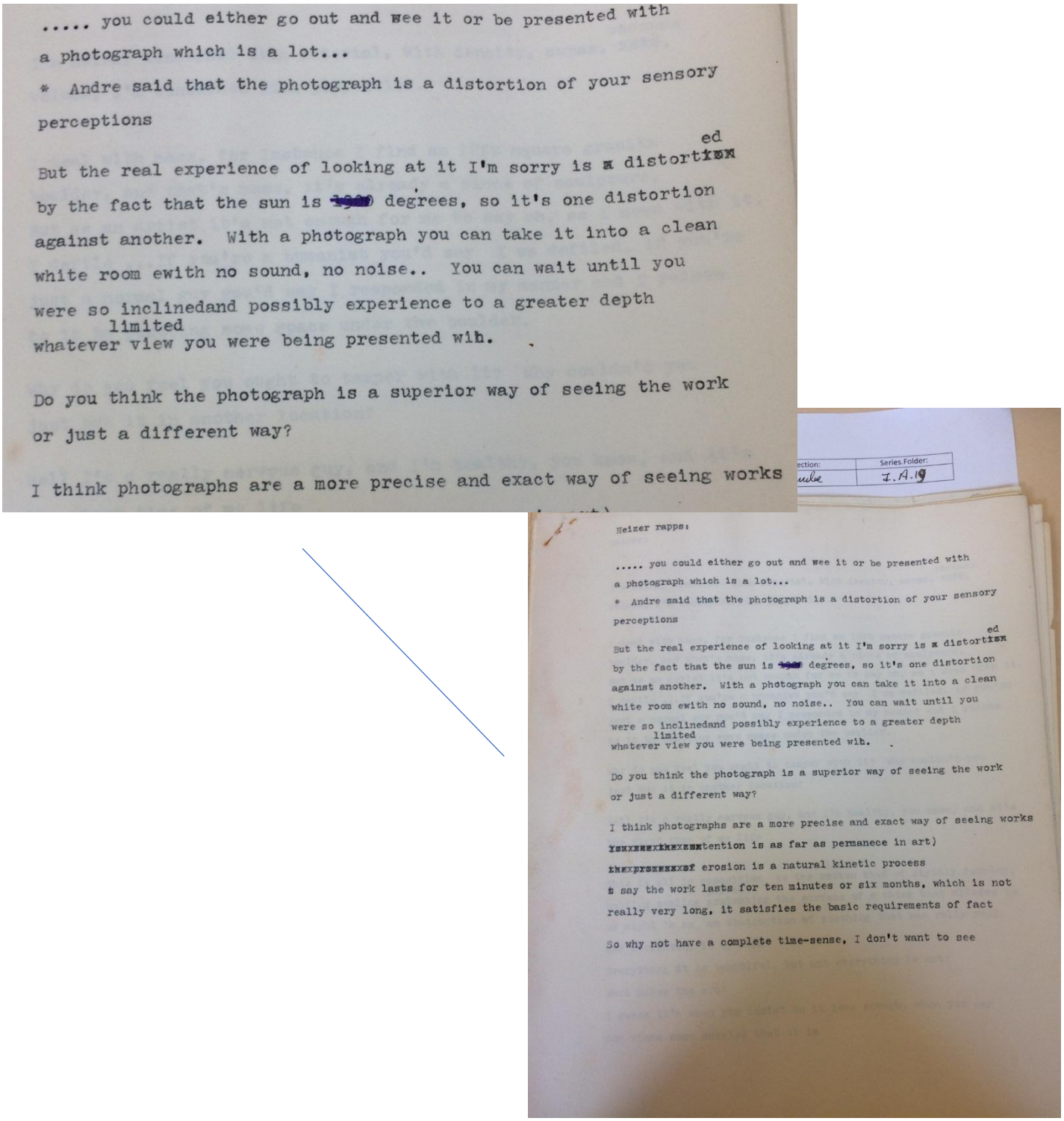
Love,
Stan

P.S. I enclosed my letter to Sokol because I don't have his address and hope you wouldn't mind taking care of it for me. Thank you.

Fig. 65

Interview transcript of an interview of Heizer at his house by interviewer Willoughby Sharp. From the Museum of Modern Art Archives, *Avalanche Magazine Papers*, folder I.A.19 (no page number).

Transcript of interview © Museum of Modern Art Archives, New York City.



..... you could either go out and wee it or be presented with a photograph which is a lot...

* Andre said that the photograph is a distortion of your sensory perceptions

But the real experience of looking at it I'm sorry is a distorted by the fact that the sun is [illegible] degrees, so it's one distortion against another. With a photograph you can take it into a clean white room ewith no sound, no noise.. You can wait until you were so inclinedand possibly experience to a greater depth limited whatever view you were being presented wih.

Do you think the photograph is a superior way of seeing the work or just a different way?

I think photographs are a more precise and exact way of seeing works

ection: Series Folder: I.A.19

Heizer rapps:

..... you could either go out and wee it or be presented with a photograph which is a lot...

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But the real experience of looking at it I'm sorry is a distorted by the fact that the sun is [illegible] degrees, so it's one distortion against another. With a photograph you can take it into a clean white room ewith no sound, no noise.. You can wait until you were so inclinedand possibly experience to a greater depth limited whatever view you were being presented wih.

Do you think the photograph is a superior way of seeing the work or just a different way?

I think photographs are a more precise and exact way of seeing works [illegible]tention is as far as permanece in art) [illegible] erosion is a natural kinetic process & say the work lasts for ten minutes or six months, which is not really very long, it satisfies the basic requirements of fact

So why not have a complete time-sense, I don't want to see

Fig. 66

Michael Heizer, exhibition photograph of *Actual Size: Munich Rotary* as installed during the exhibition of *Michael Heizer: Photographic and Actual Work* at the Detroit Institute of Art, 1971.

Six steel projectors designed by Marit Ambats, six black-and-white glass photographic slides, six steel pipes with wood platforms, and steel bases, dimensions variable.

Photograph © Detroit Institute of Art / Michael Heizer.

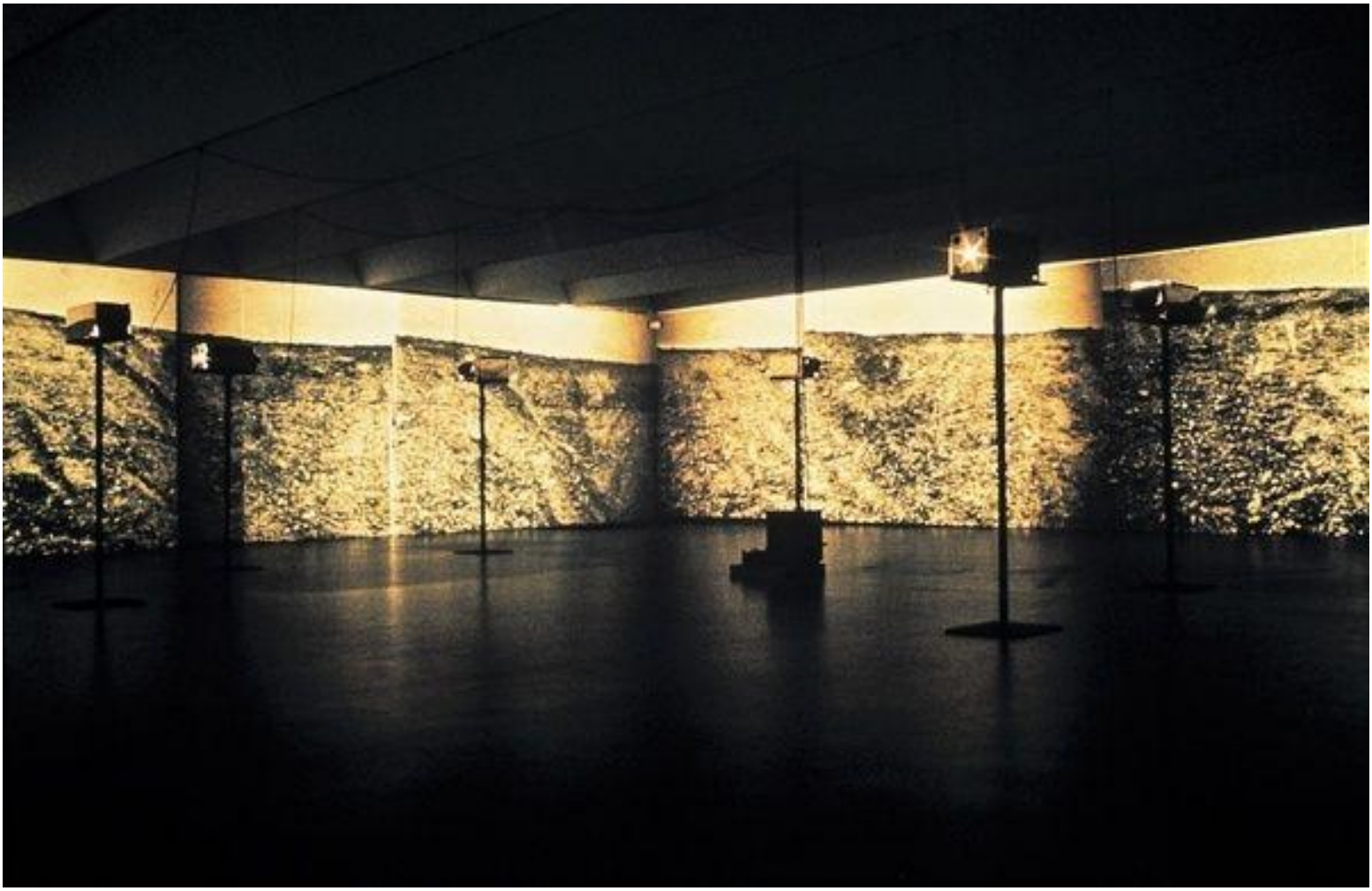




Fig. 67

Michael Heizer, *Dragged Mass Displacement,* as part of the exhibition *Michael Heizer: Photographic and Actual Work,* at the Detroit Institute of Arts, 1971.

Photograph © Museum of Modern Art, New York City / Michael Heizer.

Fig. 68

Selected newspapers coverage of Heizer's *Dragged Mass Displacement*, 1971.



Wagstaff criticizes decision

Is lawn prettier than earthwork?

The Detroit News
Section C

Thursday, April 15, 1971
Classified—14-22C

Arty lawn

Michael Heizer's granite slab lies dug in on the lawn of the Detroit Institute of Arts.

Sympl
will pe
'Super

Friday, March 19, 1971—THE DETROIT NEWS—8-C

While spectators watch from the best available vantage points (above) three bulldozers (photo at right) move a 35-ton granite slab across the lawn of the Detroit Institute of Arts, completing the earth art of artist Michael Heizer.

Earth art

Artist's 35-ton granite slab buried in Institute lawn

Artist Michael Heizer (left) supervises placement of the slab

Figs. 69 and 70

Michael Heizer, *Actual Size: Munich Rotary,* 1970– reinstalled in the Whitney Museum of Art, 2016. Dimensions variable.

© Whitney Museum, New York City / Michael Heizer.

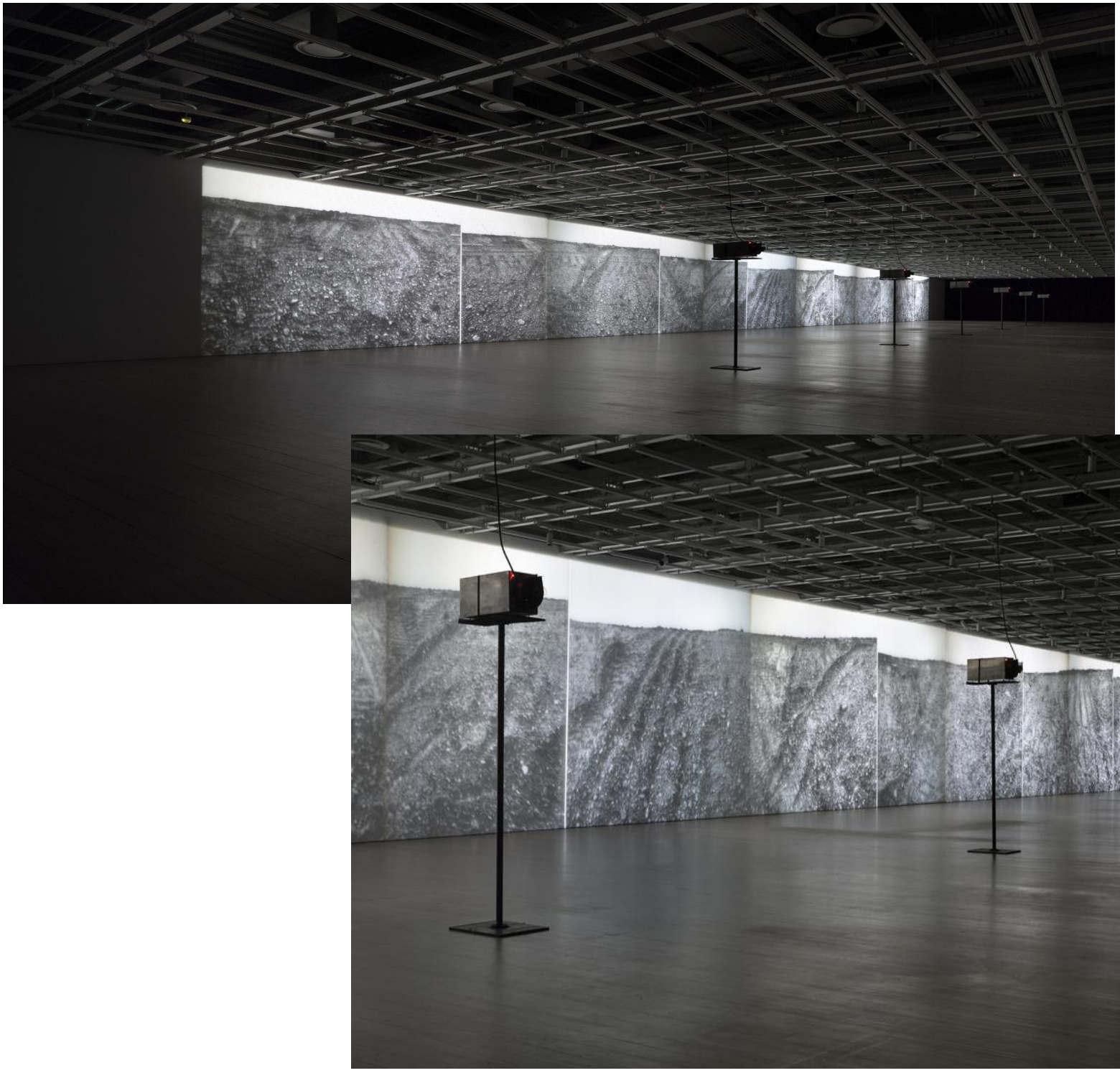
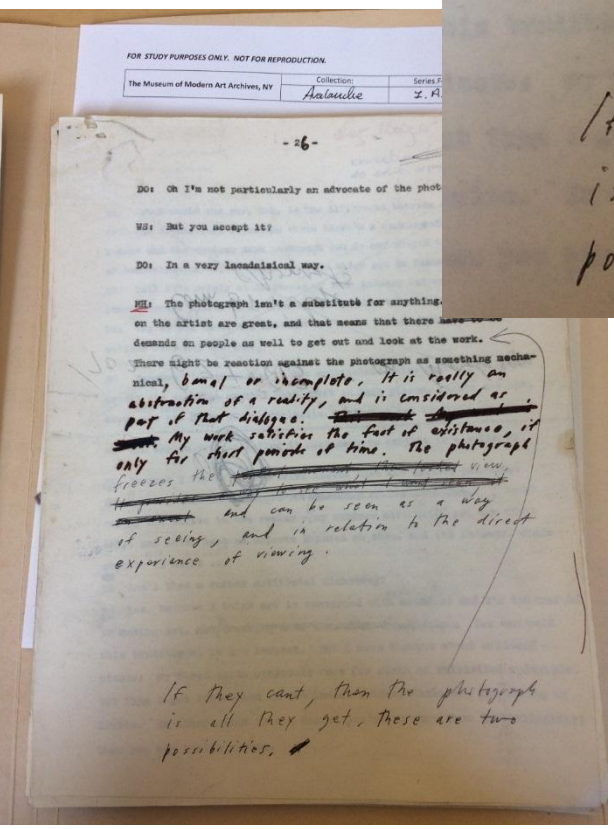


Fig. 71

Michael Heizer in an interview with Willoughby Sharp. From the Museum of Modern Art Archives, *Avalanche Magazine Papers*, folder I.A.17, p. 26.

Transcript of interview with hand edited notes by Heizer © Museum of Modern Art, New York City.



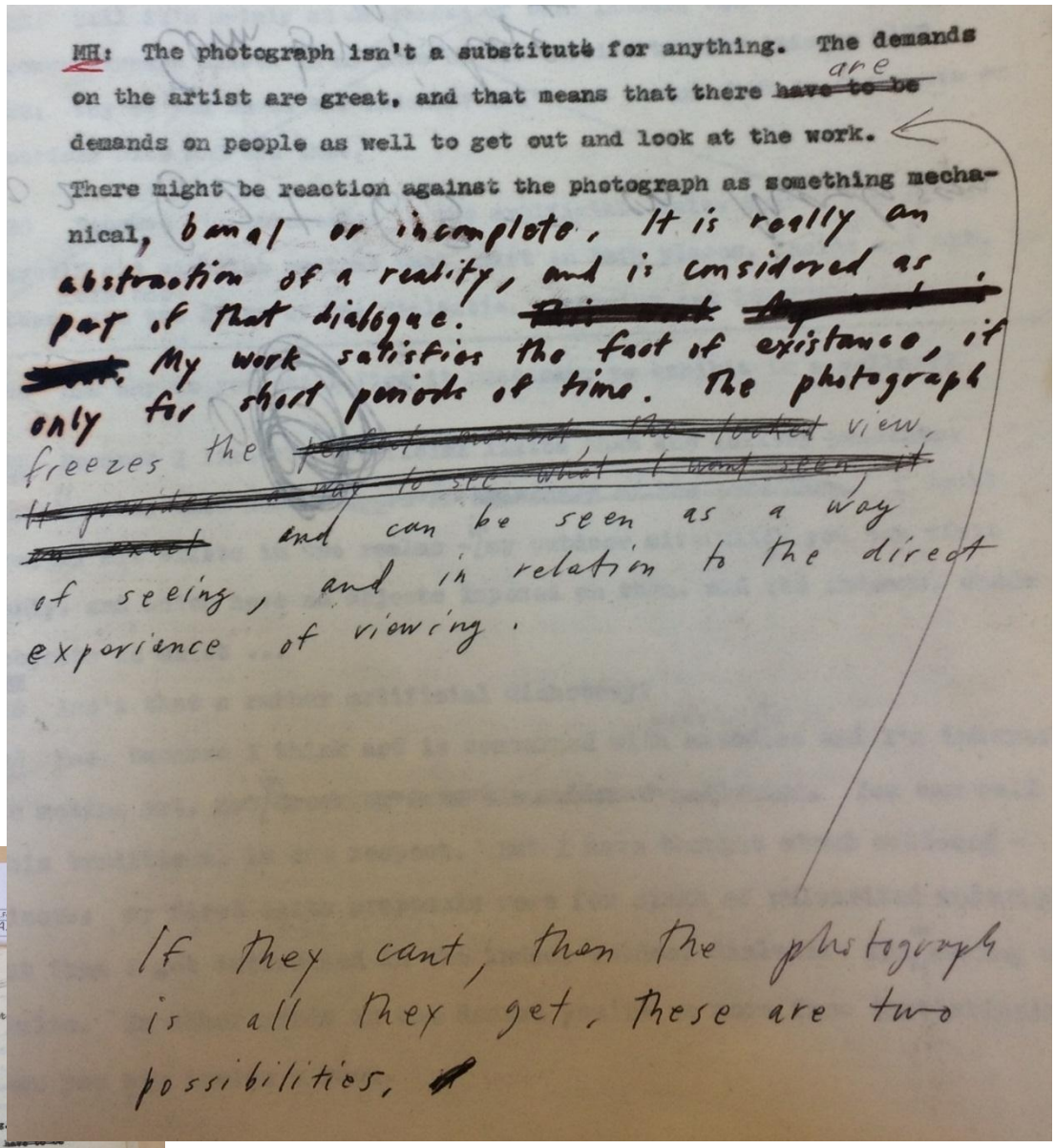


Fig. 72

Jan Dibbets, *Construction Two Rolls of Grass*, 1967.

Black-and-white photograph, ink, pencil on graph paper, 27,5 x 37 cm.

© Kröller-Müller Museum, the Netherlands.

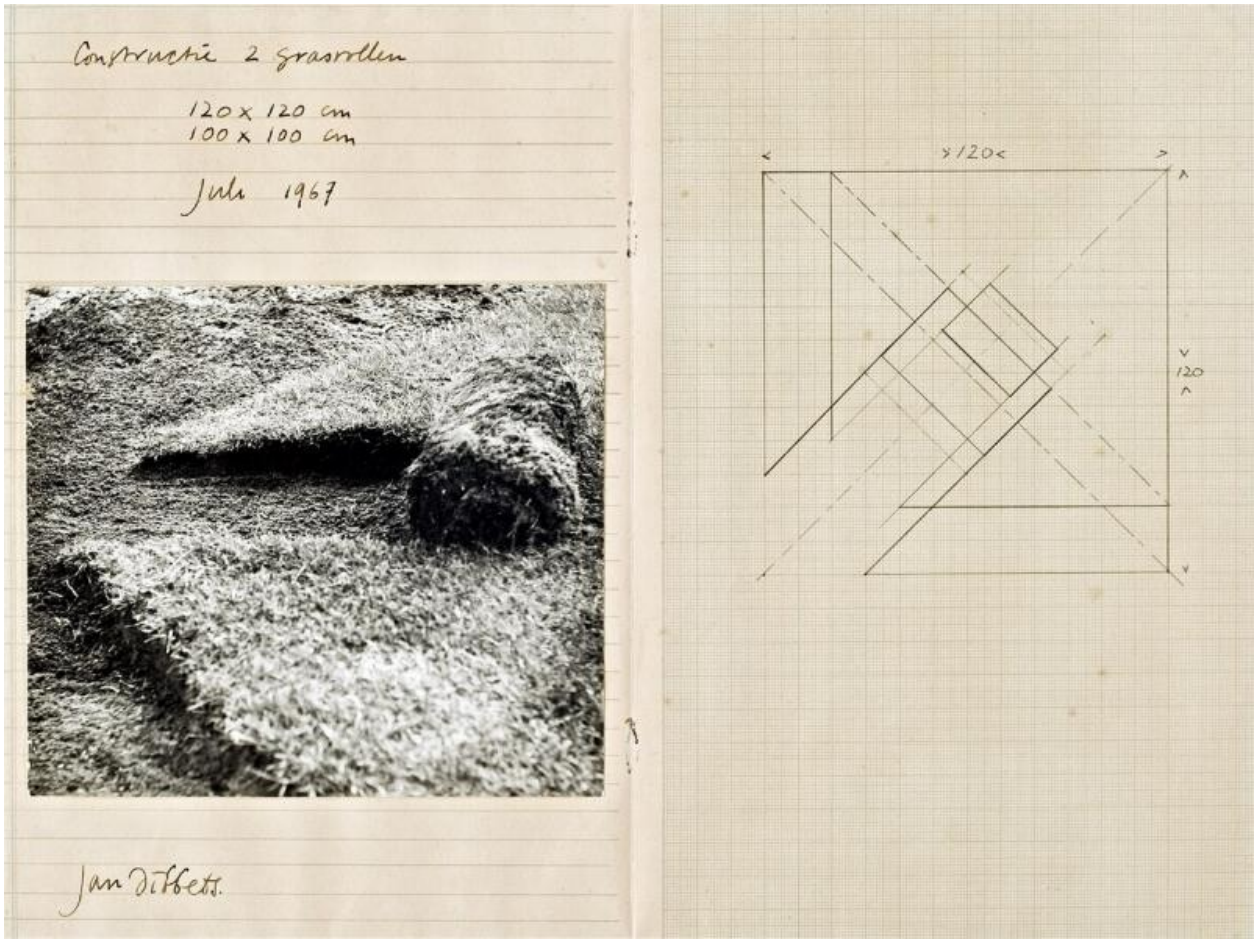


Fig. 73

Jan Dibbets, *Flood Tide (Vloed),* 1969.

Ten black/white gelatin silver prints on board (installation shot).

Photographer and original dimensions unknown.

Photograph © Jan Dibbets / Herbert Collection, Ghent.

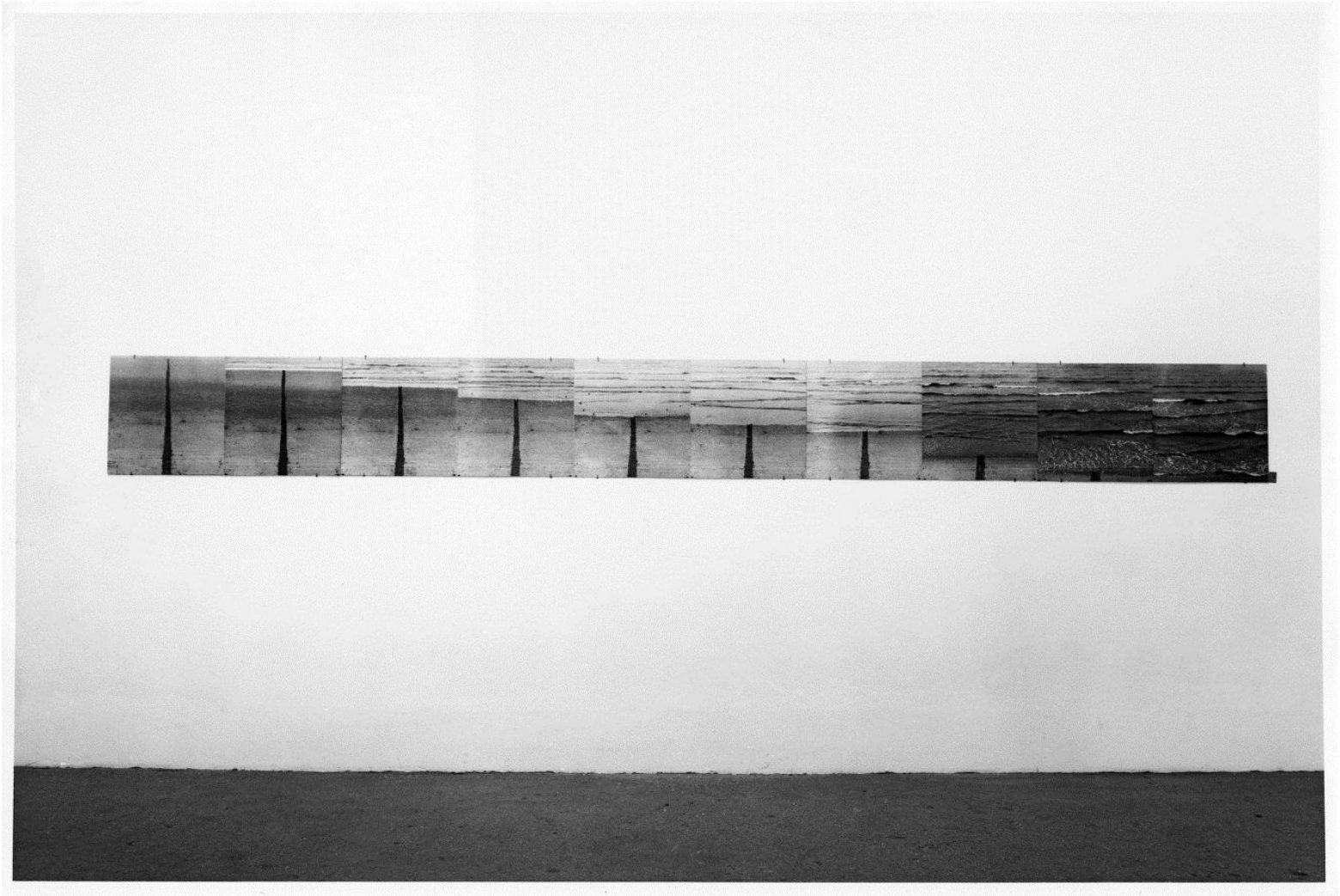




Fig. 74

Jan Dibbets, *A Trace in the Wood in the Form of an Angle of 30°—Crossing the Path*, 1969.

Executed for the *Earth Art* exhibition at Cornell University that year.

Photograph © Jan Dibbets / Herbert F. Johnson Museum of Art, Cornell University.

Fig. 75

Jan Dibbets, *A Trace in the woods in the form of a line of trees painted white,* 1969, Ithaca, NY.

Photograph © Jan Dibbets / Herbert F. Johnson Museum of Art, Cornell University.



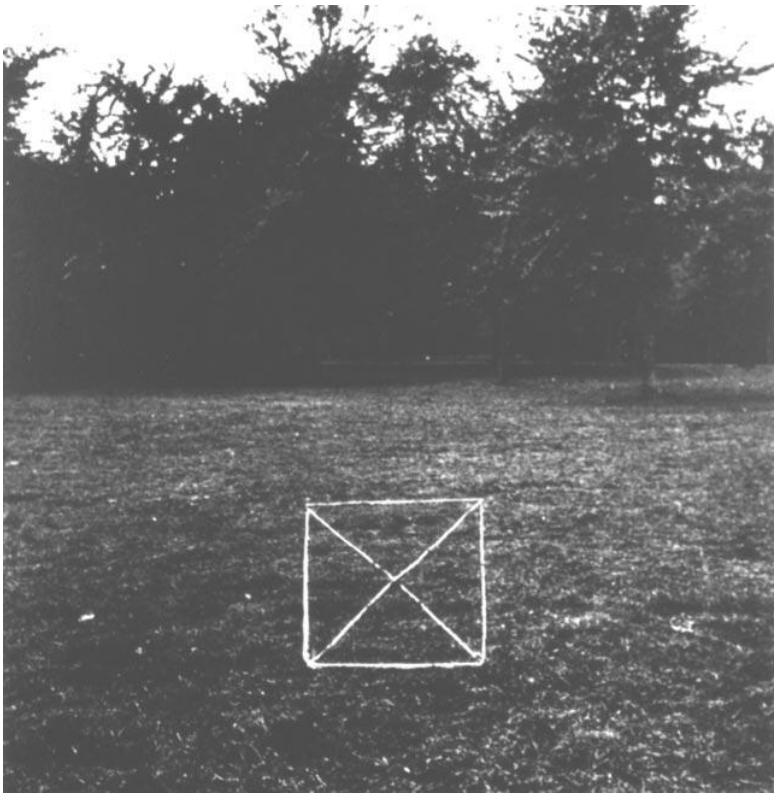


Fig. 76

Jan Dibbets, *Perspective Correction*, 1968.

Black/white photograph by Jan Dibbets.

Original dimensions variable.

Photograph © Jan Dibbets.

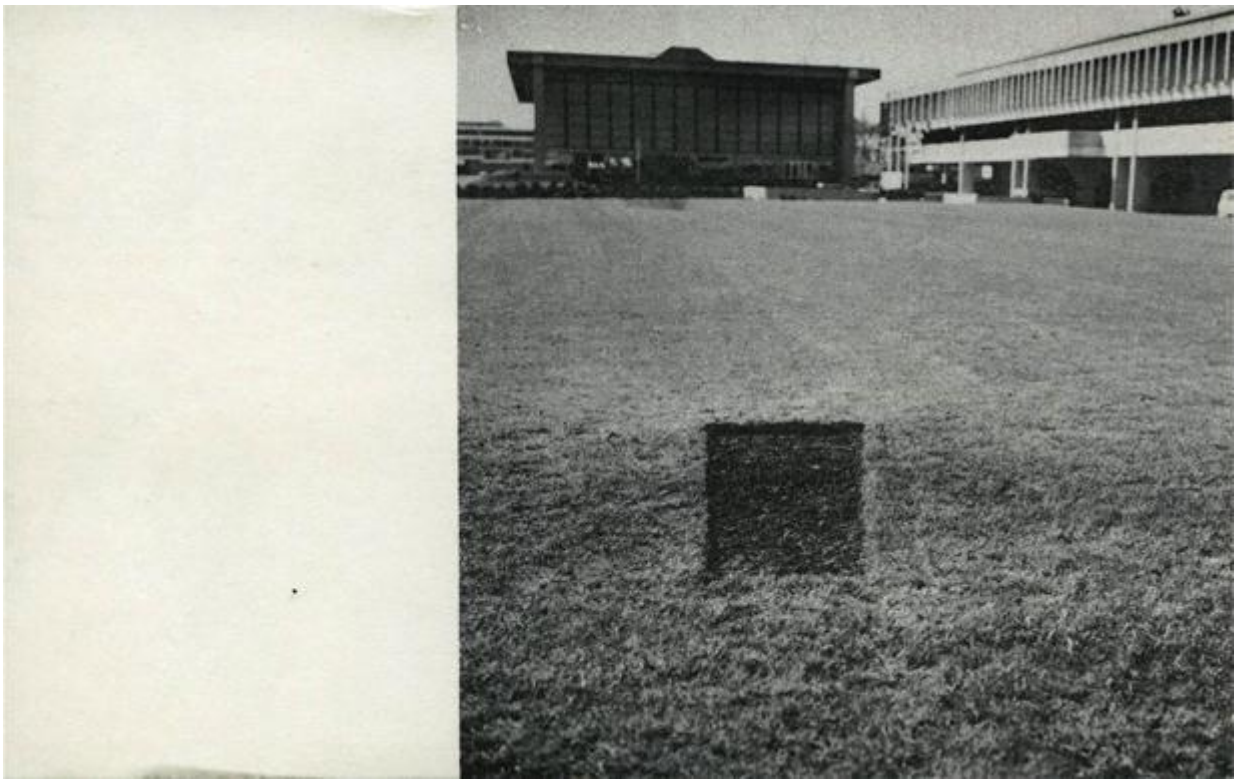


Fig. 77

Jan Dibbets, *Perspective Correction*, 1969.

Photographer unknown (possibly Jan Dibbets himself); original dimensions variable.

Photograph © Jan Dibbets.

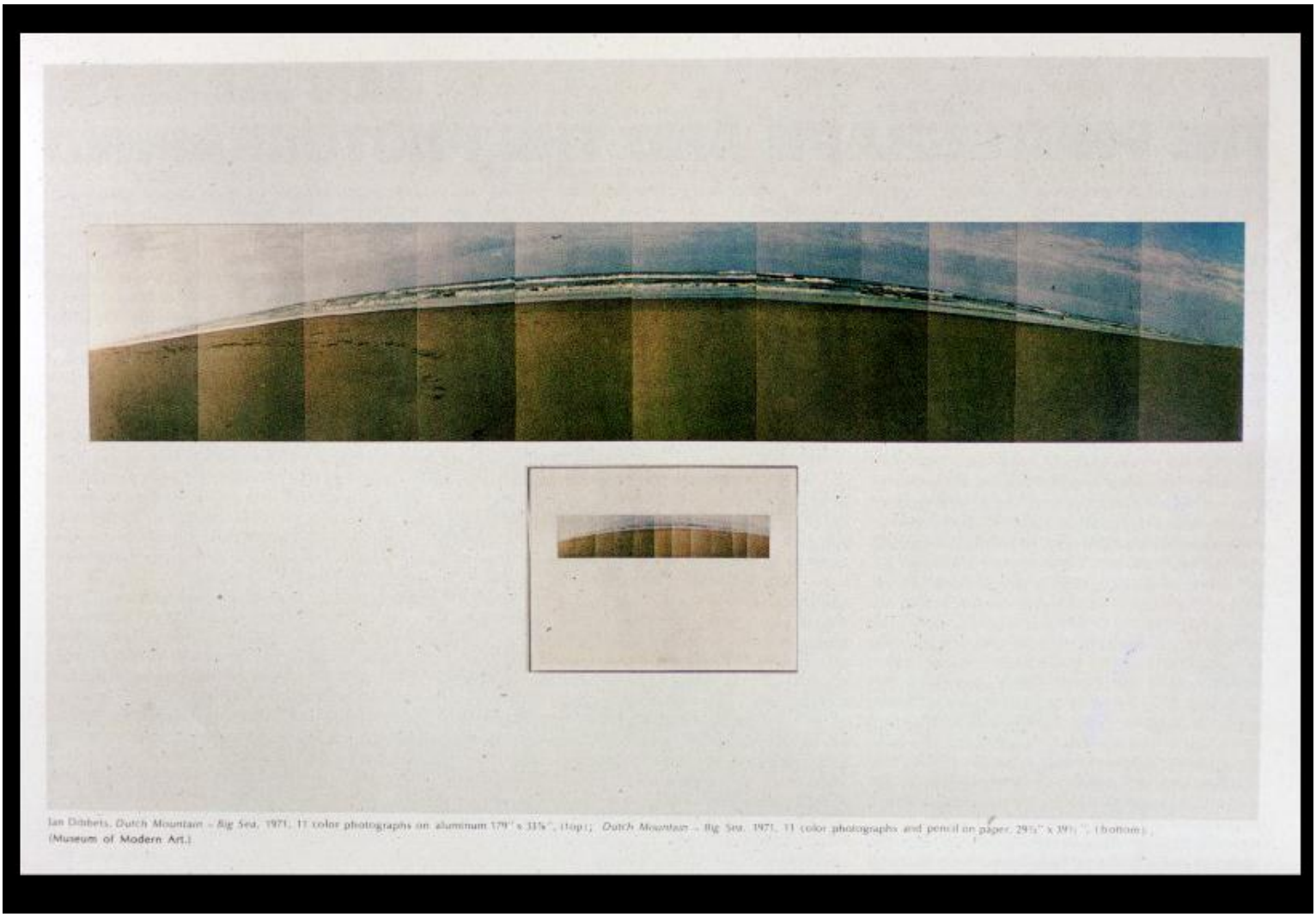


Fig. 78

Jan Dibbets, *Dutch Mountain, Big Sea*, 1971.

Colour photographs on aluminium, original dimensions unknown.

Photograph © Jan Dibbets.



Fig. 79

Jan Dibbets**,** *Comet Land / Sky / Land 6 ° – 72 °*, 1973.

Installation shot, original dimensions: 315 x 318 cm.

Photograph © Jan Dibbets.

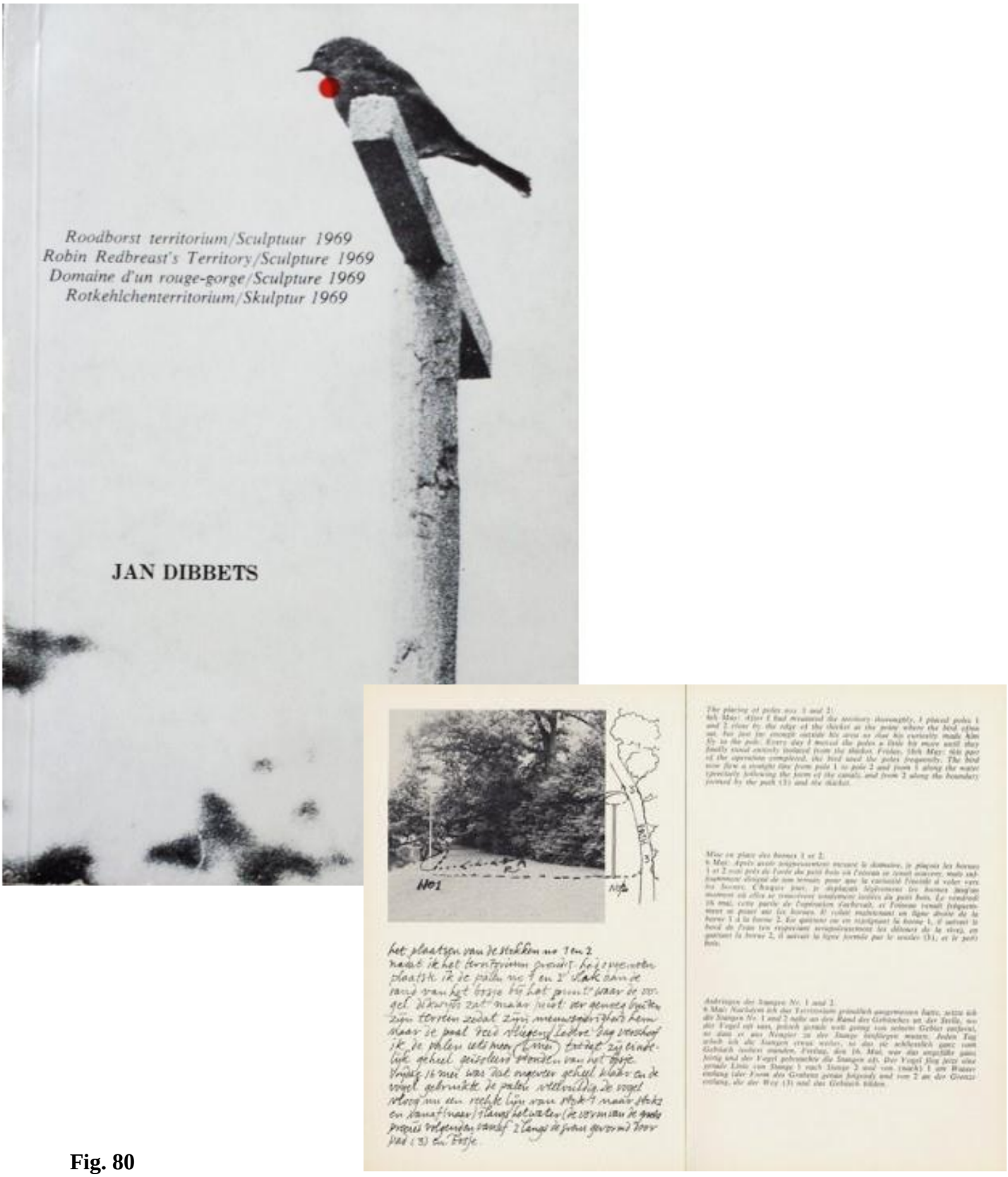


Fig. 80

Jan Dibbets, *Robin Redbreast's Territory/Sculpture,* 1969. Booklet – original dimensions unknown. © Jan Dibbets.

Fig. 81

Nancy Holt, *Concrete Visions*, 1967.

Composite inkjet from original 126 format black and white negatives in 2012, original dimensions unknown.

Photographs © Holt-Smithson Foundation.

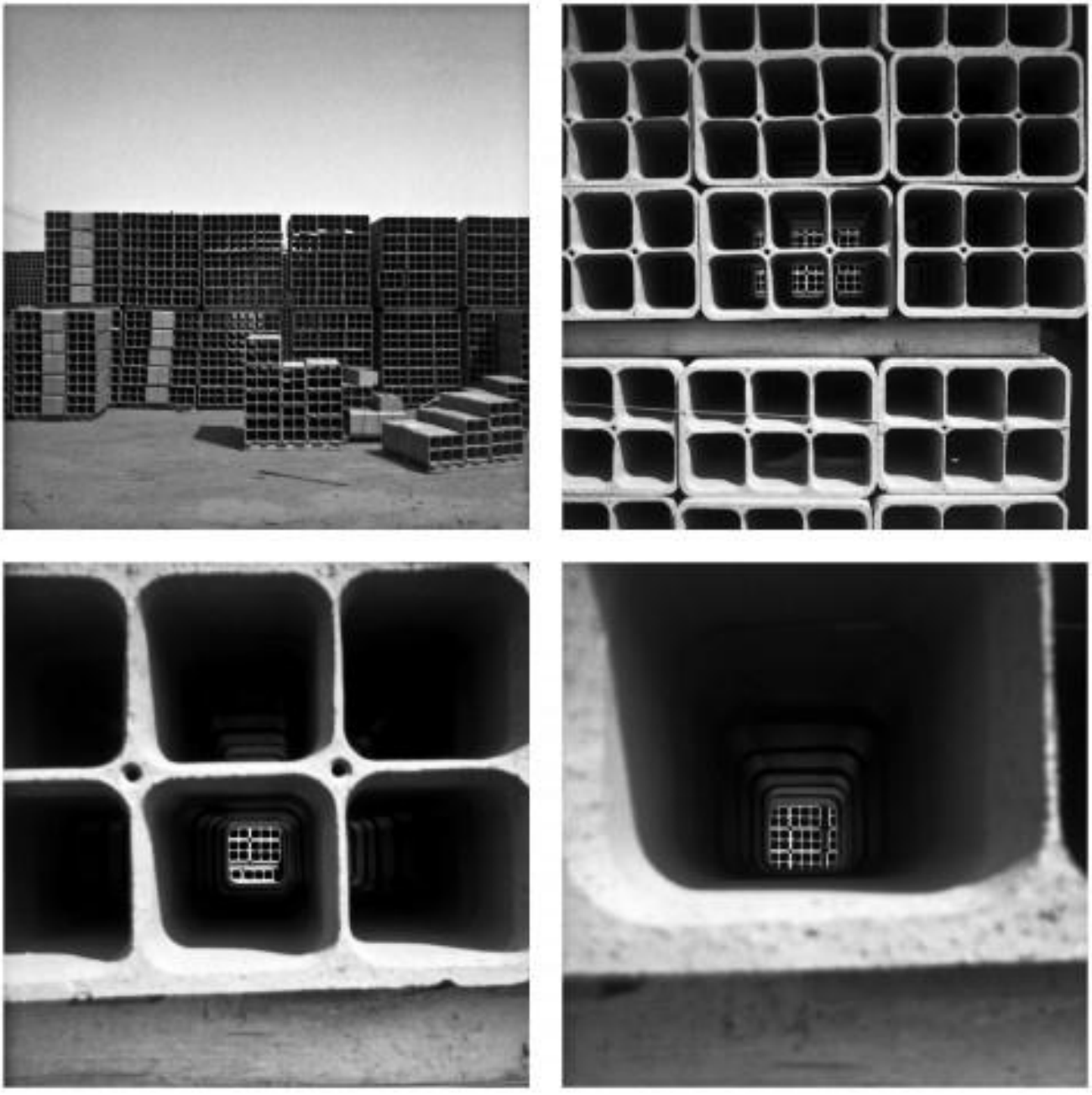


Fig. 82

Nancy Holt, *Trail Markers*, 1969.

20 inkjet prints on archival rag paper, printed in 2012 from original 126 format transparencies.

Photographs © Holt-Smithson Foundation.

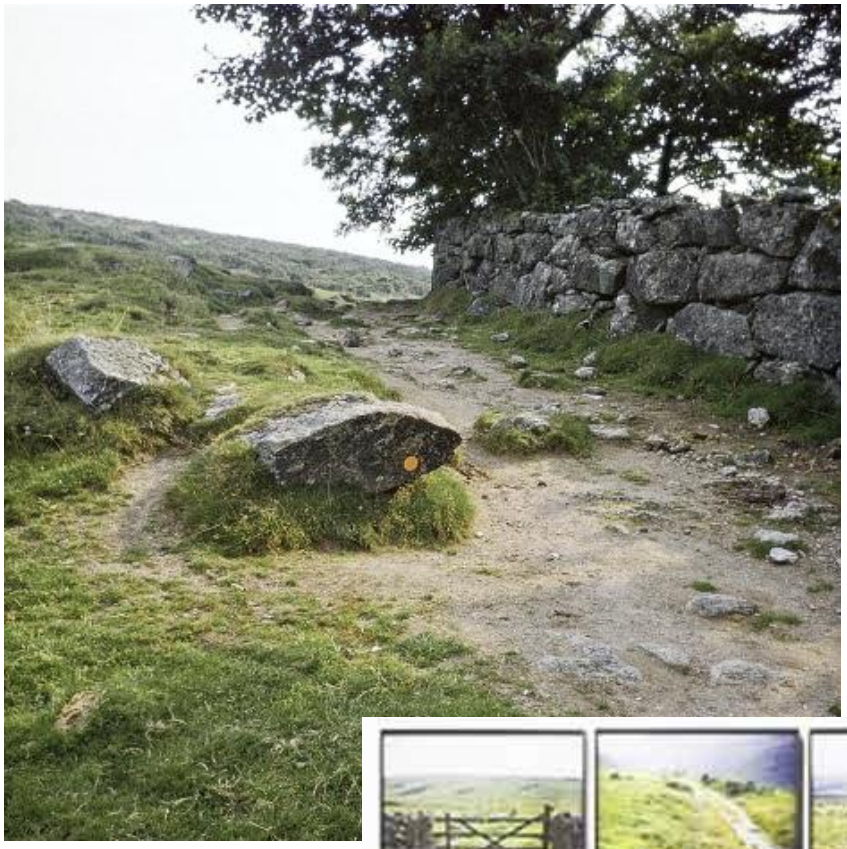




Fig. 83

Nancy Holt, Sun Tunnels, 1973-76.

Photograph © Holt-Smithson Foundation.



Fig. 84

Nancy Holt, Sun Tunnels at the moment of sunset during the summer solstice, 1978 (16 mm).

Photograph by Nancy Holt, original dimensions unknown.

Photograph © Holt-Smithson Foundation.





Figs. 85-86

Nancy Holt, Sun Tunnels, 1973-76

Inside view of tunnel (above)

and drawing of inside constellation

of northern tunnel, 1976 (right).

Photograph and drawing by Holt.

© Holt-Smithson Foundation.

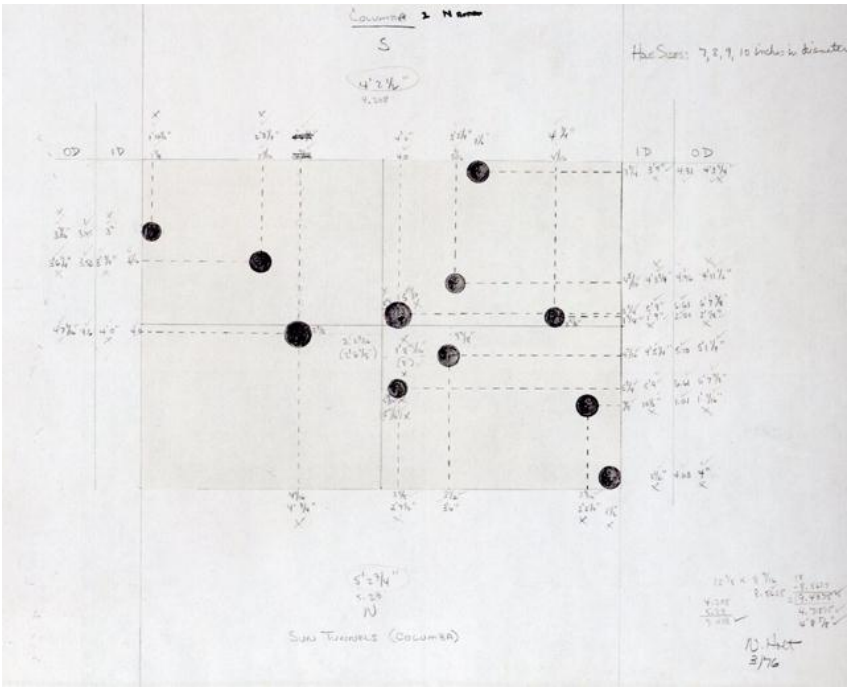


Fig. 87

Nancy Holt, preparatory drawing of Sun Tunnels, 1975.

Pencil and 12 black-and-white photographs on paper.

Drawing and photograph © Holt-Smithson Foundation.

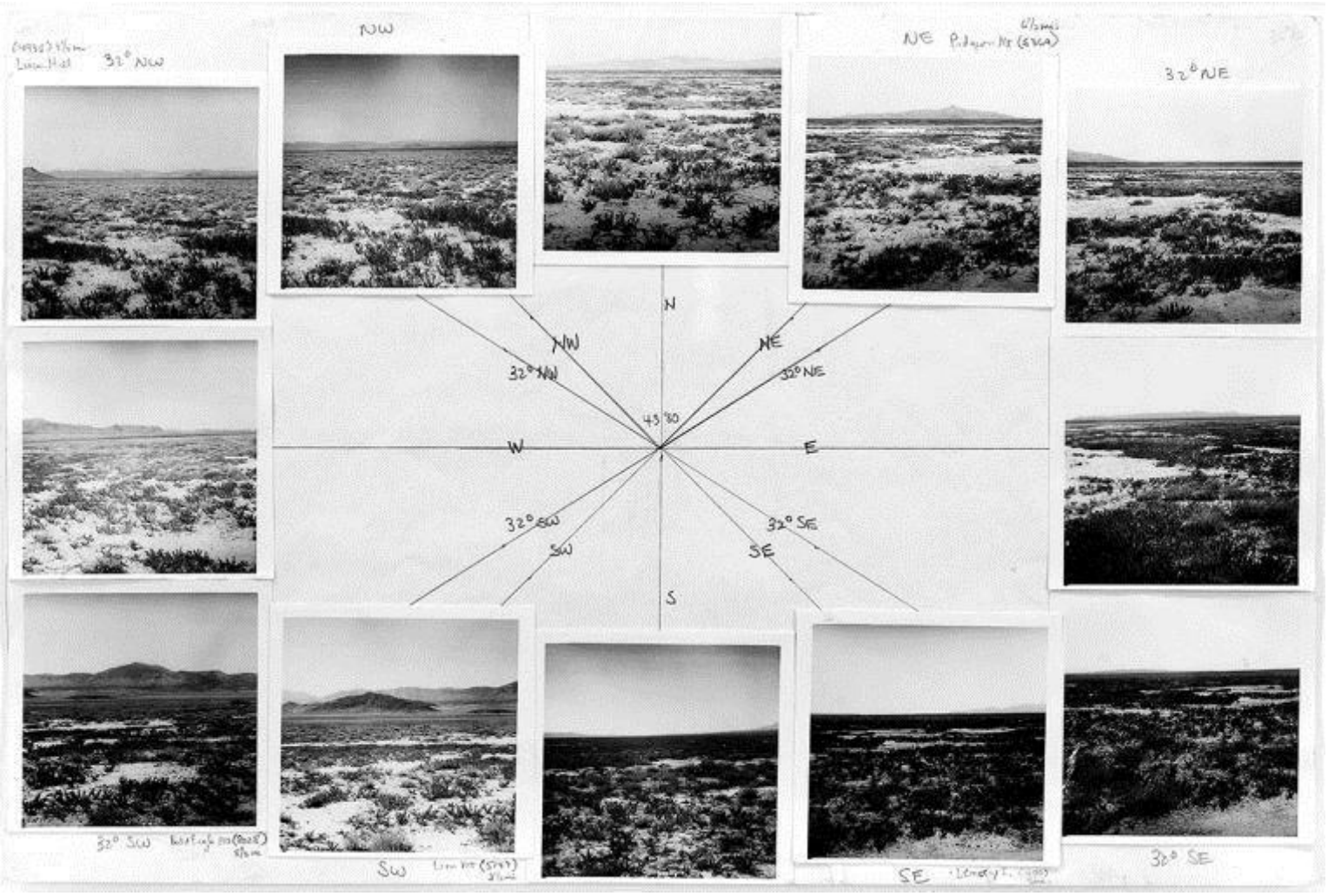


Fig. 88

Nancy Holt, *Missoula Ranch Locators: Vision Encompassed*, 1972.

Photograph © Holt-Smithson Foundation.



Fig. 89a

Nancy Holt, poster of *Missoula Ranch Locators*, 1972. Poster

© Smithsonian Archives of American Art, Washington DC / Holt-Smithson Foundation.

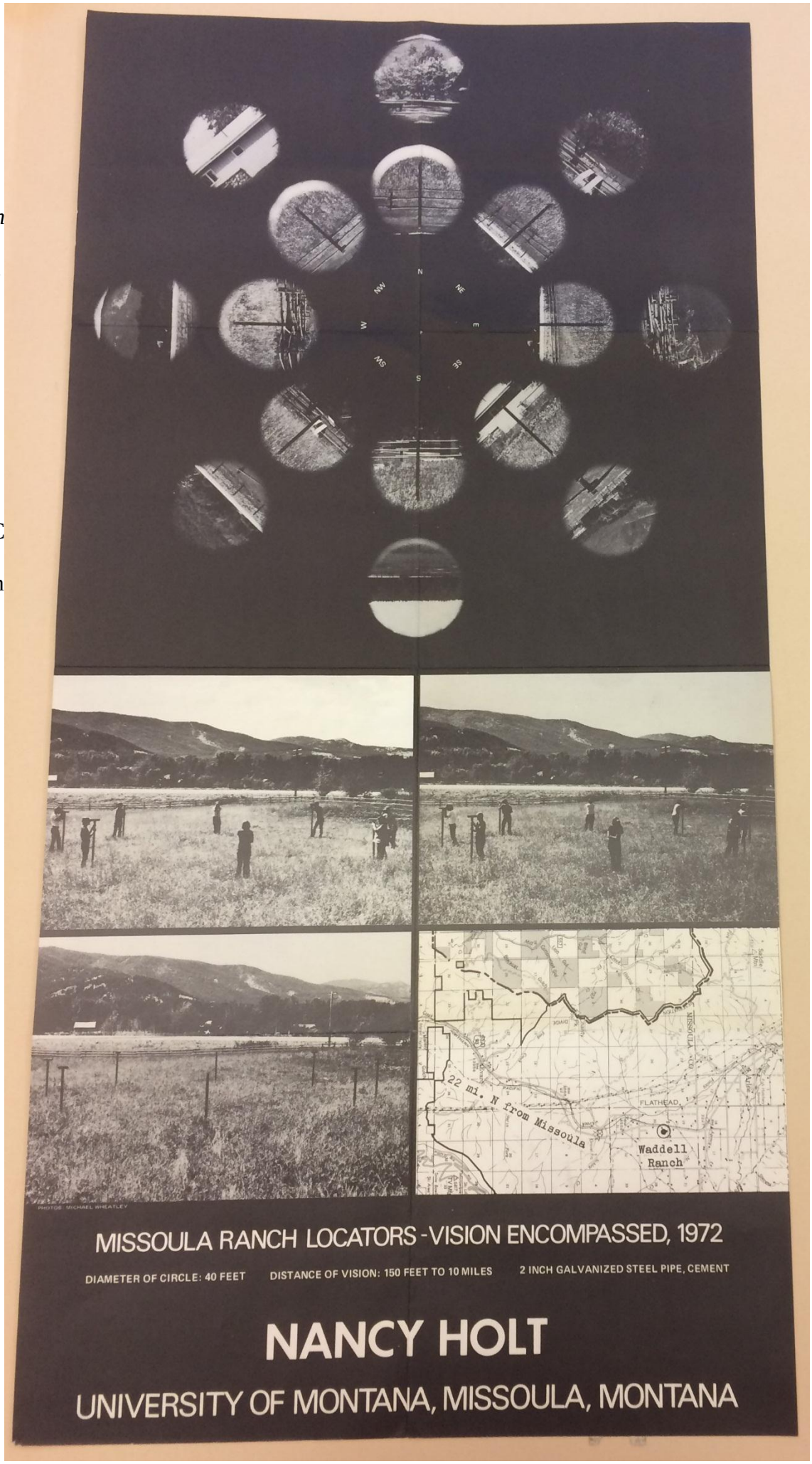


Fig. 89b

Detail of Nancy Holt, poster of *Missoula Ranch Locators*, 1972.

Poster © Smithsonian Archives of American Art, Washington DC / Holt-Smithson Foundation.

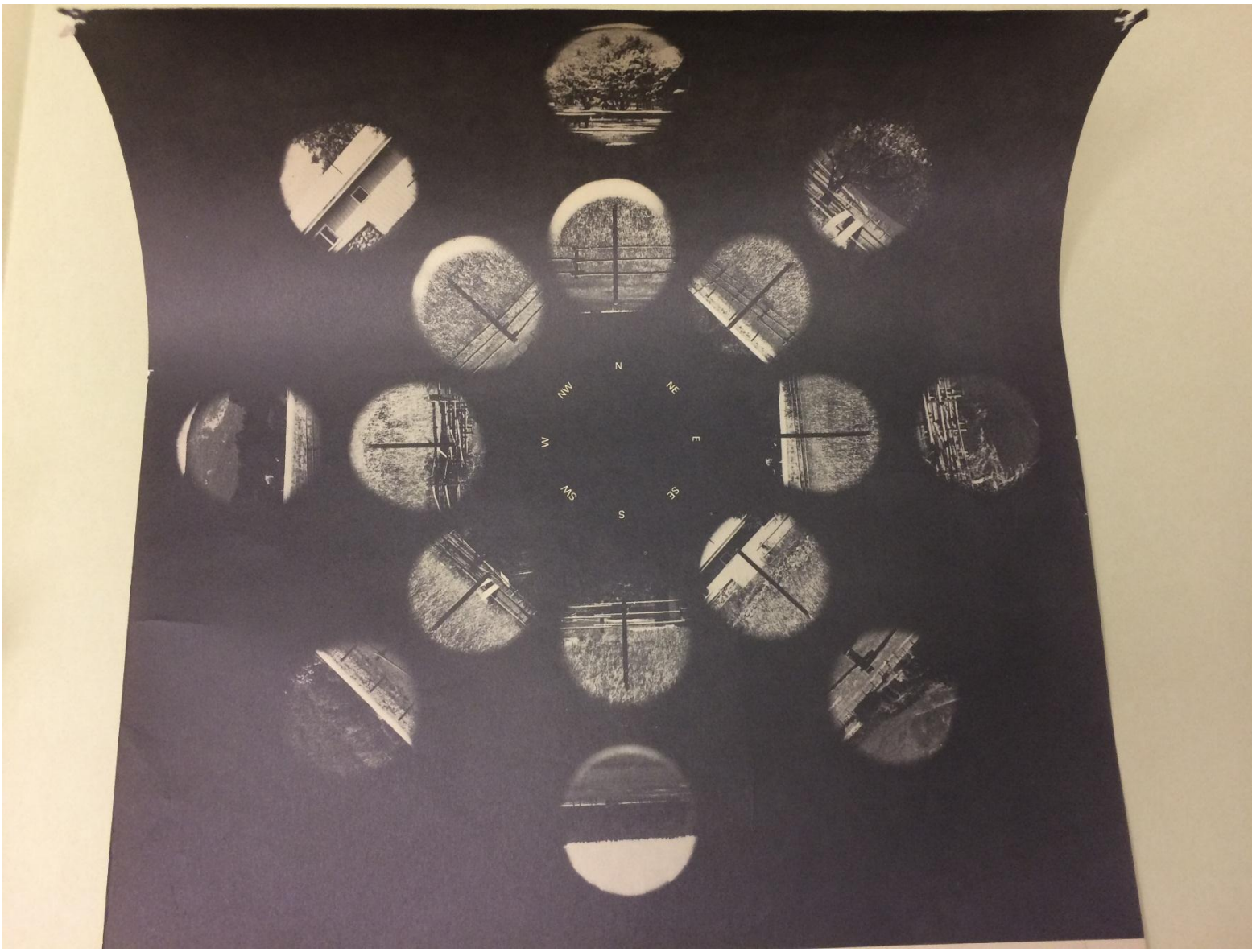


Fig. 89c

Detail of Nancy Holt, poster of *Missoula Ranch Locators*, 1972.

Poster © Smithsonian Archives of American Art, Washington DC / Holt-Smithson.

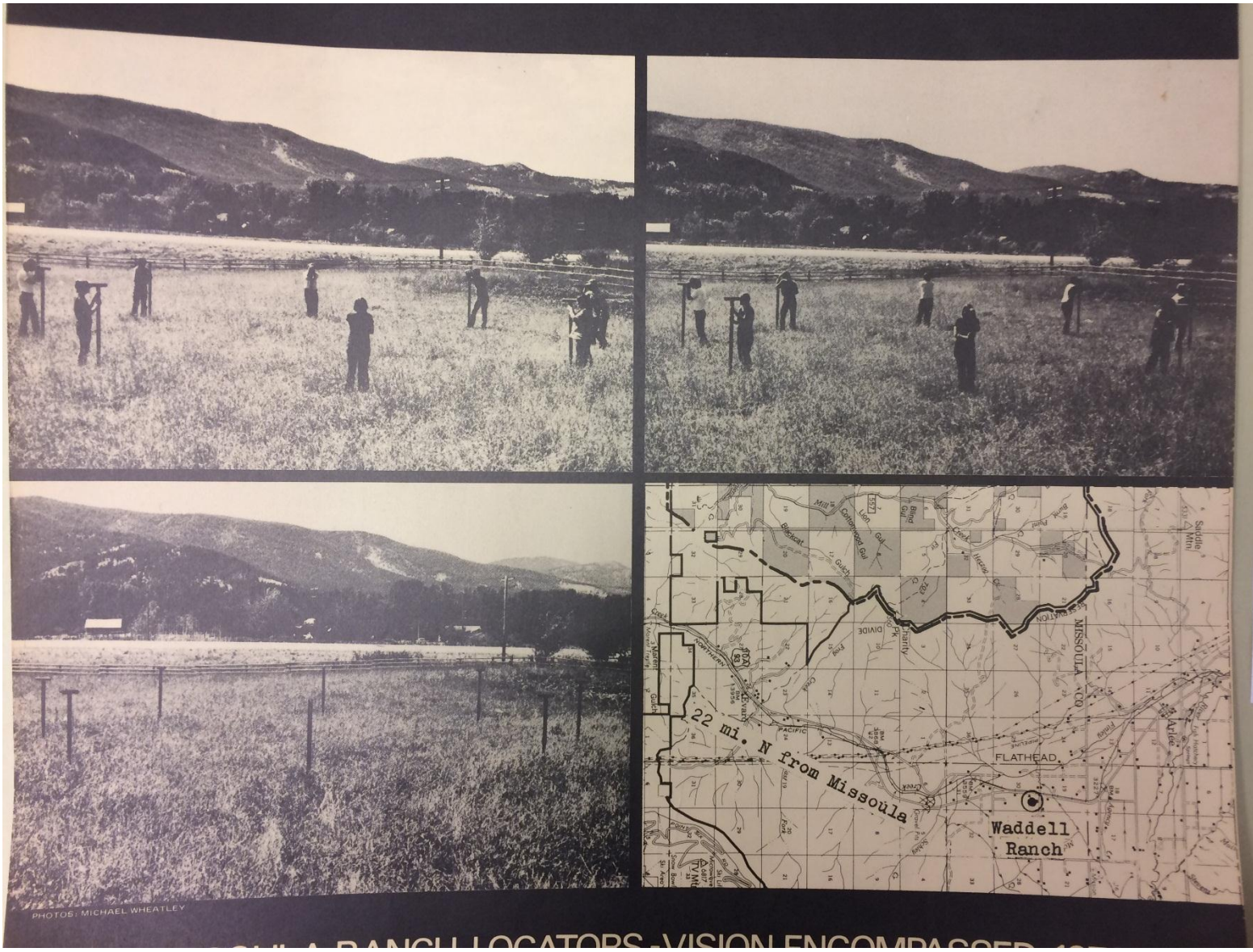


Fig. 90

Nancy Holt, *Sunlight in Sun Tunnels,* 1976.

Photographs © Holt-Smithson Foundation.

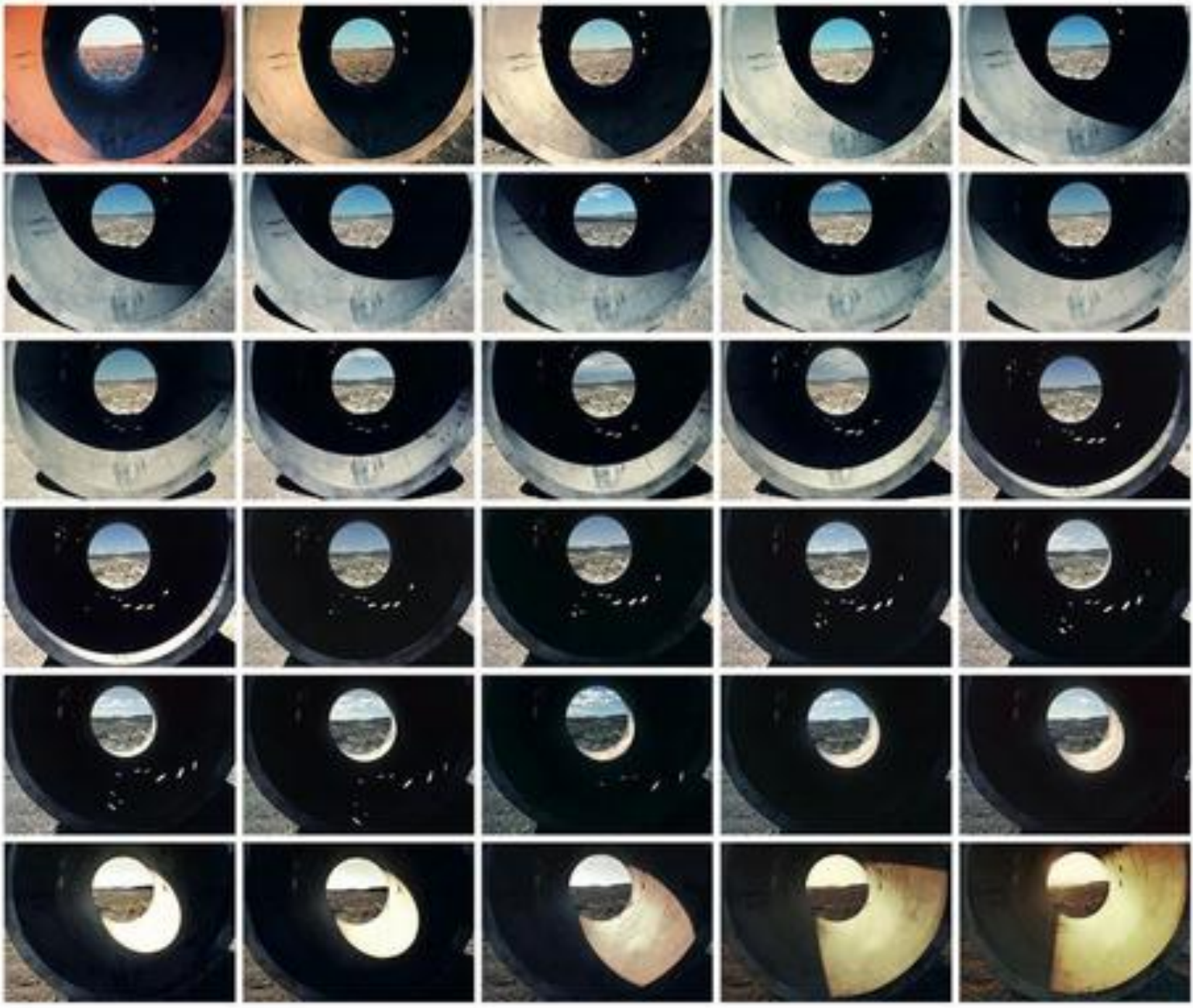
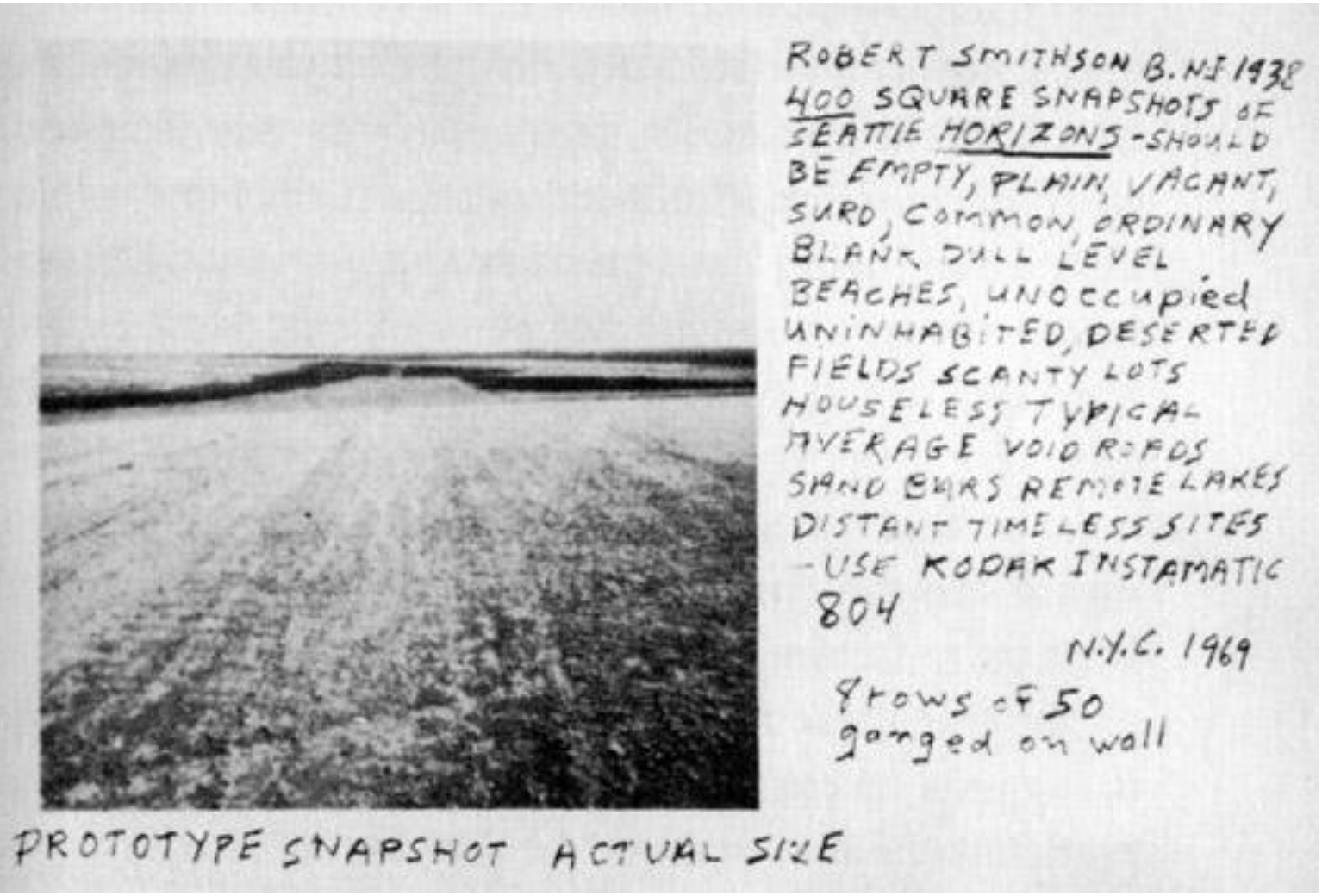


Fig. 91

Robert Smithson, instruction card for *400 Seattle Horizons*, 1969.

Photograph © Holt-Smithson Foundation.



Figs. 92-95

Robert Smithson, four ‘photo markers’ from the series *Six Stops on a Section*, 1968.

Photographs © Holt-Smithson Foundation.

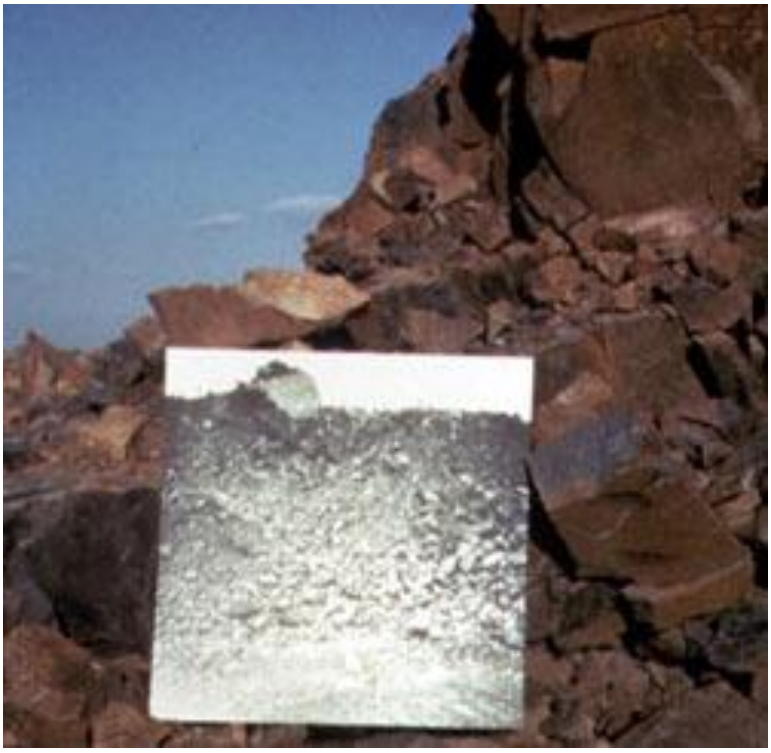








Fig. 96

Robert Smithson, nine photographs *Yucatan Mirror Displacements*, 1969.

Nine C-prints from 35 mm slides, 24 x 24 inches each.

Photographs © Holt-Smithson Foundation.



Figs. 97-100

Robert Smithson, four photographs *Mirror Displacements in England*, 1969.

Various locations, 126 format, chromogenic-development slides.

Photographs © Holt-Smithson Foundation.







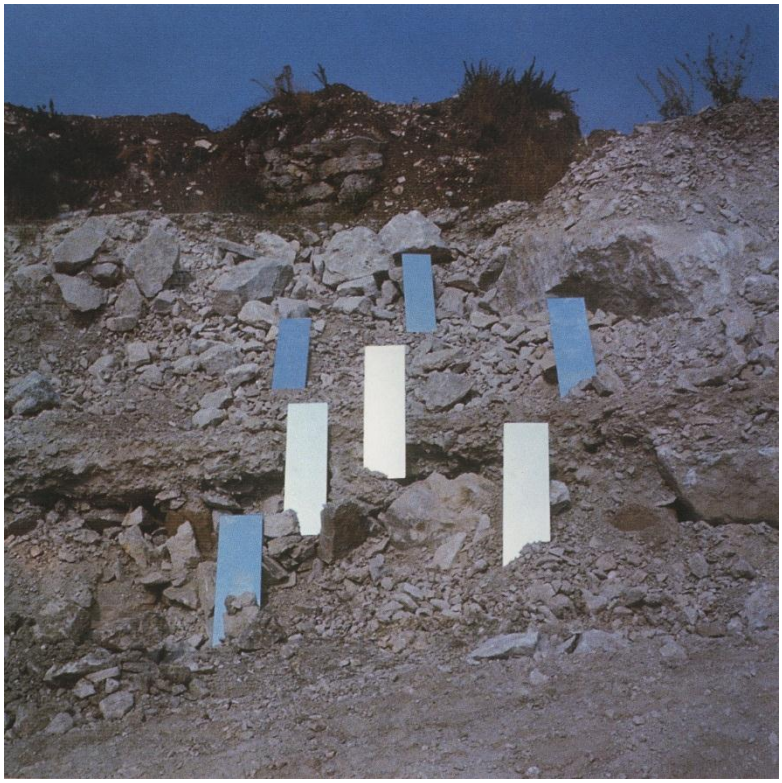


Fig. 101

Robert Smithson, *Mirror Trail, New Jersey,* 1969.

126 format, chromogenic-development slide.

Photograph © Holt-Smithson Foundation.

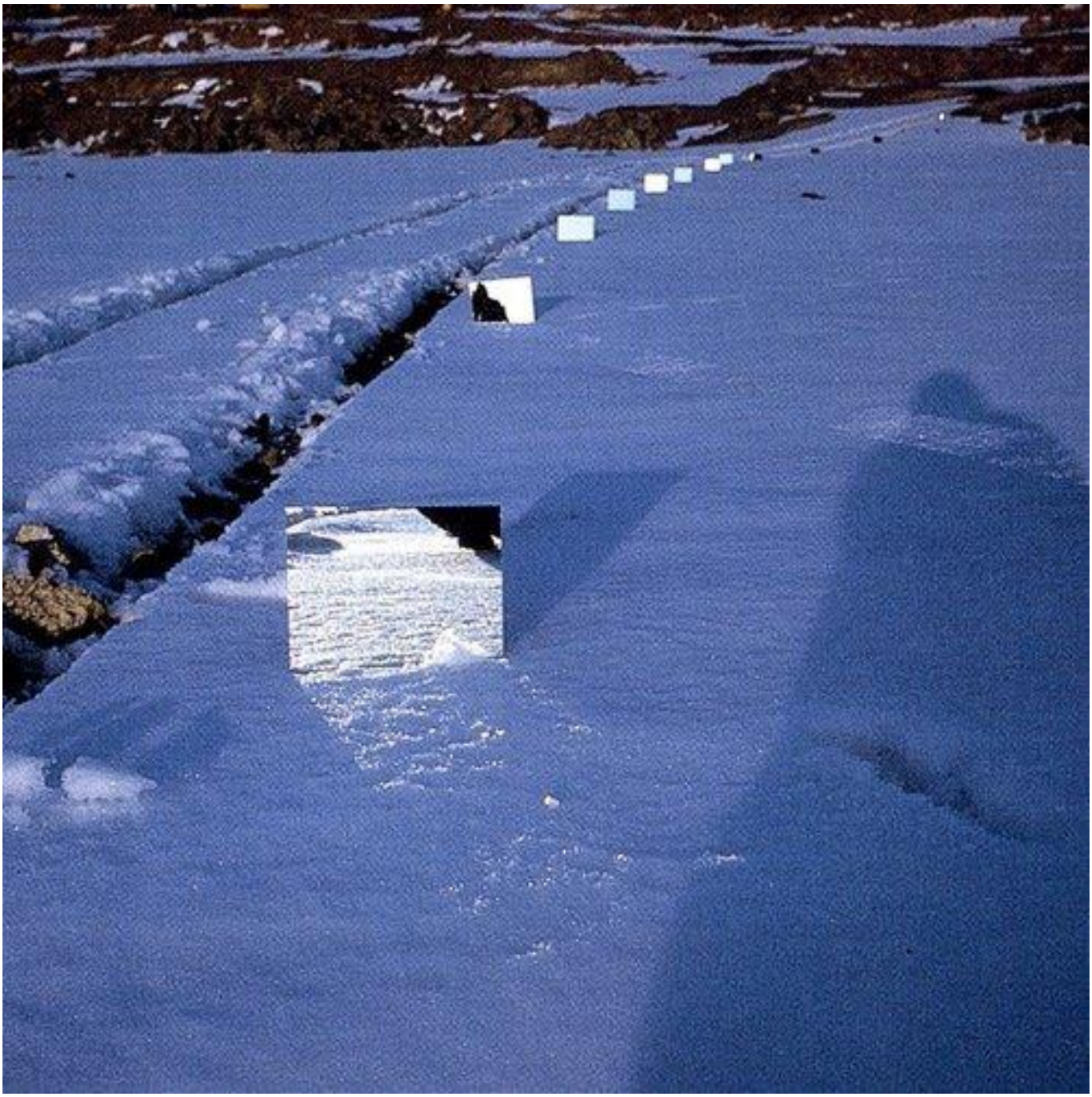
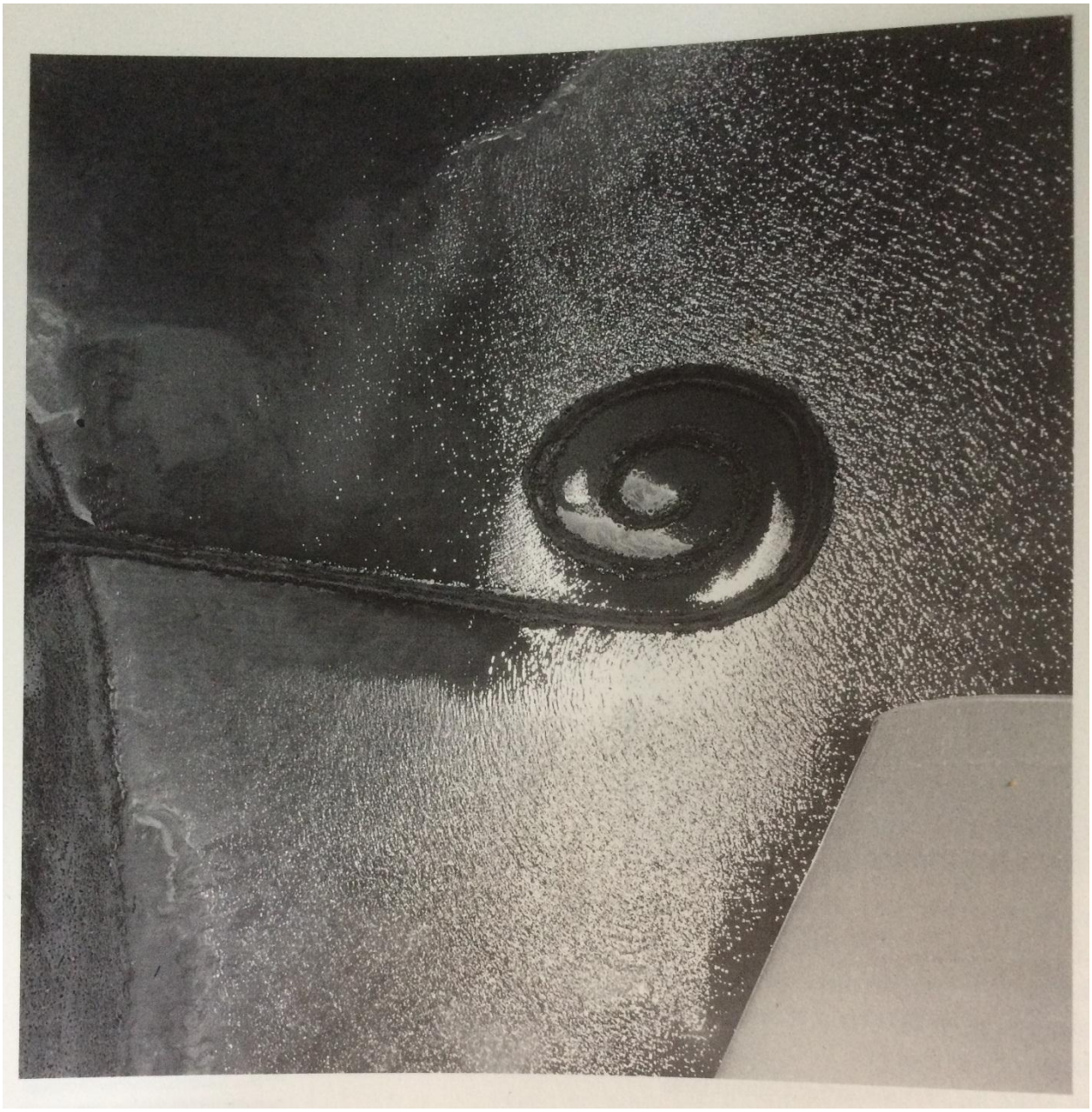


Fig. 102

Robert Smithson, *Spiral Jetty*, photograph by Smithson.

Gelatin-silver print (reprint), original dimensions unknown.

Photograph © Holt-Smithson Foundation.



Figs. 103 and 104

Robert Smithson, *Spiral Jetty*, first version.

Photograph © Holt-Smithson Foundation / Gianfranco Gorgoni.

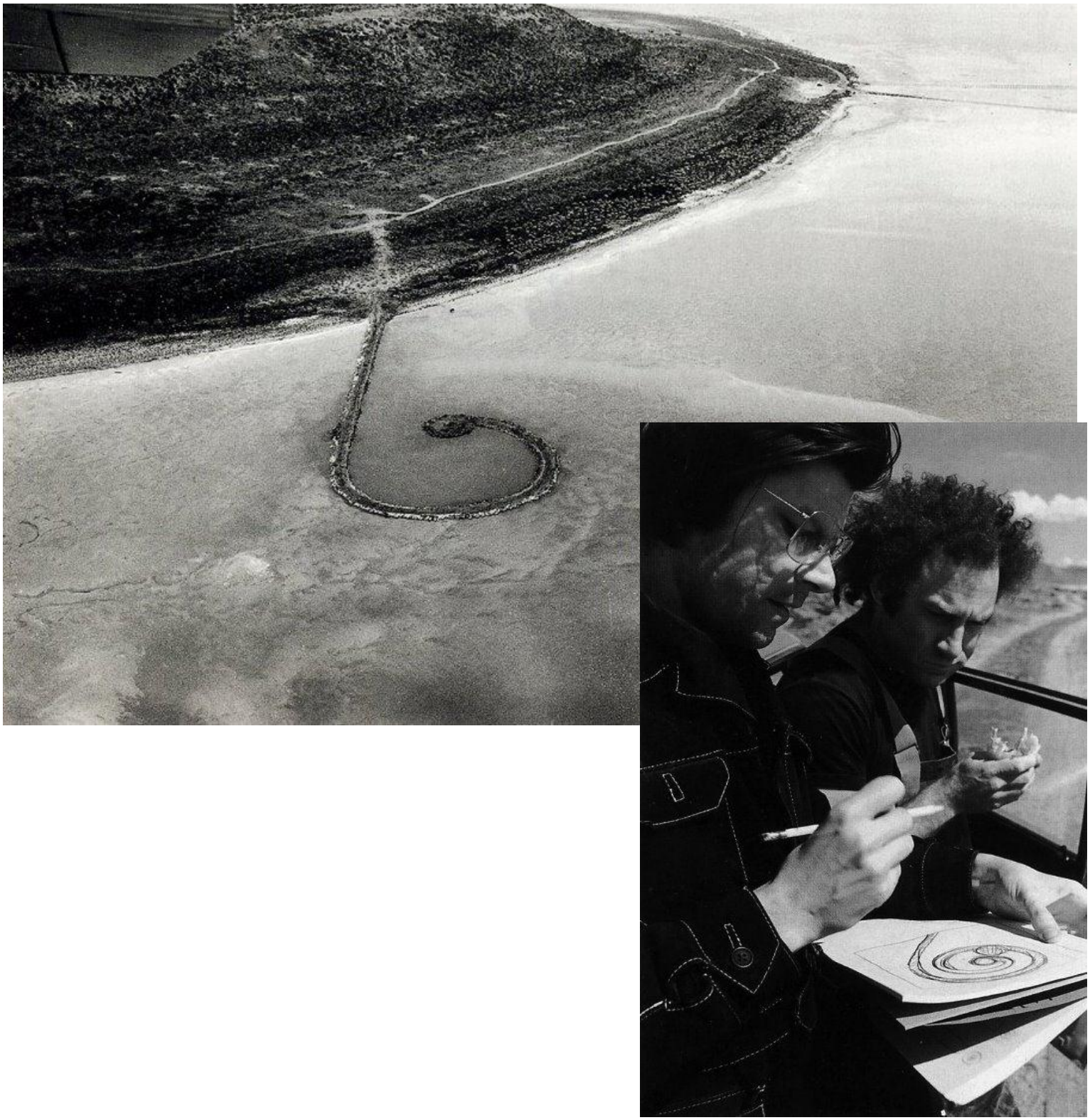


Fig. 105

Exhibition view of *Information,* 1970, Museum of Modern Art, New York City. (Photographer unknown.) With the photowork of Robert Smithson's *Spiral Jetty* on the far right.

Photograph © Smithsonian Institution, Archives of American Art.

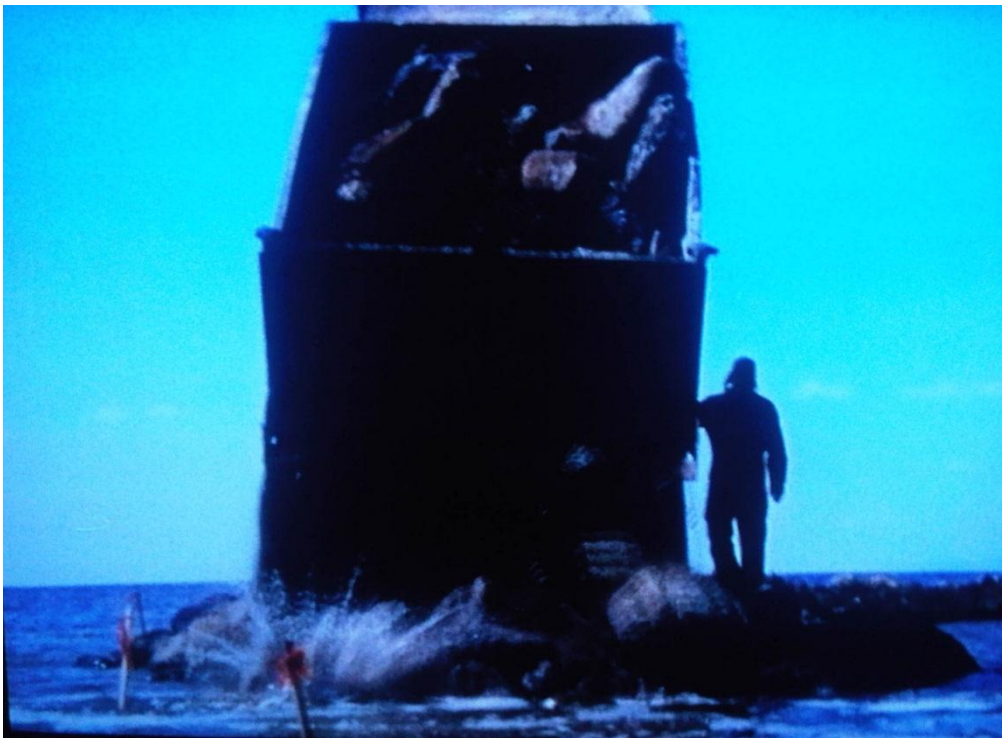


Fig. 106

Robert Smithson, *Spiral Jetty* (32 minutes, colour), 1970.

Film still, with bulldozer releasing stone and rock into the Great Salt Lake.

© Electronic Arts Intermix, New York City.



Figs. 107-110

Robert Smithson, *Spiral Jetty* (32 minutes, colour), 1970.

Film stills from the *Spiral Jetty* film: Robert Smithson running towards the end of the jetty, filmed from helicopter overhead. © Electronic Arts Intermix, New York City.



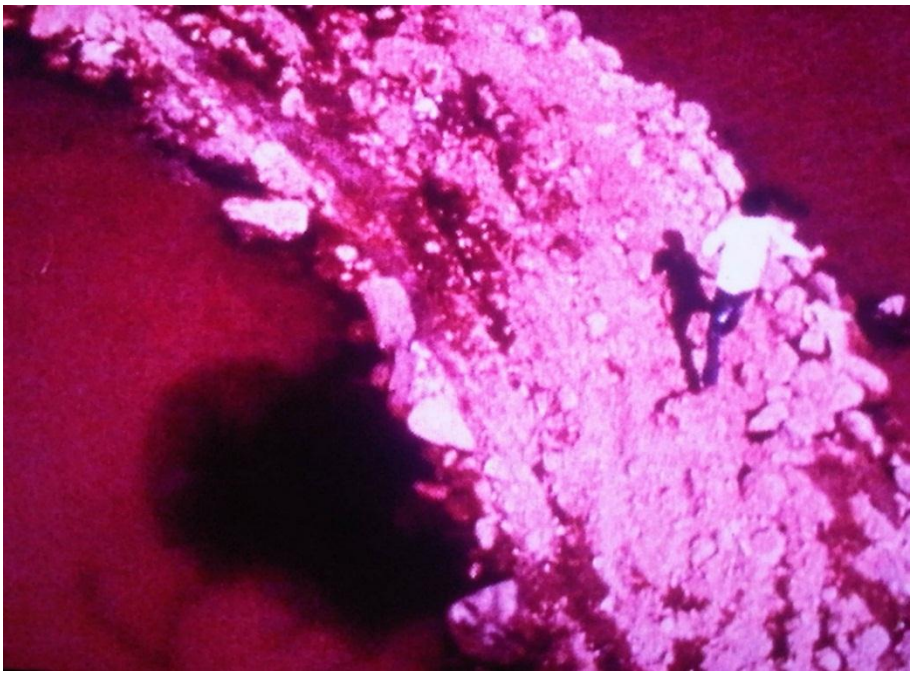






Fig. 111

Robert Smithson, *Spiral Jetty* (32 minutes, colour), 1970.

Film still from the film *Spiral Jetty*, with sun reflecting in the water.

© Electronic Arts Intermix, New York City.



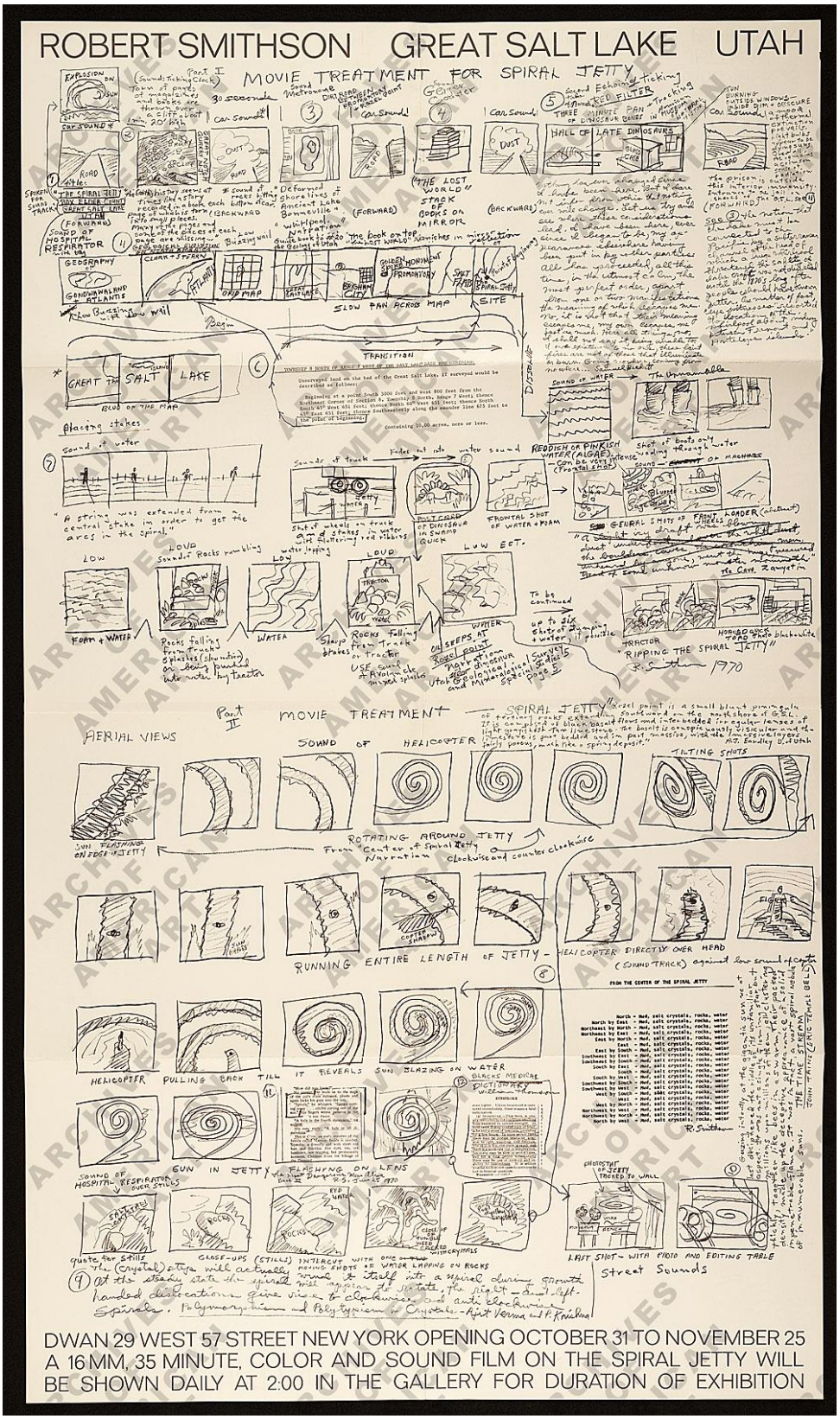


Fig. 112

Exhibition poster Dwan Gallery New York, showing Smithson's 'storyboard' for his film *Spiral Jetty.*

Poster © Smithsonian Institution, Archives of American Art.

Fig. 113

Robert Smithson, *Spiral Jetty* (32 minutes, colour), 1970.

Film still from *Spiral Jetty,* with sun and sun flares in the opening shots of the film.

© Electronic Arts Intermix, New York City.

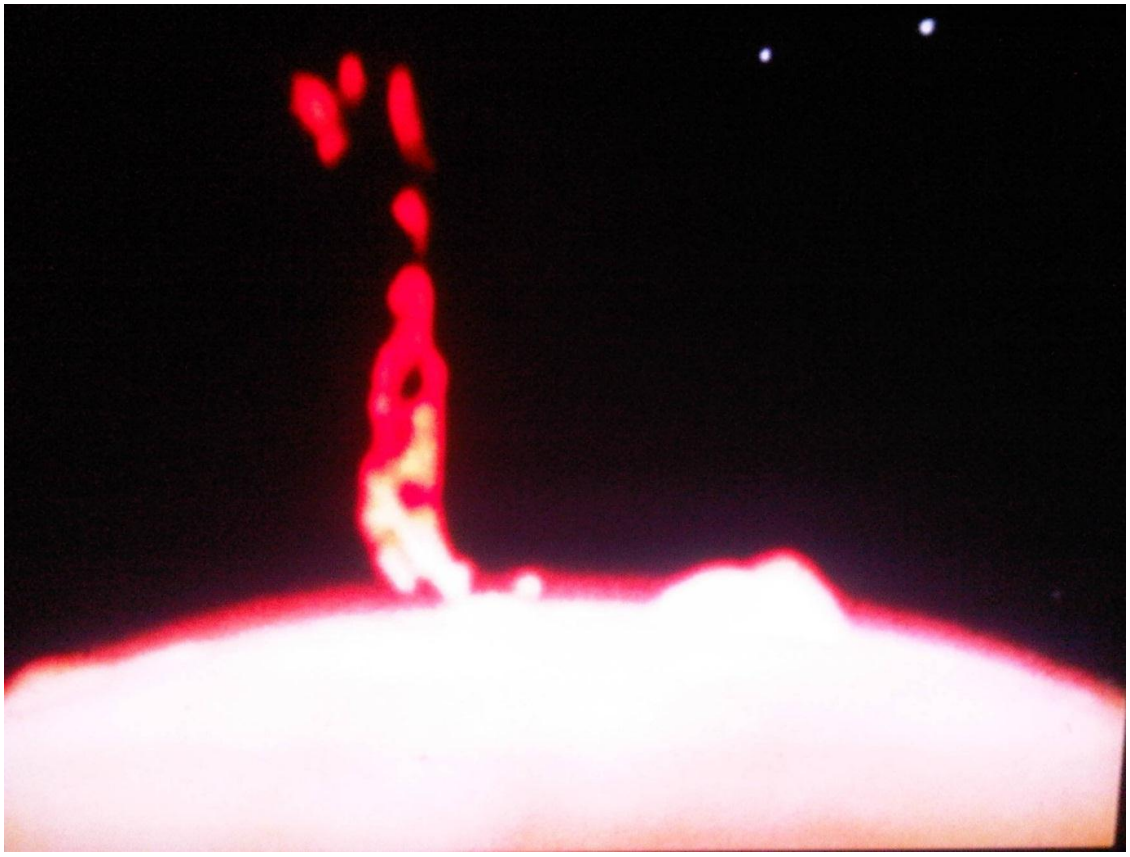


Fig. 114

Robert Smithson, *Spiral Jetty* (32 minutes, colour), 1970. Film still of the film *Spiral Jetty,* with view from the front of the car on the desert road. © EAI, New York City.



Fig. 115

Robert Smithson, *Spiral Jetty* (32 minutes, colour), 1970. Film still of the film *Spiral Jetty*, with paper snips whirling down to the earth. © Electronic Arts Intermix, NYC.

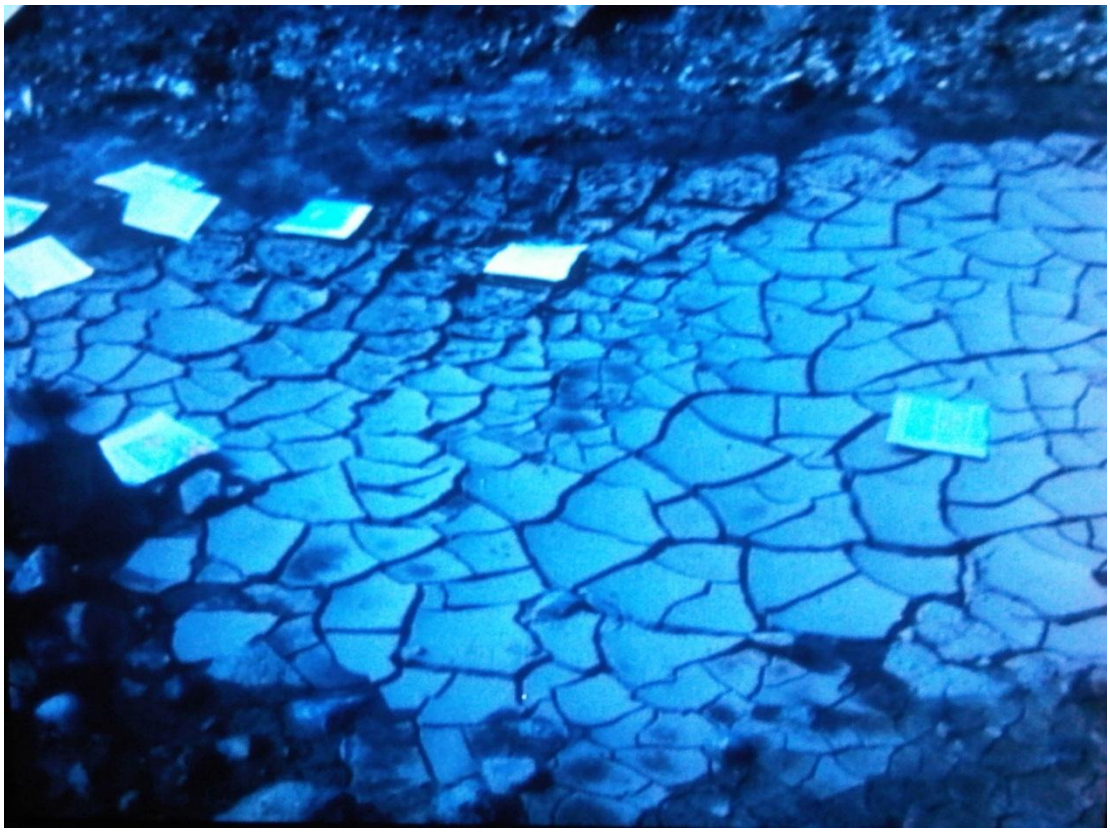


Fig. 116

Robert Smithson, *Spiral Jetty* (32 minutes, colour), 1970. Film still of the film *Spiral Jetty*, with view from the back of the car on the desert road. © Electronic Arts Intermix, New York City.



Fig. 117

Robert Smithson, *Spiral Jetty* (32 minutes, colour), 1970.

Film still of the film *Spiral Jetty,* with the abstracted bulldozer moving rocks.

© Electronic Arts Intermix, New York City.



Fig. 118

Robert Smithson, *Spiral Jetty* (32 minutes, colour), 1970.

Film still of the film *Spiral Jetty,* with light effect as seen from above.

© Electronic Arts Intermix, New York City.



Fig. 119

Robert Smithson, *Spiral Jetty* (32 minutes, colour), 1970. Film still of the film *Spiral Jetty,* with artistic effect through vertical horizon. © Electronic Arts Intermix, NYC.

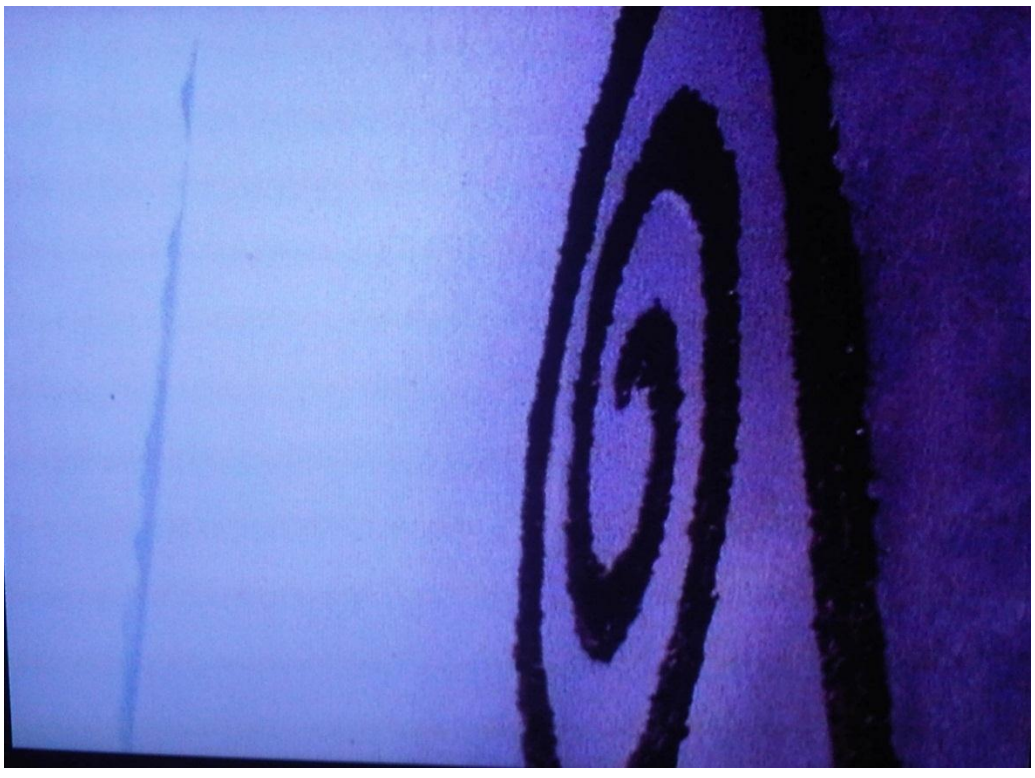


Fig. 120

Robert Smithson, *Spiral Jetty* (32 minutes, colour), 1970. Film stills of the film *Spiral Jetty*, with dialectics of bulldozer and water. © Electronic Arts Intermix, NYC.

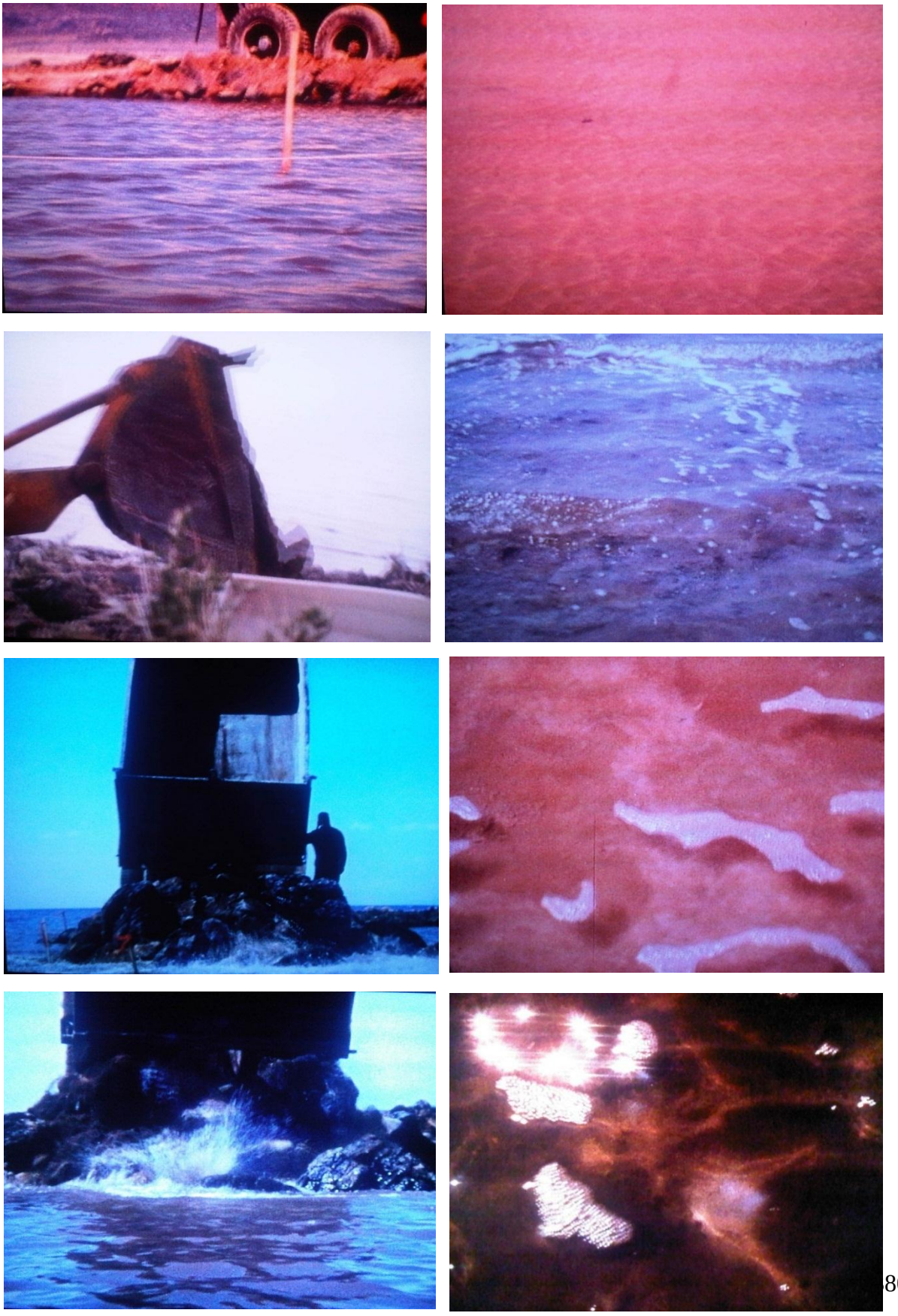
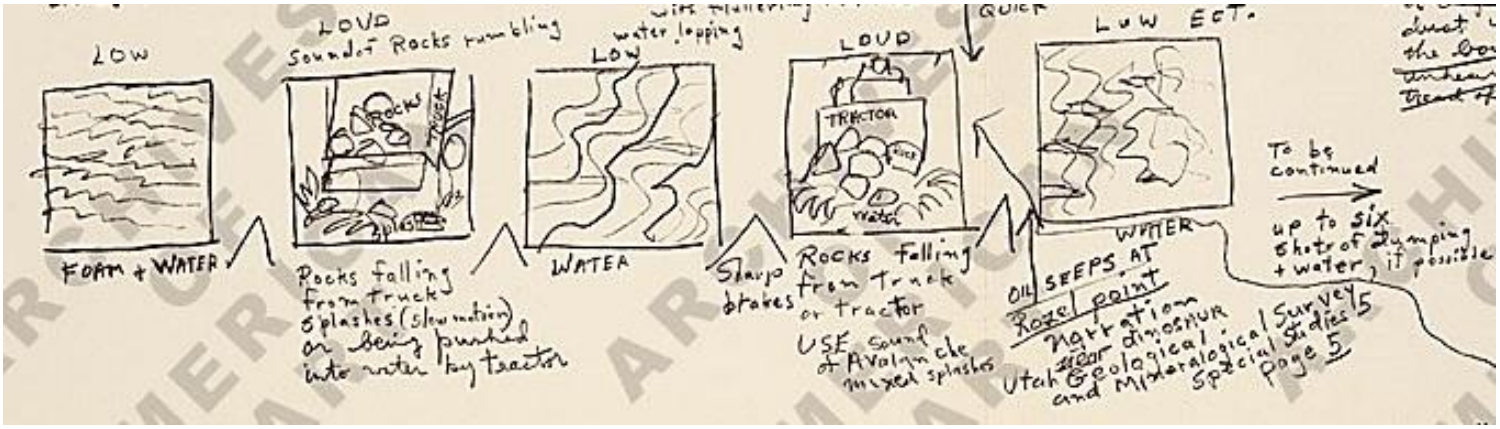


Fig. 121

Detail (with dialectic of sound noted) of exhibition poster Dwan Gallery New York, showing Smithson's 'storyboard' for his film *Spiral Jetty.*

Poster © Smithsonian Institution, Archives of American Art.

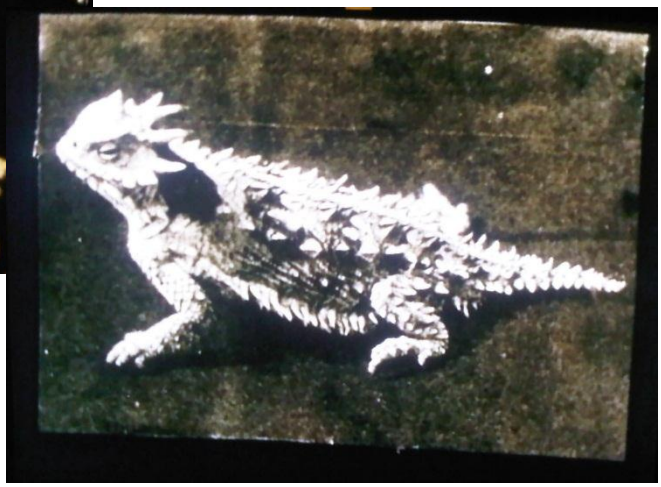


Figs. 122-123

Robert Smithson, *Spiral Jetty* (32 minutes, colour), 1970. Film stills from the film *Spiral Jetty*, with shots of the dinosaurs (fig. 122) and the lizard (fig. 123).

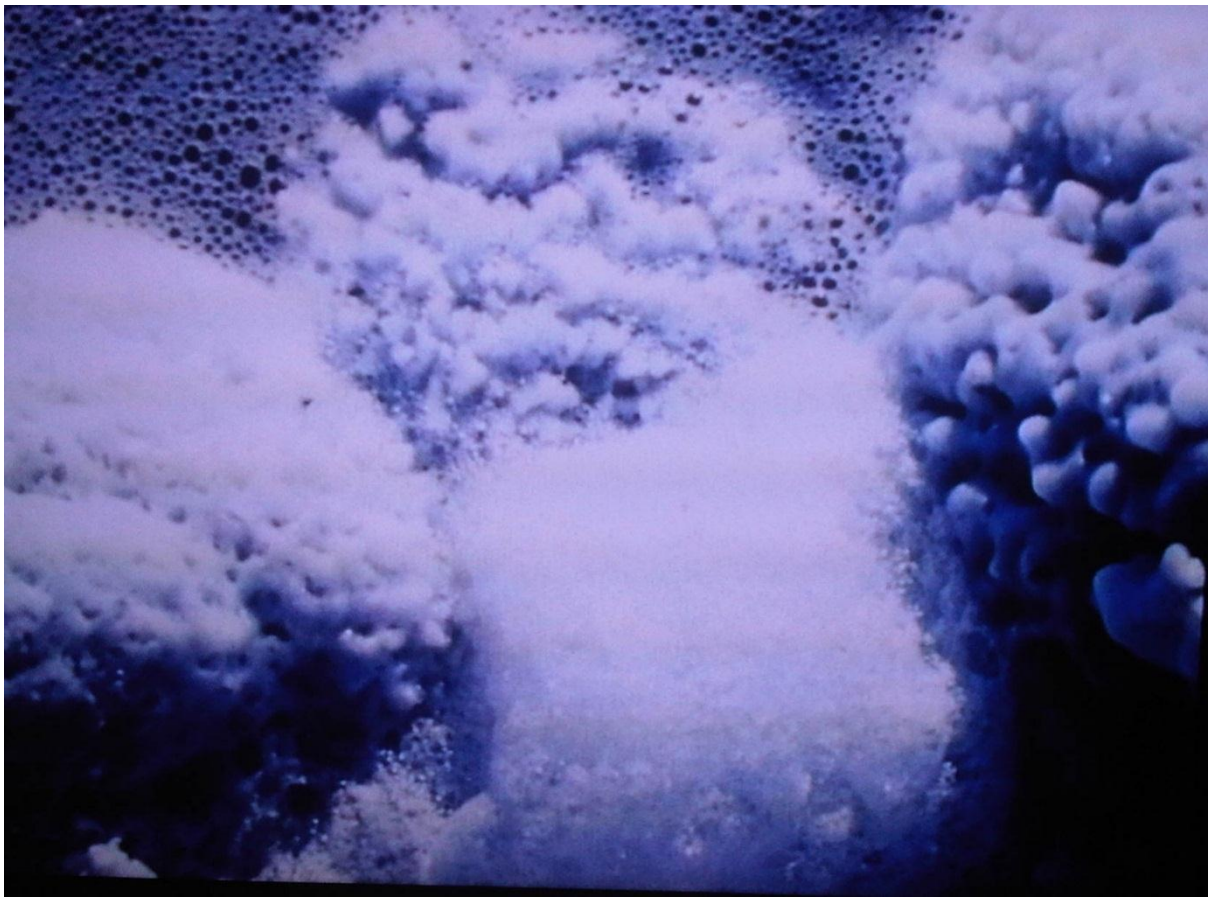
© Electronic Arts Intermix, New York City.

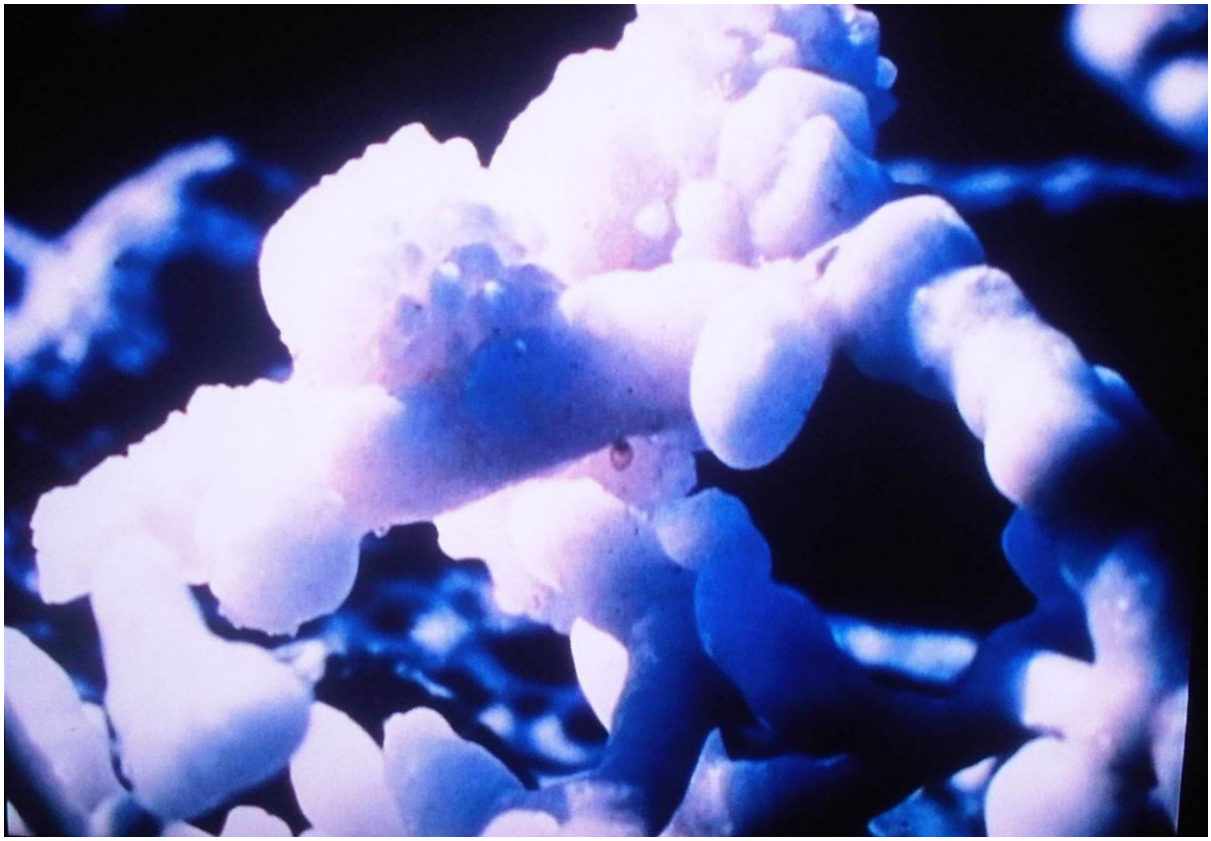




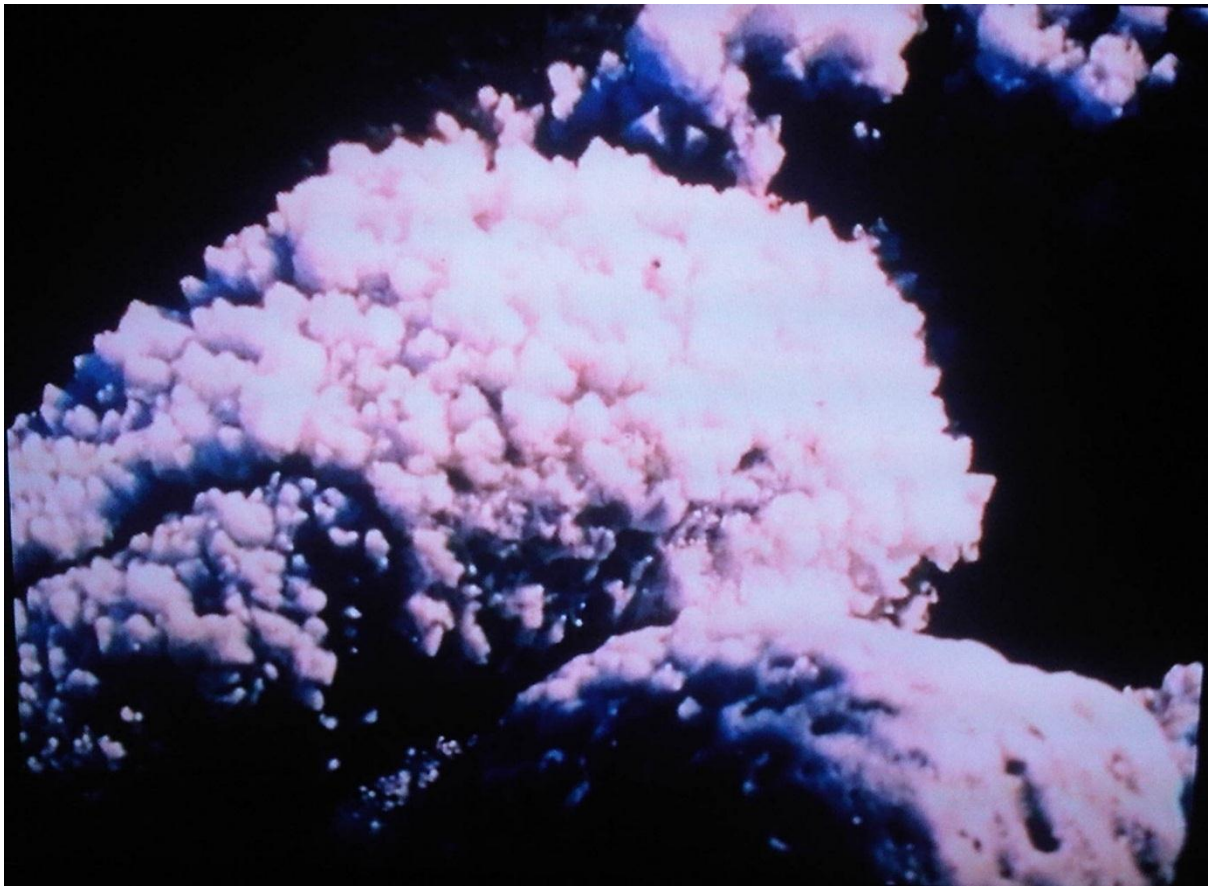
Figs. 124-127

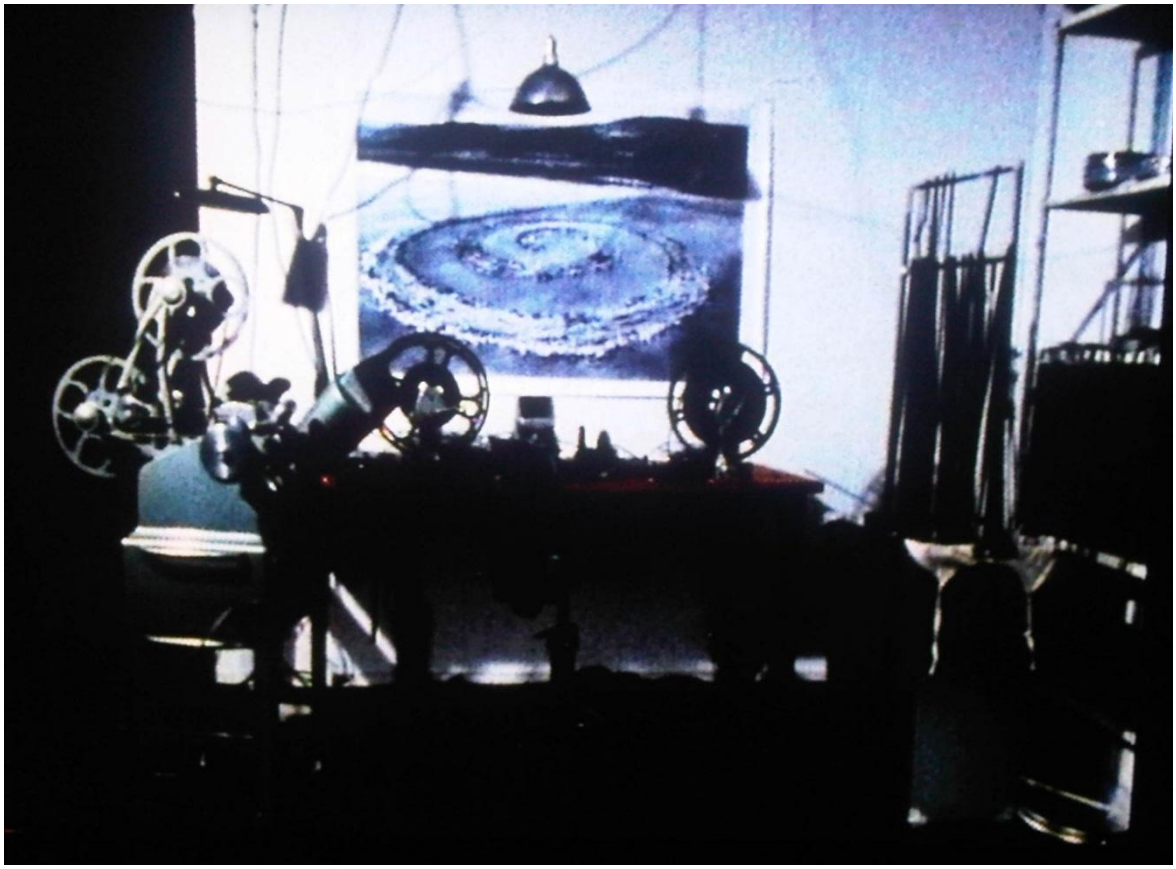
Robert Smithson, *Spiral Jetty* (32 minutes, colour), 1970. Film stills from *Spiral Jetty*, with details of salt crystals on rocks of the jetty. © Electronic Arts Intermix, NYC.











Figs. 128 and 129

Robert Smithson, *Spiral Jetty* (32 minutes, colour), 1970. Film stills from *Spiral Jetty,* last scene/two shots with editing studio, photograph and film reels (depicting zoom-in movement). © Electronic Arts Intermix, New York City.

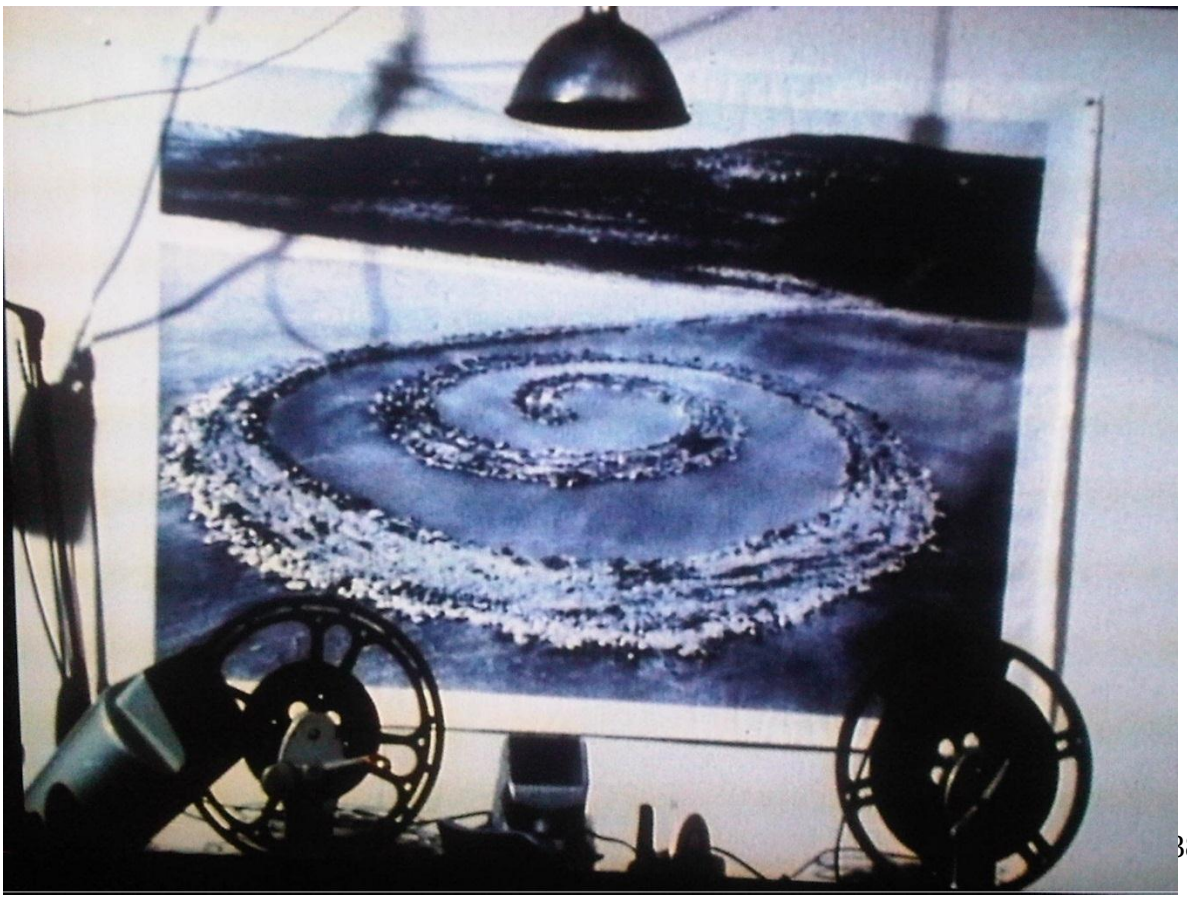


Fig. 130

Detail exhibition poster Dwan Gallery New York, showing Smithson's 'storyboard' for his film *Spiral Jetty.*

Poster © Smithsonian Institution, Archives of American Art.

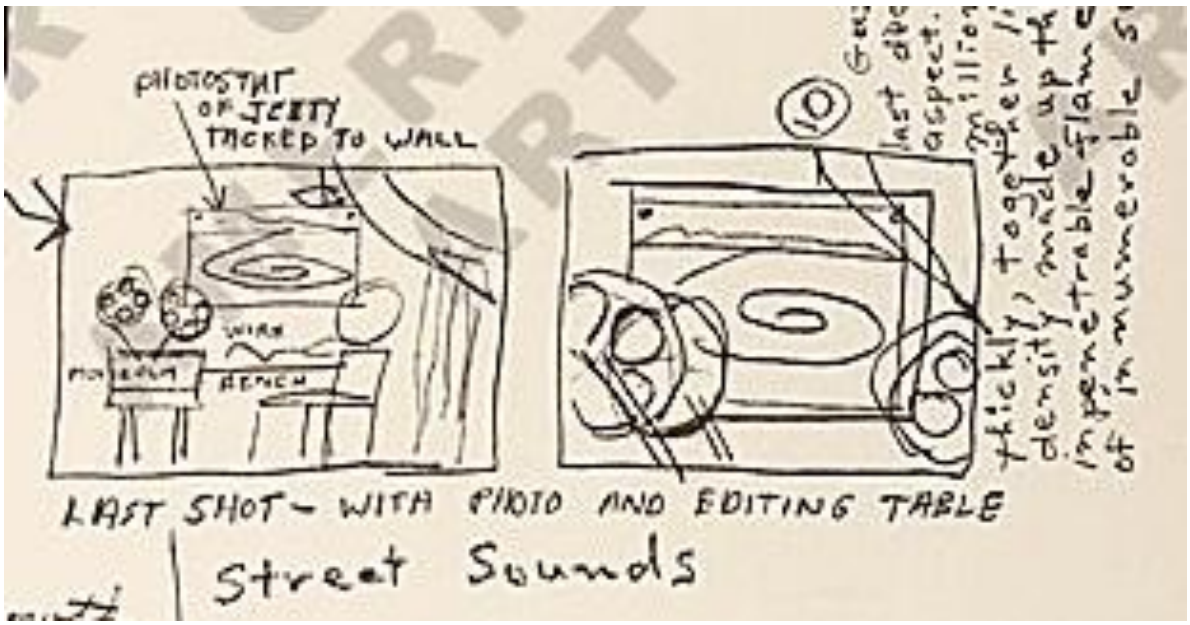


Fig. 131

Walter De Maria, *Bed of Spikes*, 1969

Installation view, unidentified photographer.

Dwan Gallery (Los Angeles, California and New York, New York) records, 1959-circa 1982, bulk 1959-1971.

© Archives of American Art, Smithsonian Institution.

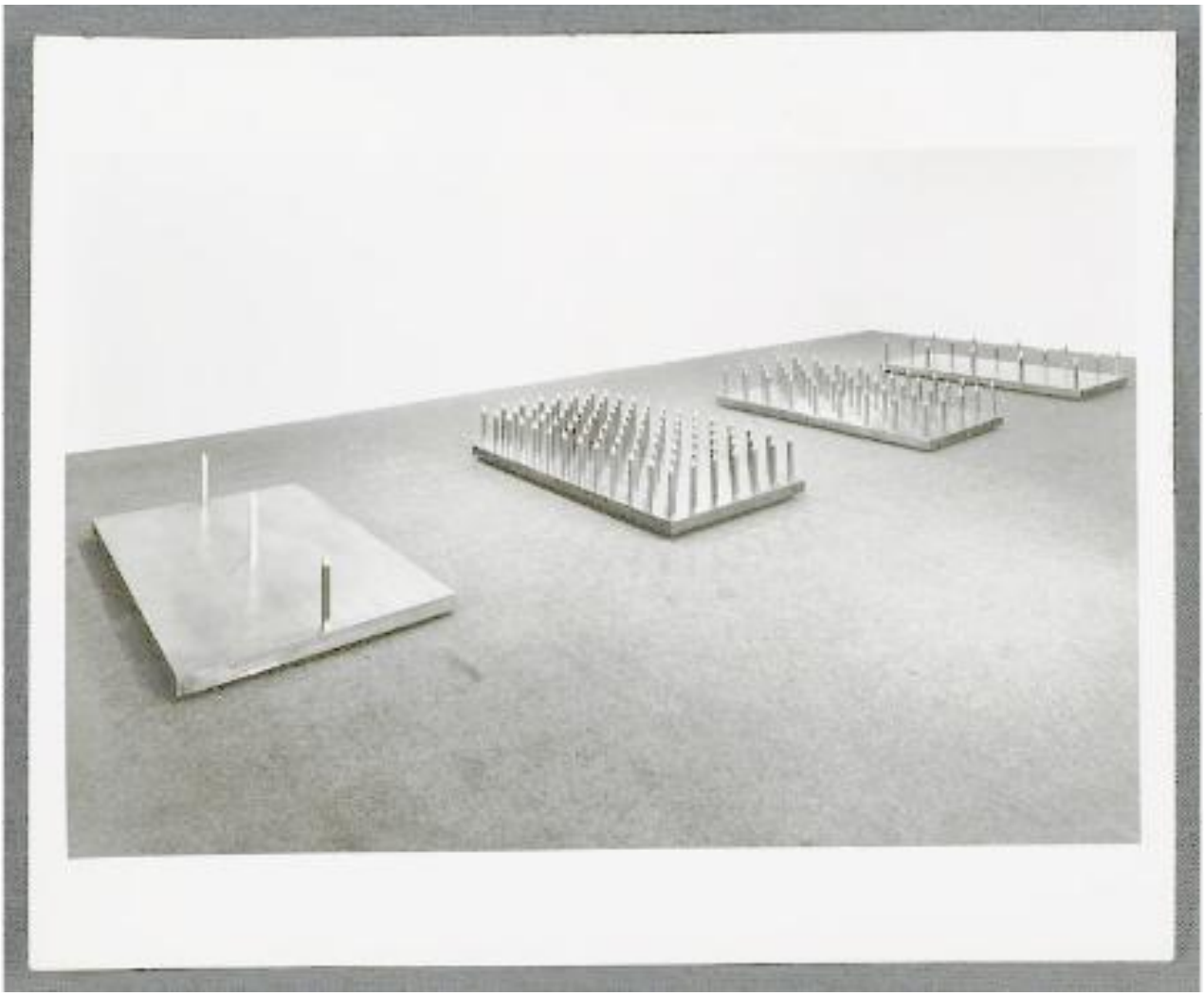
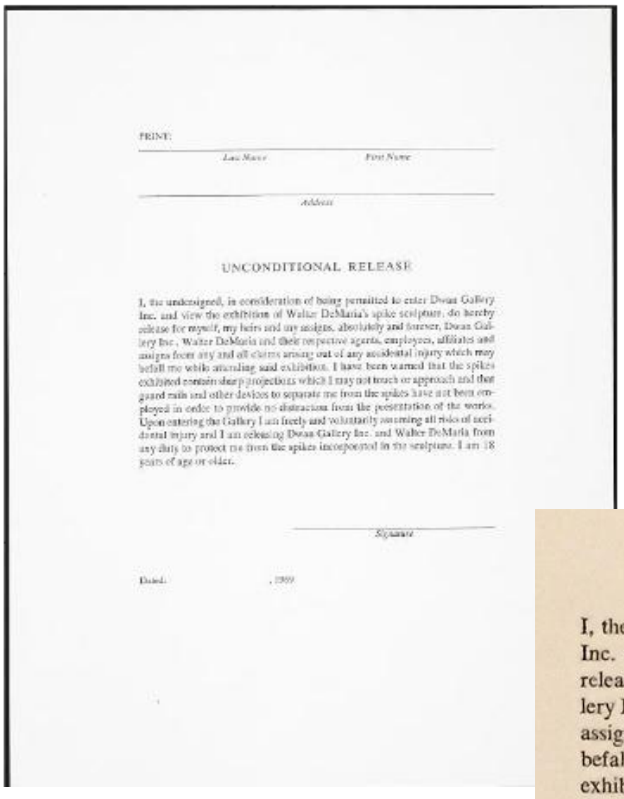


Fig. 132

Unconditional release form for gallery entrance Dwan Gallery during the *Bed of Spikes* exhibition by Walter De Maria, 1969 (with close up detail).

Dwan Gallery (Los Angeles, California and New York, New York) records, 1959-circa 1982, bulk 1959-1971.

© Archives of American Art, Smithsonian Institution.



PRINT:

Last Name First Name

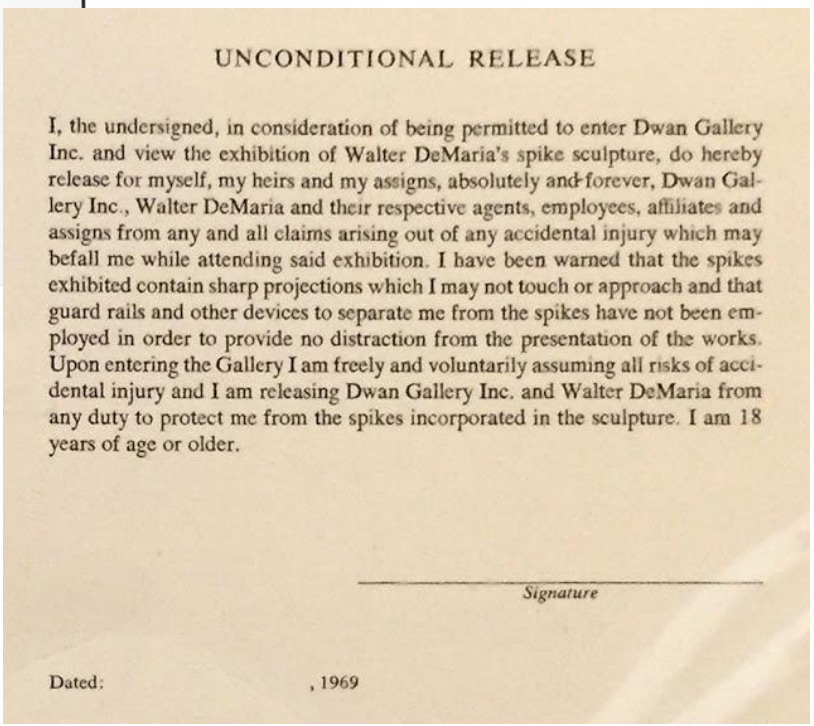
Address

UNCONDITIONAL RELEASE

I, the undersigned, in consideration of being permitted to enter Dwan Gallery Inc. and view the exhibition of Walter DeMaria's spike sculpture, do hereby release for myself, my heirs and my assigns, absolutely and forever, Dwan Gallery Inc., Walter DeMaria and their respective agents, employees, affiliates and assigns from any and all claims arising out of any accidental injury which may befall me while attending said exhibition. I have been warned that the spikes exhibited contain sharp projections which I may not touch or approach and that guard rails and other devices to separate me from the spikes have not been employed in order to provide no distraction from the presentation of the works. Upon entering the Gallery I am freely and voluntarily assuming all risks of accidental injury and I am releasing Dwan Gallery Inc. and Walter DeMaria from any duty to protect me from the spikes incorporated in the sculpture. I am 18 years of age or older.

Signature

Dated: , 1969



UNCONDITIONAL RELEASE

I, the undersigned, in consideration of being permitted to enter Dwan Gallery Inc. and view the exhibition of Walter DeMaria's spike sculpture, do hereby release for myself, my heirs and my assigns, absolutely and forever, Dwan Gallery Inc., Walter DeMaria and their respective agents, employees, affiliates and assigns from any and all claims arising out of any accidental injury which may befall me while attending said exhibition. I have been warned that the spikes exhibited contain sharp projections which I may not touch or approach and that guard rails and other devices to separate me from the spikes have not been employed in order to provide no distraction from the presentation of the works. Upon entering the Gallery I am freely and voluntarily assuming all risks of accidental injury and I am releasing Dwan Gallery Inc. and Walter DeMaria from any duty to protect me from the spikes incorporated in the sculpture. I am 18 years of age or older.

Signature

Dated: , 1969

Fig. 133

Fakirs on beds of spikes/

Beds of nails.

Photographer unknown.

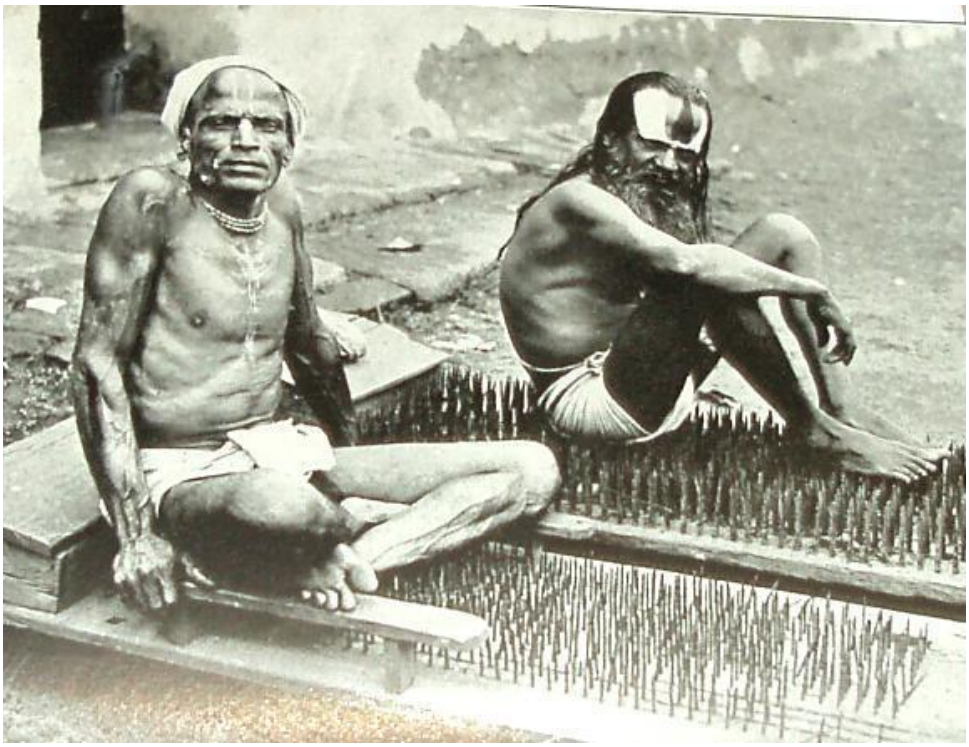


Fig. 134

Exhibition colour photograph, Walter De Maria's *Bed of Spikes*, 1969.

(Photographer unknown.) © Archives of American Art, Smithsonian Institution.

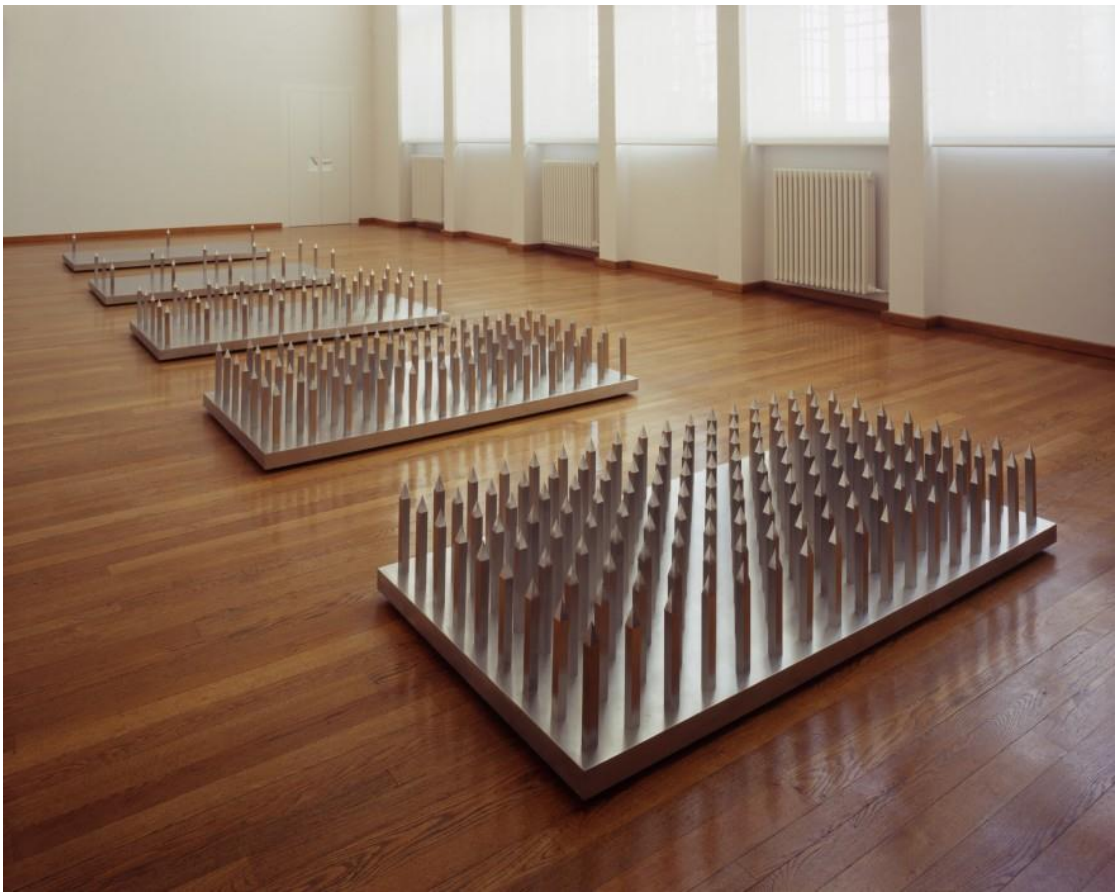


Fig. 135

Exhibition announcement, *Bed of Spikes*, Walter De Maria in the Dwan Gallery.

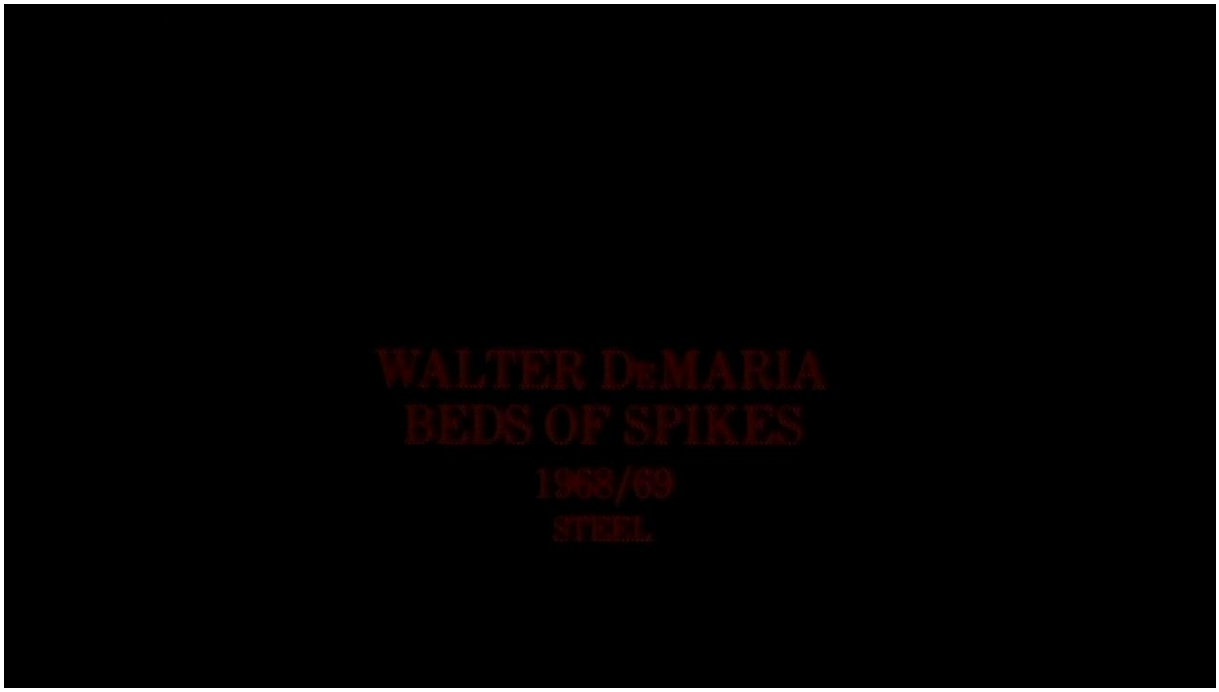
© Archives of American Art, Smithsonian Institution.

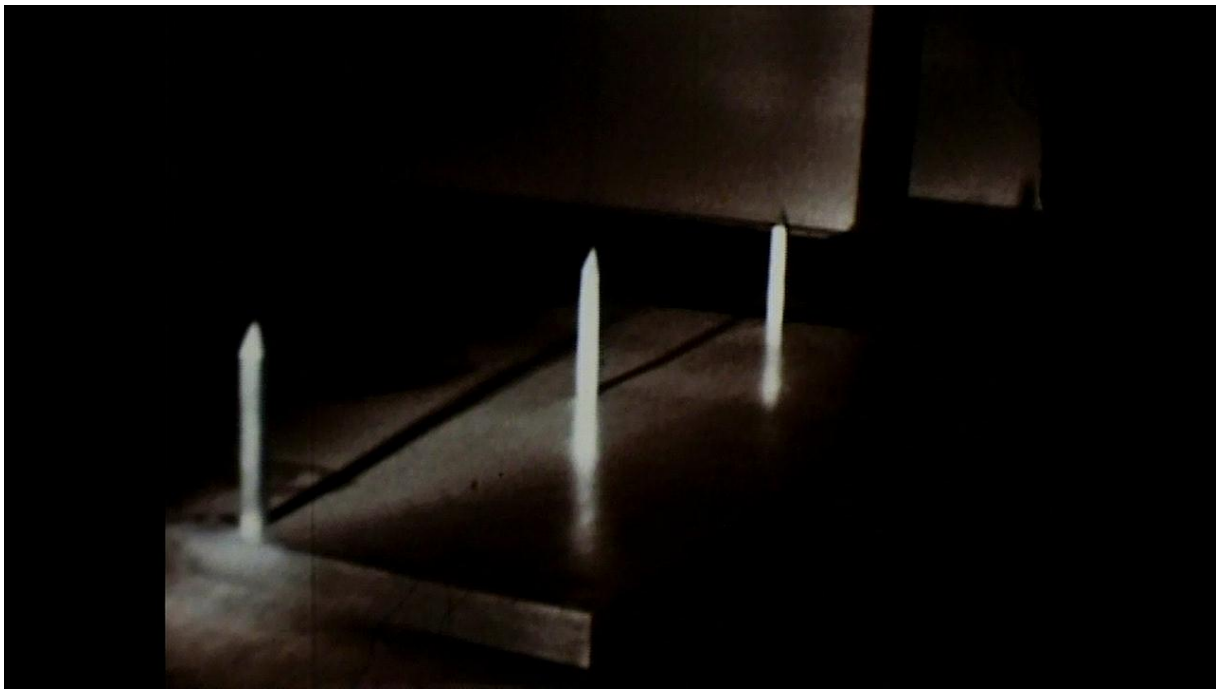


Figs. 136 and 137

Opening shot (title page) and first image of the film *Bed of Spikes* by Walter De Maria, 1968-69. Colour, sound, 8.33 minutes.

© Smithsonian National Gallery of Art, Washington DC.

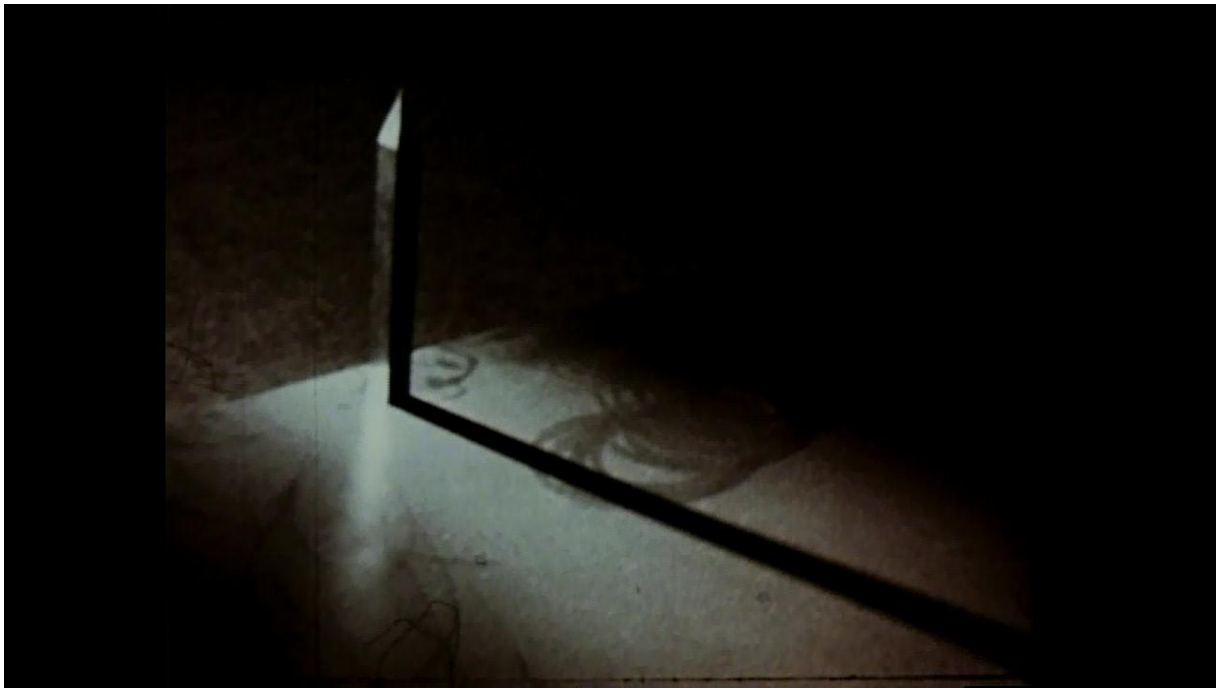


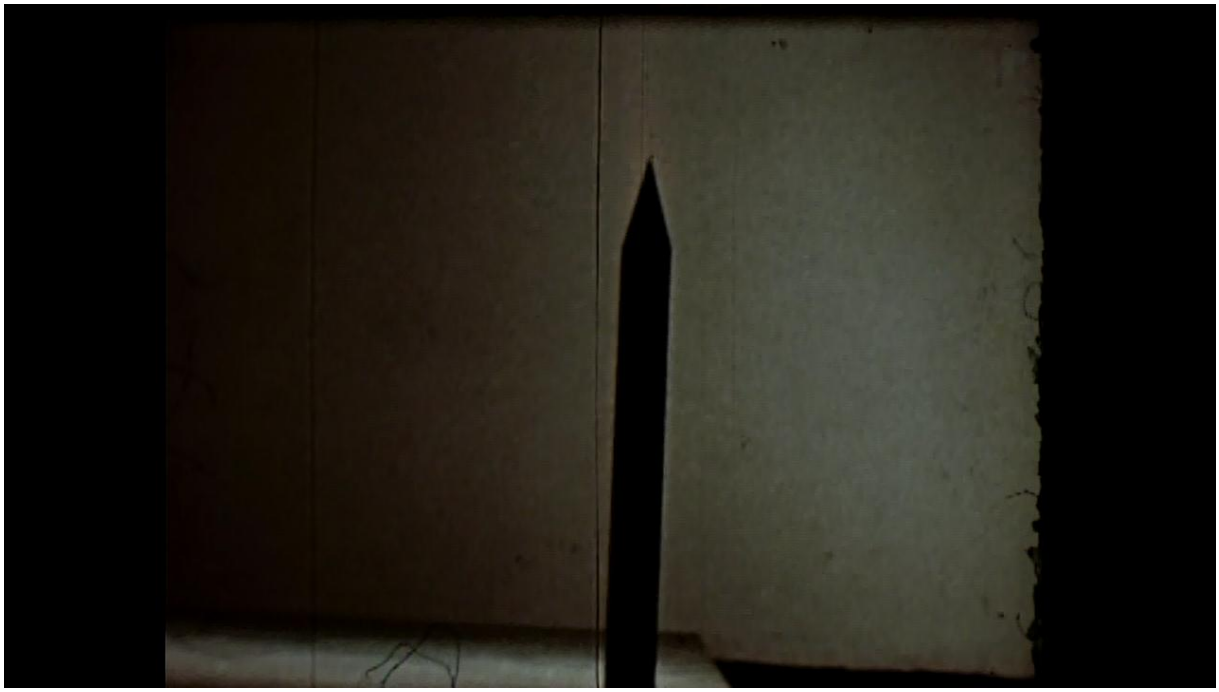


Figs. 138 and 139

Emphasis on the pointy end of the spikes – stills of the film *Bed of Spikes* by Walter De Maria, 1968-69. Colour, sound, 8.33 minutes.

© Smithsonian National Gallery of Art, Washington DC.

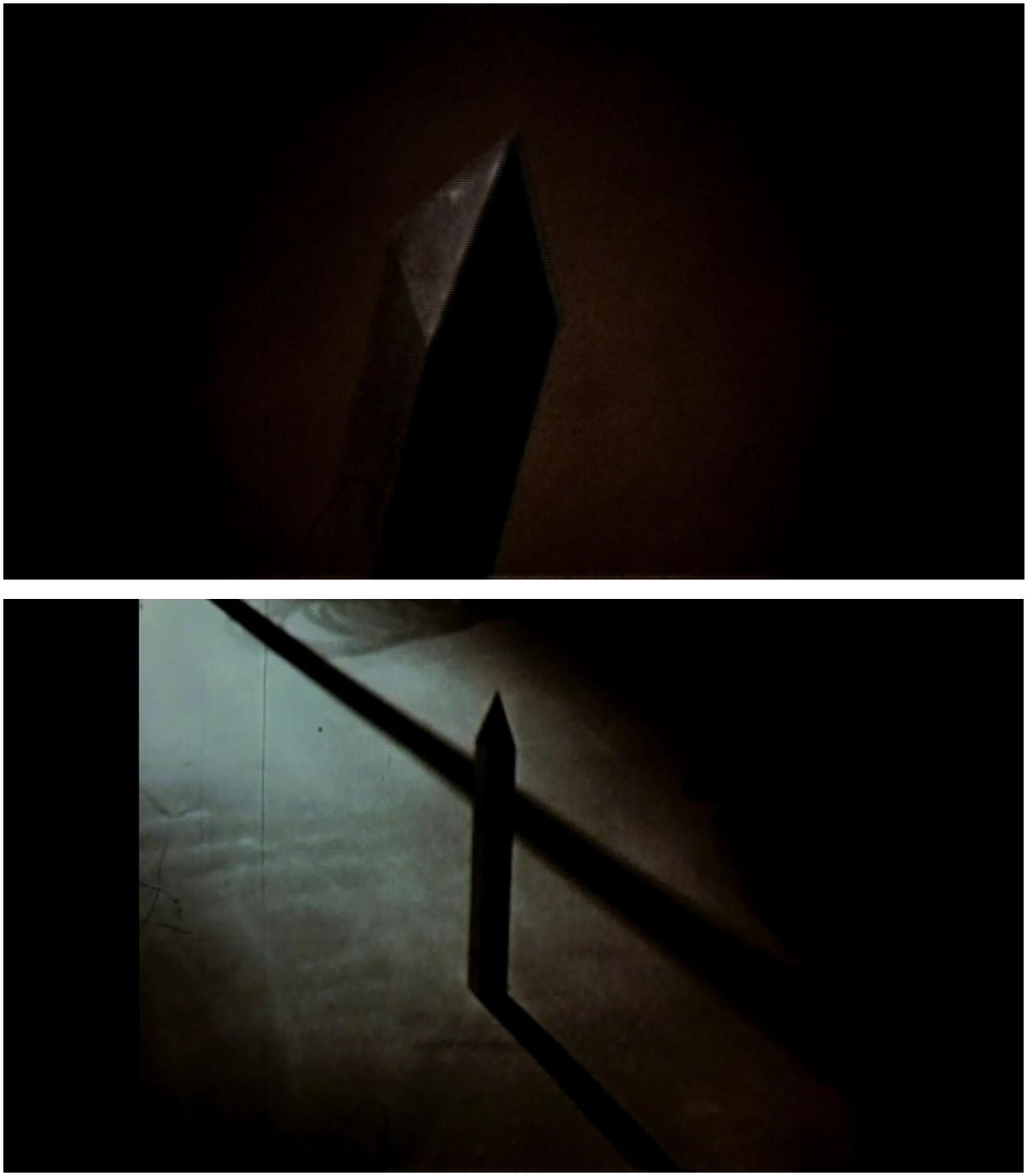




Figs. 140 and 141

Emphasis on the pointy end of the spikes in close ups – stills of the film *Bed of Spikes* by Walter De Maria, 1968-69. Colour, sound, 8.33 minutes.

© Smithsonian National Gallery of Art, Washington DC.

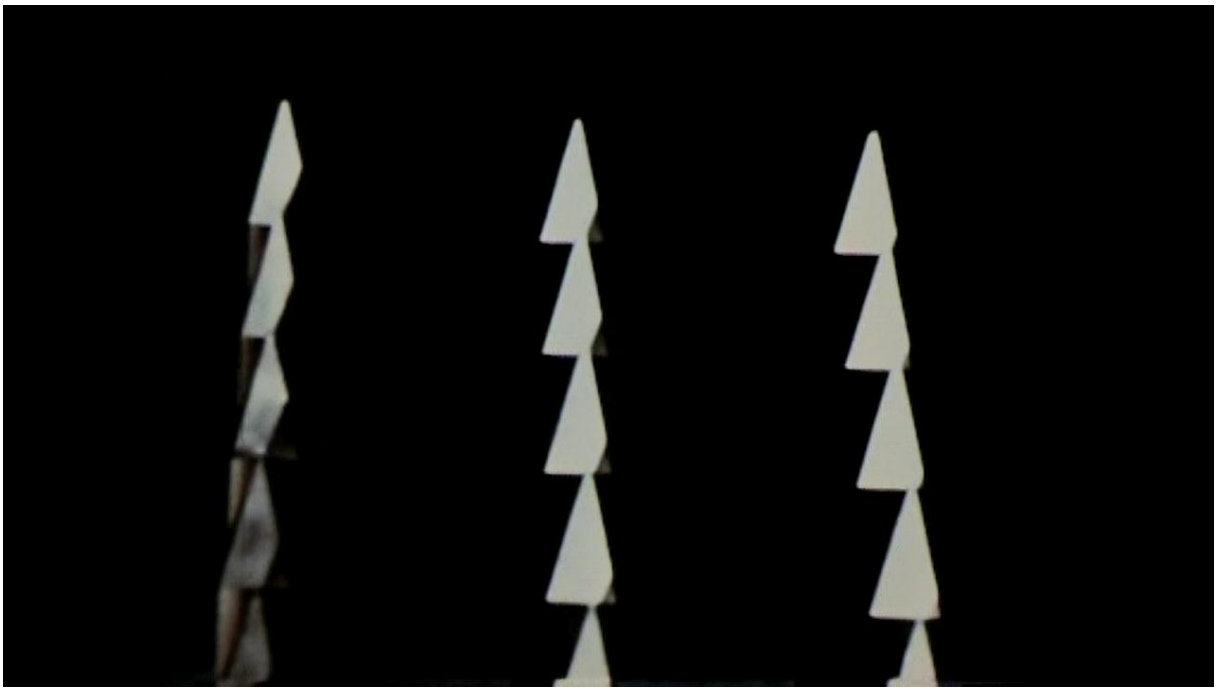


Figs. 142 and 143

Other beds of spikes – multiple spikes and their contrast, steel, chiaroscuro effect. Stills of the film *Bed of Spikes* by Walter De Maria, 1968-69. Colour, sound, 8.33 minutes.

© Smithsonian National Gallery of Art, Washington DC.

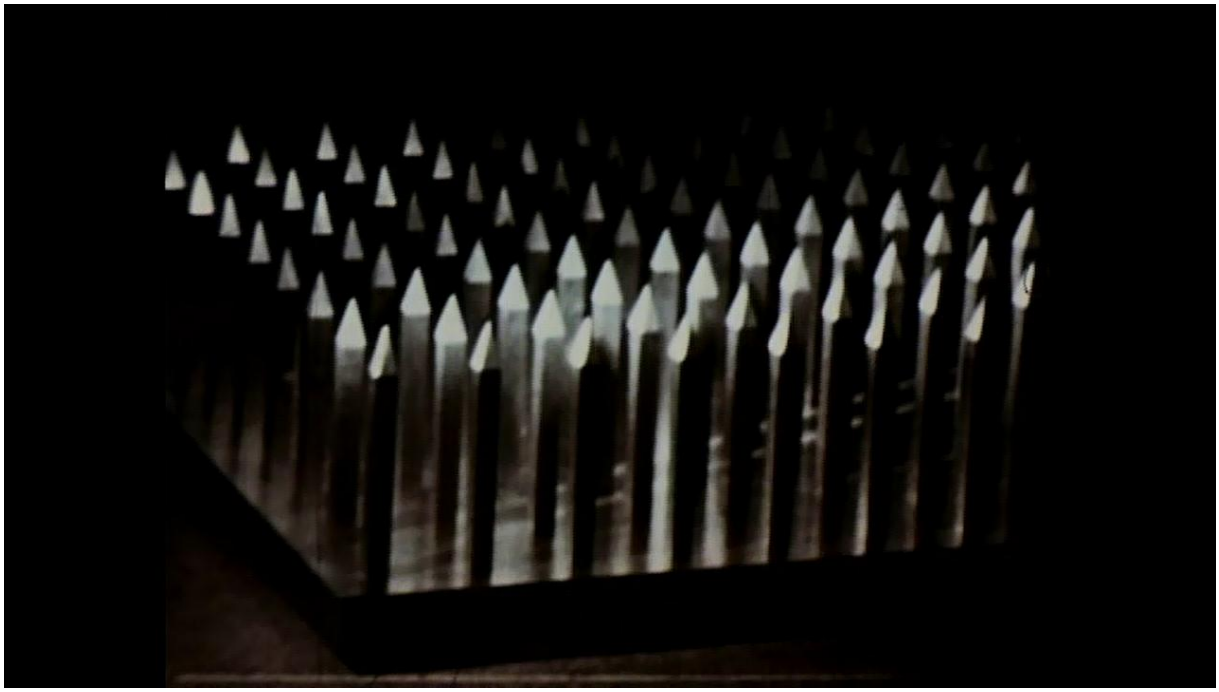


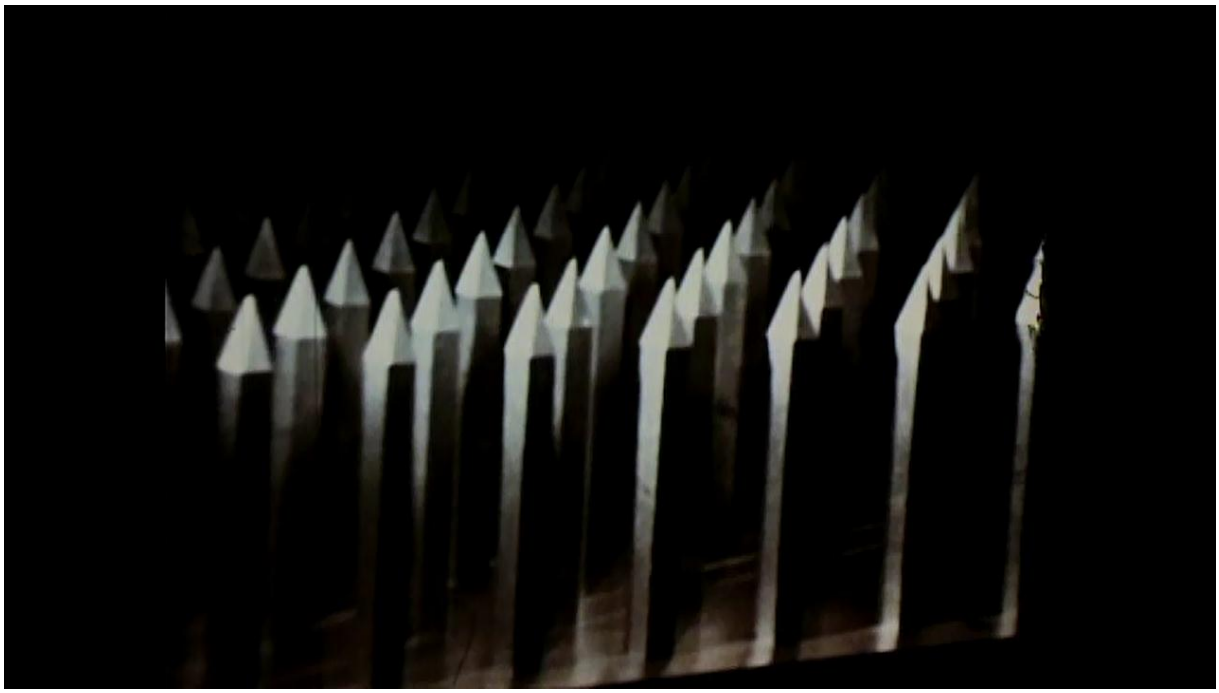


Figs. 144 and 145

A multitude of spikes – chiaroscuro effect. Stills of the film *Bed of Spikes* by Walter De Maria, 1968-69. Colour, sound, 8.33 minutes.

© Smithsonian National Gallery of Art, Washington DC.



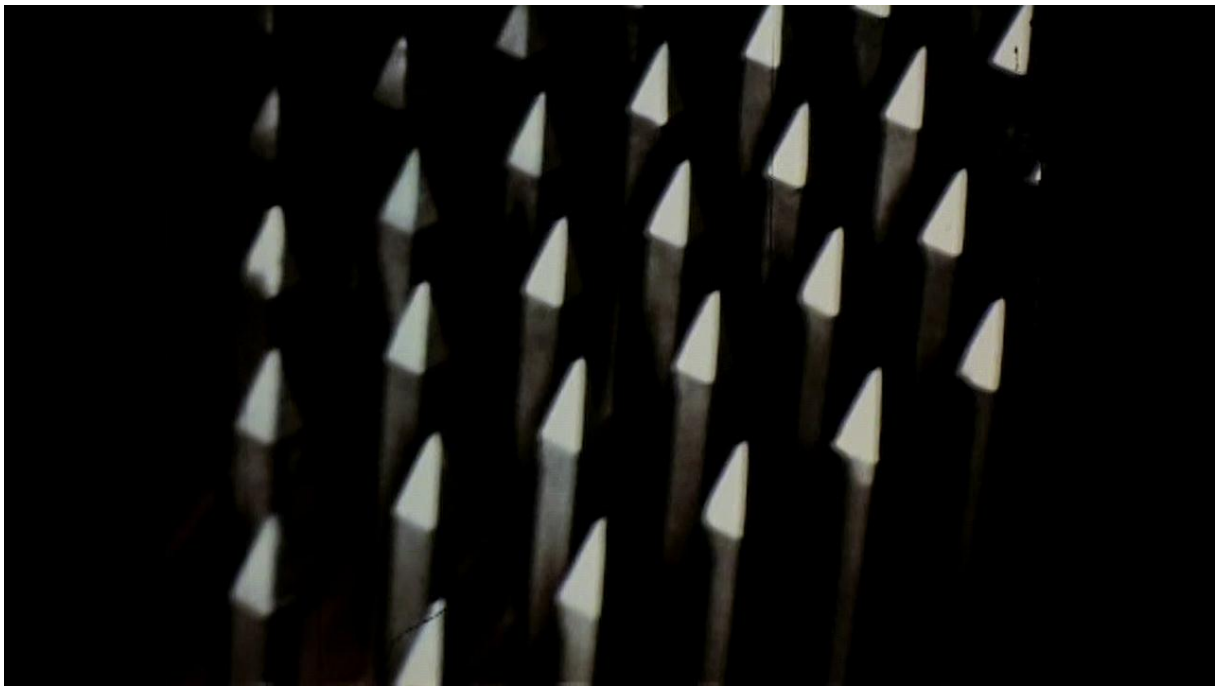


Figs. 146 and 147

Different creative, bird eye perspectives of the spikes – chiaroscuro effect. Stills of the film *Bed of Spikes* by Walter De Maria, 1968-69. Colour, sound, 8.33 minutes.

© Smithsonian National Gallery of Art, Washington DC.

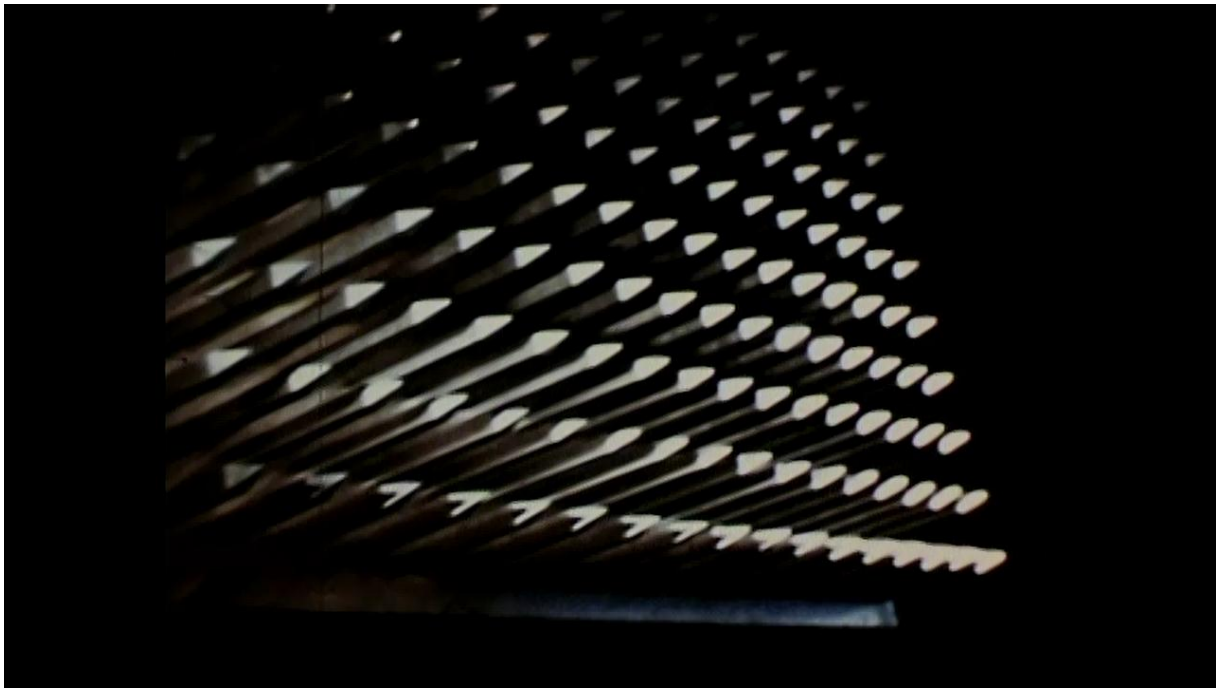


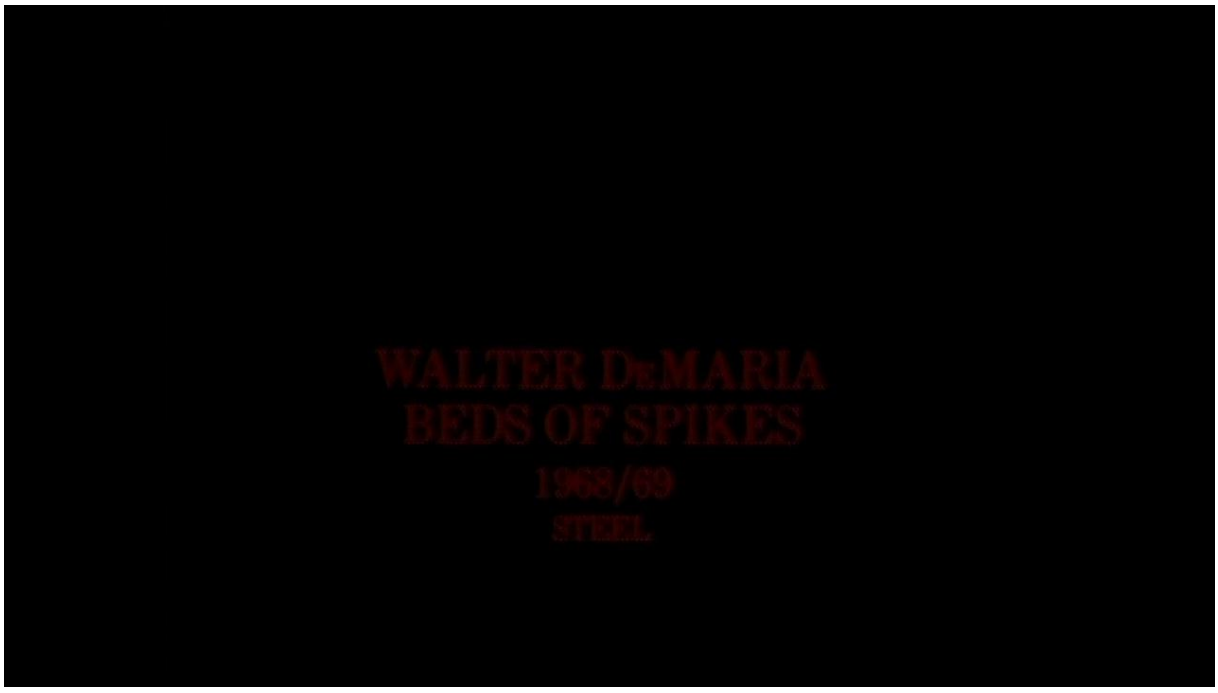


Figs. 148 and 149

Camera moves – chiaroscuro effect. And second title page. Stills of the film *Bed of Spikes* by Walter De Maria, 1968-69. Colour, sound, 8.33 minutes.

© Smithsonian National Gallery of Art, Washington DC.





Figs. 150 and 151

Camera moves – chiaroscuro effect. Stills of the film *Bed of Spikes* by Walter De Maria, 1968-69. Colour, sound, 8.33 minutes.

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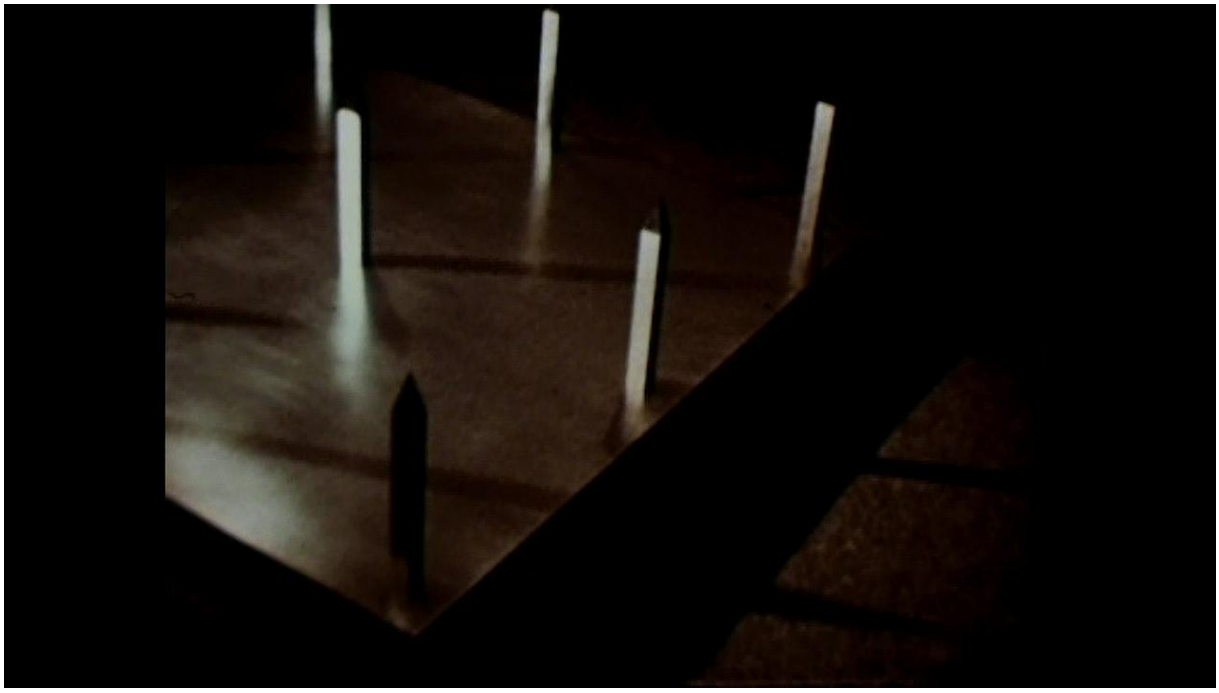


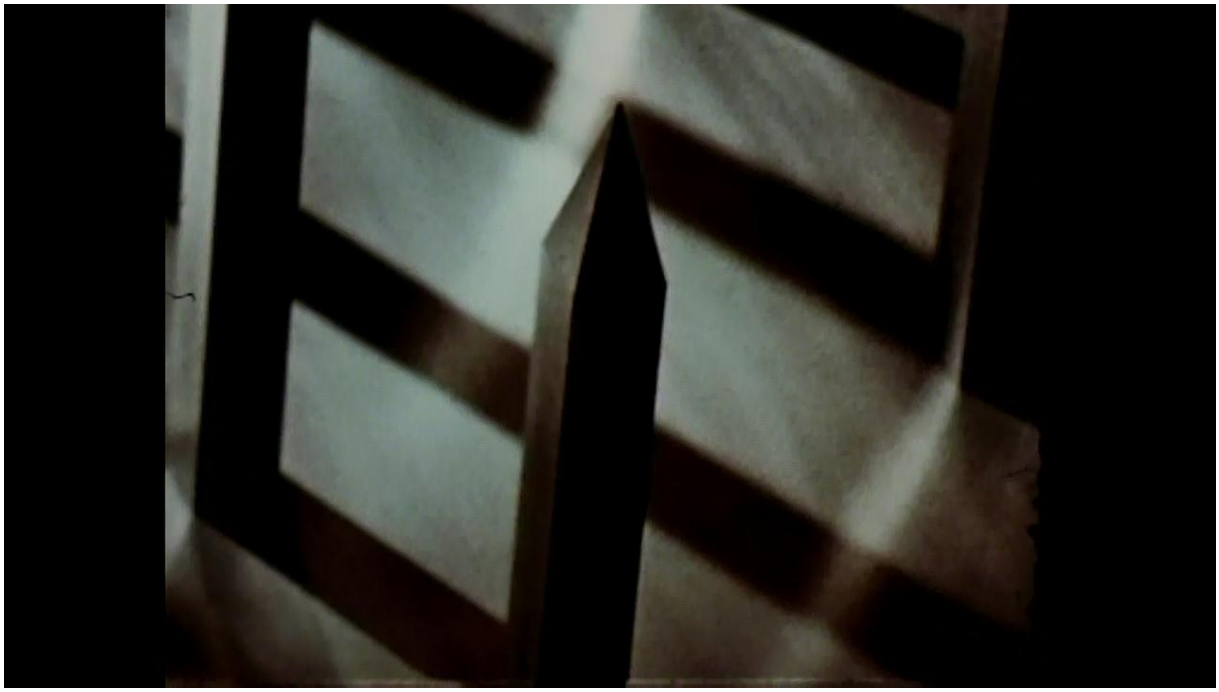


Figs. 152 and 153

Camera moves – chiaroscuro effect. Stills of the film *Bed of Spikes* by Walter De Maria, 1968-69. Colour, sound, 8.33 minutes.

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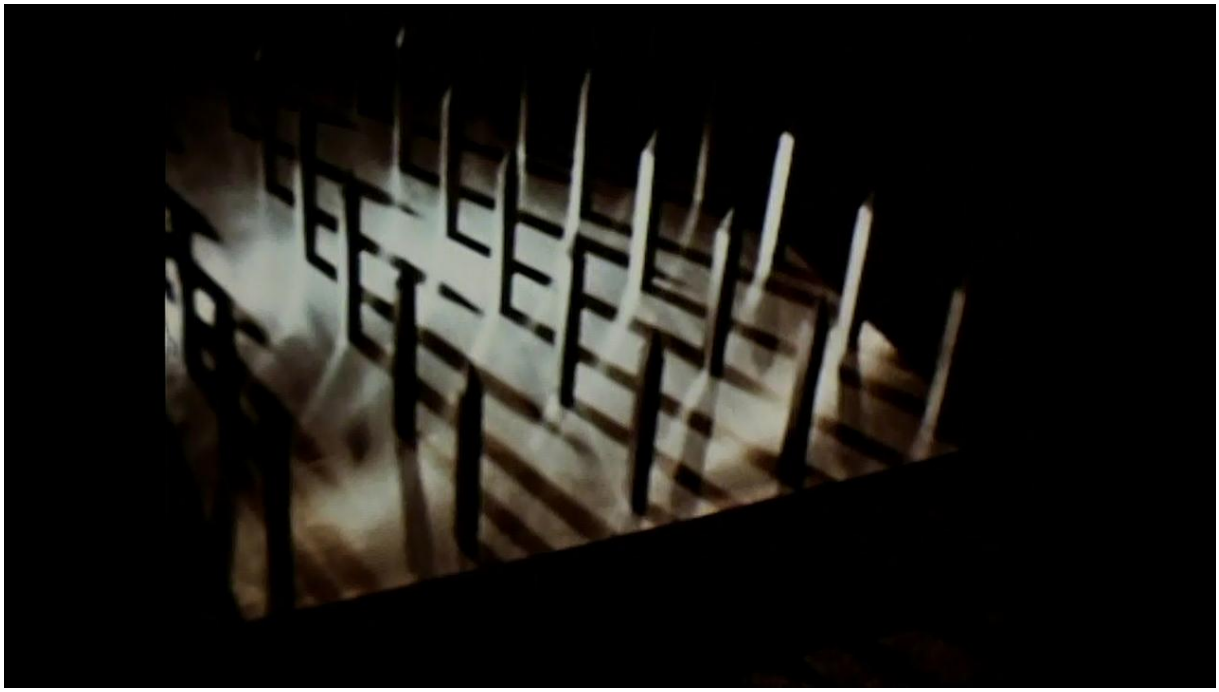




Figs. 154 and 155

More camera moves – an army of spikes. Stills of the film *Bed of Spikes* by Walter De Maria, 1968-69. Colour, sound, 8.33 minutes.

© Smithsonian National Gallery of Art, Washington DC.

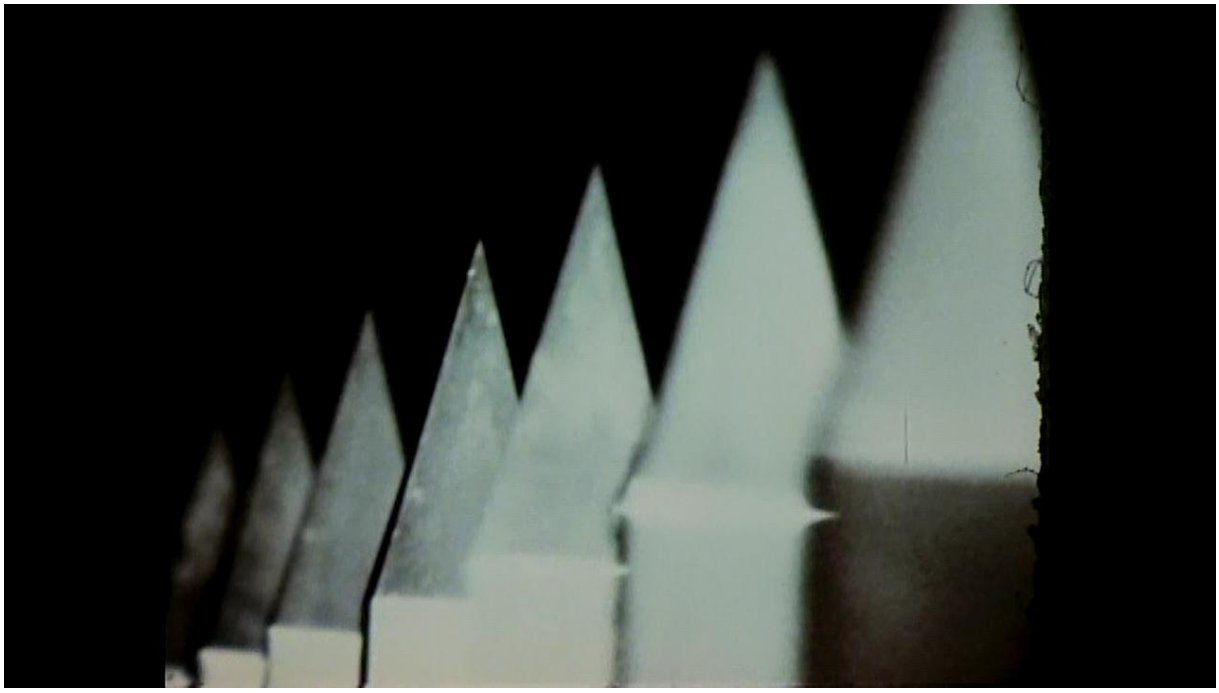


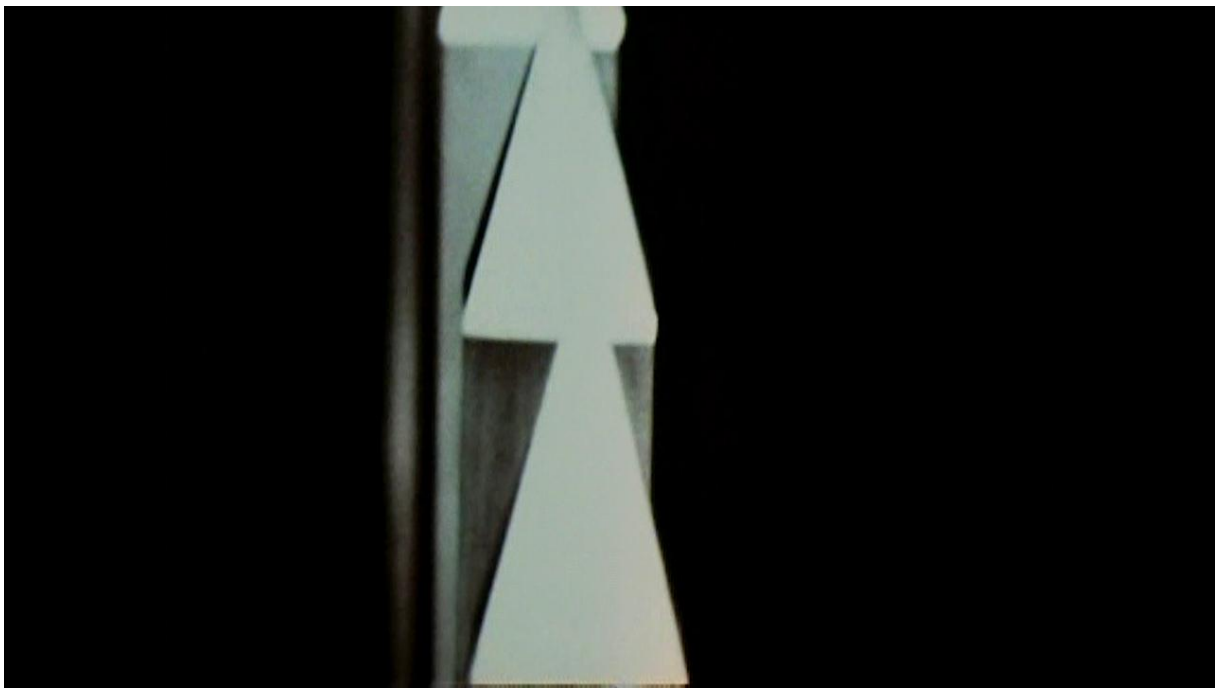


Figs. 156 and 157

A camera that catches the light – the tips of the spikes. Stills of the film *Bed of Spikes* by Walter De Maria, 1968-69. Colour, sound, 8.33 minutes.

© Smithsonian National Gallery of Art, Washington DC.

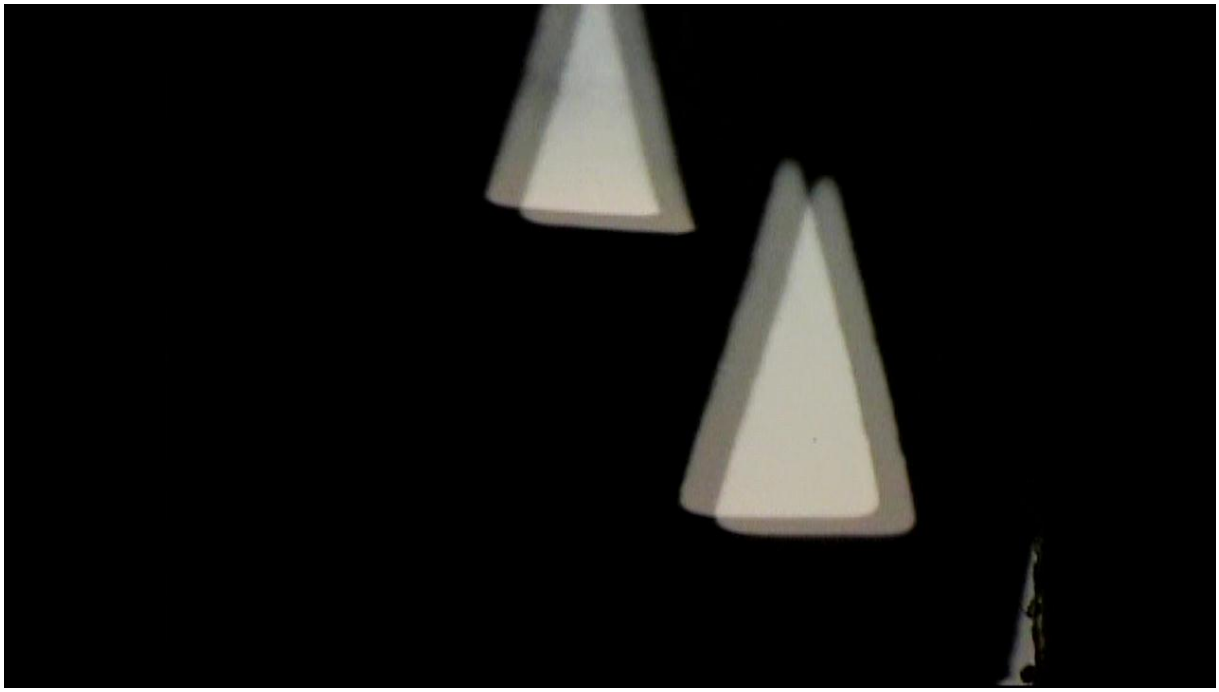




Figs. 158 and 159

A camera that dances – the tips of the spikes. Stills of the film *Bed of Spikes* by Walter De Maria, 1968-69. Colour, sound, 8.33 minutes.

© Smithsonian National Gallery of Art, Washington DC.





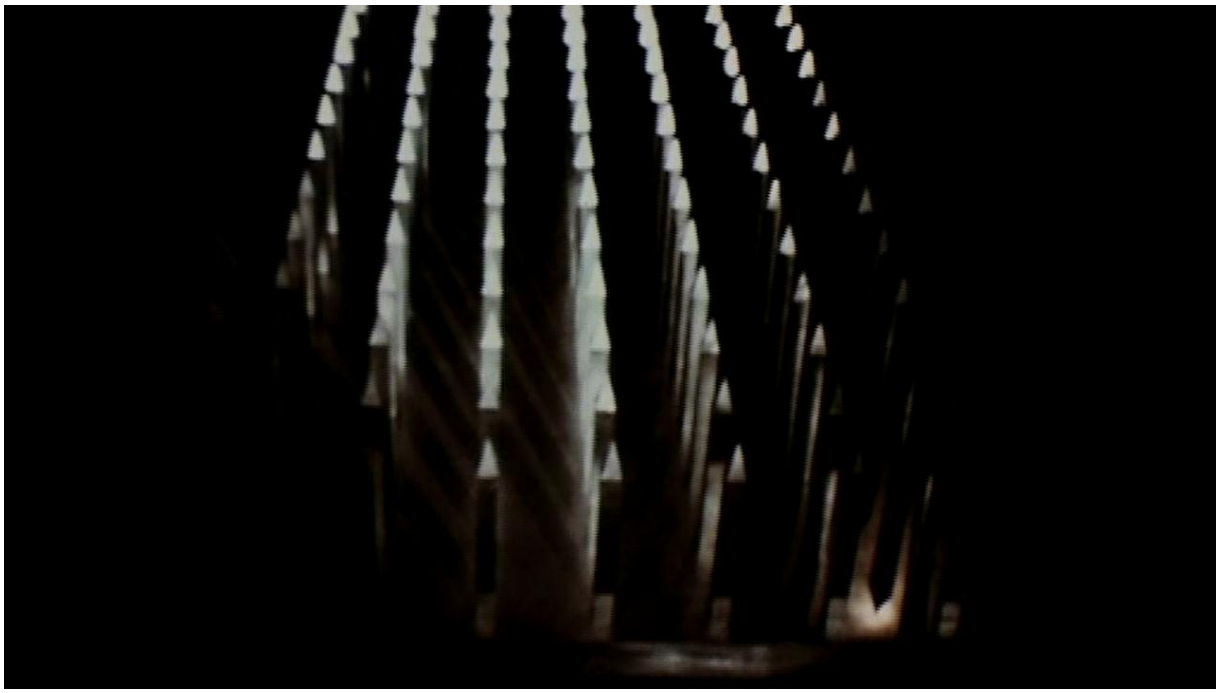
Figs. 160 and 161

Last part of the second part of the film – the tips of the spikes of the 7x13 (91) spikes bed.

And the first shot of the third part of the film *Bed of Spikes,* by Walter De Maria, 1968-69.

Colour, sound, 8.33 minutes.

© Smithsonian National Gallery of Art, Washington DC.





Figs. 162 and 163

First part of the third part of the film. Stills of the film *Bed of Spikes* by Walter De Maria, 1968-69. Colour, sound, 8.33 minutes.

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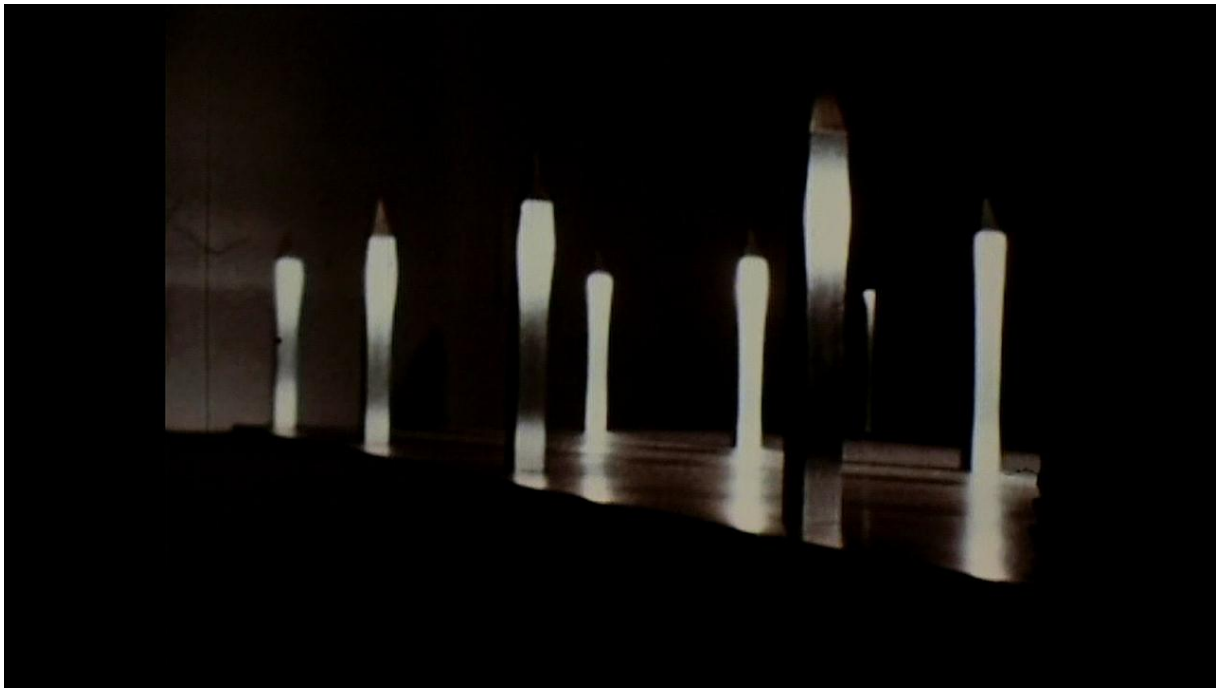




Figs. 164 and 165

First part of the third part of the film. Stills of the film *Bed of Spikes* by Walter De Maria, 1968-69. Colour, sound, 8.33 minutes.

© Smithsonian National Gallery of Art, Washington DC.





Figs. 166 and 167

First part of the third part of the film. Stills of the film *Bed of Spikes* by Walter De Maria, 1968-69. Colour, sound, 8.33 minutes.

© Smithsonian National Gallery of Art, Washington DC.



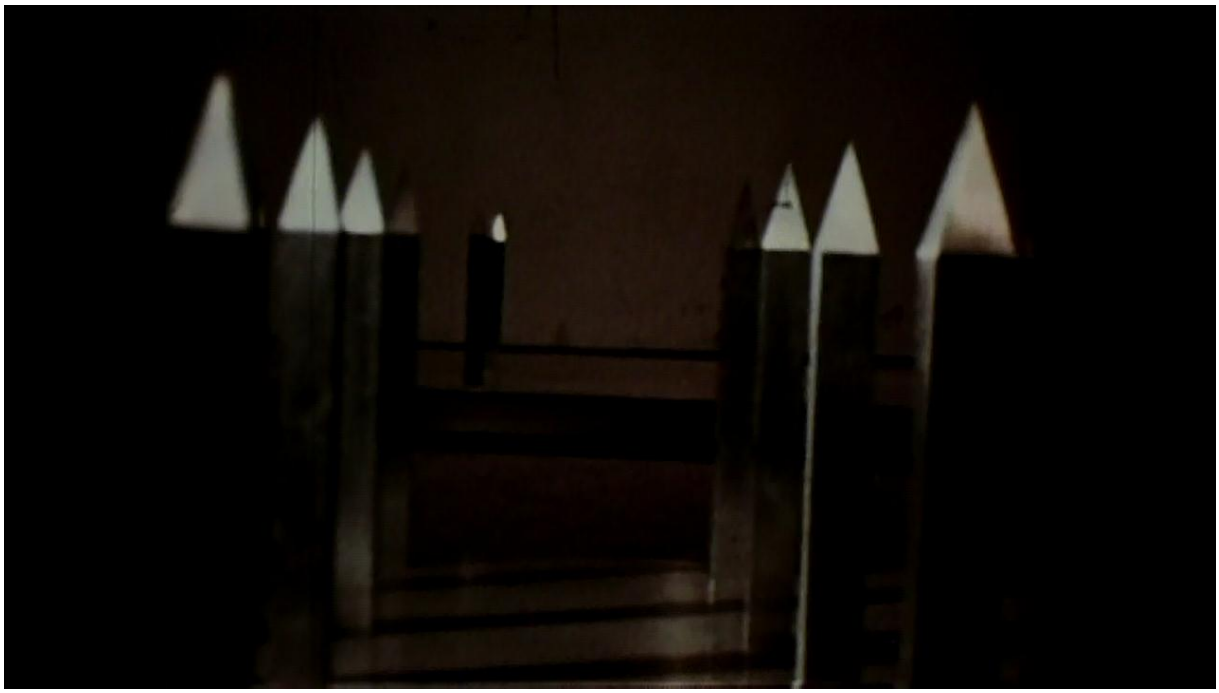
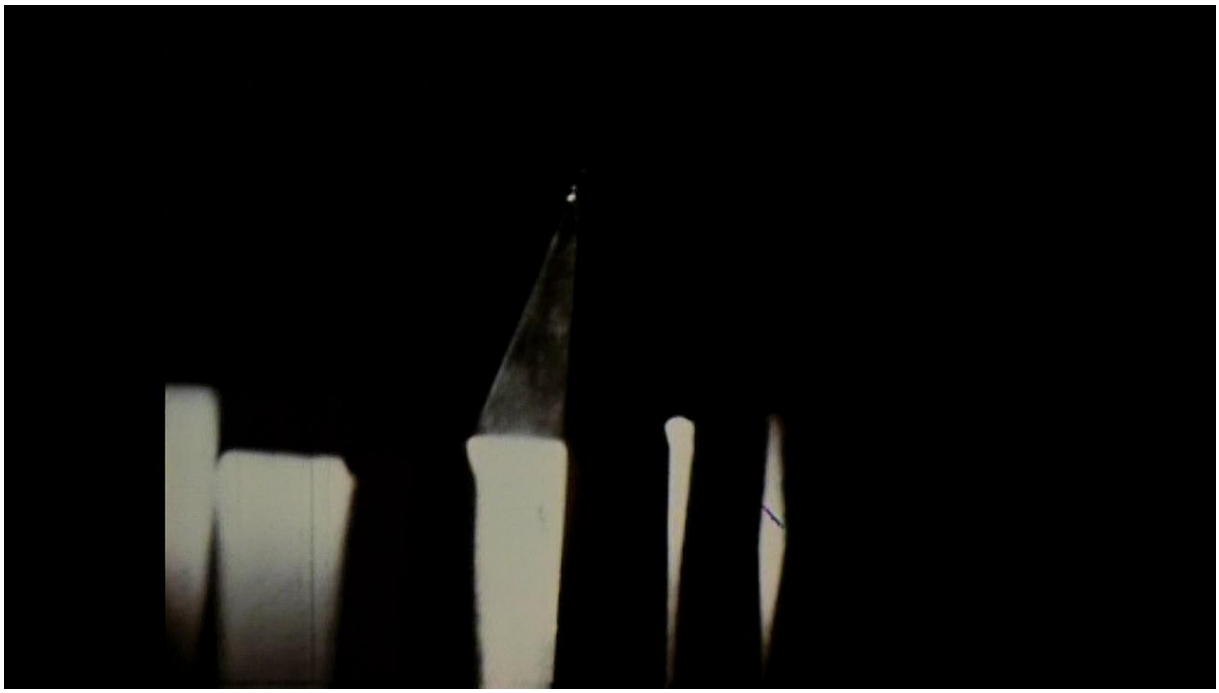


Fig. 168

Final shot of the third part of the film. Still of the film *Bed of Spikes* by Walter De Maria, 1968-69. Colour, sound, 8.33 minutes.

© Smithsonian National Gallery of Art, Washington DC.

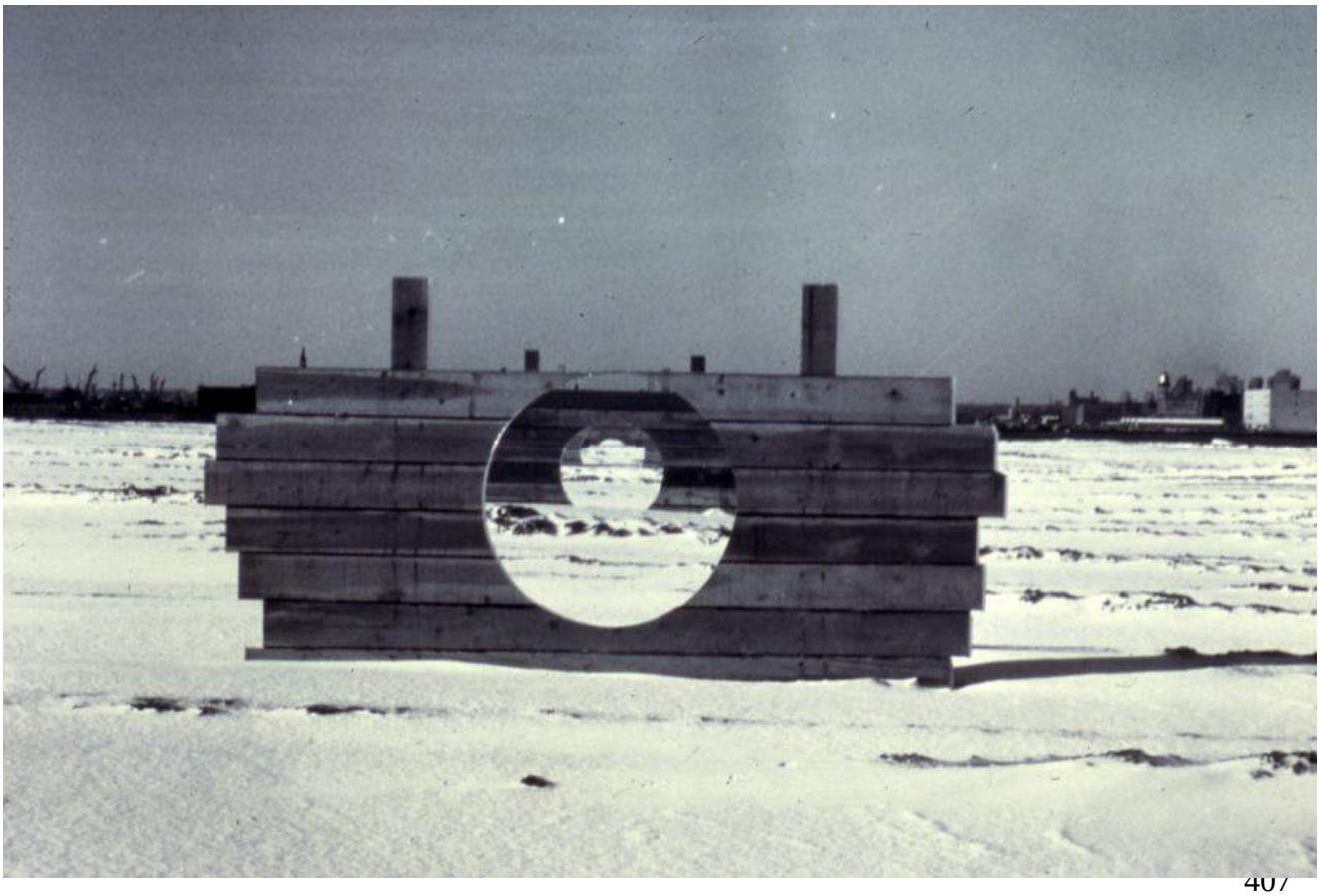


Figs. 169 and 170

Mary Miss, *Battery Park Landfill*, 1973.

© Mary Miss.





Figs. 171-173

Agnes Denes, *Rice/Tree/Burial*, 1968 (Sullivan County, New York).

© Agnes Denes / Cornell University.





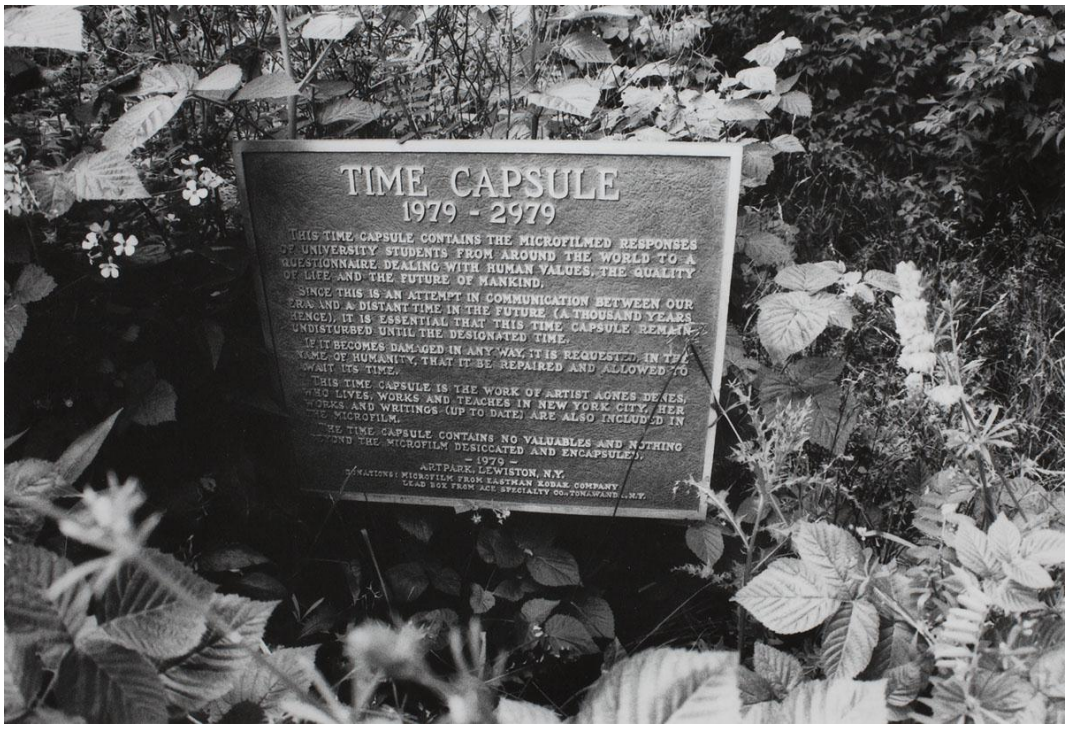
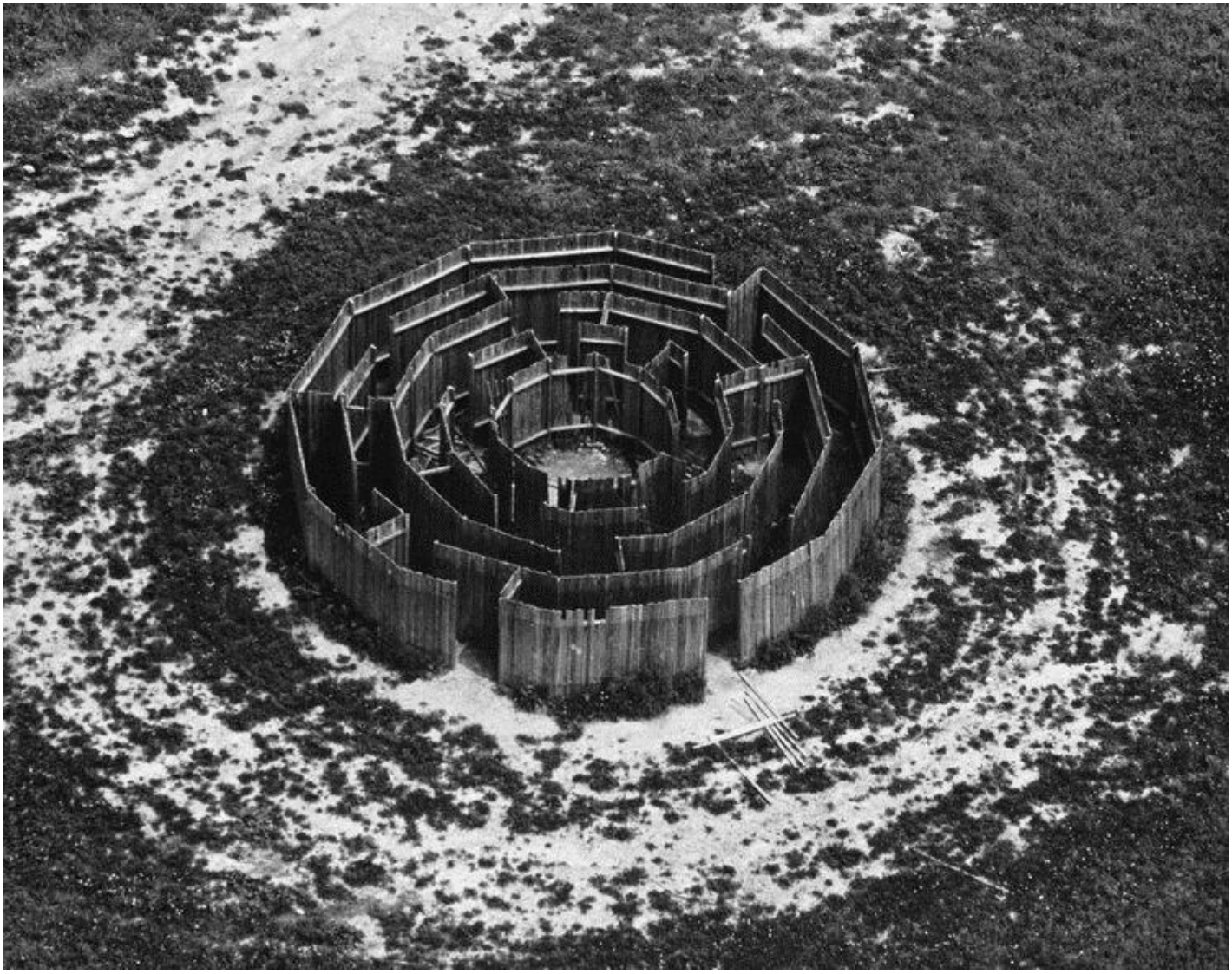


Fig. 174

Alice Aycock, *Maze*, 1972.

12-sided wooden structure of 5 concentric dodecagonal rings, broken by 19 points of entry and 17 barriers. 32’ diameter x 6’ high. Originally sited at Gibney Farm near New Kingston, Pennsylvania.

© Alice Aycock / Silver Spring Township Police Department, Mechanicsburg, PA.



Figs. 175-176

Patricia Johanson, *Stephen Long*, 1968 (New York).

Along an abandoned Boston and Maine railroad bed in Buskirk, New York, 1968. Sculpture and 16mm film transferred to DVD (colour and sound; CBSTV, 1968; edited by Joanna Alexander, WNET-TV, New York, 1971, 5 minutes).

© Patricia Johanson.





Figs. 177 and 178

Mary Kelly, *An Earthwork Performed,* 1970. Film still and an installation view of the whole piece in the Henry Moore Institute, Leeds, Spring 2016.

© Mary Kelly / Henry Moore Institute, Leeds.





Fig. 179

Peter Hutchinson, *A Day in the Life of Mt. Sopris*, 1972.

16mm film transferred to DVD; colour, silent, 19:52 minutes.

© Peter Hutchinson.



Fig. 180

Bruce Nauman, *Live-Taped Video Corridor*, 1970.

Corridors / sculpture plus television sets.

© Bruce Nauman.

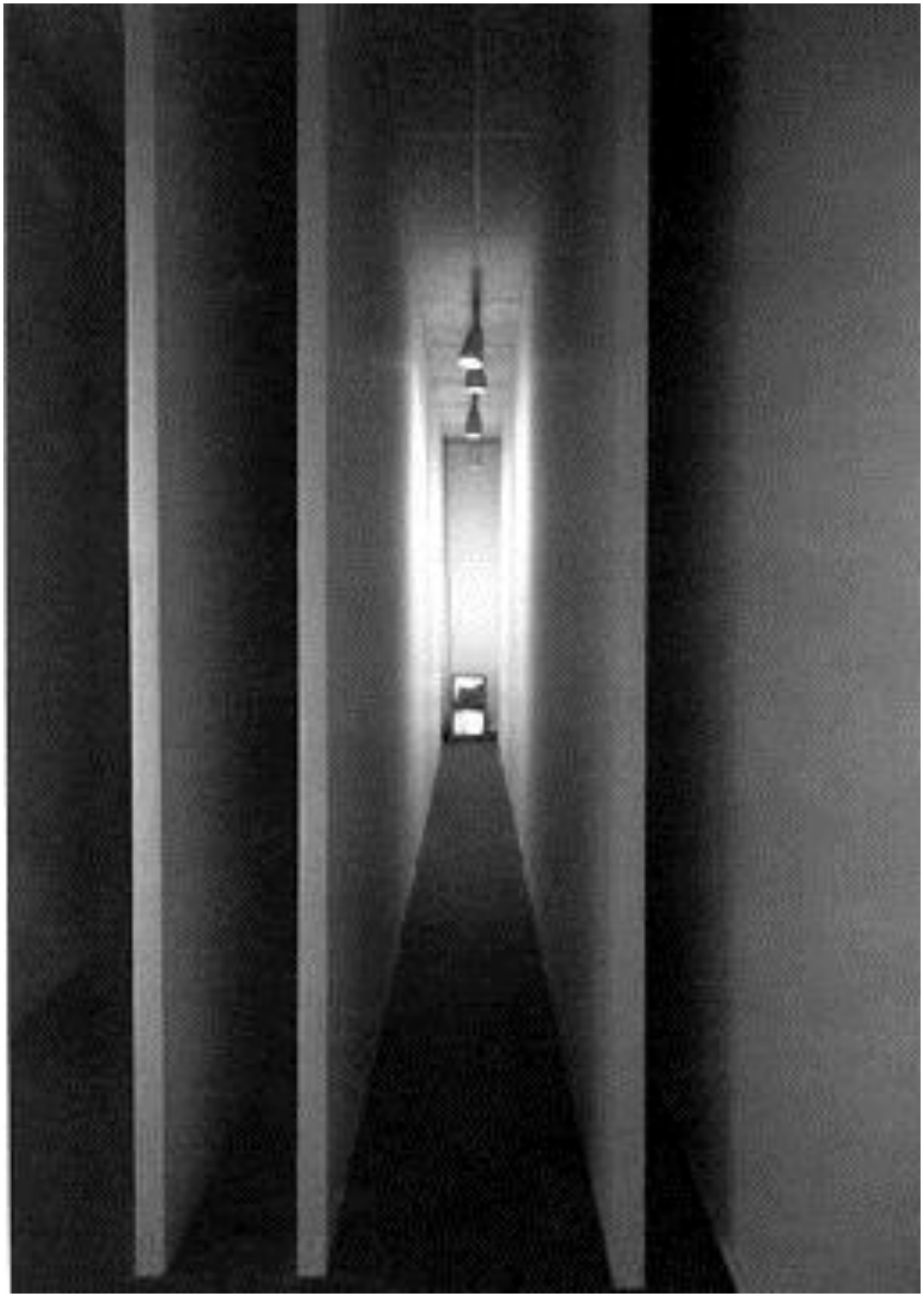




Fig. 181

Edward Kienholz, *The Big Eye (Homage to H.S.)*, 1961, installation with television and several objects. © Edward Kienholz.

Fig. 182

Nam June Paik, *Exposition of Music – Electronic Television*, 1963. Galerie Parnass in Wuppertal, Germany. © Medien Kunst Netz / Nam June Paik.





Figs. 183 and 184

Film stills of Richard Long's film 'Walking a Straight Line…', as part of the television exhibition *Land Art* in 1969, by Gerry Schum. The first still shows the title of the film, while the second shows the name of the artist and the location of the film – while the landscape keeps circling around.

© Stedelijk Museum Amsterdam / Gerry Schum.



Figs. 185 and 186

Film stills of Richard Long's film 'Walking a Straight Line…', as part of the television exhibition *Land Art* in 1969, by Gerry Schum.

© Stedelijk Museum Amsterdam / Gerry Schum.

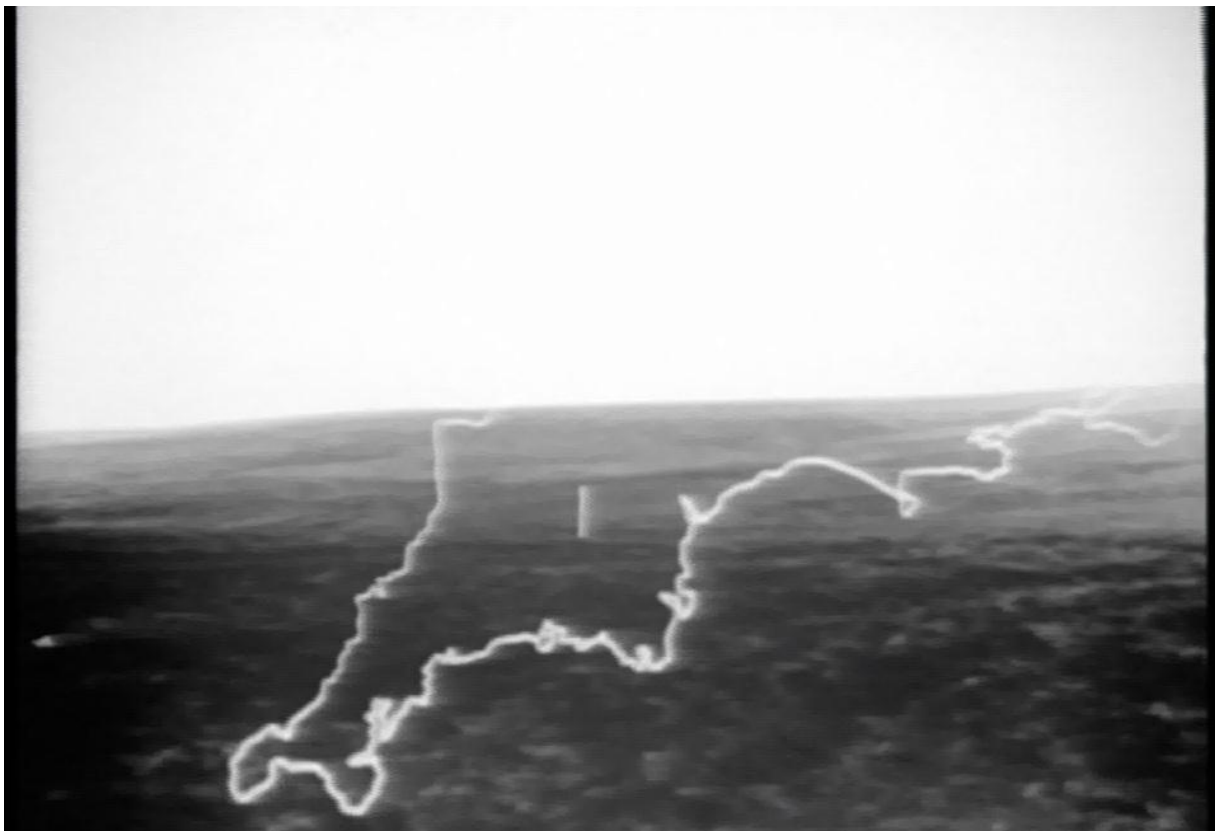
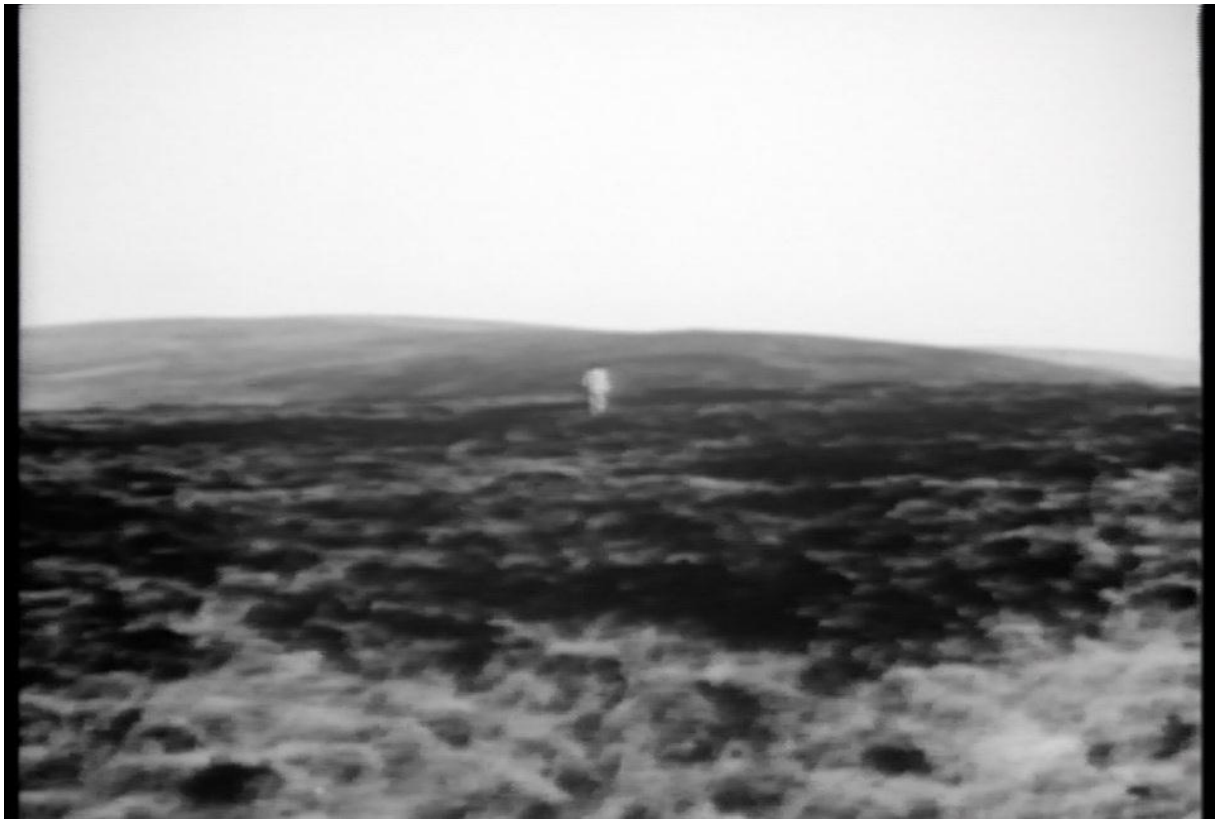




Fig. 187

Film still of Richard Long's film 'Walking a Straight Line…', as part of the television exhibition *Land Art* in 1969, by Gerry Schum. The still shows the figure at the beginning of the 'walk'.

© Stedelijk Museum Amsterdam / Gerry Schum.





Figs. 188 and 189

Film stills of Richard Long's film 'Walking a Straight Line…', as part of the television exhibition *Land Art* in 1969, by Gerry Schum. The still shows the zoom-in motion of the camera shots during the walk, starting as above and ending as below.

© Stedelijk Museum Amsterdam / Gerry Schum.



Fig. 190

Film still of Richard Long's film 'Walking a Straight Line…', as part of the television exhibition *Land Art* in 1969, by Gerry Schum. The river view, downstream, at the end of the line.

© Stedelijk Museum Amsterdam / Gerry Schum.



Fig. 191

Film still of Richard Long's film 'Walking a Straight Line…', as part of the television exhibition *Land Art* in 1969, by Gerry Schum.

The word 'back' after the end of the line.

© Stedelijk Museum Amsterdam / Gerry Schum.



Fig. 192

Film still of Richard Long's film 'Walking a Straight Line…', as part of the television exhibition *Land Art* in 1969, by Gerry Schum. The river, as seen upstream, at the beginning of the way back of the walk.

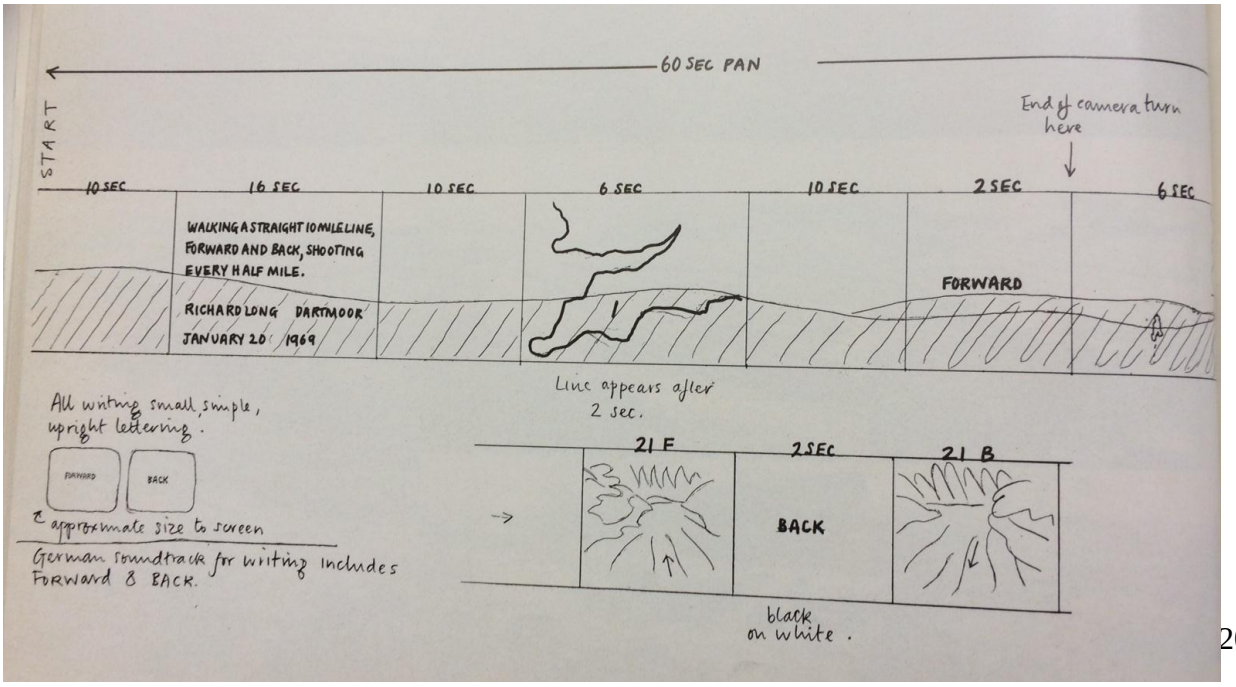
© Stedelijk Museum Amsterdam / Gerry Schum.



Fig. 193

Drawn directions, as a 'storyboard', by Richard Long for his film 'Walking a Straight Line…', which was part of the television exhibition *Land Art* in 1969, by Gerry Schum.

© Gerry Schum.



Figs. 194 and 195

Film stills of Barry Flanagan's film 'A Hole in the Sea', as part of the television exhibition *Land Art* in 1969, by Gerry Schum. The first shot of the film with cylinder, and then with the name of the artist.

© Stedelijk Museum Amsterdam / Gerry Schum.

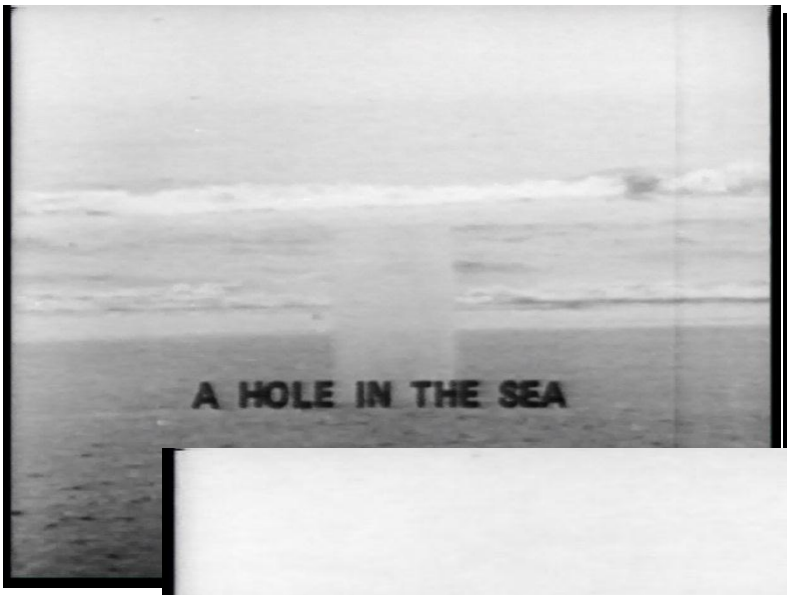




Figs. 196, 197 and 198

Film stills of Barry Flanagan's film 'A Hole in the Sea', as part of the television exhibition *Land Art* in 1969, by Gerry Schum. The first shots of the film with the title, the place of filming and then a zoomed in shot of the cylinder again.

© Stedelijk Museum Amsterdam / Gerry Schum.



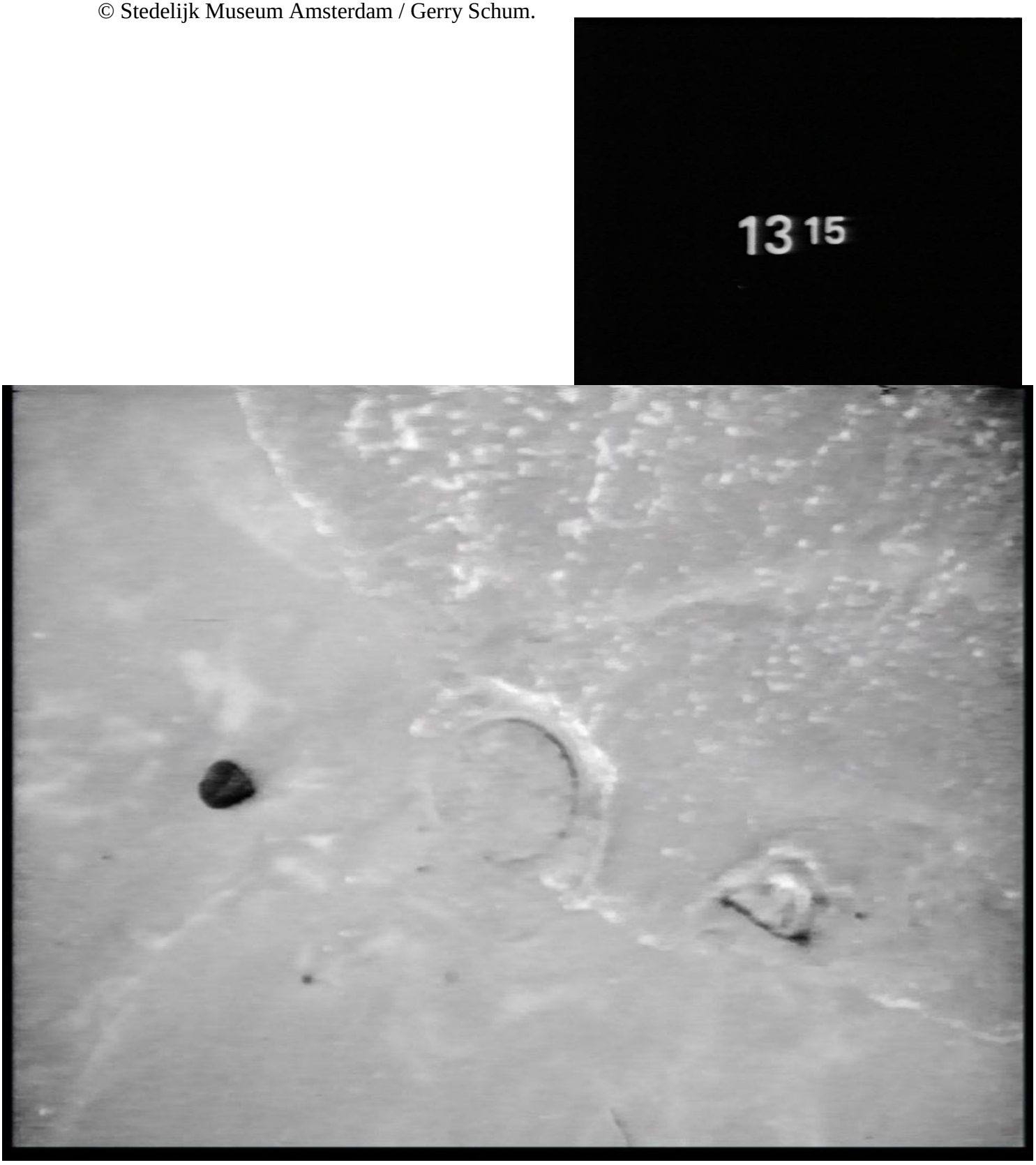




Figs. 199 and 200

Film stills of Barry Flanagan's film 'A Hole in the Sea', as part of the television exhibition Land Art in 1969, by Gerry Schum. The first time frame and first shot of the 'hole in the sea'.

© Stedelijk Museum Amsterdam / Gerry Schum.

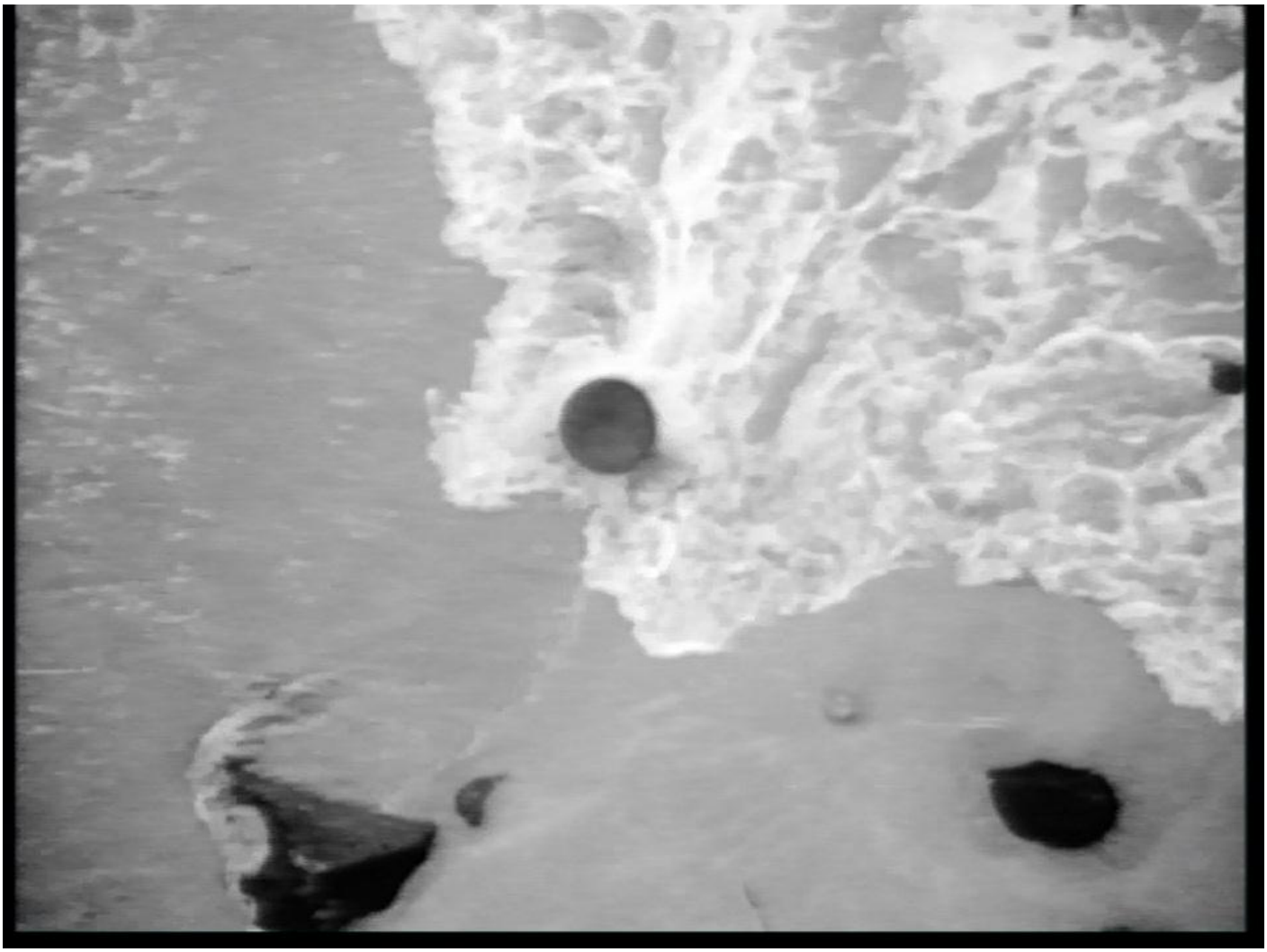


Figs. 201 and 202

Film stills of Barry Flanagan's film 'A Hole in the Sea', as part of the television exhibition *Land Art* in 1969, by Gerry Schum. The second time frame and second shot of the 'hole in the sea'.

© Stedelijk Museum Amsterdam / Gerry Schum.



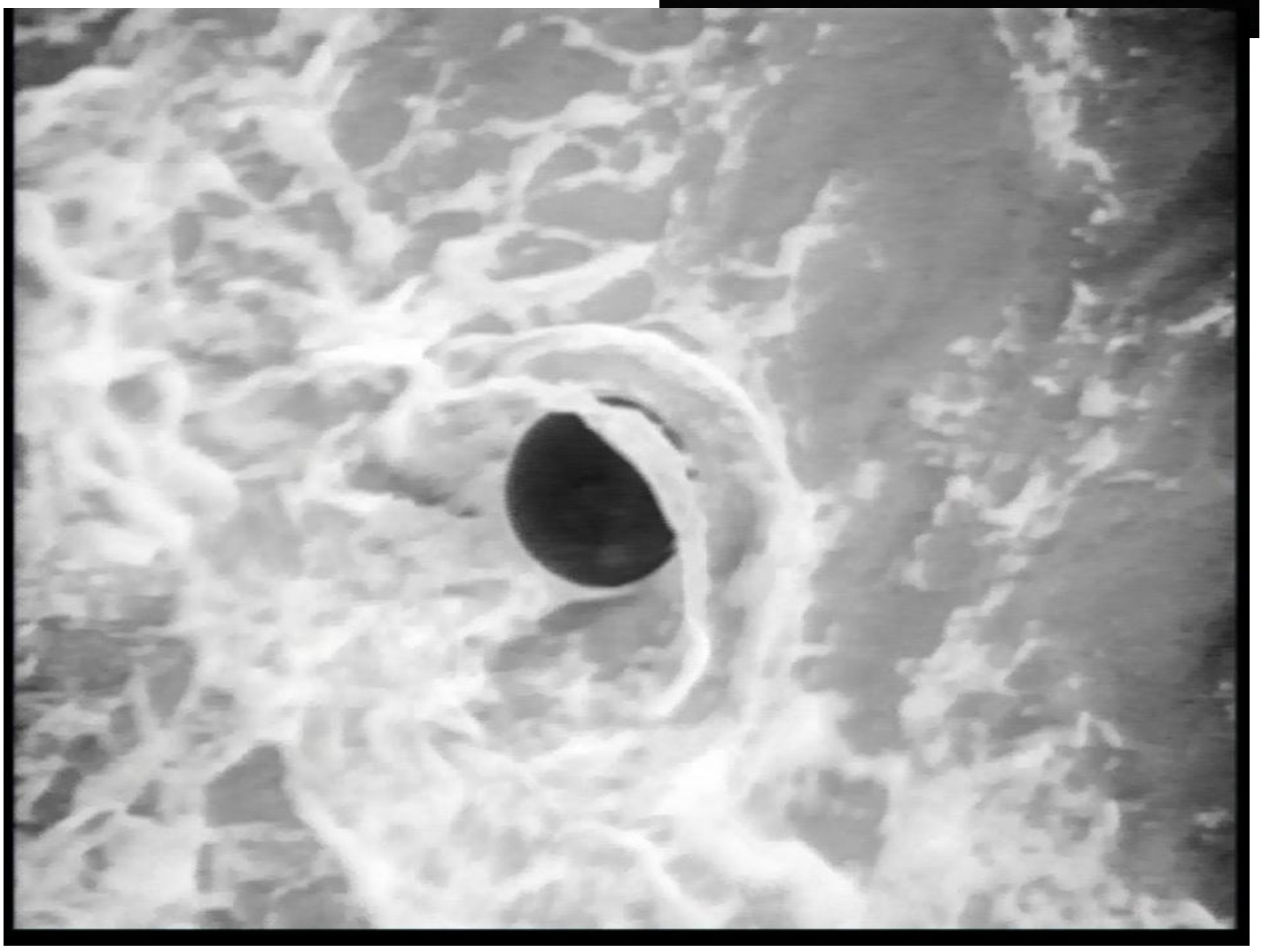


Figs. 203 and 204

Film stills of Barry Flanagan's film 'A Hole in the Sea', as part of the television exhibition *Land Art* in 1969, by Gerry Schum. The seventh time frame and seventh shot of the 'hole in the sea'.

© Stedelijk Museum Amsterdam / Gerry Schum.



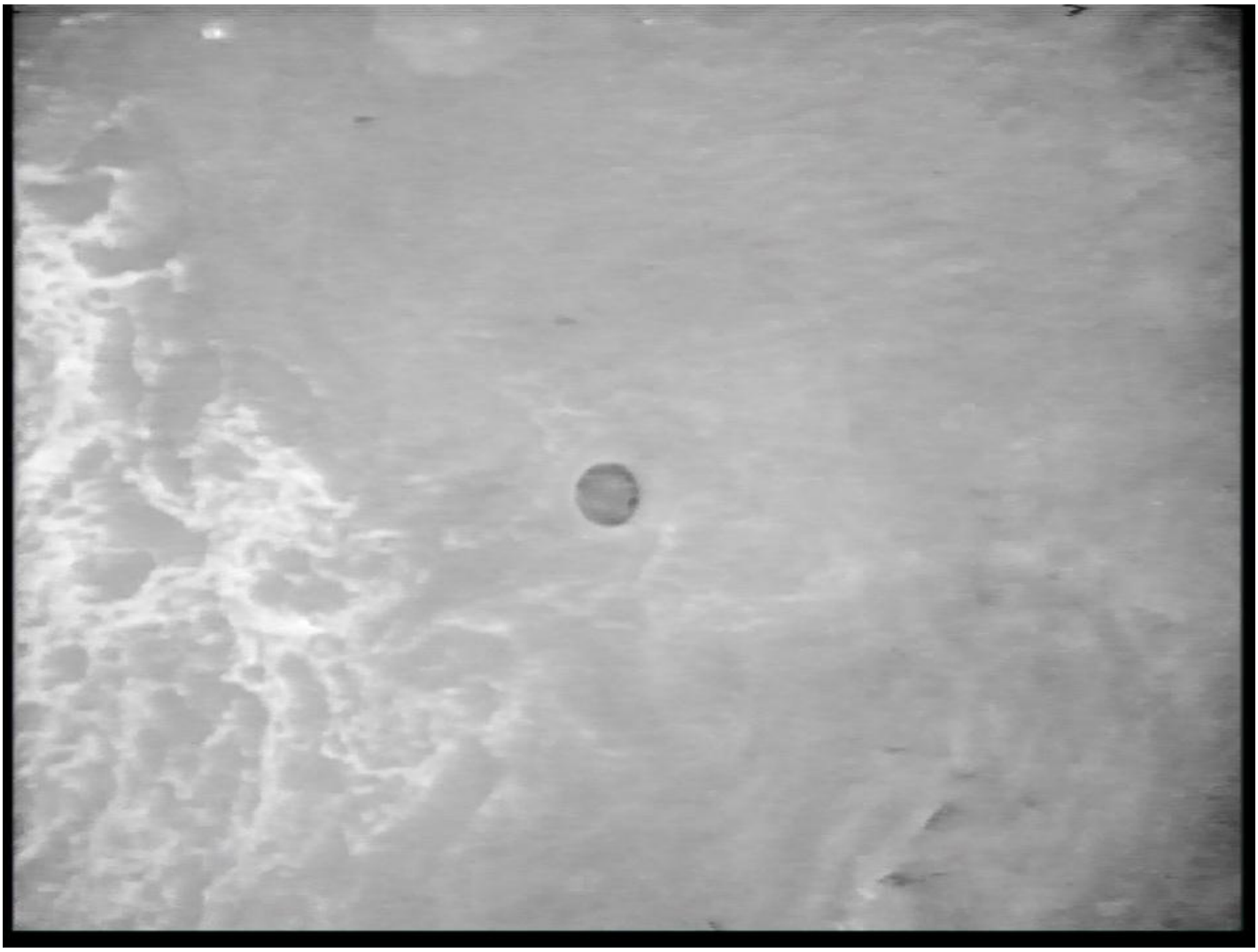


Figs. 205 and 206

Film stills of Barry Flanagan's film 'A Hole in the Sea', as part of the television exhibition *Land Art* in 1969, by Gerry Schum. The eleventh time frame and eleventh shot of the 'hole in the sea'.

© Stedelijk Museum Amsterdam / Gerry Schum.

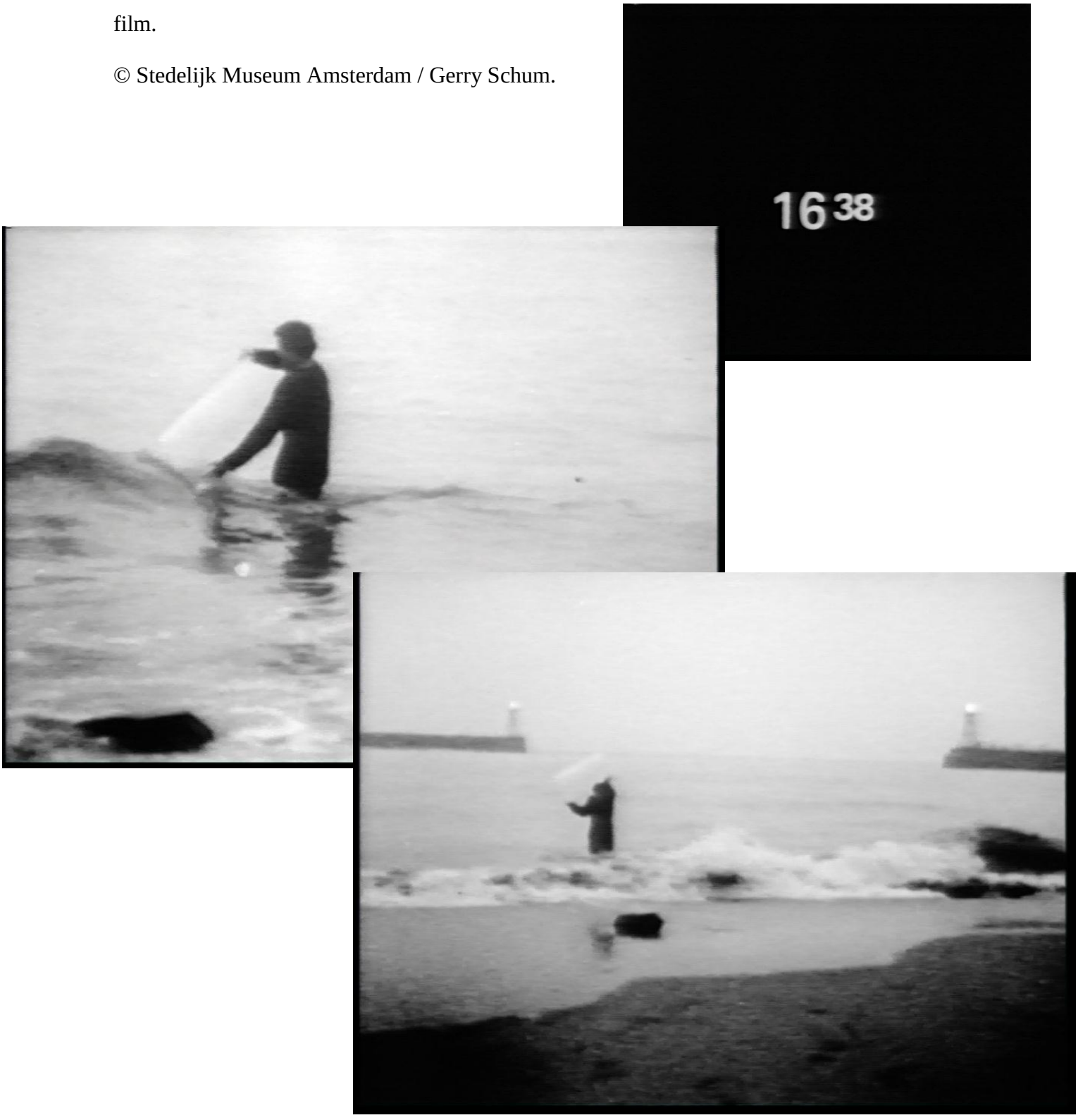




Figs. 207, 208 and 209

Film stills of Barry Flanagan's film 'A Hole in the Sea', as part of the television exhibition *Land Art* in 1969, by Gerry Schum. The thirteenth (and last) time frame and last shots of the film.

© Stedelijk Museum Amsterdam / Gerry Schum.



Figs. 210 and 211

Film stills of Barry Flanagan's film 'A Hole in the Sea', as part of the television exhibition *Land Art* in 1969, by Gerry Schum. The final shots of the film.

© Stedelijk Museum Amsterdam / Gerry Schum.





Fig. 212

Barry Flanagan, *A Hole in the Sea*, triptych, film stills, 1967-1970.

© Barry Flanagan.



Fig. 213

Photograph of Dennis Oppenheim during the making of his film *Timetrack*, as part of the television exhibition *Land Art* in 1969, by Gerry Schum. Showing Oppenheim in a snow mobile.

© Gerry Schum.



Figs. 214, 215 and 216

Film stills of Dennis Oppenheim's film 'Timetrack', as part of the television exhibition *Land Art* in 1969, by Gerry Schum. The first shots of the film with the name of the artist, the title and the location.

© Stedelijk Museum Amsterdam / Gerry Schum.



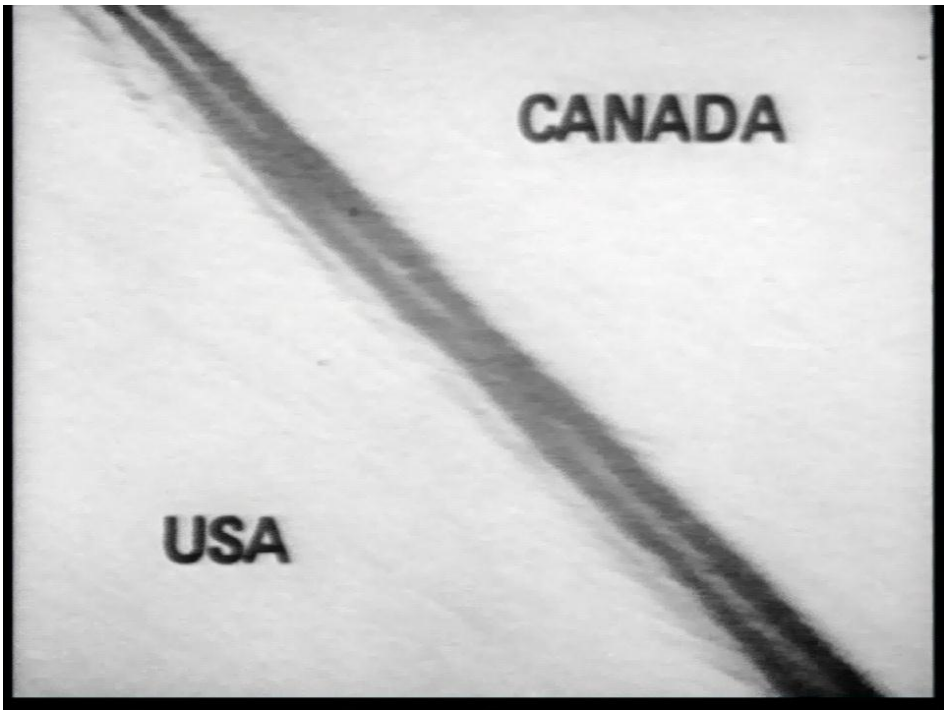


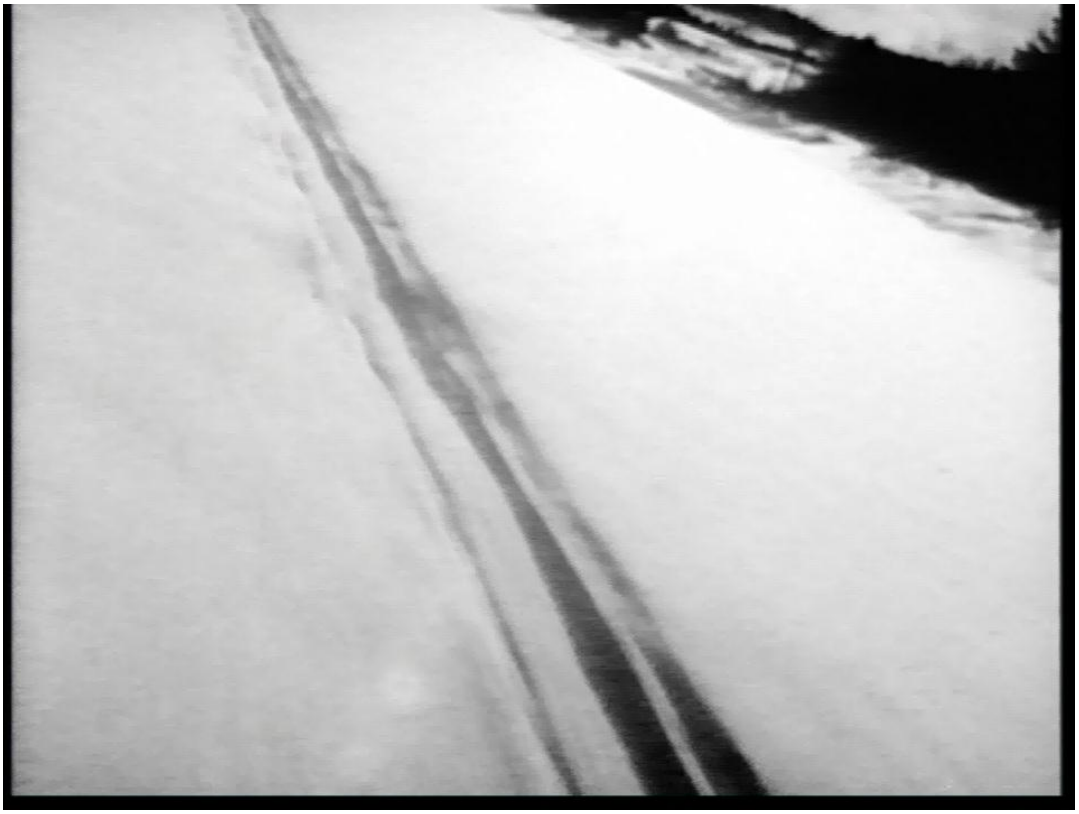


Figs. 217 and 218

Film stills of Dennis Oppenheim's film 'Timetrack', as part of the television exhibition *Land Art* in 1969, by Gerry Schum. The shot with the countries' names and first landscape shot.

© Stedelijk Museum Amsterdam / Gerry Schum.





Figs. 219 and 220

Film stills of Dennis Oppenheim's film 'Timetrack', as part of the television exhibition *Land Art* in 1969, by Gerry Schum. Two shots with the sun coming out of the clouds, and reflection on the water.

© Stedelijk Museum Amsterdam / Gerry Schum.





Figs. 221 and 222

Film stills of Dennis Oppenheim's film 'Timetrack', as part of the television exhibition *Land Art* in 1969, by Gerry Schum. Two shots with the sun flickers in the camera's lens, slowly moving towards the left of the screen, and with the snow mobile clearly visible (where the 'track' ends).

© Stedelijk Museum Amsterdam / Gerry Schum.





Figs. 223 and 224

Film stills of Dennis Oppenheim's film 'Timetrack', as part of the television exhibition *Land Art* in 1969, by Gerry Schum. Shot with part of the airplane visible on the left side and the last shot of the film showing the landscape in front.

© Stedelijk Museum Amsterdam / Gerry Schum.





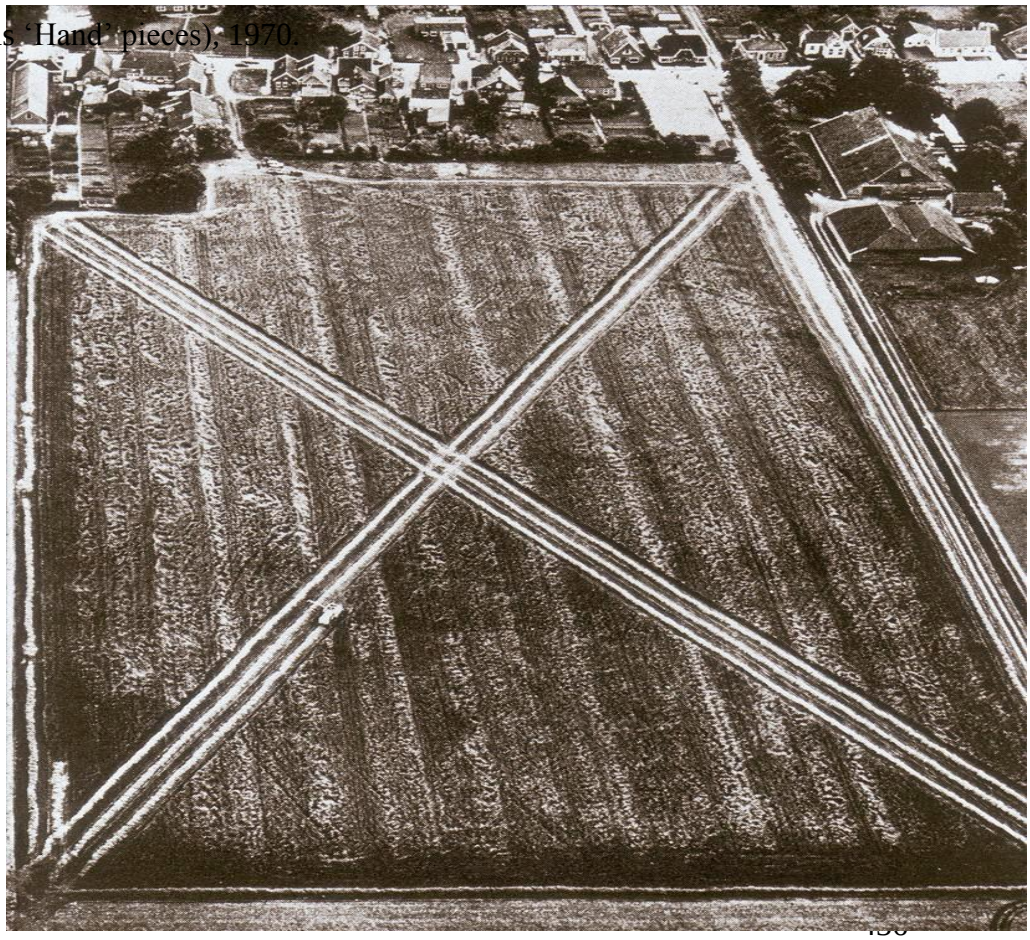
Fig. 225

Photograph of Dennis Oppenheim's artwork *Direct Seeding/Cancelled Crop,* 1969. Photographer unknown. © Dennis Oppenheim.



Fig. 226

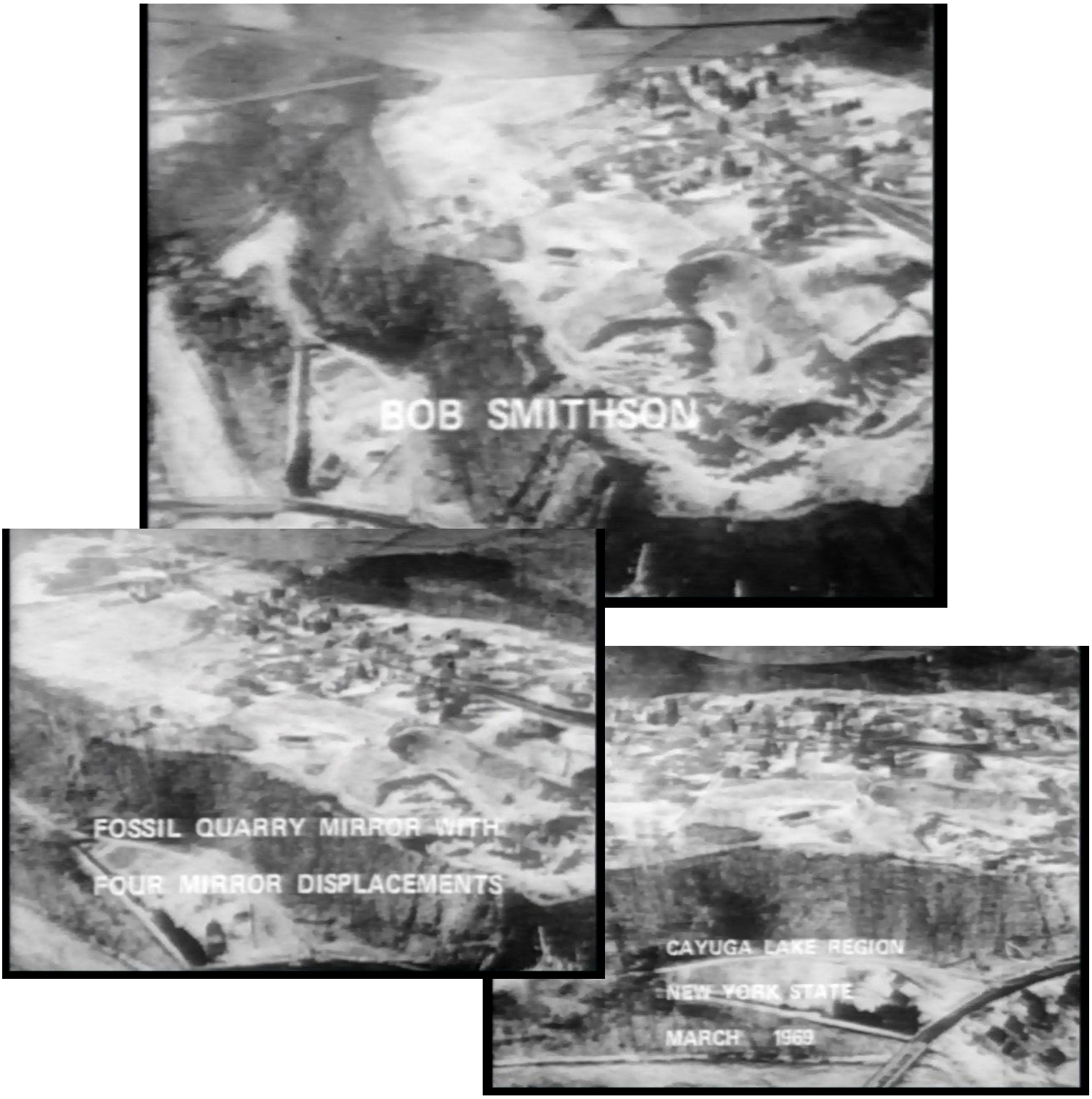
Film stills of Dennis Oppenheim's *Leafed Hand* (one of his 'Hand' pieces), 1970. © Dennis Oppenheim.



Figs. 227, 228 and 229

Film stills of Robert Smithson's film 'Fossil Quarry Mirror with Four Mirror Displacements', as part of the television exhibition *Land Art* in 1969, by Gerry Schum. First shots with name, title and location.

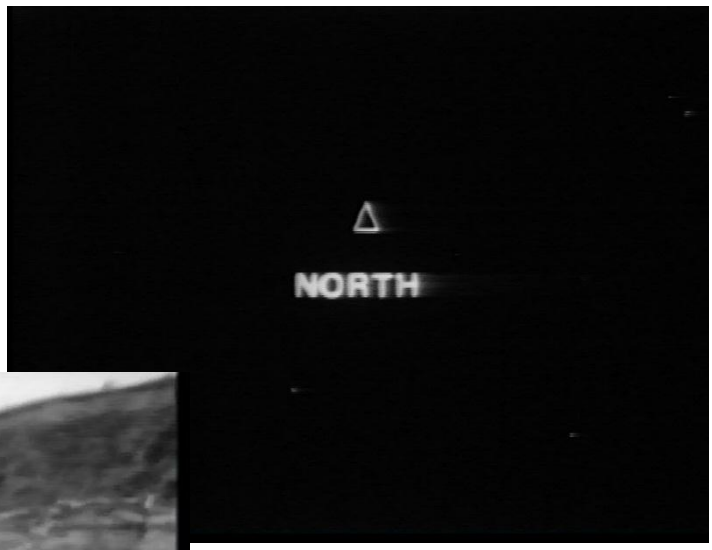
© Stedelijk Museum Amsterdam / Gerry Schum.



Figs. 230, 231 and 232

Film stills of Robert Smithson's film 'Fossil Quarry Mirror with Four Mirror Displacements', as part of the television exhibition *Land Art* in 1969, by Gerry Schum. Shots with the first word 'North' and a triangle, the overview shot and the zoomed-in shot.

© Stedelijk Museum Amsterdam / Gerry Schum.



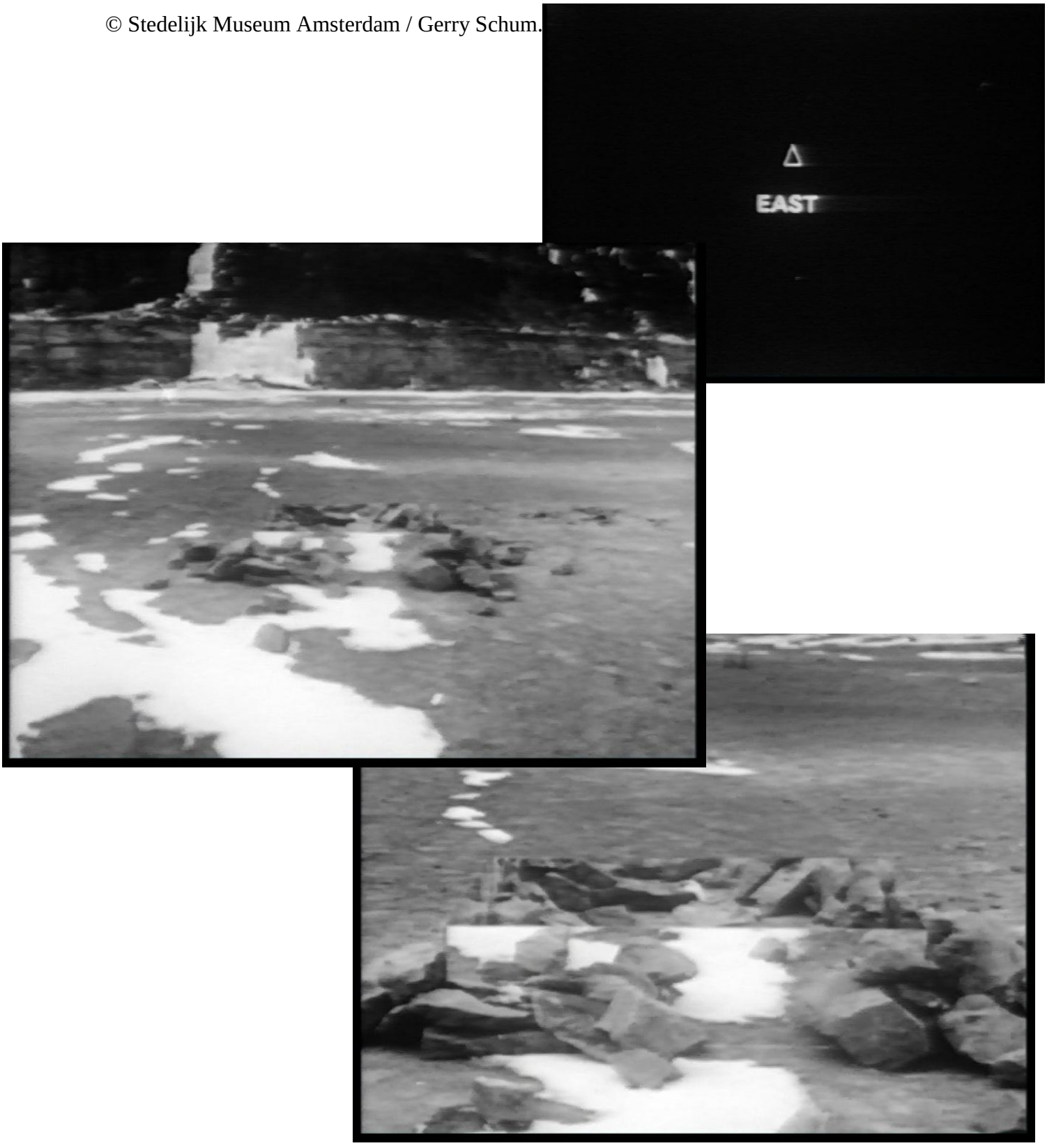




Figs. 233, 234 and 235

Film stills of Robert Smithson's film 'Fossil Quarry Mirror with Four Mirror Displacements', as part of the television exhibition *Land Art* in 1969, by Gerry Schum. Shots with the first word 'East' and a triangle, the overview shot and the zoomed-in shot.

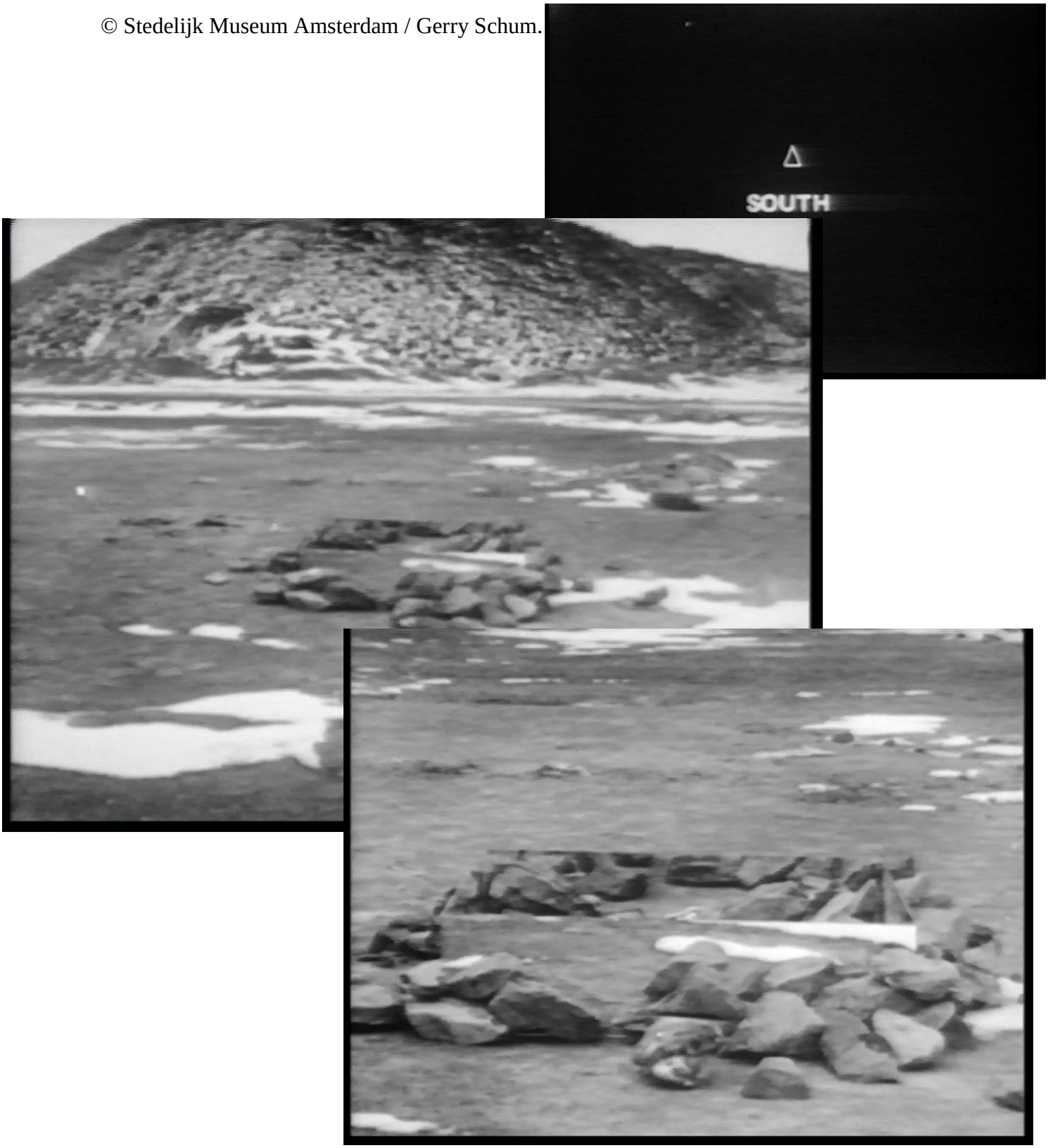
© Stedelijk Museum Amsterdam / Gerry Schum.



Figs. 236, 237 and 238

Film stills of Robert Smithson's film 'Fossil Quarry Mirror with Four Mirror Displacements', as part of the television exhibition *Land Art* in 1969, by Gerry Schum. Shots with the first word 'South' and a triangle, the overview shot and the zoomed-in shot.

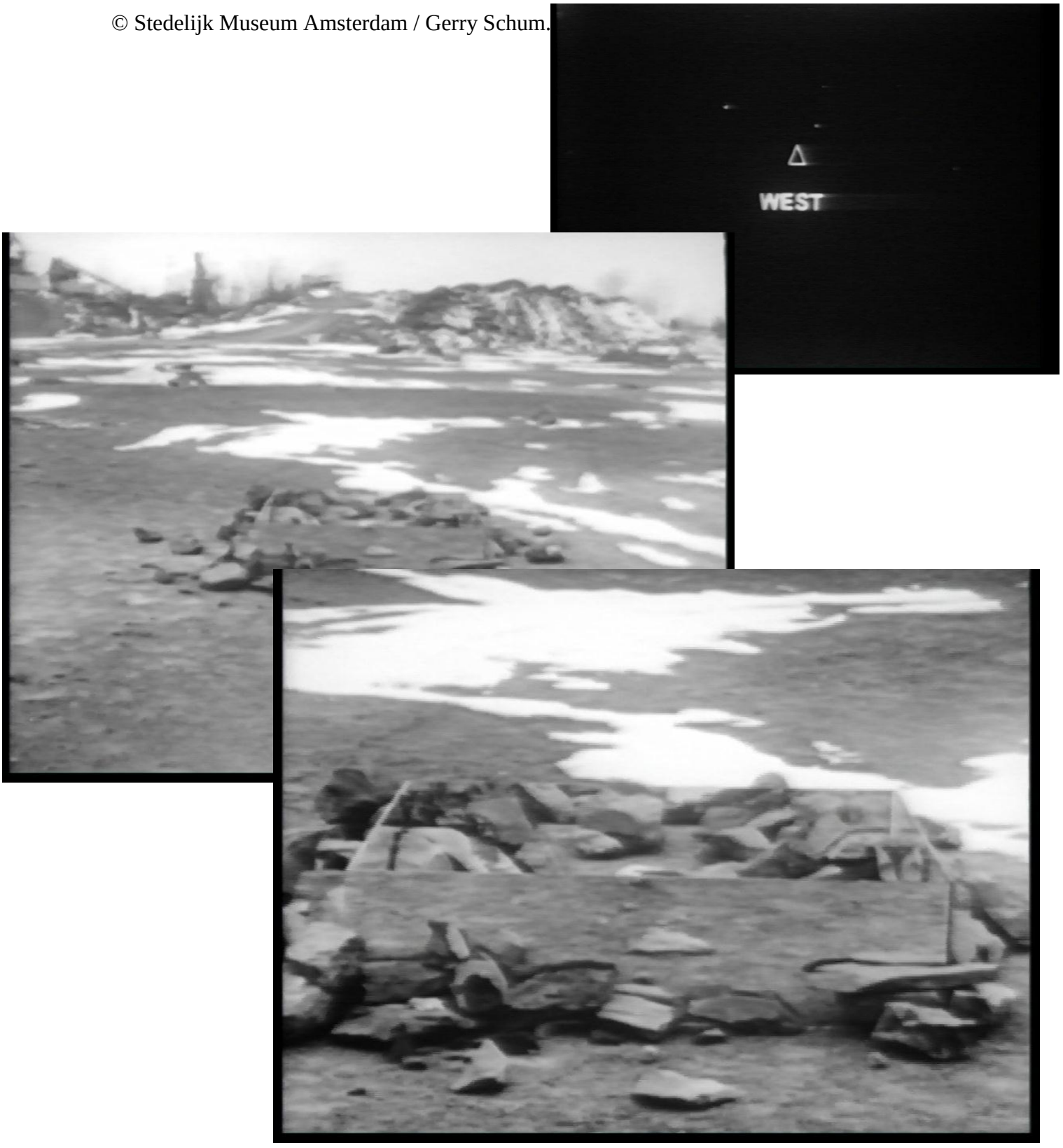
© Stedelijk Museum Amsterdam / Gerry Schum.



Figs. 239, 240 and 241

Film stills of Robert Smithson's film 'Fossil Quarry Mirror with Four Mirror Displacements', as part of the television exhibition *Land Art* in 1969, by Gerry Schum. Shots with the first word 'West' and a triangle, the overview shot and the zoomed-in shot.

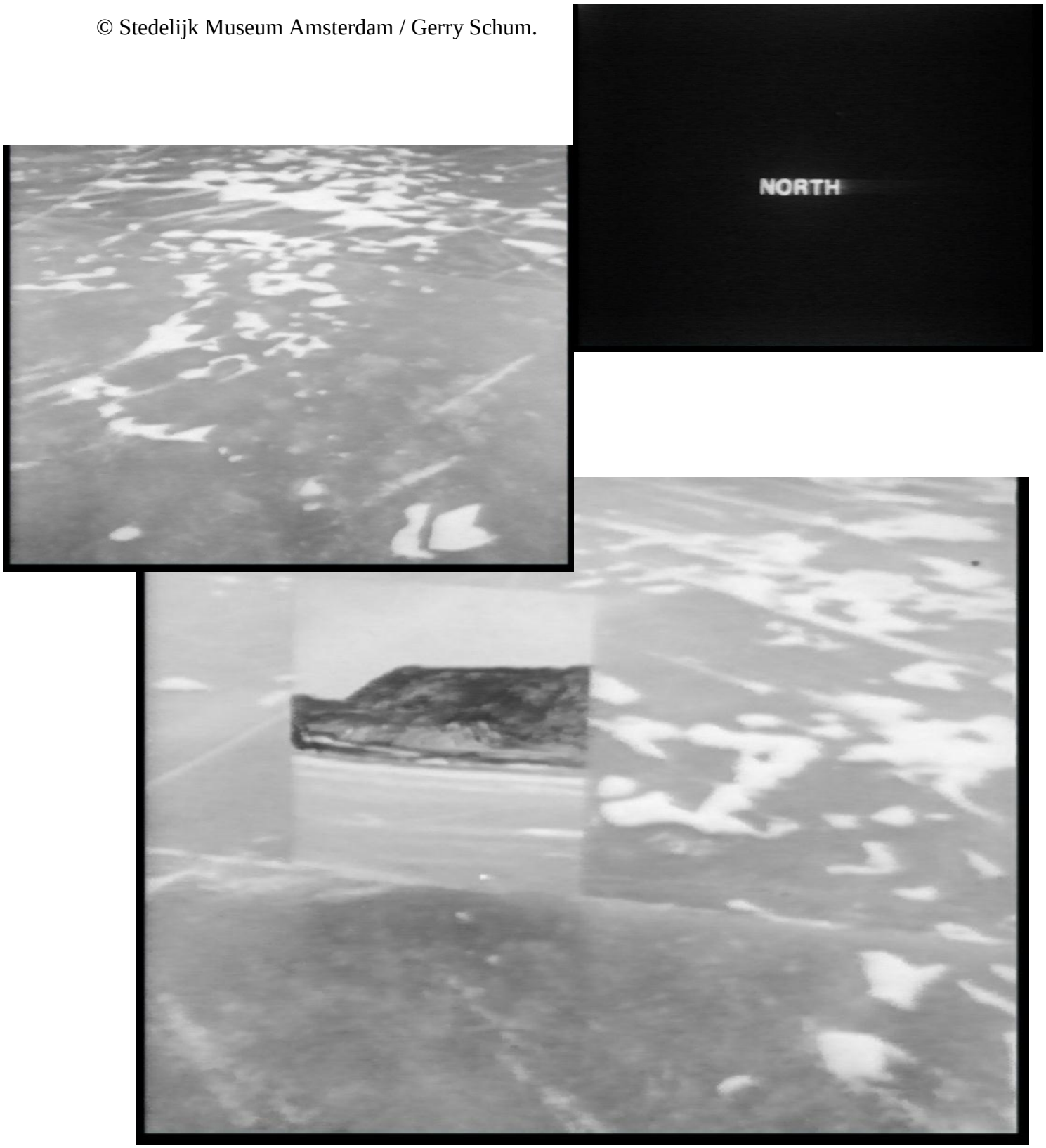
© Stedelijk Museum Amsterdam / Gerry Schum.



Figs. 242, 243 and 244

Film stills of Robert Smithson's film 'Fossil Quarry Mirror with Four Mirror Displacements', as part of the television exhibition *Land Art* in 1969, by Gerry Schum. Shots with the second word 'North' (now without a triangle sign above it), the ground shot and the final mirror shot.

© Stedelijk Museum Amsterdam / Gerry Schum.



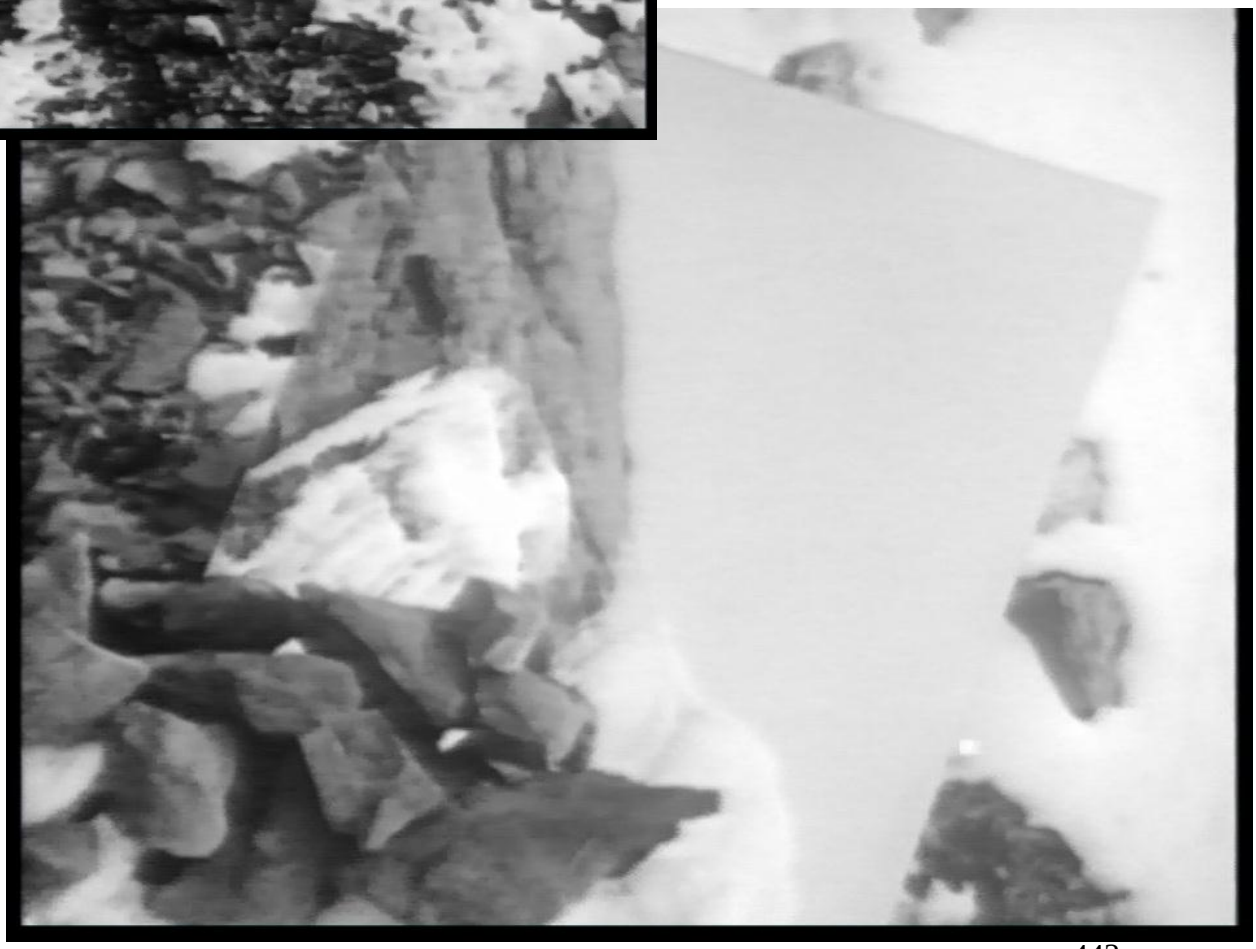
Figs. 245, 246 and 247

Film stills of Robert Smithson's film 'Fossil Quarry Mirror with Four Mirror Displacements', as part of the television exhibition *Land Art* in 1969, by Gerry Schum. Shots with the second word 'East' (now without a triangle sign above it), the ground shot and the final mirror shot.

© Stedelijk Museum Amsterdam / Gerry Schum.







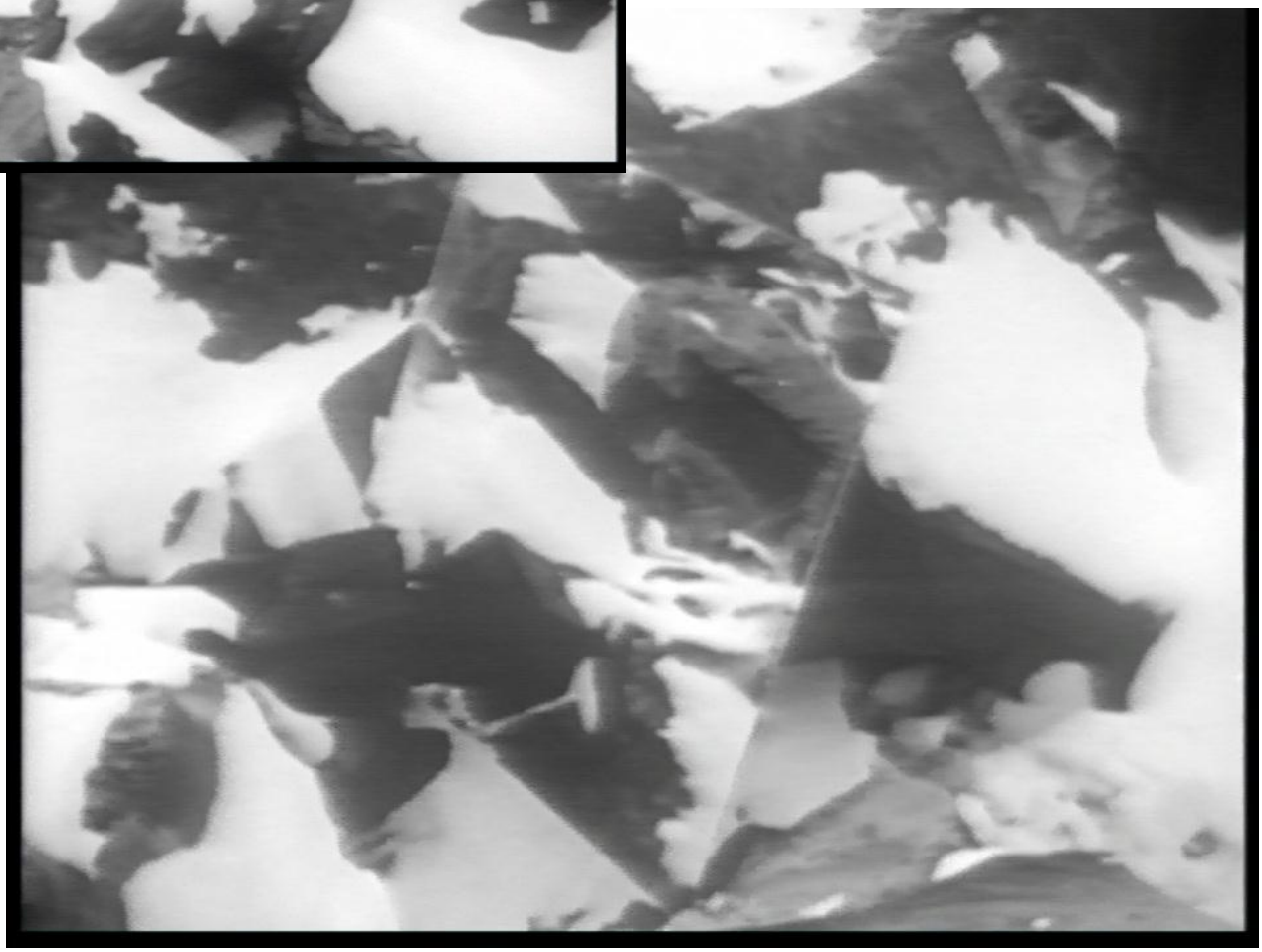
Figs. 248, 249 and 250

Film stills of Robert Smithson's film 'Fossil Quarry Mirror with Four Mirror Displacements', as part of the television exhibition *Land Art* in 1969, by Gerry Schum. Shots with the second word 'South' (now without a triangle sign above it), the ground shot and the final mirror shot.

© Stedelijk Museum Amsterdam / Gerry Schum.





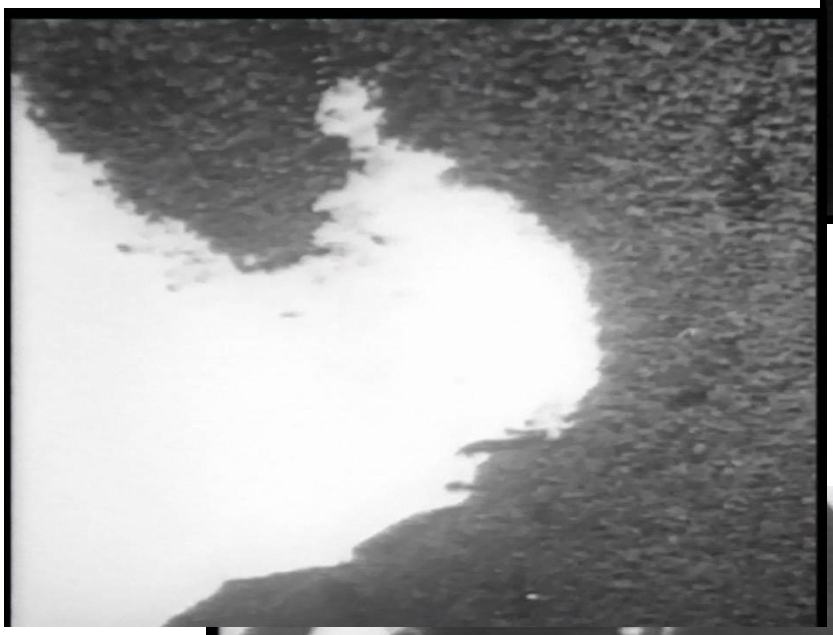


Figs. 251, 252 and 253

Film stills of Robert Smithson's film 'Fossil Quarry Mirror with Four Mirror Displacements', as part of the television exhibition *Land Art* in 1969, by Gerry Schum. Final shots of the film, with the second word 'West' (now without a triangle sign above it), the ground shot and the final mirror shot.

© Stedelijk Museum Amsterdam / Gerry Schum.







Figs. 254, 255 and 256

Film stills of Marinus Boezem's film 'Sand Fountain', as part of the television exhibition *Land Art* in 1969, by Gerry Schum. First shots of the film, with name, title and location.

© Stedelijk Museum Amsterdam / Gerry Schum.







Figs. 257, 258 and 259

Film stills of Marinus Boezem's film 'Sand Fountain', as part of the television exhibition *Land Art* in 1969, by Gerry Schum. First shots of the film, first without the sand fountain and then the beginning of the sand fountain, with the wind slowly increasing in force.

© Stedelijk Museum Amsterdam / Gerry Schum.

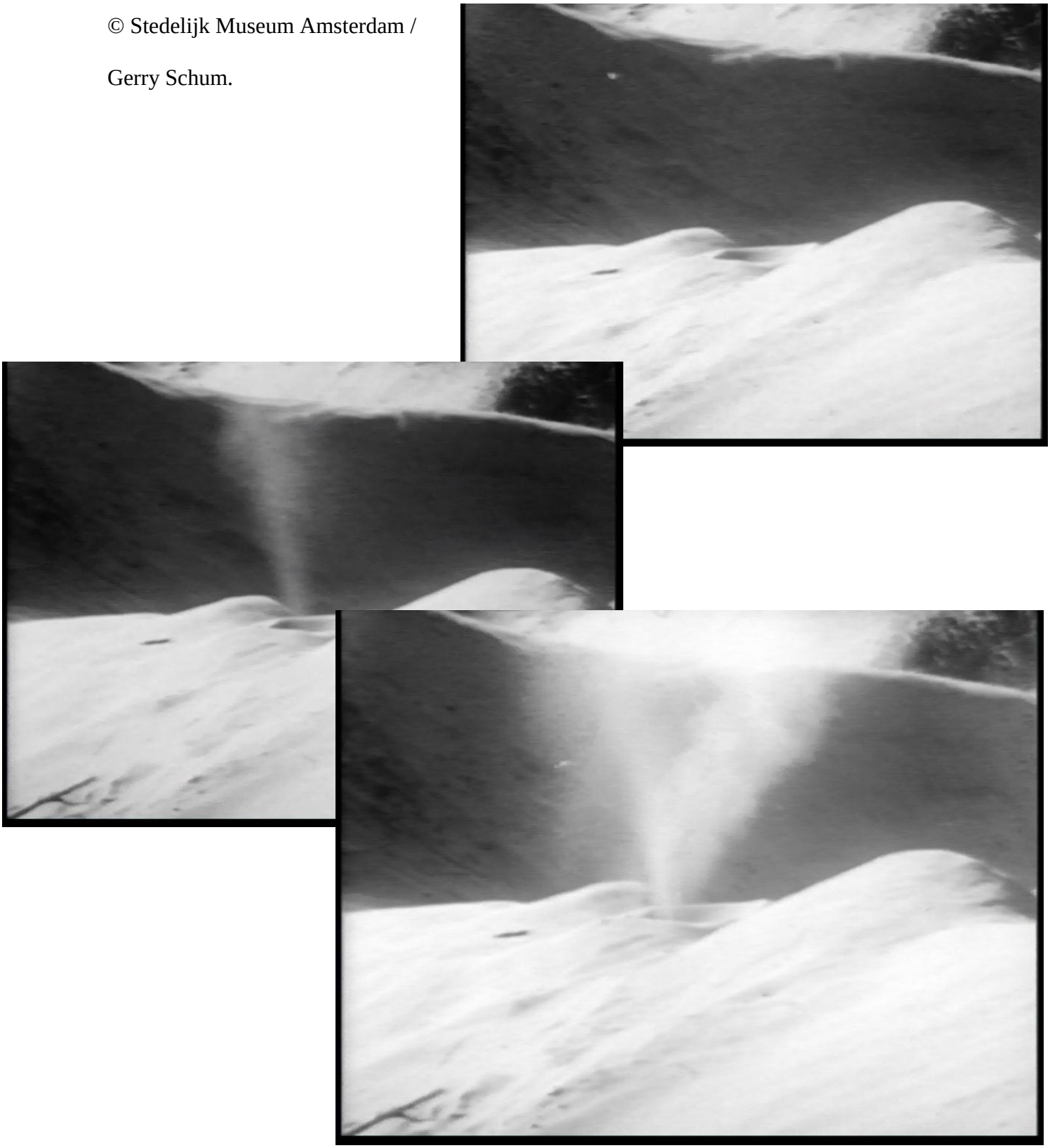
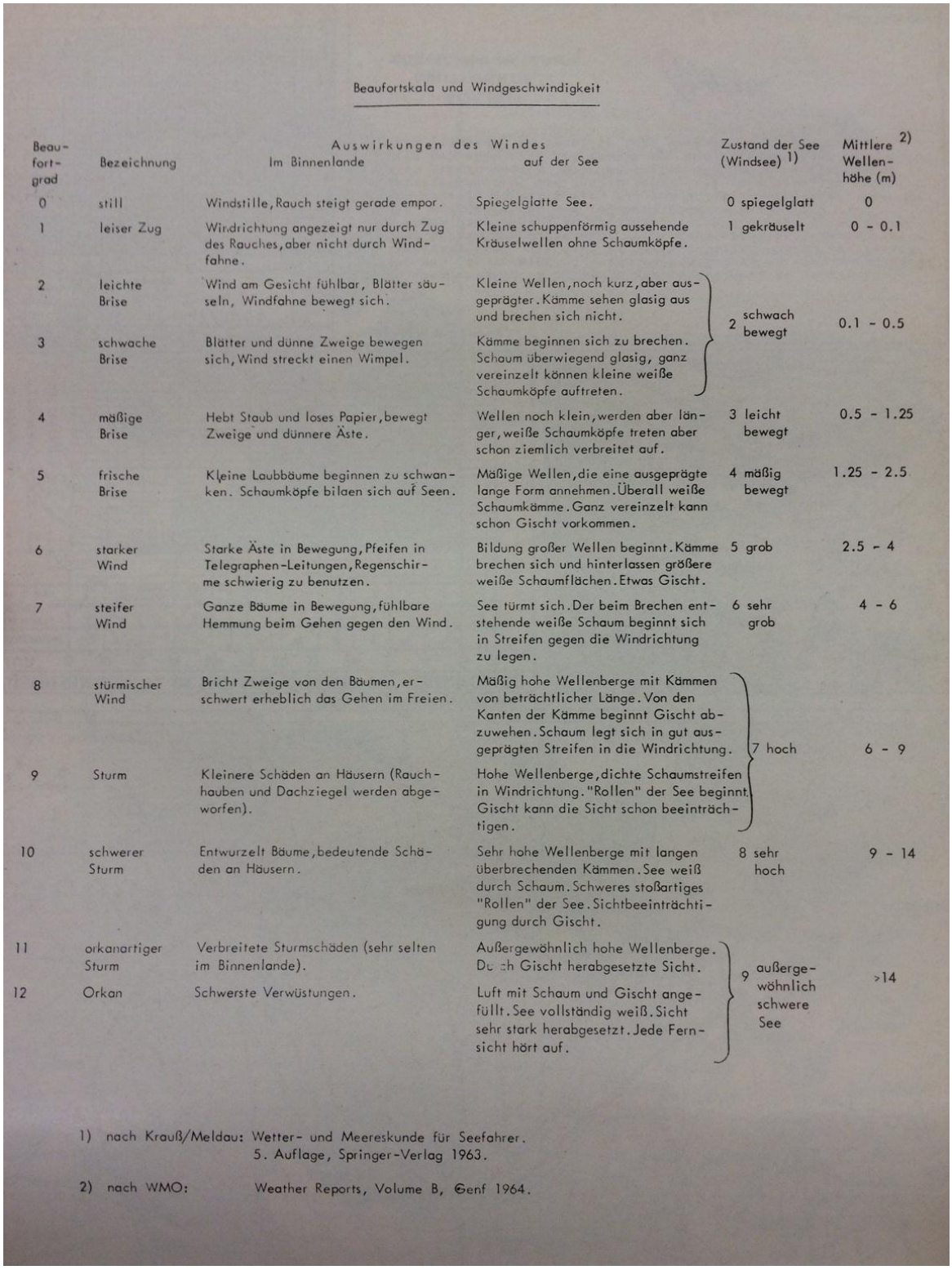


Fig. 260

‘Beaufortskala und Windgeschwindigkeit’ (Scale of Beaufort and Wind Speeds). Register used by Boezem for his film ‘Sand Fountain’, as published in the accompanying exhibition catalogue of the television exhibition *Land Art.* (For English translation, see fig. 261.)

© Stedelijk Museum Amsterdam / Gerry Schum.



Beaufortskala und Windgeschwindigkeit

Beaufortgrad	Bezeichnung	Auswirkungen des Windes Im Binnenlande	Auswirkungen des Windes auf der See	Zustand der See (Windsee) 1)	Mittlere Wellenhöhe (m) 2)
0	still	Windstille, Rauch steigt gerade empor.	Spiegelglatte See.	0 spiegelglatt	0
1	leiser Zug	Windrichtung angezeigt nur durch Zug des Rauches, aber nicht durch Windfahne.	Kleine schuppenförmig aussehende Kräuselwellen ohne Schaumköpfe.	1 gekräuselt	0 - 0.1
2	leichte Brise	Wind am Gesicht fühlbar, Blätter säuseln, Windfahne bewegt sich.	Kleine Wellen, noch kurz, aber ausgeprägter. Kämme sehen glasig aus und brechen sich nicht.	2 schwach bewegt	0.1 - 0.5
3	schwache Brise	Blätter und dünne Zweige bewegen sich, Wind streckt einen Wimpel.	Kämme beginnen sich zu brechen. Schaum überwiegend glasig, ganz vereinzelt können kleine weiße Schaumköpfe auftreten.		
4	mäßige Brise	Hebt Staub und loses Papier, bewegt Zweige und dünnere Äste.	Wellen noch klein, werden aber länger, weiße Schaumköpfe treten aber schon ziemlich verbreitet auf.	3 leicht bewegt	0.5 - 1.25
5	frische Brise	Kleine Laubbäume beginnen zu schwanken. Schaumköpfe bilden sich auf Seen.	Mäßige Wellen, die eine ausgeprägte lange Form annehmen. Überall weiße Schaumkämme. Ganz vereinzelt kann schon Gischt vorkommen.	4 mäßig bewegt	1.25 - 2.5
6	starker Wind	Starke Äste in Bewegung, Pfeifen in Telegraphen-Leitungen, Regenschirme schwierig zu benutzen.	Bildung großer Wellen beginnt. Kämme brechen sich und hinterlassen größere weiße Schaumflächen. Etwas Gischt.	5 grob	2.5 - 4
7	steifer Wind	Ganze Bäume in Bewegung, fühlbare Hemmung beim Gehen gegen den Wind.	See türmt sich. Der beim Brechen entstehende weiße Schaum beginnt sich in Streifen gegen die Windrichtung zu legen.	6 sehr grob	4 - 6
8	stürmischer Wind	Bricht Zweige von den Bäumen, erschwert erheblich das Gehen im Freien.	Mäßig hohe Wellenberge mit Kämmen von beträchtlicher Länge. Von den Kanten der Kämme beginnt Gischt abzuwehen. Schaum legt sich in gut ausgeprägten Streifen in die Windrichtung.	7 hoch	6 - 9
9	Sturm	Kleinere Schäden an Häusern (Rauchhauben und Dachziegel werden abgeworfen).	Hohe Wellenberge, dichte Schaumstreifen in Windrichtung. "Rollen" der See beginnt. Gischt kann die Sicht schon beeinträchtigen.		
10	schwerer Sturm	Entwurzelt Bäume, bedeutende Schäden an Häusern.	Sehr hohe Wellenberge mit langen überbrechenden Kämmen. See weiß durch Schaum. Schweres stoßartiges "Rollen" der See. Sichtbeeinträchtigung durch Gischt.	8 sehr hoch	9 - 14
11	orkanartiger Sturm	Verbreitete Sturmschäden (sehr selten im Binnenlande).	Außergewöhnlich hohe Wellenberge. Durch Gischt herabgesetzte Sicht.	9 außergewöhnlich schwere See	>14
12	Orkan	Schwerste Verwüstungen.	Luft mit Schaum und Gischt angefüllt. See vollständig weiß. Sicht sehr stark herabgesetzt. Jede Fernsicht hört auf.		

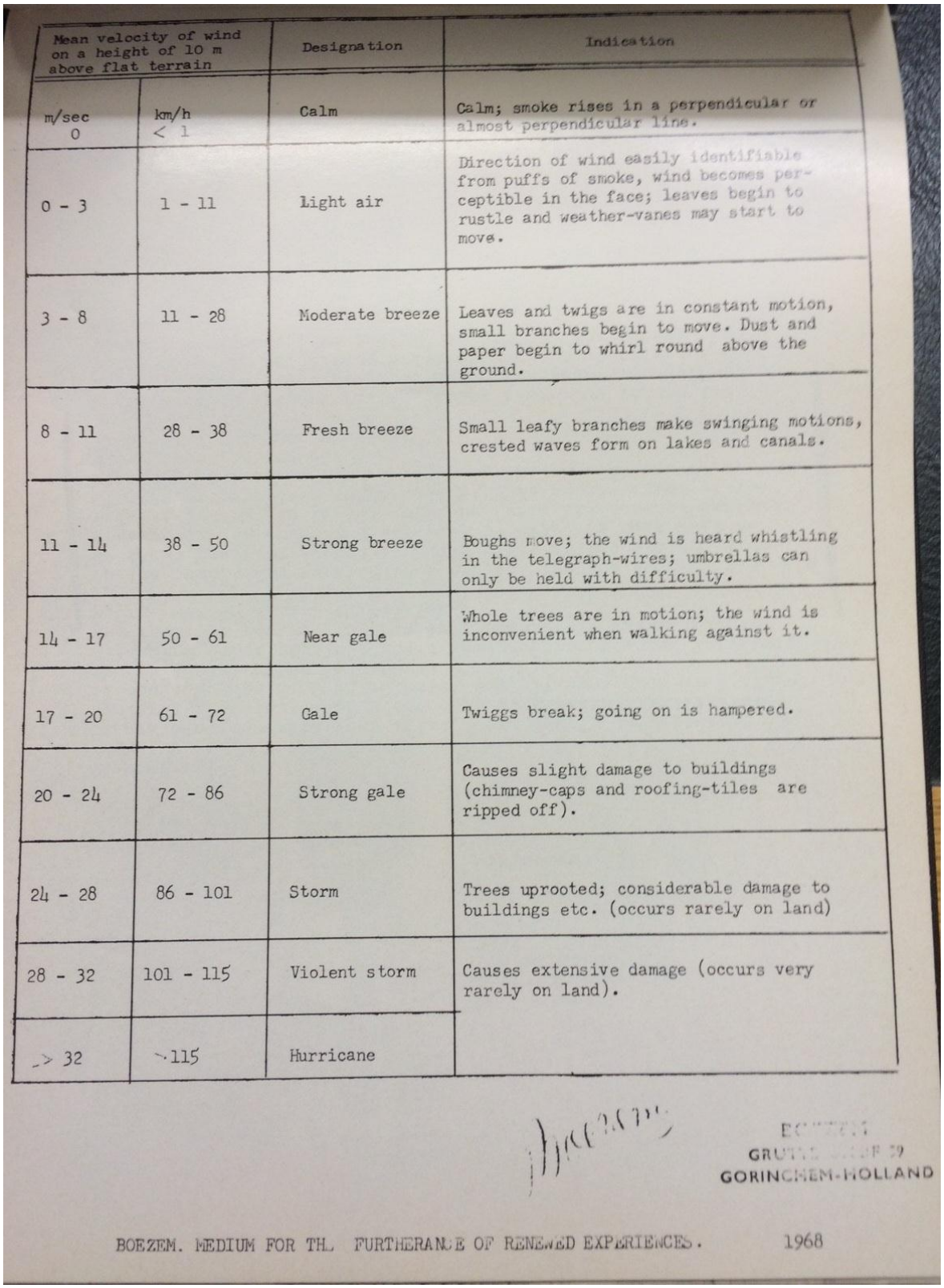
1) nach Krauß/Meldau: Wetter- und Meereskunde für Seefahrer. 5. Auflage, Springer-Verlag 1963.

2) nach WMO: Weather Reports, Volume B, Genf 1964.

Fig. 261

Scale of Beaufort and wind speeds. Register used by Boezem for his film „Sand Fountain', as published in the accompanying exhibition catalogue of the television exhibition *Land Art.*

© Stedelijk Museum Amsterdam / Gerry Schum.



Mean velocity of wind on a height of 10 m above flat terrain		Designation	Indication
m/sec	km/h		
0	< 1	Calm	Calm; smoke rises in a perpendicular or almost perpendicular line.
0 - 3	1 - 11	Light air	Direction of wind easily identifiable from puffs of smoke, wind becomes perceptible in the face; leaves begin to rustle and weather-vanes may start to move.
3 - 8	11 - 28	Moderate breeze	Leaves and twigs are in constant motion, small branches begin to move. Dust and paper begin to whirl round above the ground.
8 - 11	28 - 38	Fresh breeze	Small leafy branches make swinging motions, crested waves form on lakes and canals.
11 - 14	38 - 50	Strong breeze	Boughs move; the wind is heard whistling in the telegraph-wires; umbrellas can only be held with difficulty.
14 - 17	50 - 61	Near gale	Whole trees are in motion; the wind is inconvenient when walking against it.
17 - 20	61 - 72	Gale	Twiggs break; going on is hampered.
20 - 24	72 - 86	Strong gale	Causes slight damage to buildings (chimney-caps and roofing-tiles are ripped off).
24 - 28	86 - 101	Storm	Trees uprooted; considerable damage to buildings etc. (occurs rarely on land)
28 - 32	101 - 115	Violent storm	Causes extensive damage (occurs very rarely on land).
> 32	> 115	Hurricane	

GORINCHEM-HOLLAND

BOEZEM. MEDIUM FOR THE FURTHERANCE OF RENEWED EXPERIENCES. 1968

Figs. 262, 263 and 264

Film stills of Marinus Boezem's film 'Sand Fountain', as part of the television exhibition *Land Art* in 1969, by Gerry Schum. First shots of the film, with the sand fountain and the wind slowly increasing in force.

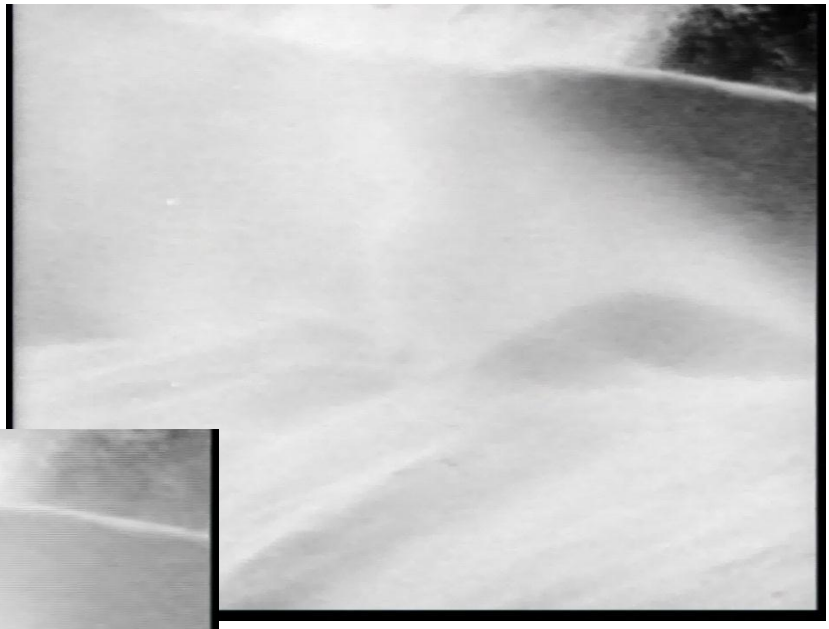
© Stedelijk Museum Amsterdam / Gerry Schum.



Figs. 265, 266 and 267

Film stills of Marinus Boezem's film 'Sand Fountain', as part of the television exhibition *Land Art* in 1969, by Gerry Schum. First shots of the film, with the sand fountain and the wind slowly increasing in force.

© Stedelijk Museum Amsterdam / Gerry Schum.



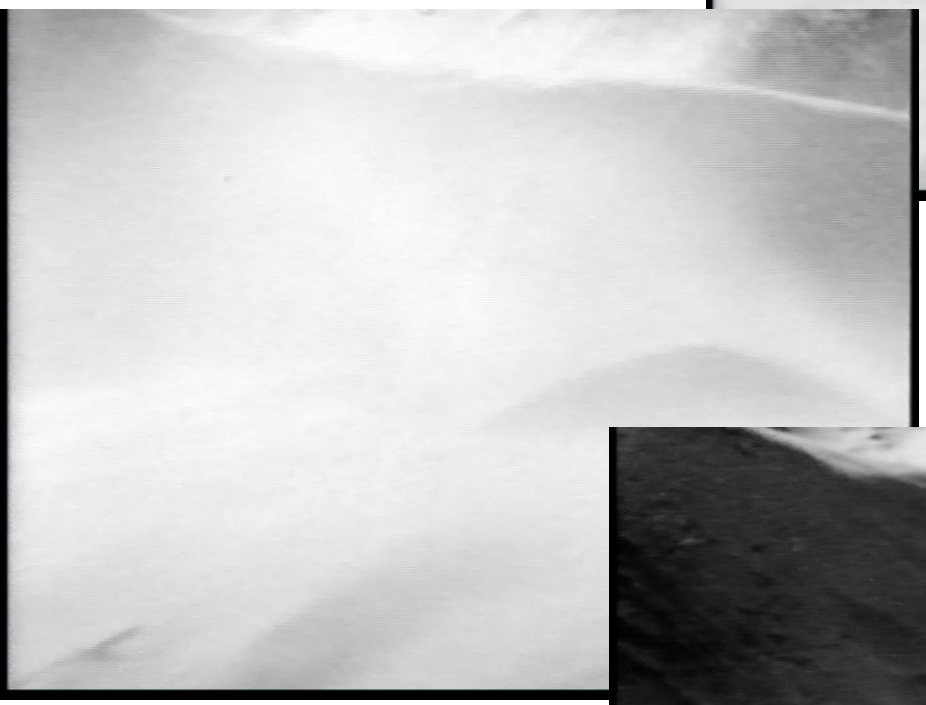




Fig. 268

Marinus Boezem, *Zandfontein* (*Sand Fountain*), drawing, as reprinted in the exhibition catalogue *LAND ART* by Gerry Schum, which accompanied the actual television exhibition. © Marinus Boezem / Gerry Schum.

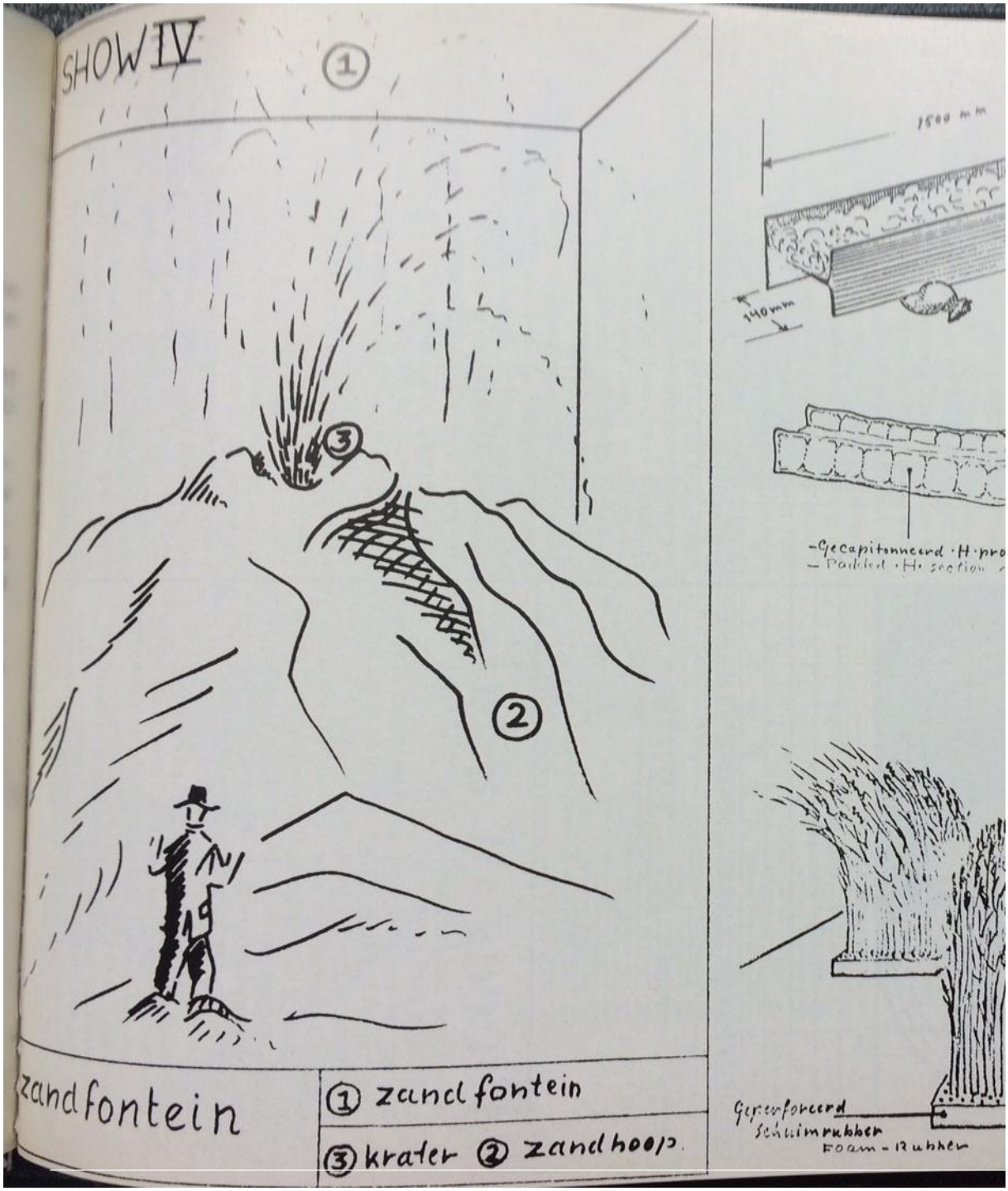


Fig. 269

Marinus Boezem, *Skywriting*, 1969. Signing the sky above the port of Amsterdam with an aeroplane. Photographer unknown. © Marinus Boezem.



Fig. 270

Marinus Boezem, *Green Cathedral*, 1978-1987 (ongoing). 178 trees planted by Boezem himself in the shape of a cathedral's foundations, close to Almere, the Netherlands. Photographer unknown. © Marinus Boezem.

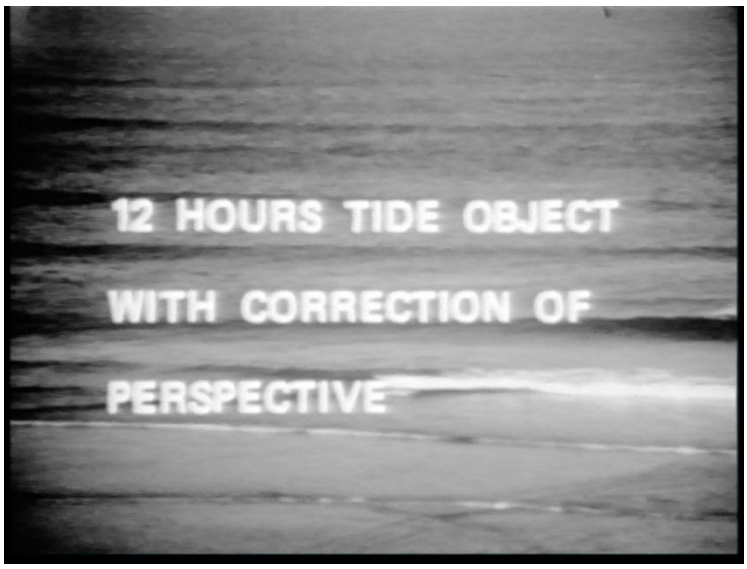


Figs. 271, 272 and 273

Film stills of Jan Dibbets' film '12 Hours Tide Object with Correction of Perspective', as part of the television exhibition *Land Art* in 1969, by Gerry Schum. First shots of the film, with name, title and location.

© Stedelijk Museum Amsterdam / Gerry Schum.





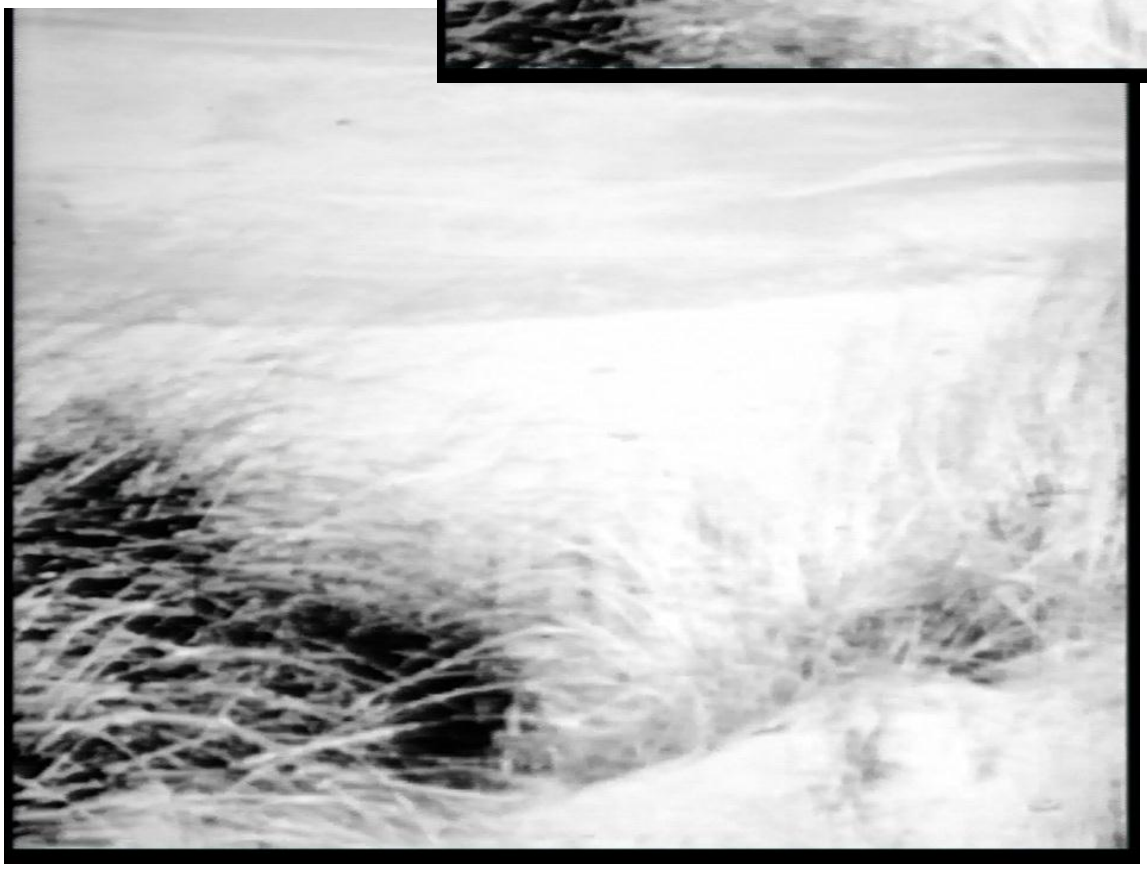


Figs. 274 and 275

Film stills of Jan Dibbets' film '12 Hours Tide Object with Correction of Perspective', as part of the television exhibition *Land Art* in 1969, by Gerry Schum. First shots of the film, with a shot of the sea and the dunes.

© Stedelijk Museum Amsterdam / Gerry Schum.

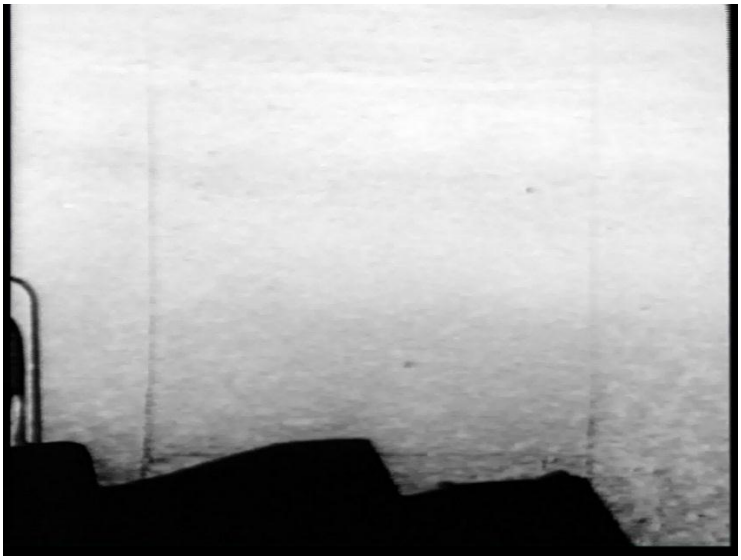




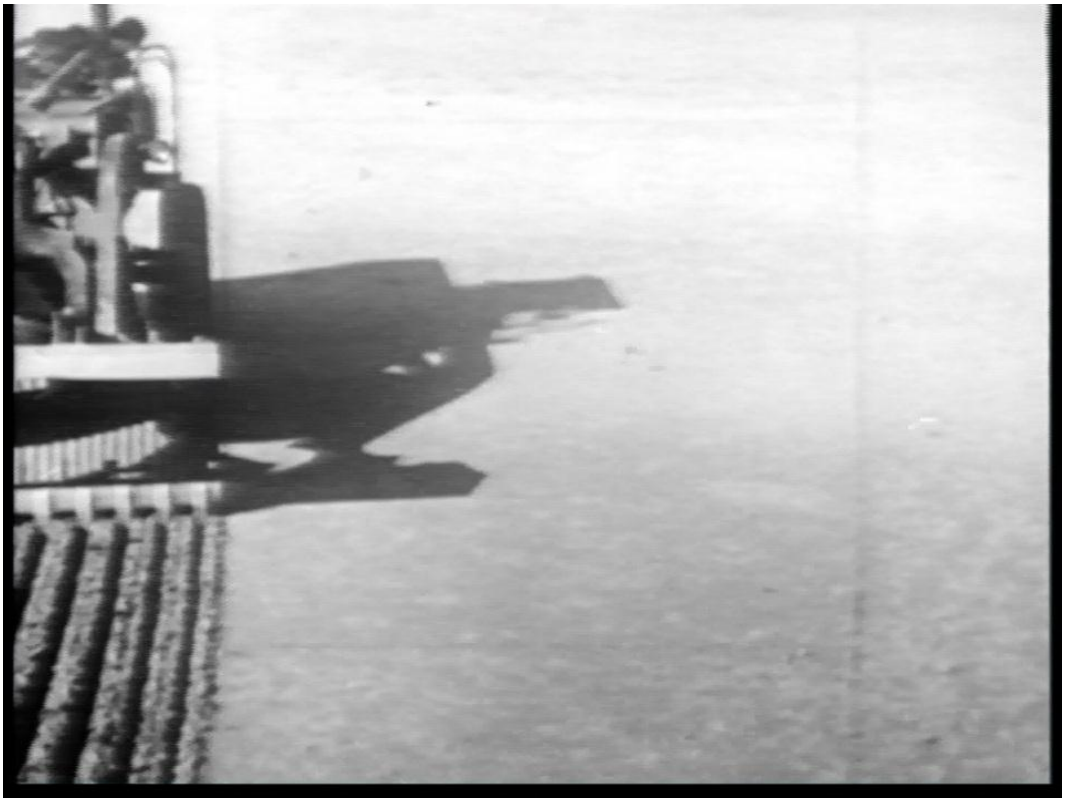
Figs. 276, 277 and 278

Film stills of Jan Dibbets' film '12 Hours Tide Object with Correction of Perspective', as part of the television exhibition *Land Art* in 1969, by Gerry Schum. First shots of the tractor (and its shadow) and the trace it leaves behind.

© Stedelijk Museum Amsterdam / Gerry Schum.







Figs. 279, 280 and 281

Film stills of Jan Dibbets' film '12 Hours Tide Object with Correction of Perspective', as part of the television exhibition *Land Art* in 1969, by Gerry Schum. Shots of the tractor (and its shadow) while making the traces.

© Stedelijk Museum Amsterdam / Gerry Schum.







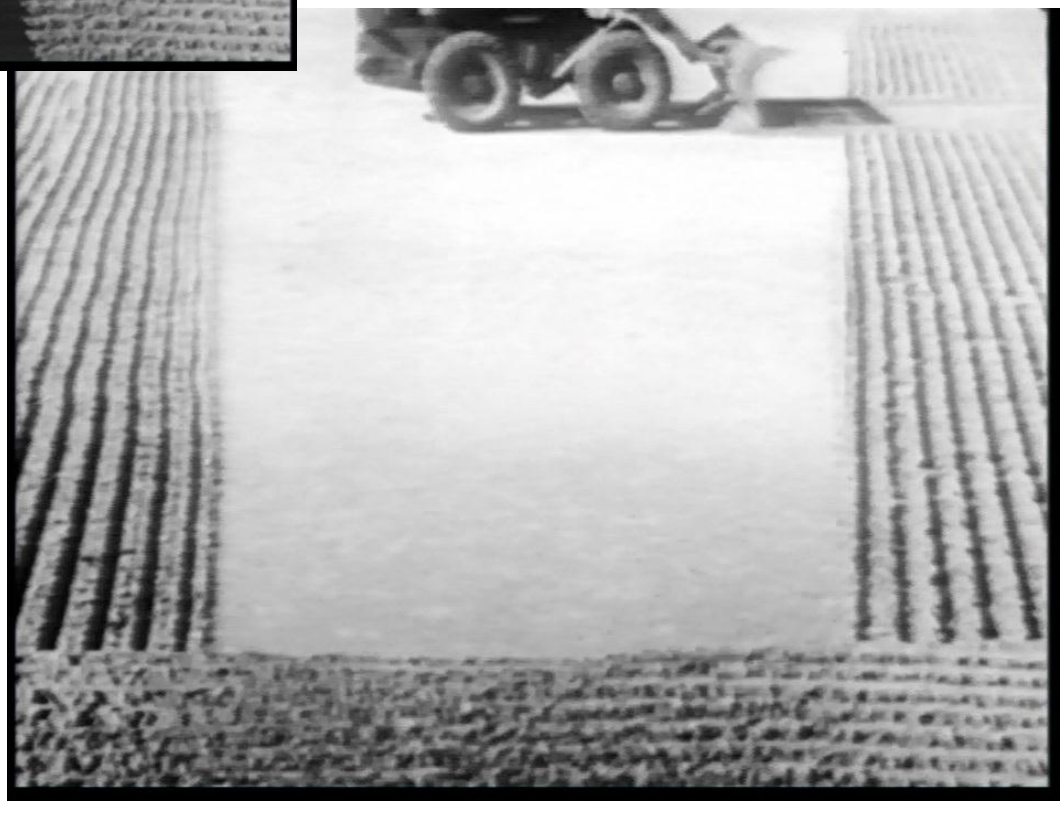
Figs. 282, 283 and 284

Film stills of Jan Dibbets' film '12 Hours Tide Object with Correction of Perspective', as part of the television exhibition *Land Art* in 1969, by Gerry Schum. Shots of the tractor while making the traces.

© Stedelijk Museum Amsterdam / Gerry Schum.



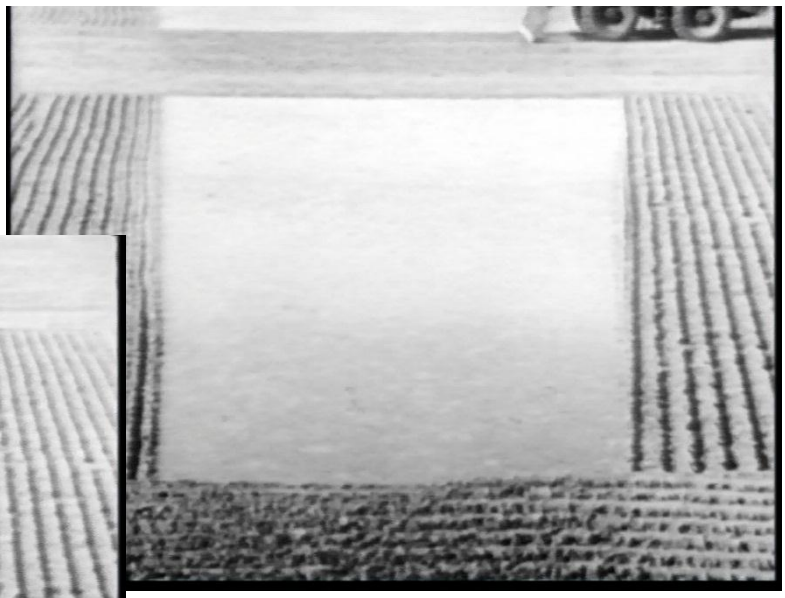


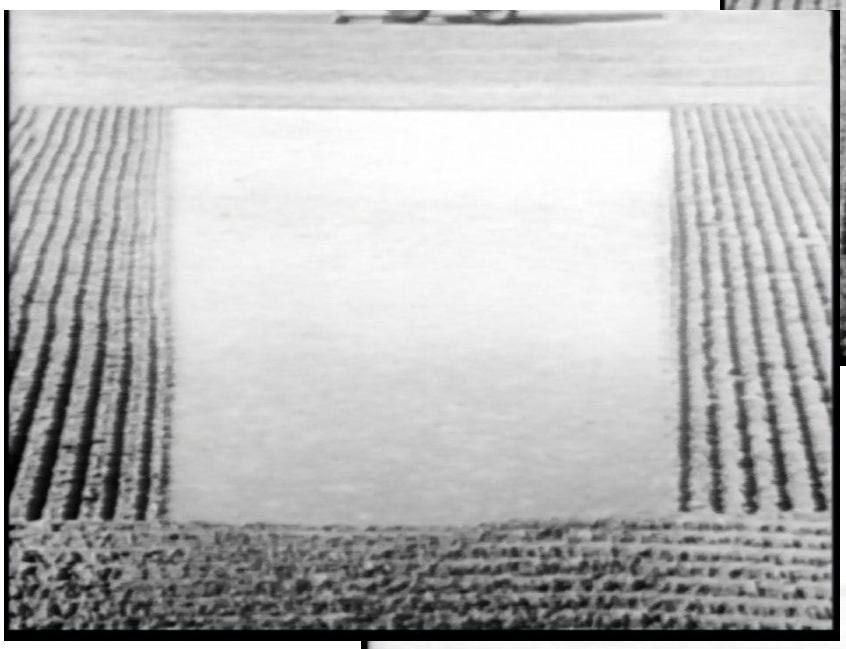


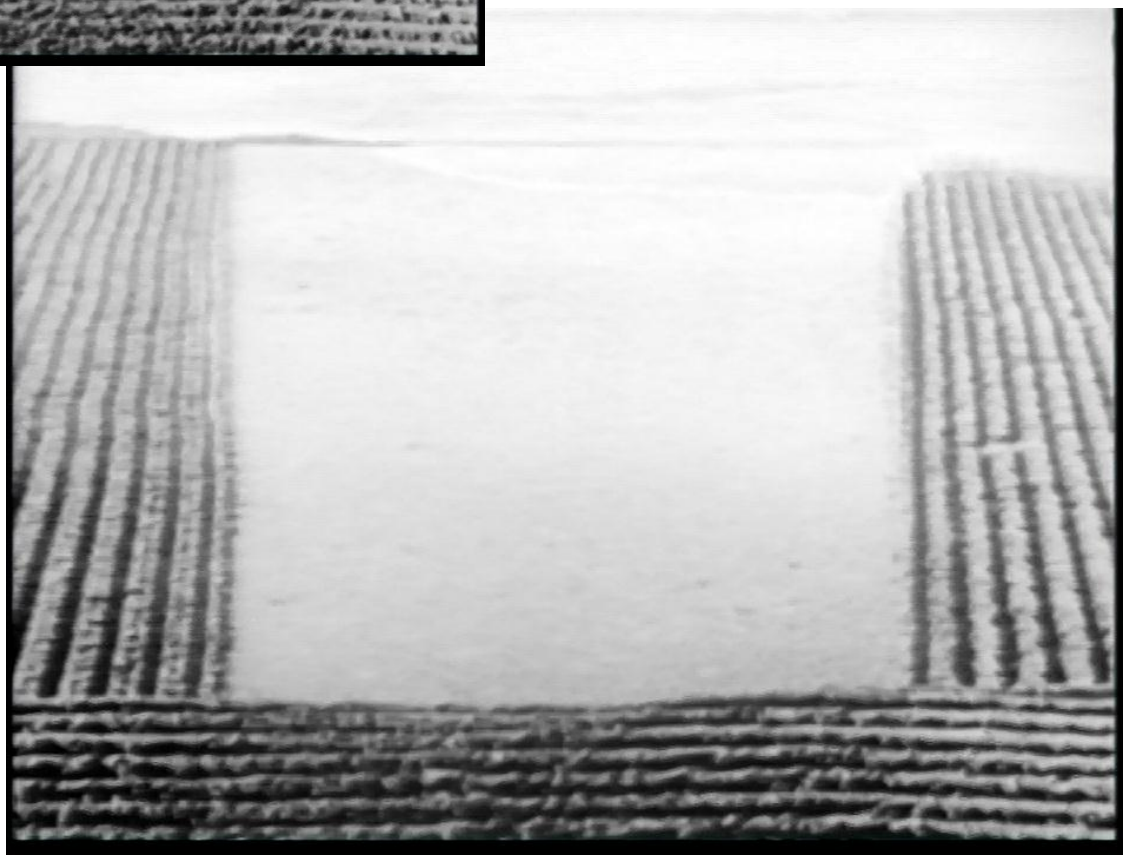
Figs. 285, 286 and 287

Film stills of Jan Dibbets' film '12 Hours Tide Object with Correction of Perspective', as part of the television exhibition *Land Art* in 1969, by Gerry Schum. Shots of the tractor while making the traces and first shot of the sea erasing the traces in the sand.

© Stedelijk Museum Amsterdam / Gerry Schum.



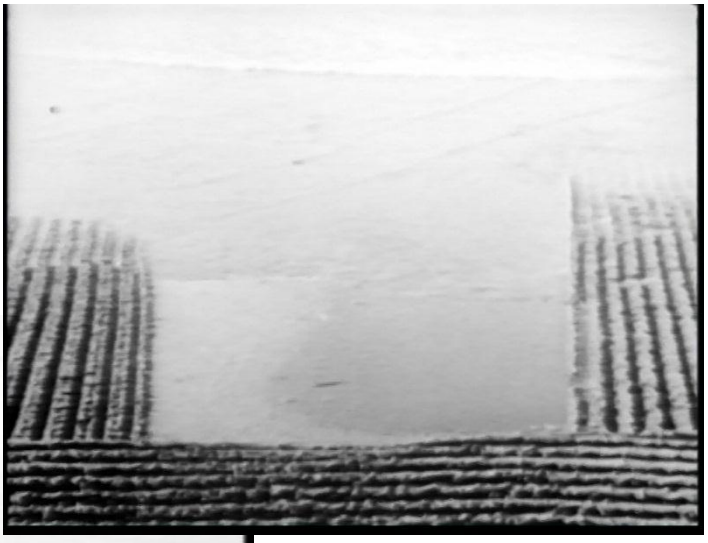


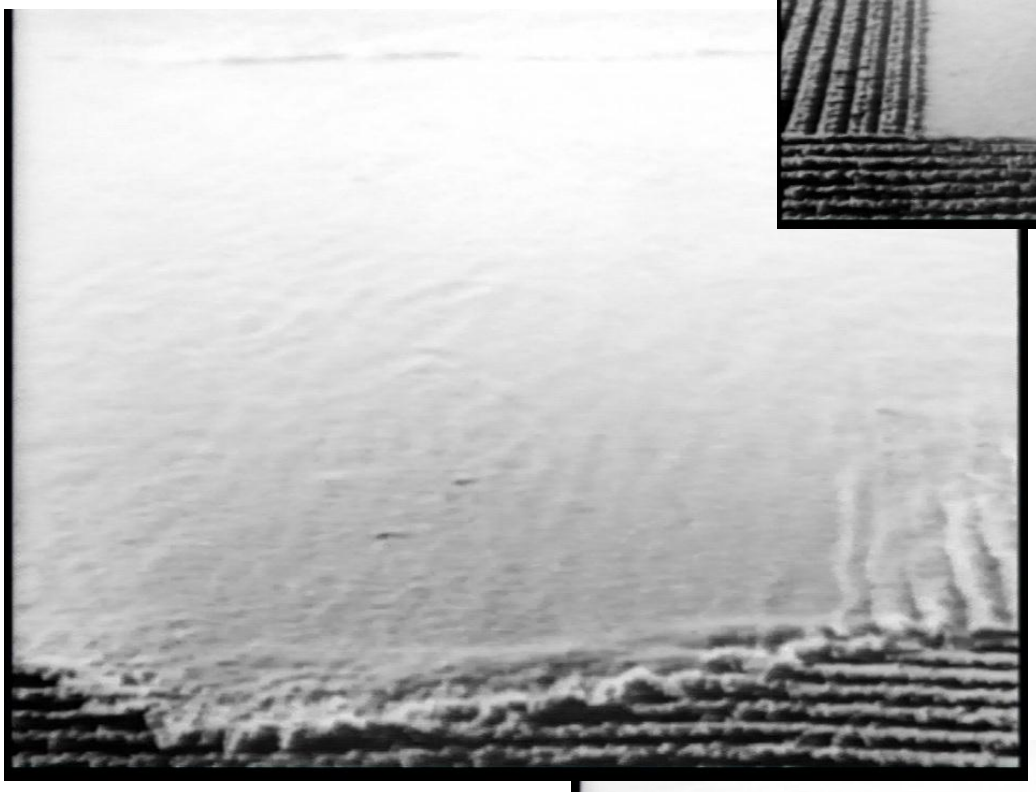


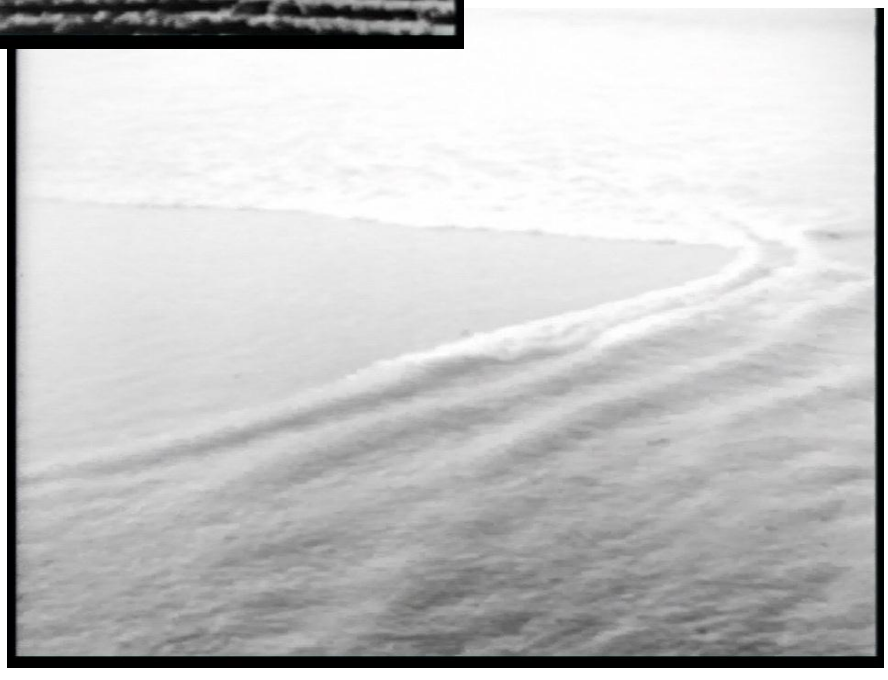
Figs. 288, 289 and 290

Film stills of Jan Dibbets' film '12 Hours Tide Object with Correction of Perspective', as part of the television exhibition *Land Art* in 1969, by Gerry Schum. Shots of the tide coming in: the sea erasing the traces in the sand made by the tractor.

© Stedelijk Museum Amsterdam / Gerry Schum.







Figs. 291 and 292

Film stills of Jan Dibbets' film '12 Hours Tide Object with Correction of Perspective', as part of the television exhibition *Land Art* in 1969, by Gerry Schum. Final shots of the sea with some flying and fishing seagulls and then a similar shot to the opening shot, with an overview of the beach and sea.

© Stedelijk Museum Amsterdam / Gerry Schum.





Figs. 293, 294 and 295

Film stills of Walter De Maria's film 'Two Lines Three Circles in the Desert', as part of the television exhibition *Land Art* in 1969, by Gerry Schum. First shots with name, title and location.

© Stedelijk Museum Amsterdam / Gerry Schum.







Figs. 296, 297 and 298

Film stills of Walter De Maria's film 'Two Lines Three Circles in the Desert', as part of the television exhibition *Land Art* in 1969, by Gerry Schum. First shots with overexposed image of De Maria standing in between the two lines, and then starting to walk towards the horizon.

© Stedelijk Museum Amsterdam / Gerry Schum.



Figs. 299, 300 and 301

Film stills of Walter De Maria's film 'Two Lines Three Circles in the Desert', as part of the television exhibition *Land Art* in 1969, by Gerry Schum. Shots with De Maria standing walking towards the horizon, and then the camera circling slowly to the right, towards a view of a mountainous landscape.

© Stedelijk Museum Amsterdam / Gerry Schum.



Figs. 302, 303 and 304

Film stills of Walter De Maria's film 'Two Lines Three Circles in the Desert', as part of the television exhibition *Land Art* in 1969, by Gerry Schum. Shots of the landscape and then the first return to the white lines and De Maria as a black speck towards the horizon (after the first 'circle').

© Stedelijk Museum Amsterdam / Gerry Schum.







Figs. 305, 306 and 307

Film stills of Walter De Maria's film 'Two Lines Three Circles in the Desert', as part of the television exhibition *Land Art* in 1969, by Gerry Schum. Last shots: start of the third and last 'circle', with still a black speck on the horizon, and return to the white lines after the third circle, in which De Maria has now completely disappeared.

© Stedelijk Museum Amsterdam / Gerry Schum.

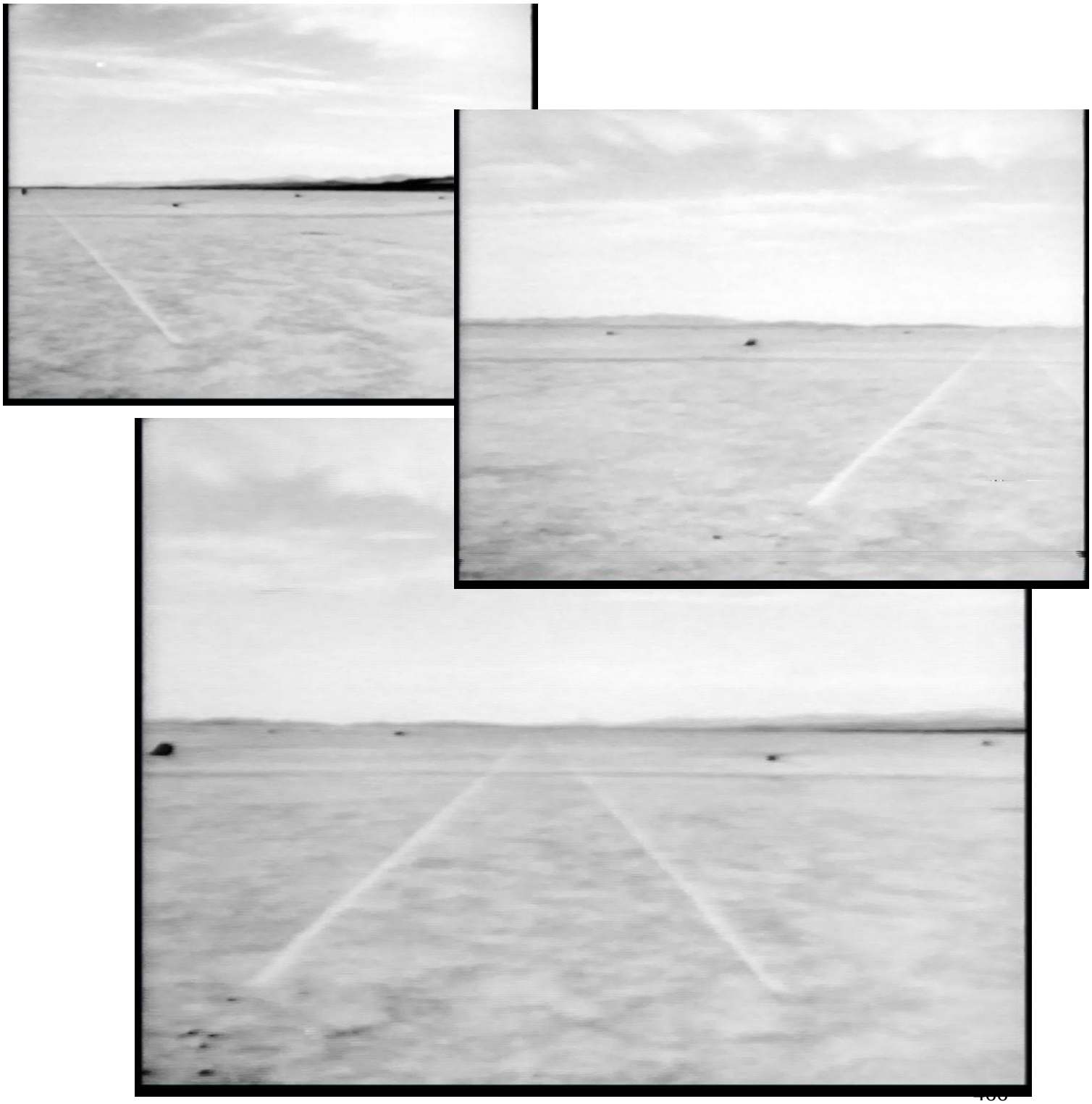


Fig. 308

Exhibition catalogue photograph with cover of text of Walter De Maria's film 'Two Lines Three Circles in the Desert', as part of the television exhibition *Land Art* in 1969, by Gerry Schum.

© Walter De Maria / Gerry Schum.

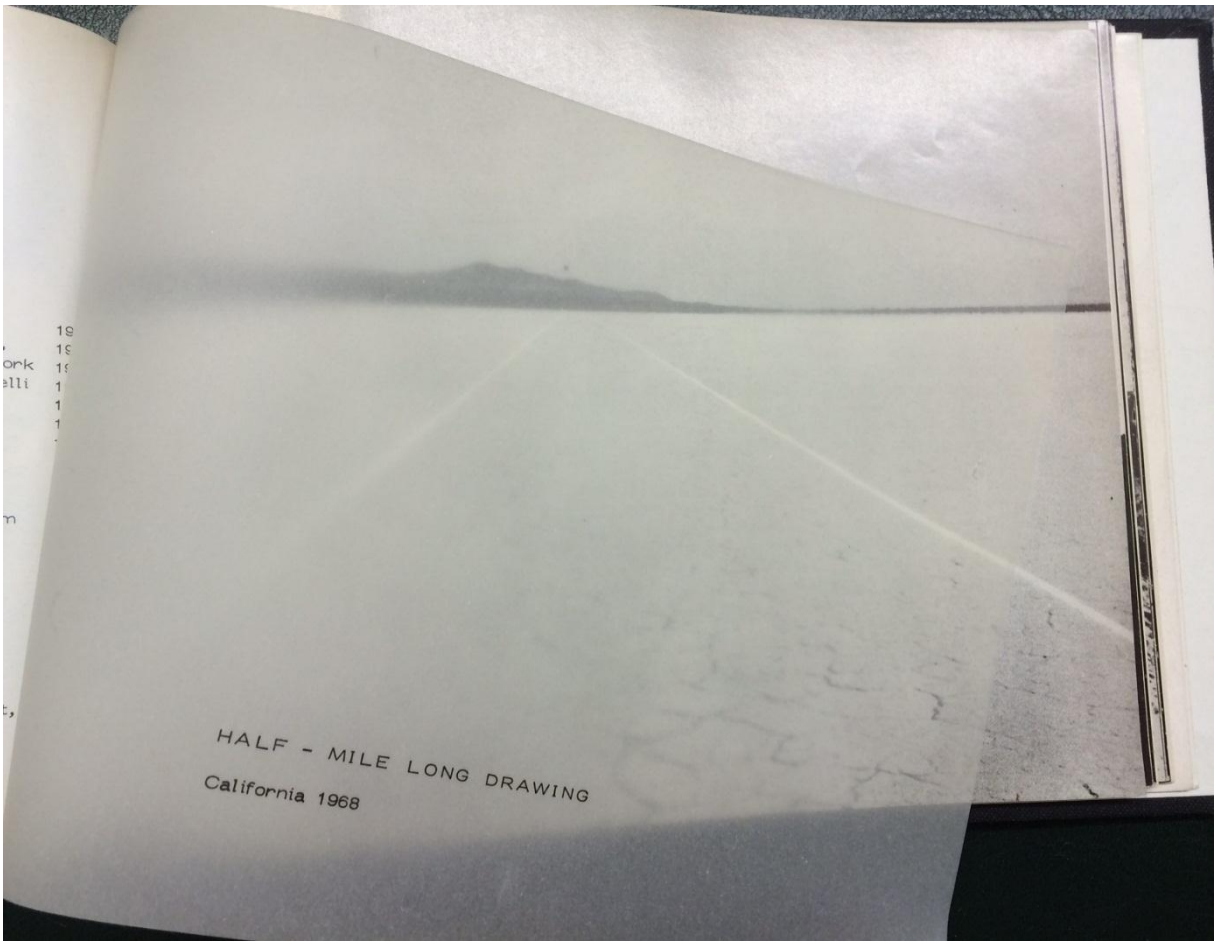


Fig. 309

Exhibition catalogue photograph of Michael Heizer during the making of his film *Coyote*, as part of the television exhibition *Land Art* in 1969, by Gerry Schum. The drawn figures in the desert can be seen in the background on the sand.

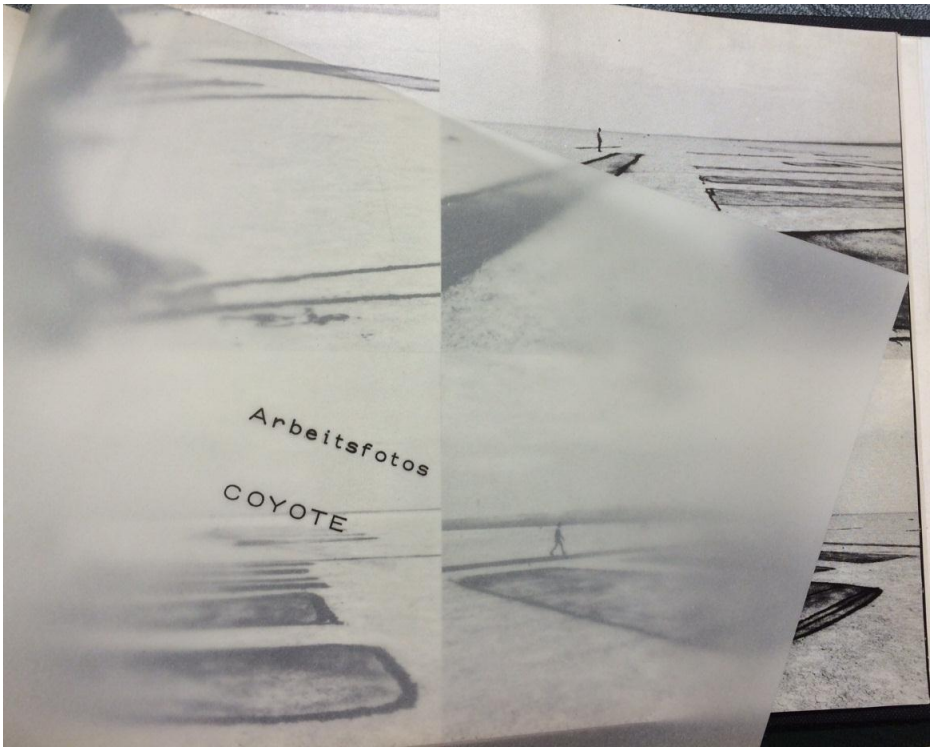
© Michael Heizer / Gerry Schum.

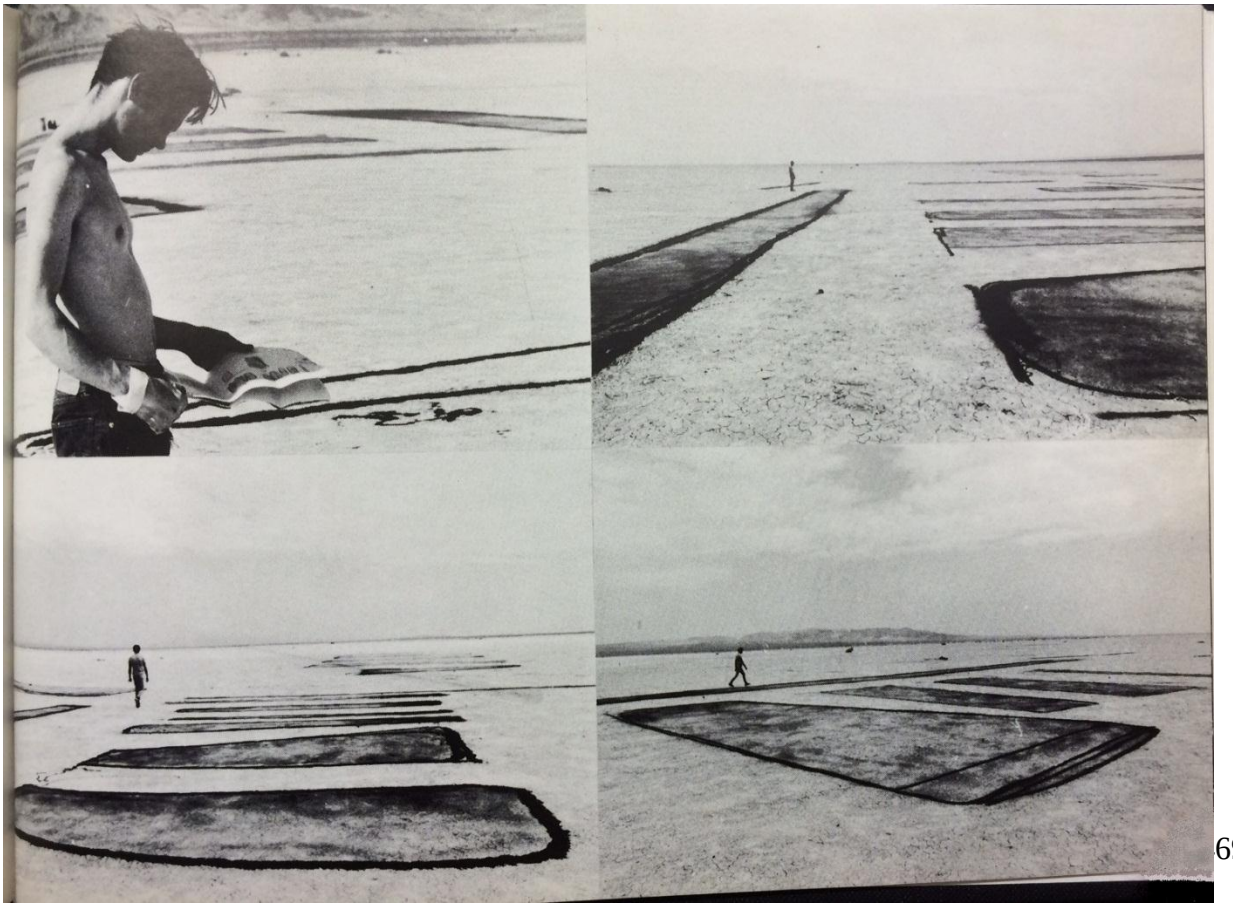


Figs. 310 and 311

Exhibition catalogue 'work photographs' (*'Arbeitsfotos'*) of Michael Heizer during the making of his film *Coyote*, as part of the television exhibition *Land Art* in 1969, by Gerry Schum.

© Michael Heizer / Gerry Schum.

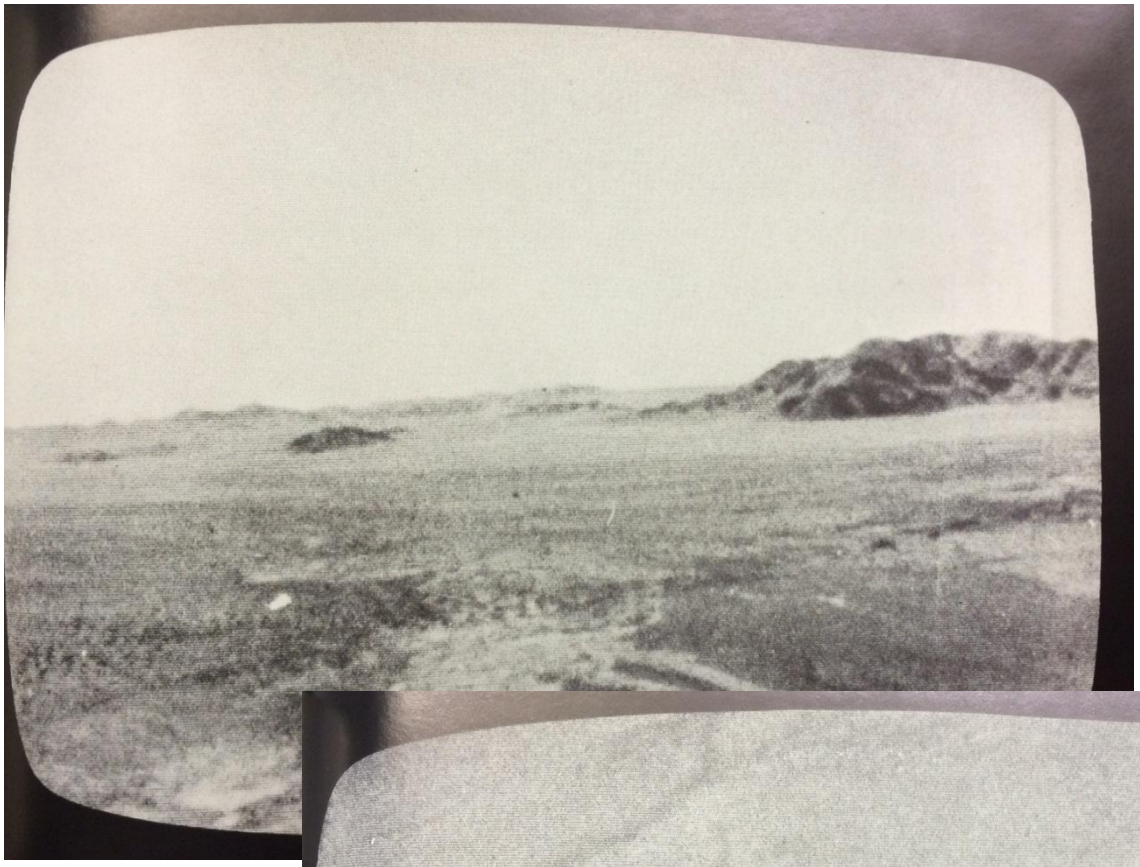




Figs. 312-313

Film stills of Michael Heizer's film *Coyote*, as part of the television exhibition *Land Art* in 1969, by Gerry Schum. The film was withdrawn from the exhibition after the first screening on television and is now no longer extant.

© Michael Heizer / Gerry Schum.



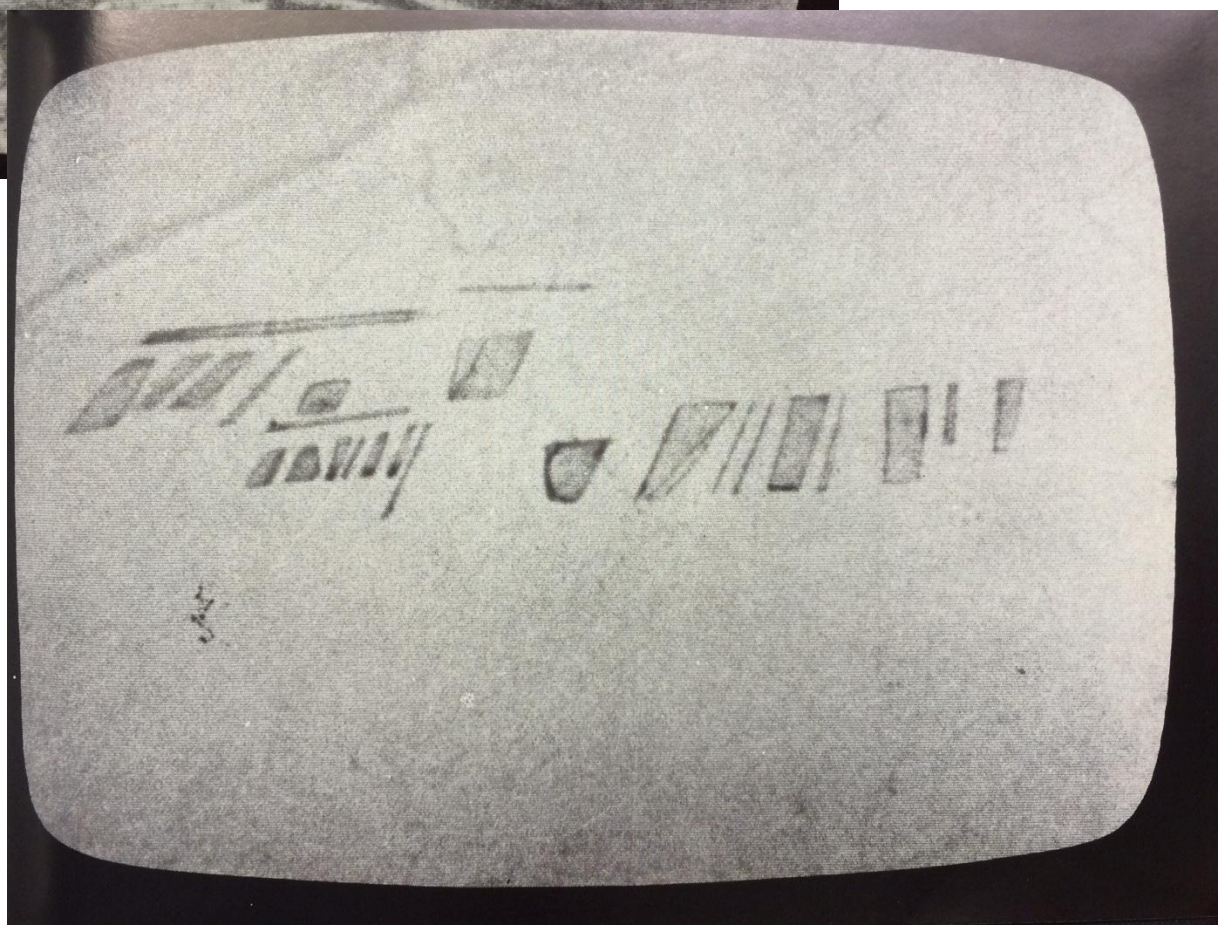


Fig. 314

Film still of Michael Heizer's film *Coyote*, as part of the television exhibition *Land Art* in 1969, by Gerry Schum. The film was withdrawn from the exhibition after the first screening on television and is now no longer extant.

© Michael Heizer / Gerry Schum.

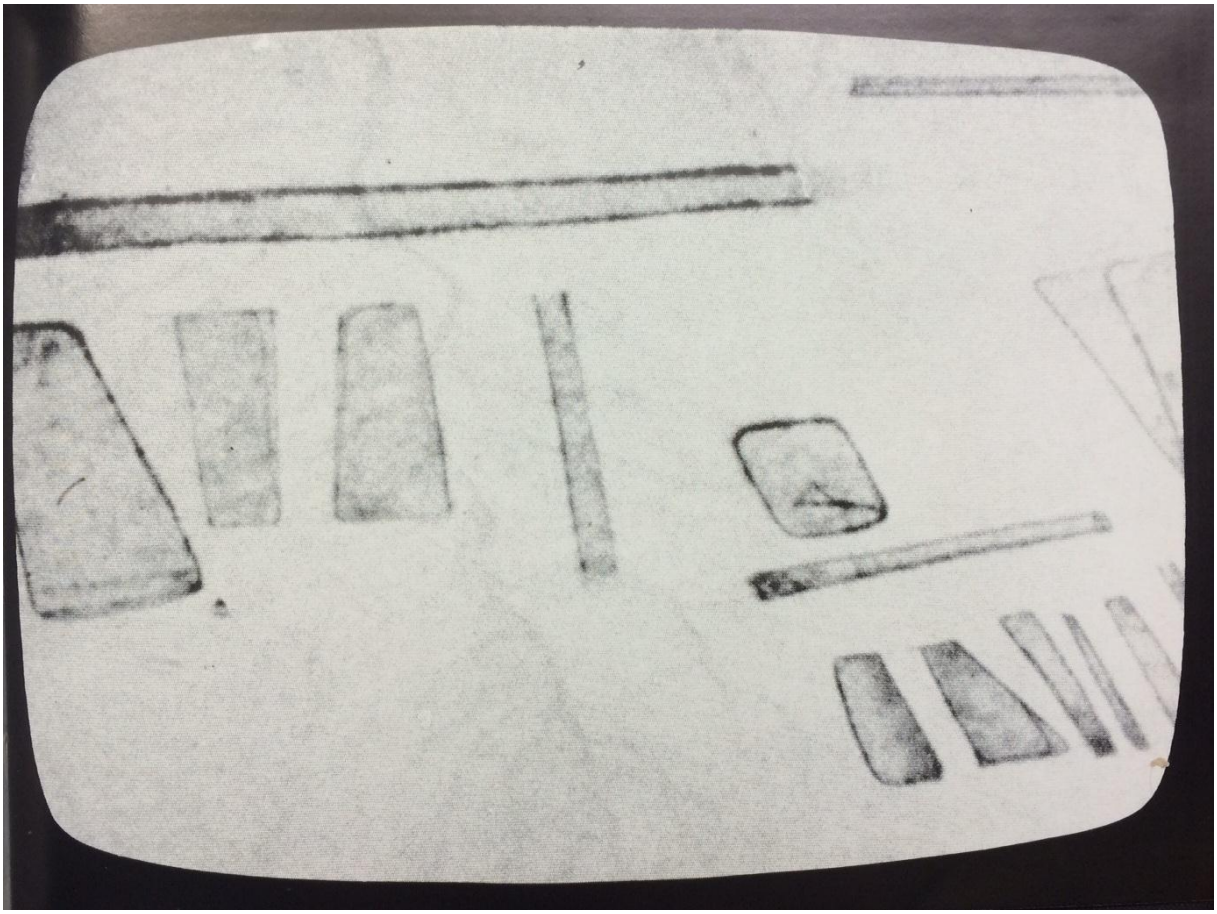
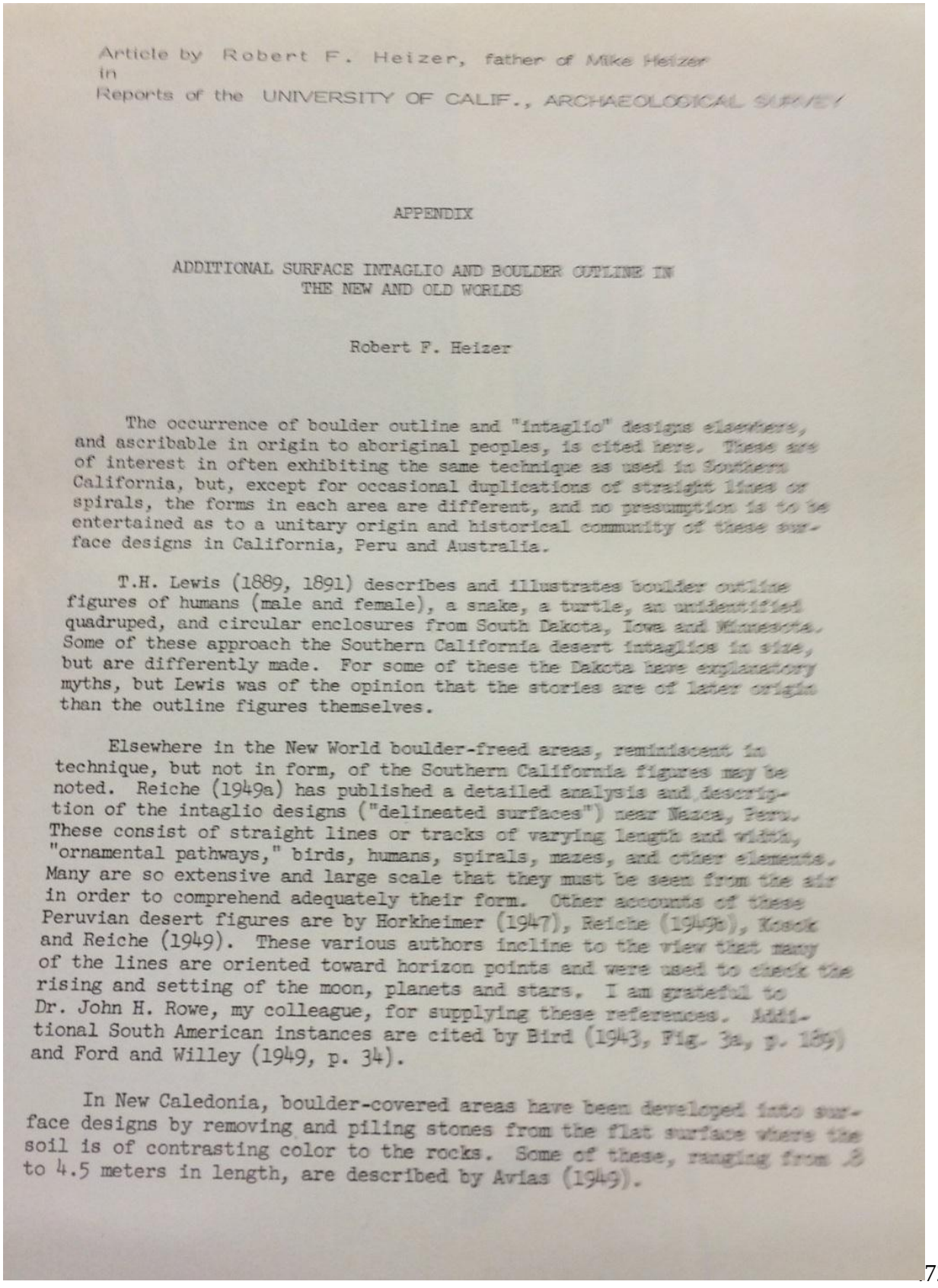


Fig. 315

Article by Robert F. Heizer, Michael Heizer's father, about boulder outlines. Accompanied the exhibition catalogue materials for Heizer's film *Coyote*, as part of the television exhibition *Land Art* in 1969, by Gerry Schum. © Robert F. Heizer / Schum.



Article by Robert F. Heizer, father of Mike Heizer
in
Reports of the UNIVERSITY OF CALIF., ARCHAEOLOGICAL SURVEY

APPENDIX

ADDITIONAL SURFACE INTAGLIO AND BOULDER OUTLINE IN
THE NEW AND OLD WORLDS

Robert F. Heizer

The occurrence of boulder outline and "intaglio" designs elsewhere, and ascribable in origin to aboriginal peoples, is cited here. These are of interest in often exhibiting the same technique as used in Southern California, but, except for occasional duplications of straight lines or spirals, the forms in each area are different, and no presumption is to be entertained as to a unitary origin and historical community of these surface designs in California, Peru and Australia.

T.H. Lewis (1889, 1891) describes and illustrates boulder outline figures of humans (male and female), a snake, a turtle, an unidentified quadruped, and circular enclosures from South Dakota, Iowa and Minnesota. Some of these approach the Southern California desert intaglios in size, but are differently made. For some of these the Dakota have explanatory myths, but Lewis was of the opinion that the stories are of later origin than the outline figures themselves.

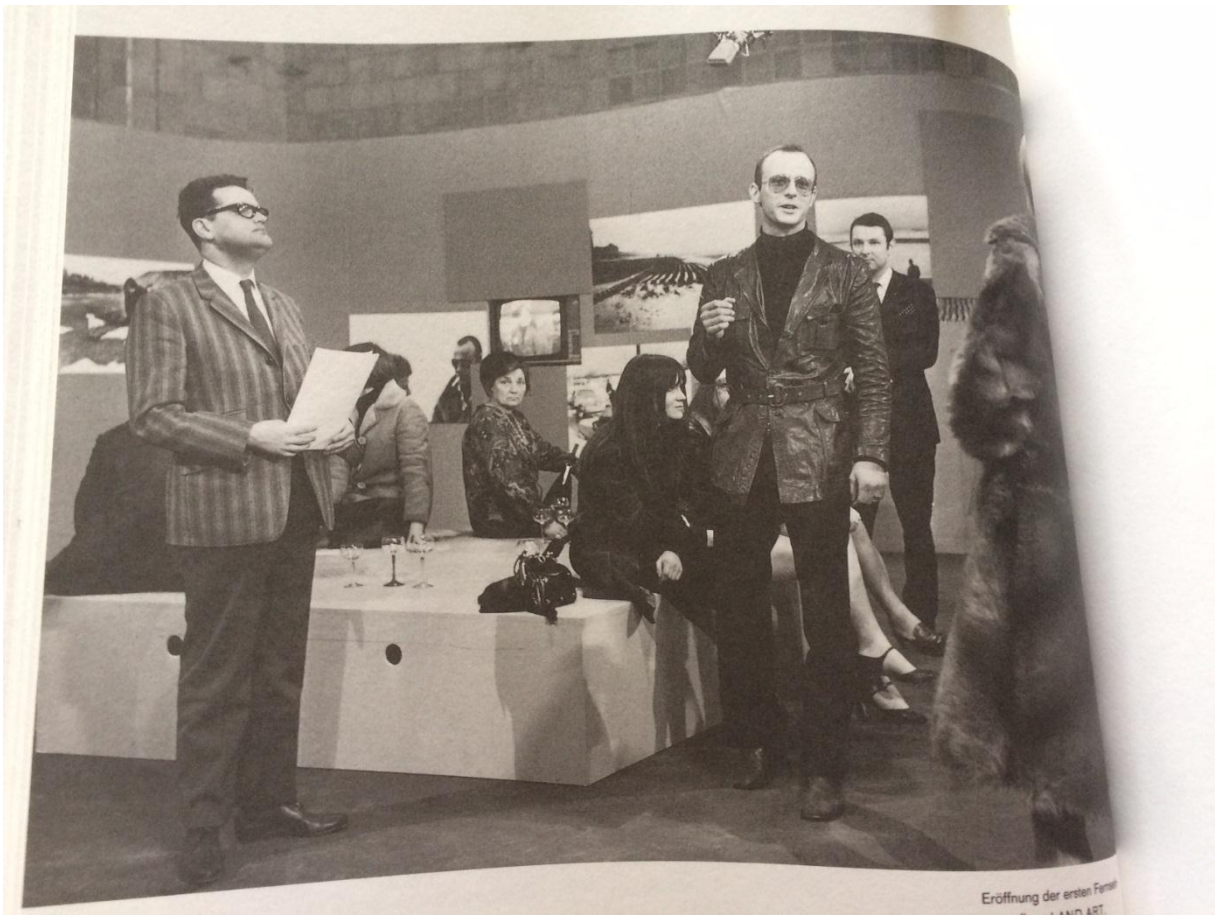
Elsewhere in the New World boulder-freed areas, reminiscent in technique, but not in form, of the Southern California figures may be noted. Reiche (1949a) has published a detailed analysis and description of the intaglio designs ("delineated surfaces") near Nazca, Peru. These consist of straight lines or tracks of varying length and width, "ornamental pathways," birds, humans, spirals, mazes, and other elements. Many are so extensive and large scale that they must be seen from the air in order to comprehend adequately their form. Other accounts of these Peruvian desert figures are by Horkheimer (1947), Reiche (1949b), Kosok and Reiche (1949). These various authors incline to the view that many of the lines are oriented toward horizon points and were used to check the rising and setting of the moon, planets and stars. I am grateful to Dr. John H. Rowe, my colleague, for supplying these references. Additional South American instances are cited by Bird (1943, Fig. 3a, p. 189) and Ford and Willey (1949, p. 34).

In New Caledonia, boulder-covered areas have been developed into surface designs by removing and piling stones from the flat surface where the soil is of contrasting color to the rocks. Some of these, ranging from .3 to 4.5 meters in length, are described by Avias (1949).

Figs. 316 and 317

Photographs of Gerry Schum's vernissage (official opening) of the *Fernsehgalerie* (television gallery) of the exhibition *LAND ART,* Studio C of the SFB, 28-3-1969.

© Gerry Schum/Ursula Wevers.



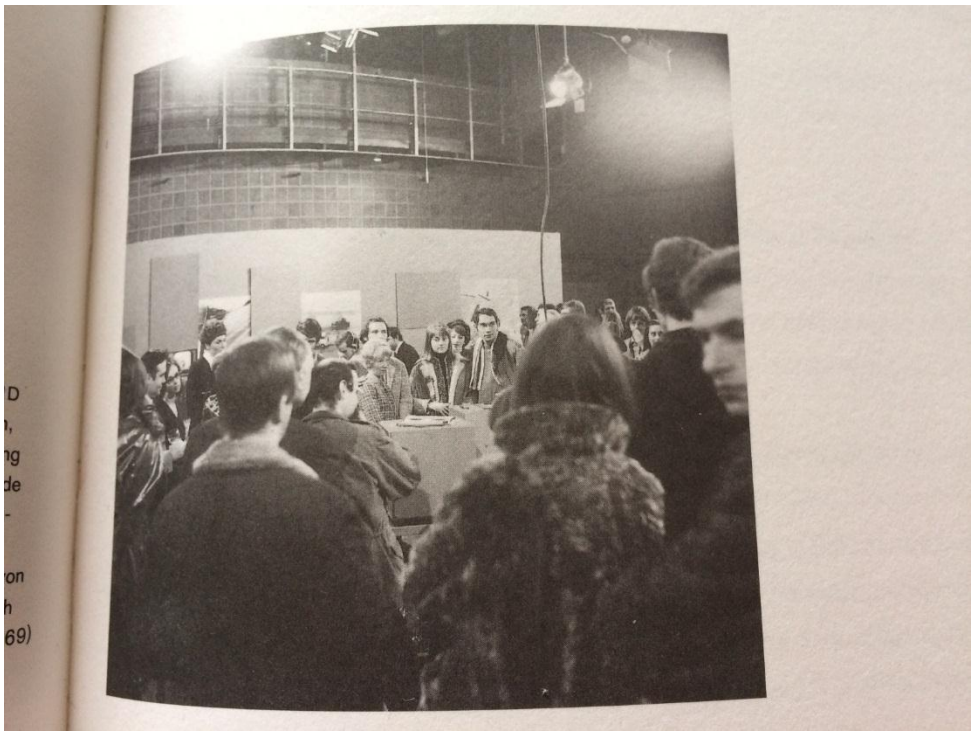


Fig. 318

Garry Winogrand, *Democratic National Convention*, 1960.

Gelatin silver print, black/white. Dimensions: 46.8 x 31.4 cm.

© Museum of Modern Art, New York City.



Bibliography

For the purpose of clarity, this bibliography has been divided into:

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