

...ND
LANDSCHAP
'de opening
me weg richting thu
WAAR de herinnering
voortleeft'



Land(scape ecological) art

AART DE VEER & WILLEM VOS (EDS.)

Introduction

The purest expression of the bridge between art and landscape is the Land Art movement. Although many similar expressions may be identified from prehistoric times on, the movement formally started only in the 1960s, mainly in the USA. Artists like Walter de Maria, Robert Smithson, Robert Morris, Michael Heizer and Christo stressed the significance of basic experience of the perception of space and the engagement of art in natural cycles (Voigt & Schenkluhn, 1998). The landscape itself is (re)created or modified at a landscape scale, and the temporary character of the objects, constructions and situations make a link between ecology and aesthetics. In this sense, Land Art may be understood as everything man-made in nature, including all cultural landscapes -- we live, work and recreate amidst art. This must surely be true for The Netherlands, a country that is largely a construction, the expression of centuries of human concepts of how the land should function and what it should look like; and this is also true for much "nature" that is being "developed" and managed (Zijlmans, 1999). And in this sense the concept also applies e.g. to all kinds of man-made geometric forms and objects from Neolithic times, bronze age and iron age that very well integrate in the landscape, such as menhirs, stone circles and alignments. And of course to many graves and grave monuments that most literally integrate the culture of man and the land: grave hills, chambered tombs, portal tombs, cromlechs, necropoli, etc. And apart from grave hills, also defence hills, refuge hills in regions with frequent flooding, ringforts, ecclesiastical enclosures, etc.. In the same way all those roads, temples, terraces, stone walls, dikes etc. that became completely integrated in the land and nowadays determine its image, demonstrate that most of Europe's landscape is indistinguishably connected with its culture.

TO LANDSCAPE SCIENCE





A STRICTER definition of Land Art is the ritual creation by man of a landmark. This is done by depositing, rearranging or taking away natural or man-made materials in the environment. The resulting earth sculptures and site-specific land-art projects sometimes may have a purely aesthetic function. Almost always they accentuate nature, or contrast with nature and it is not uncommon for them to stimulate discussion about the relation between man and nature, inviting human engagement in spontaneous processes. And, of course, Land Art extends the realm within which art is made and seen from inside (studio, gallery and museum) to outside. The creation of these symbolic landmarks has a long history too, as is demonstrated e.g. by the construction of follies, formal garden layouts, labyrinths and puzzle mazes through the centuries, and the labyrinths, recently made in the United Kingdom by Jim Buchanan .

KASTNER AND Wallis (1998) give a fairly complete overview of land and environmental art in the last five decades. Their subdivision into five types may also help our understanding of this type of outside art. These “five ‘I’s” are Integration, Interruption, Involvement, Implementation and Imagining.

INTEGRATORS MANIPULATE the landscape as a material in its own right. They add, remove or displace local natural materials and their work draws out the relationship between the existing characteristics of a site and evidence of human intervention. Smithson’s Spiral Jetty, made from rocks, earth and salt crystals in the Great Salt Lake in Utah, is a well-known example. It is submerged in the lake, a hollow testimony of man’s domination of the landscape.

THE INTERRUPTORS intersect the environment by employing non-indigenous, man-made materials. Their works expand to match the large scale of the environment itself. Examples of this concept are the works of Christo, who wraps up buildings, bridges, islands and other objects in the landscape and renews forms and images of space.

ONE MAY speak of Involvement when the work focuses on the artist as an individual, acting in a one-to-one relationship with the land. The scale of these works is related to the human body. Richard Long makes stone circles or lines that vanish in nature. He marks his lonesome walk through an overwhelming mountainous landscape, makes a picture of the track he has just drawn and then leaves his “impression” behind forever, so that nature may take over.

WORKS OF the Implementation type demonstrate how human relations with the natural environment are based not only on perception and pleasure but also on exploitation, waste and destruction, and range from sculpture to performance. It is also here that applications of landscape ecology may closely approach the arts. Haacke’s projects with endangered animal species and Feigenbaum’s willow ring planting in a coal-dust run-off are good examples.

LASTLY, IN the Imagining category the landscape artists make works that employ the land not as physical matter, but as a metaphor or signifier. They understand it as a concept or an optical construction that may take the form of a diagram or a photograph. The Dutchman Dibbets, for example, creates an illusion by drawing lines in the landscape with a false perspective, to mislead the view-

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er, and then takes a photograph of it. Delvoye's recent ironic comment on Land Art can also be put into this group: on a huge laser ink-jet image of a mountainous landscape we read on a rock wall "SUSAN. OUT FOR A PIZZA. BACK IN FIVE MINUTES. GEORGE" (Riemschneider & Grosenick, 1999).

ZIJLMANS (1999) gives a comprehensive overview of some well-known land-art objects in The Netherlands, such as the Observatory by Robert Morris, the Hemels Gewelf by James Turrell, the Broken Circle/Siral Hill by Robert Smithson, the Aardzee by Piet Slegers, the Green Cathedral by Marius Boezem, the Franeker forest by Krijn Giezen, the growth sculptures from trees by Sjoerd Buisman and the Theatre of Nature by Adriaan Nette.

AS MENTIONED above, the Implementation type of Land Art is ecological art or environmental art. This seeks to balance ecological and aesthetic attitudes towards the world by analysing the environmental problems of a region and subsequently designing organic solutions, which may be for the landscaping of landfills, for instance, or water purification, or nest sites for bees and other insects (Voigt & Schenkluhn, 1998). An example is the work of Michael Singer, who applies wood, natural rocks, living plants, etc. in monumental art and architecture (e.g. the Alterra-IBN building in Wageningen and Denver International Airport). A shift in orientation from objects to processes is a logical consequence of the ecological attitude.

ANOTHER EXPRESSION of the cross-fertilisation of ecology and aesthetics is ecological architecture, which is definitely not the same as sustainable

building, but in many cases implies the use of such techniques. Many examples from all over the world have been discussed briefly in Toy (ed. 1997). Some of these may equally well be interpreted as forms of applied Land Art, such as the Schlumberger Research Laboratories and the Ramat Hanadiv Memorial Museum by Emilio Ambasz & Associates, the Eden Project by Nicholas Grimshaw & Partners and the Trawsfynydd International Energy Communications Centre by SITE. An early example of ecological architecture with the character of Land Art was the complex of stadiums and parks for the Olympics in München 1972 by Günter Behnisch, Carlo Weber, Günther Grzimek a.o. (A+U, May 1990; Schmidt & Zeller, 1992).

ECOLOGISTS, TOO, feel the need to deal with landscape in a more "complete" way, which is why a number of artistic expressions were included in the scientific programme of the congress. There was a performance of the Cantata Ecologica by the composer Steven Hoogenberk and an exhibition of etchings by Rolf Weijburg, famous for his "island etchings", who made a special colour etching for the congress; and during the scientific workshops a number of landmarks (presumably temporary) were made in Dutch landscapes with the help of three land artists.

SIM VISSER and the participants of the workshop on Rural Landscapes created the project "Messages to a Floating Landscape". In a recent publication Visser (1999) reflects on his experiences with this project. As a central theme he mentions the distance between man and landscape and the attempt to bring them together again. His work in the field with more than 80 scientists from 17 different



G. BEHNISCH ET AL. 1972



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European countries resulted in a wood of flags with messages to a Dutch peat polder landscape that express the private engagement of each individual. In the workshop *The Meuse Artery of Nature*, Maria Evelein and her group traced the pattern of a river and its tributaries as they walked through the landscape. Material found was taken and later left behind, forming a "River Tree". In the workshop on Urbanisation, Peter Dauvellier took the participants on a boat trip and challenged them to make a free poster of what they saw along the route or of what they had seen before -- river shore, urban fringe or even a Green Metropolis -- and the whole group reflected on that in text.

IN THE following paragraphs, Sim Visser and Maria Evelein report on their projects. Concepts, methods and results are presented and illustrated.

Messages to a floating landscape (Sim Visser*)

BEING BOTH an artist and a landscape architect, a request to design a land-art project for the WLO congress fascinated me from the very start. What fascinated me most were two elements of the request. First, to contribute to the subject of the workshop in Bergen: a sustainable future for European cultural landscapes. This subject has inspired me for many years and I have contributed to it in lectures and articles. Bergen is situated in North Holland and it is hard to think of a more characteristic landscape in Holland to provide the setting for the project. Second, to execute the project together with the participants of the workshop. For me this meant that the participants would really subscribe to the idea of the project. The basic requirement was an intense relationship between

the idea of the artist, the magic of the landscape and the participants. This reminded me of the early works of Christo in California, like "Running Fence" and "Valley Curtain". In these projects one of his main objectives was the intense cooperation of volunteers.

AS I was very busy at that time, I didn't start thinking about the project until my summer holidays in France. Lying on the beach I sketched my first ideas in the sand. What gripped me from the very start was the idea of making a panorama. In my youth I regularly visited the 19th century panorama Mesdag in my native city, The Hague. The panorama recreates a perfect view of the sea, the village of Scheveningen, the dunes and The Hague in the distance. The Dutch landscape offers amazing opportunities for a panorama, especially in the West. Just by standing on a slight elevation, for instance a

Location of the plot of land used for the land art project in the Eilandspolder, province of Noord-Holland



dike, you can get an undisturbed view of the horizon. My first plan was more or less a copy of the panorama Mesdag; I wanted the participants to create a panorama of the landscape near Bergen using materials found on the beach. I soon rejected this idea as being too dull because the result would look too much like the contents of an art shop in a beach resort. Besides, the role of the participants would be too passive.

AN IMPORTANT step in the development of my concept was to have the participants contribute more distinctly to the project. Why not focus on their ideas? So many people (more than 80) from all over Europe had enrolled for the workshop on cultural landscapes and would undoubtedly have an outspoken vision on the Dutch landscape. For me, as a Dutchman, it would be thrilling to discover their visions or, more actively, to know their message to this landscape.

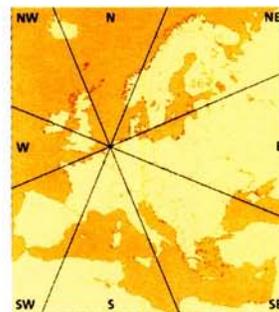
HOW COULD this idea be translated into the panorama? In general, a panorama reflects the individual's scope. I decided to invert the point of view in the panorama. I imagined the horizon filled with the participants looking at the landscape and reflecting its meaning. In this way the landscape would become the centre of attention and the messages of the participants would form the panorama.

ONCE THE basic idea had been decided on, the next steps in the process of design were rather easy to take. The most characteristic landscape in North Holland from the European perspective is without doubt the reclaimed lakes and peat polders. I obtained permission from the National Forest Service to use a piece of land in the Eilandspolder.

In this peat polder the land seems to float on the water (Eilandspolder literally means "polder of islands"). Here, every participant would plant a flag with their personal message, in their own language, to the floating landscape. The participants flags were to be placed in the direction of their homes beyond a central circle with a diameter of 30 m. In this way a forest of 80 flags "charged with meaning" would emerge.

ON TUESDAY October 7 a truck loaded with a hundred poles 3.5 m long arrived at the congress centre in Bergen. During the evening the participants wrote their messages with a large black marker on the flags. They also indicated the compass direction of their home on the pole. As material for the flags I had chosen strong white plastic often used in greenhouses. The flags measured 1 m by 0.8 m. Because there was no adequate space available in the congress centre, the flags had to be made in a small shed. The weather was getting worse -- strong wind and continuous rain -- and conditions in the shed were cramped and stuffy. Nevertheless, the work progressed quickly and the participants kept their spirits up.

THE NEXT day, Wednesday October 8, the weather was worse: a stormy wind and heavy rain. At 3 p.m. about ten courageous men and women loaded a touring car with the flags. At 3.30 p.m. they arrived in the Eilandspolder. On Tuesday afternoon I had already indicated the layout of the project with white chalk. I made a huge circle 30 m in diameter and divided the space outside the circle into segments, resembling an enormous compass, so it was quite easy for the participants to find the right points to place their flags. Next, holes 1 m deep were made with augers and the flags were placed



The eight compass directions used by the participants for finding their sector and locating their flags



about 2 m apart. Within an hour the flags were standing and made a fascinating sound, a kind of rhythmic roaring. The workers in the field, now looking like “drowned rats”, kept their good humour in spite of the absurd circumstances. They then joined in a short ceremony to open the land-art project.

THE PROJECT lasted a week. Passers-by were intrigued by what they saw from the road: the flags looked like a flock of white geese. The messages, written in the participants’ own languages and in English, were recorded and now form a unique testimony to the project. Many photographs of the project were taken in different circumstances, from stormy weather to more tranquil conditions, and will keep the memory of the project alive. Plans

are in progress to realise this project in a more permanent way, for example in the form of a small plantation and using some of the messages in a work of art in the centre.

IT WAS a real pleasure to design this land-art project and execute it with so many dedicated people. The memory is dear to me and I am sure that this is true for many of the participants. One of them sent me a letter in which he stated: “I keep the congress in good memory and especially your project”.

The messages (in participant’s language, with the corresponding compass direction for each participant) demonstrate in a striking way how people from quite different cultures experienced a typical Dutch landscape - in typical Dutch weather!

Drilling the holes, placing the flags, and the result



Carola Bühler-Natour
(Germany) SE
"Schwimmende Landschaften"
Woher? Wohin?
From where? To Where?

Hans Sprangers
(The Netherlands) E
"Drijvend landschap"
Help!
Help!

Jim van Laar
(The Netherlands) E
"Drijvend landschap"
Bomen zijn van levensbelang voor ieder mens op aarde.
Trees are of vital importance for every human being on earth.

Jan Klijn
(The Netherlands) NNW
"Drijvend landschap"
Als de geest dwaalt, houd de voeten droog en de ogen waterpas.
If your mind floats, keep your feet dry and your eyes level.

Rebecca Hughes
(Scotland) NW
"Floating landscape"
East, West, Home's Best:
Local Distinctiveness starts at Home.

Joep Frissel
(The Netherlands) SE
"Drijvend landschap"
Water stroomt waar het stroomt.
Water flows where it flows.

Mariëlle van der Zouwen
(The Netherlands) SE
"Drijvend landschap"
Blijvende verwantschap?!
Eternal companionship?!

Marcel Pleijte
(The Netherlands) S
"Drijvend landschap"
Verdrink het land niet. Ik woon 6 meter beneden NAP.
Preserve the landscape.
I live 6 meters below sea level.

Lissi Osinski
(Germany) SE
"Schwimmende Landschaft"
Wer gibt dir deinen Rettungsanker?
Who gives you your sheet anchor?

Hein Korevaar
(The Netherlands) SE
"Drijvend landschap"
De meeste molens draaien tegen de wind in.
Most windmills turn against the wind.

Max Eichenberger
(Switzerland) S
"Treibende Landschaft"
Wieso nicht wieder Insel?
Why not an island again?

Rosmarie Eichenberger
(Switzerland) S
"Treibende Landschaft"
Mehr Blumen: von den Alpen bis zum Meer!
More flowers: from the Alps to the sea!

Sim Visser
(The Netherlands) S
"Drijvend landschap"
De mens brengt de verbinding tussen land en water tot uitdrukking.
Man expresses the relation between land and water.

Akse Østebrot
(Norway) N
"Flytende landskap"
Eq vil snakka med fuglane dine,- og eq vil undra meg!
I want to talk with your birds - and I want to wonder!

Karina Hendriks
(The Netherlands) SE
"Drijvend landschap"
Symfonie zonder einde voor aarde, water, lucht en licht.
Luister....
Symphony without an end for earth, water, air and light.
Listen....

Kjell Nilsson
(Sweden) NE
"Flytande Landskap"
Landskap till salu.
Landscape for sale.

Elisabeth Oxenbøll Sørensen
(Denmark) NE
"Flydende Landskaber"
De flydende veje, når alle.
The flowing roads reach everyone.



Juliëtte Kuiper
(The Netherlands) SE
"Drijvend landschap"
Wat mist u?
What is it you're missing?

Anne Buit
(The Netherlands) SW
"Golvend landschap"
...Eindeloos
kijk zie ervaar
...Endless
Watch see experience

Lone Kristensen
(Denmark) NE
"Bevægelige landskaber"
Rum till spontanitet
Space for spontaneity

Jørgen Primdahl
(Denmark) NE
"Landskabet er et bosted"
Vi lever alle i et lokalt landskab.
Vi skal have indflydelse på det og vi skal værdsætte det.
We all live in a local landscape.
We should have influence on it and we should value it.





Morten Clemetsen

(Norway) N
 "Flytende landskap"
 Omsorg for kulturlandskaperens mangfold gjør menneskelivet rikere.
 Caring about the diversity of cultural landscapes makes human life richer.

Annet Stegeman

(The Netherlands) SW
 "Drijvend landschap"
 Een mooi landschap om als boer in te werken en zo een bijdrage te leveren aan het behoud.
 A lovely landscape for a farmer to work in and by doing that well to make a contribution to conservation.

Niek Hazendonk

(The Netherlands) S
 "Drievend Landschap"
 Waai maar weg
 Land van lucht en water
 Veer wordt later land of water
 Eiland drijft in lucht
 Blow away
 Land of sky and water
 Peat later becomes land or water
 Island floats in sky

Frans Smeding

(The Netherlands) SE
 "Uitgestrekte drijfijl"
 Verandering door vrijheid en verbondenheid.
 Change with freedom and engagement.

Marien de Bakker

(The Netherlands) NE
 "Drijvend landschap"
 Landschapsverandering drijft door naar.....
 Landscape change floats towards.....

Dirk Wascher

(Germany) S
 "Schwimmende Land-schaft"
 Landflucht + Landschaft
 = Riss im Landtuch
 Land escape + land desire
 = torn land towel

Didi Kaplan

(Israel) SE
 "(hebrew)"
 Let us ensure that the landscape will last

Emmy Bolsius

(The Netherlands) SE
 "Drijvend landschap"
 Ontstaan dankzij en ondanks wind en water.
 Het verschil tussen verdrinken en verdienen is slechts één hand.
 Hou vast!
 Came into being through and despite wind and water.
 The difference between drowning and earning is but a hand.
 Shake hands!

Søren Kristensen

(Denmark) NE
 "Flydende Landskaber"
 Landskaber: en arv fra fortiden - en gave til fremtiden.
 Landscapes: a heritage from the past -- a gift for the future.



Lene Møller Jensen

(Denmark) NE
 "Foranderlige landskaber"
 Planlægning "the link"
 mellem fortid og fremtid.
 Planning the link between past and present.

Kees Canters

(The Netherlands) SE
 "Drijvend landschap"
 Landschap brengt Mens en Natuur bij elkaar!
 Landscape brings Man and Nature together!

Pascal Raevel

(France) SW
 "Paysage flottant"
 On a les paysages que l'on mérite:
 Rendons les VIVANTS!
 We get the landscapes that we deserve:
 Let's make them LIVE!

Dick Melman

(The Netherlands) SW
 "Drijvend landschap"
 eindeloze openheid
 immerdurende nijverheid





Overview of the project: all messages to a floating landscape, blowing (and rearing) in the wind

vanzelfsprekende natuur-
lijkheid
bedreigde vochtigheid
onvermijdelijke eindigheid
endless openness
everlasting industry
self-evident naturalness
threatened moistness
inevitable endness

Thomas van Elsen
(Germany) E
"Eine Landschaft im
Umbruch"
Landnutzung kann zur

Kunst werden!
Landuse can become art!

Willem Vos
(The Netherlands) SE
"Drijvend land"
Holland drijft, maar
waarheen?
Holland is floating, but in
what direction?

Eva Cudlínová
(Czech Republic) E
"Plovovcí krasina"
Nedes se - dròik ti palce

Stay strong and healthy - I
am with you

Finnain Mac Naeidhe
(Ireland) W
"Talam fe sheol"
Ta an la ag briseadh
The dawn is breaking.

Roberto Rossi
(Italy) SE
"Paesaggio che galleggia"
Siamo tutti sulla stessa
barca
We are all on the same boat

Reija Hietala-Koivu
(Finland) NE
"Kelluva maisema"

Kelluva maisema
Ihmiseltä luonnolle
ihmisen hyväksi?

Ilman peruskalliota
Tämä tuntuu ihmeeltä
mutta ihminen vastaa
lopuksi teoistaan.



Floating landscape
From Man to Nature
because of Man's living?

Without bare rock
that is like a miracle
But Man has a duty
to manage Nature.

David R. Harris
(England) W
"Floating landscape"
Nature never did betray the
heart that loved her
(Wordsworth, 1798)
The message is the motto
of the Suffolk Preservation
Society, a branch of the
CPRE, UK

Remco Kranendonk
(The Netherlands) SE
"Drijvend landschap"
De openheid en de wind
drijven me weg van dit
landschap richting thuis,
waar de herinnering
voortleeft.
The openness and the wind
carry me away from this
landscape to home, where the
memory will live on.

Sylvia Herrmann
(Germany) SE
"Schwimmende Landschaften"
Kulturlandschaft existiert
nicht ohne Menschen.
Cultural landscapes cannot
exist without people.

Geert de Snoo
(The Netherlands) S
"Drijvend landschap"
Land met gaten
vrijwel verlaten
door mensen verbonden
rust hervonden.
Land with gaps
almost abandoned
connected by people
peace regained

Ana Viegas-Firmino
(Portugal) SW
"Paisagem flutuante"
Substitua o plástico, por
favor!
Replace the plastic, please!

Lilian van den Aarsen
(The Netherlands) S
"Drijvend landschap"
bodem, wind, water
wankele basis van bestaan
hou vast aan 't leven
hou vol voor later
soil, wind, water
uncertain basis of existence
hold on to life
hang on to the future

Herman Meekes
(The Netherlands) SE
"Golvend landschap"
Beter een kunstzinnig dan
een kunstmatig landschap.
Better an artistic than an arti-
ficial landscape.

Waske Ypma
(The Netherlands) S
"Drijvend landschap"
Eindelijk Breedbeeld
Finally Widescreen (television)

Teresa Pinto-Correia
(Portugal) SW
"Paisagem flutuante"
Mantenham a diferença
Keep the difference

Olaf Bastian
(Germany) SE
"Schwimmende Landschaft"
Achtet die landeskul-
turellen Leistungen unser-
er Vorfahren!
Care for the landscape-cultural
heritage!

Dominic Habron
(Scotland) NW
"Floating landscape"
Float through the land-
scape of time your everyday
life.

Jan Diek van Mansvelt
(The Netherlands) SE
"Drijvend landschap"
Kijk wat je zien kan.
Look what you can see.

Maria Andreoli
(Italy) S/SE
"Paesaggio galleggiante"
Non vuoi bandiere per
stupire il passante.
You do not need flags to
amaze the passer-by.

Ülo Mander
(Estonia) E
"Hõljuv maastik"
Mine läände, aga vaata
tagasi itta!
Go west, but look back to the
east!

Derk Jan Stobbelaar
(The Netherlands) SE
"Drijvend landschap"
Hoe hangt de vlag erbij in
de 21e eeuw?
How will the flag hang in the
21st century?

Gaston Remmers
(The Netherlands) S
"Zwevend landschap"
Ieder zijn eigen landschap.
To each his own landscape.