We live in an era of unprecedented environmental transformation. Unfortunately the vast preponderance of this change is negative: from the relentless decimation of animal species to the ravages of a global warming so dire that even the Pentagon has admitted it as a real threat. It is not surprising, then, that artists have sought to address ecological concerns in their work. Artists throughout the modern period have turned to natural themes (often through the rhetoric of landscape), and have also claimed a special affinity with the world of nature. What is more unusual in recent art practice is that this essentially representational relationship to nature has been supplemented by a commitment to direct intervention. Building on the tradition established by earth art pioneers such as Helen and Newton Harrison, Agnes Dennis, and Alan Sonfist, artists over the past decade have developed a remarkable range of projects that offer concrete solutions to specific ecological problems ranging from brownfield reclamation to the survival of family farms. Groundworks: Environmental Collaborations in Contemporary Art will provide an overview of recent projects, bringing more established practitioners into conversation with emerging groups in the United States, England, Austria, Japan and Argentina. This generational dialogue will overlay a set of geographic exchanges, in which artists working in western Pennsylvania will be exhibited in the context of a growing national and international environmental art movement. The exhibition is being supported by the Studio for Creative Inquiry at Carnegie Mellon University. It will also feature documentation from a series of long-term residency projects in which national and regional artists will work collaboratively with the residents of communities and neighborhoods in the Monongahela river valley.

Over the last two decades the field of environmental art practice has become increasingly diverse, with works ranging from traditional sculpture and public art to performance and new media. Groundworks will focus specifically on two, often interrelated, areas of current practice. First, we will present works that are generated through a collaborative or participatory approach in which the inhabitants of specific sites are actively involved in a process of physical and creative transformation. Drawing inspiration from the history of performance art as well as the traditions of radical planning, these projects seek to replace the mastery of the conventional planner or artist, with an openness to the specific realities of site and subjectivity embodied in a given environment. We will also focus on projects that seek to directly engage the mechanisms of policy and planning that govern the use of a given eco-system. These may include professional planning agencies, government officials, activist organizations and NGOs. In each area of work the artist helps to craft an interface: between the contingencies of place and the abstractions of space, between the needs of inhabitants and the survival of complex eco-systems, and between the agency of man and the autonomy of nature. In many cases these two tendencies, collaborative process and direct political engagement, are combined in a single work.
This is an exhibition about the environment, but it is also an exhibition that explores the boundaries of new art practices. The projects on display reflect back critically on normative assumptions about art—what form it might take, what effects it might have—as much as they do on our perceptions of the natural environment. They embody a relationship to nature not as something to be mastered, transformed, or turned to our advantage, but as an interlocutor and agent speaking to us in a language we are not always equipped to understand. At the same time, they suggest a critical relationship to notions of authorship, expressivity and immanence in art practice, embracing instead the uncertainty of collaborative interaction. There is, in fact, an underlying synchronicity between this collaborative approach (in which the work of art is less an a priori construct than an open-ended process of exchange) and the ethical relationship to the land that is implicit throughout these works. These questions will be explored in an accompanying catalog, with essays by leading figures in the fields of art and architectural history and environmental philosophy. Groundworks will feature project documentation, images, drawings, wall texts, diagrams and maps, transforming the exhibition space into a visually rich Chautauqua; a site for dialogue over new developments in art and environmental activism. The following list includes brief descriptions of artists and groups included in the exhibition as well as participants in the residency projects.

~Grant Kester

Groundworks Curator: GRANT KESTER
Art Theorist and Historian
University of California, San Diego, CA
Phone: (858) 822-4860
e-mail: gkester@ucsd.edu

October 14th 2004 - November 2005
Groundworks Exhibition, Miller Gallery

Jenny Stayer, Director
Regina Gouger Miller Gallery
Carnegie Mellon University
phone: (412) 268 3877
e-mail: jstrayer@andrew.cmu.edu
EXHIBITION ARTISTS
ALA PLASTICA (Rio De La Plata, Argentina)

Ala Plastica is an arts and environmental organization based in Argentina that develops projects that can be described as public art or interventionist art. The main concern is to link the artist's way of thinking and working with the development of projects in the social and environmental realm. Since 1991 Ala Plastica has developed a range of non-conventional artworks, focused on local and regional problems, and in close contact and collaboration with other artists, scientists and environmental groups. Ala Plastica works bio-regionally, within the nation of Argentina, as well as internationally in relationship to other transformative arts practitioners. The members of Ala Plastica are Silvina Babich, Alejandro Meitin, and Rafael Santos.

A bioregional perspective: the place vocation.
Communities are identified with systems that are environmentally recognizable through a comprehensive totality definable as what we term the "place vocation." This integration of the place symbolic role of place and the form built in the natural landscape has been represented by art in most cultures. Advanced research on immunodeficiency recognizes that the human body is connected to the environment by means of a neuro-chemical communication network that determines our health and well being to a great extent. In order to be connected with the environment, it is not necessary to develop a sense of sentimentality or mysticism, not even a vital and intense sense of connection with nature. It is simply necessary to understand the place vocation and to recognize that the environment –its cultural and natural manifestations- is only an extension of who we are.

The challenge lies in how to articulate the force of an engaged art practice in order to catalyze the regenerative possibilities of the community through doing. Two basic elements for the regeneration of a bioregional system are communication and the recovery of the social power of doing.

Project: Exercise of Displacement: Rio Santiago
Ala Plastica, together with the Austrian group Cartografia, has begun to develop a participatory design process for the territory or Rio Santiago based upon the remnant elements of indigenous nature and culture. The Río Santiago basin has specific characteristics and form such as unemployment indexes above 30 percent, very high level of contamination from industrial effluent and an increasing impact on the land and air by transportation systems. The challenge is to create a collective civic plan based on a harmonic comprehension of the ecosystem and the infrastructure. The plan as it is being developed will include cultural values, landscape, recreational convenience, bio-diversity corridors and the participation of social actors in the use of public land.
Navjot Altaf is an artist living and working in Mumbai and Bastar. For the past two decades she has produced sculpture and video installations addressing violence in individual and collective memory in India and other parts of the world (e.g. the communal riots in Bombay in 1993 following the Babri Masjid demolition in Ayodhya in 1992-3 and attacks associated with the rise of right-wing fundamentalism in India) at museums and galleries in Mumbai, New Delhi, Fukuoka, London, Liverpool/Bolton, Berlin, New York and other places.

Beginning in the early ‘90s she produced a series of cooperative works with composers, musicians, documentary filmmakers and craftspeople. These led her in turn to develop a series of interactive/collaborative projects in Indian villages, revolving around the design and creation of water pump sites and children’s temples (Pilla Gudis) in collaboration with Adivasi artists from Bastar, Chattisgarh in central India. As Altaf has written, “The Pilla Gudis emerged from the realization that village children had no space of their own where they could go to play or engage in other activities outside school hours. (They) are designed as meeting spaces in which young people could interact with each other and with community members with a knowledge of oral and artistic traditions in their village (as well as visiting and invited artists from throughout India). “Such interactions,” Altaf continues, can “encourage the young to think about different ways of knowing and modes of working, enabling them to draw nourishment and sustenance from difference and similarities. The . . .mainstream education system [in India] neutralizes cultural difference in the hope of creating a sense of ‘Unity in Diversity’ which affects student’s perception of culture.” The idea, Altaf notes, is to “encourage young minds to be able to question and take decisions, rather than merely receive. This will also help the artists engaged with the activities to free themselves from taking a stereotypical position of a teacher.”

Altas water pump sites are also produced in collaboration with craftspeople and children: “Our concern of designing and transforming the sites is firstly to create drainage and to improve hygiene since Naggar Palika (the local municipality) does not provide this facility. Second, we want to design shelves for women to place their vessels on, to avoid weight on the bent leg before placing it on their head (according to doctors a particular bent leg posture harms the back over time). Thirdly, we hope to beautify the public sites where women, children, and men of all ages come for a mundane job like fetching water as many as ten times, a day for domestic or other usage. Seven local women artists and inhabitants, at different levels have participated in the process.”
“For us, organizing the art workshops for the young is as important as creating the sites (Pilla Gudis). It encourages a communication network between artists from different cultures and disciplines from within Bastar and outside and with and between the young. The plan is also to invite social and cultural volunteers, college students, teachers, workers, peasants, hawkers and others to participate. They can in many ways share their experiences of belonging to different cultural and economic backgrounds and how or whether they are knowingly dealing with the issue of migration in present times. The adivasi areas around Kondagaon, now part of a new state, Chattisgarh, are no longer remote. My Adivasi colleagues see themselves as interventionists in their own environment. The nature of their intervention, mine and ours together, perhaps can be known from the intentions of our concepts, questioning, and ways of carrying out the work at public sites. Process, though time consuming helps in learning about the subtle and complex ways of different local cultures.”
Osaka-born artist Ichi Ikeda believes that water is the earth’s most precious resource. He has dedicated his career to raising global awareness around issues of water conservation through international conferences, community activism, public performances and interactive installations. Ikeda encourages his viewers to consider the larger context in which they live, and to see how their current actions can affect the earth’s future. He views the conscious networking of concerned individuals as a key to sustainability. His art serves as a catalyst for change and an inspirational focal point for the exchange and circulation of information related to water conservation. Ikeda addresses these issues through both large and small scale interventions. During his Big Hands Conference in 2002 (Thailand), Ikeda orchestrated an educational symposium in Bangkok which featured an interactive gallery installation with images of large cupped hands holding water, factual information and a recording of poetry by the artist. Other projects have included Arcing Ark (1997) which was developed as a joint project between two sites with different cultural backgrounds: the island cities of Kaseda, Japan and Taipei, Taiwan.

Groundworks will feature documentation of Ikeda’s recent Water Ekiden-Manosogewa River Art Project, (1999-). Manosegawa River, with an overall length of approximately 26km, flows across the south of Kyushu Island, into the East China Sea. The river, which runs through a rural region of Japan, looks clean, but in fact, is quite polluted by waster water runoff, factory pollution and pig farms. Over the past several years Ikeda has organized a series of talks with people in four local communities located along the Manosegawa and its tributaries, focusing on the collective responsibility for the river. This led to the creation of a series of “water stations,” produced in collaboration with the residents of four different districts, and related to the storage and transfer of rain water, spring water, purified water and water for agricultural irrigation.
HUIT FACETTES (Dakar, Senegal)

Huit Facettes, a Senegalese collective of visual artists, has disentangled THE historical contradiction between MODERNIST art’s claim to aesthetic autonomy and its ambitions for social relevance. Founded in 1996, Huit Facettes focus their attention on processual social interventions in the form of workshops. Instead of depending on the institutional framework of art, their localized interventions debase canonical systems of commodified art production. Utilizing the capacities of creative energy, they aim to highlight and alter aberrations in the mostly rural Senegalese socio-political and economic systems. Huit Facettes’ unique approach involves taking the participants of their artistic workshops through the trauma of being socially abject. Helping the participants to rediscover their creative abilities and cultural identities, they become anchored in their own tradition of arts and craft. Conducting workshops in rural Senegal, in villages such as Joal, Ndem and Hamdallaye Samba Mbaye, Huit Facettes attempts to reconcile an ever increasing polarity between the urban and the suburban, between art and development, and between arts and craft (batik, painting on glass, ceramics, pyroengraving, etc.).

Huit Facettes tries to mediate the disparities between the “Third” and the Western world, between processes of globalization and the multiplicity of individual temporalities. In 1996, in close contact with local developers such as Maat Mbay (a farmer from Hamdallaye Samba Mbaye and self taught painter of frescoes), Huit Facettes set up a “sociocultural center of creativity” in his village. Establishing a personalized graphic register for the villagers by decorating huts with a new form of alphabet, a mode of corporate identity was collectively conceived.

Huit Facettes’ social work follows a non-Western logic of capitalist liberalism where everybody should be granted privileged access to wealth by injecting artistic perception into everyday use. Their work does not simply incorporate the local into the global, but lends new strength to local idioms and exports their knowledge by confronting and profiting from the workings of global modernity.
“Landed: A Project for Elkhorn City” was developed by Suzanne Lacy, Susan Leibovitz Steinman and Yutaka Kobayashi in conjunction with Appalshop in Whitesburgh, Kentucky. Lacy, Steinman and Kobayashi were invited to work with residents of Elkhorn City, Kentucky, a small ex-mining town with a population under 1,000 people. Nearby, Breaks Interstate Park, which straddles Kentucky's West Virginia border, contains the 250-million-year-old Breaks Canyon, considered to be the “Grand Canyon of the South.” The Kentucky side of Breaks Interstate Park is under threat of natural gas drilling, one of many pending or already accomplished ecological devastations of the regional economy. “Landed: A Project for Elkhorn City” entails restoring a waterfront; designing an interpretive park with mini-wetlands, where storm water runoff from a gas station hits the river; creating a riverfront performance with Louise Smith, theater artists from Ohio, and collecting river and land stories as part of the Heritage Council’s oral history project.

Yutaka Kobayashi was born in Tokyo, Japan. Since receiving his Master of Fine Arts from Parsons School of Design, New York in 1991. Kobayashi’s work has been shown in numerous exhibitions in New York and throughout Japan including the Echigo-Tsumari Art Triennial 2003. In addition to ecological, site-specific installations in the US, Canada, Turkey and Japan, he has been working in designing and implementing new school and community based art projects. He had received overseas fellowship from the Japanese Ministry of Education, and has been an artist-in-residence at Otis College of Art and Design and California College of Arts and Crafts, working with the Center for the Arts and Public Life. He is a professor of Fine Arts at University of the Ryukyus in Okinawa, Japan and a member of mayor's urban planning cabinet for the city of Naha.

Suzanne Lacy is Chair of Otis School of Fine Arts. In 1995-96, Lacy, with artist Judith Baca, founded the innovative Visual and Public Art Institute at California State University at Monterey Bay. She was dean of Fine Arts at California College of Arts and Crafts (CCAC) in Oakland from 1987-97, and in 1998 was the Founding Director of the Center for Art and Public Life at CCAC. Her best known work to date is The Crystal Quilt (Minneapolis, 1987), a performance with 430 older women, broadcast live on Public Television. More recently, she created Full Circle (1993), for Culture in Action, a Chicago sculpture exhibit curated by Mary Jane Jacob; Auto: On the Edge of Time (1993-95) an installation on domestic violence for Art Park and the Public Art Fund; and The Roof is on Fire (1994), a multi-media public conversation and performance with 200 Oakland teenagers, sponsored by California College of Arts and Crafts, the Oakland Unified School District, and KRON Channel 4. Her most recent work includes Code 33, a performance involving 150 youth and 100 police officers in dialogue in Oakland, and The Skin of Memory, with Pilar Riano, an installation in Medellin, Colombia. Lacy has published articles on public theory in Performing Art Journal, Ms. Magazine, Art Journal, High Performance, and the Public Art Review, among others. She has exhibited in the Museum of Contemporary Art in London, the Museum of Modern Art in San Francisco, and the New Museum in New York, and her work has been reviewed in Artforum, The Drama

Artist Susan Leibovitz Steinman salvages materials directly from community waste streams to construct public art installations that connect common daily experiences to broader social issues. Projects include conceptual sculpture gardens that meld art, ecology and community action. In 1998 she produced Mandela Artscape, a two acre temporary installation of recycled freeway materials and native plants on West Oakland’s Mandela Parkway which involved the participation of community residents, Caltrans, the City of Oakland, Merritt College and the Museum of Children’s Art. Her permanent commission for the City of Palo Alto, California Avenue, California Native (1997), recreates a native grassland meadow in a median strip. Hand painted banners of indigenous animals and plants display both their common and Latin names. Sierra granite stones double as benches. New brick sidewalk patterns are interlaid with 100 special bricks engraved with poetic text written by winners in a public contest (attracting 500+ entries) on, “What makes California California?” For San Francisco’s waste transfer and recycling facility (NORCAL Sanitary Fill Company) she designed The River of Hopes and Dreams (1992), a permanent three-acre sculpture garden as a model for reclamation, resource conservation, recycling, and community involvement. Almost one-hundred high school students contributed their art and ideas to it.
PARK FICTION (Hamburg, Germany)

Since 1995 Park Fiction has organized COLLECTIVE PRODUCTIONS OF DESIRE for a park in St. Pauli, Hamburg, Germany’s red light district. The physical location of the park is scenic, with views looking over the harbor, and the city government has been eager to sell the site to private real-estate developers. These plans, developed by private investors working with government officials, were blocked by a network of community members organized by Park Fiction. Rather than simply protest the planned gentrification of the park area, this loose network organized a parallel planning process, creating platforms for exchange among people from many different cultural fields: musicians, priests, a headmistress, a cook, café-owners, bar-men, a psychologist, squatters, artists and interventionist residents. This “constituent practice” was accompanied by a series of lectures, talks, discussions, exhibitions and screenings that Park Fiction termed “Infotainment,” and by other activities anticipating the desired park. Located in one of the poorest residential areas in western Germany, Park Fiction is an internationally-discussed art project that approaches the planning process like a game.

Park Fiction developed special tools and techniques to make the planning process more accessible. Margit Czenki produced her film Park Fiction—Desire will Leave the House and Take to the Streets in 1998, to capture the different voices of the park, and the moment when “art and politics made each other more clever.” The park is still under construction. The Teagarden Island features artificial palm trees and is surrounded by an elegant 40 meter long bench from Barcelona. There is an Open Air Solarium and a Flying Carpet, a wave-shaped piece of lawn surrounded by a mosaic inspired by the Alhambra. The Woman Pirates Fountain and the strawberry-shaped Tree House, however, have not yet been financed. To keep the planning horizon open Park Fiction will soon initiate the Institute for Independent Urbanism.

A condensed version of the Park Fiction installation developed by Margit Czenki, Günter Greis and Christoph Schäfer for Documenta 11 in 2002, has been placed in Park Fiction’s former “planning container.” This archive-like space offers visitor’s insights into self-organizing social movements. It’s design combines references to Russian Constructivism with the style of a 1960s language lab, referencing the failed promises of past revolutionary moments. Rather than a passive storage system, the archive functions as a space of discussion and reflection in which new local, national and international projects located at the intersection of the everyday and the imaginary can be incubated. To catalyze this process Park Fiction organized an “international congress” in 2003, featuring groups from Delhi, Tijuana, La Plata, Hamburg and Milan, that all manage to create “Unlikely Encounters in Urban Space.” After years of struggle, the first section of the park is now being used by the public.
PLATFORM promotes creative processes of democratic engagement to advance social and ecological justice. The group seeks to harness the power of art, the commitment of campaigning, and the energy of education to unleash citizens’ creative and democratic potential. Platform’s core principles include:

**Individuals not Representatives**
Creating unique spaces – communities of interest – where people from different backgrounds and perspectives come together in an atmosphere of trust to discuss complex issues.

**Practical and Poetic**
Using a variety of strategies from research to performances, from walks to renewable energy systems, from publications to discussion – feasts.

**Interdisciplinary Creativity**
Developing distinctive projects by consistently combining the skills and experience of people from many different disciplines—economists to artists, psychologists to environmentalists.

**Here & Elsewhere**
Evolving long-term initiatives that embody a deep commitment to London’s ecology and peoples while at the same time exploring the city’s impacts on the wider world.

PLATFORM has been described as many things—an arts group, a forum for political dialogue, an environmental campaign—but, in essence, it is an idea, a vision of using creativity to transform the society we live in; a belief in every individual’s innate power to contribute to this process. We are a deliberately small group, concerned with long term working and building a depth of relationships to people, issues, and place over time. We take a very long time to work a subject out, and strive to take an extremely long view, disciplining our thinking by imagining and researching both backwards in history, and forwards to the time of our generation’s great-grandchildren and beyond: the communities of the dead and the unborn. Our working method is grounded in bringing together individuals from different disciplines, who then work collectively, developing an open space for dialogue and ideas. Since its conception in 1983 PLATFORM has combined the creativity of, among many others, economists, visual artists, psychotherapists, community activists and teachers. This method of interdisciplinary creativity encourages participatory audiences from equally diverse backgrounds, ranging from fishermen to commuters, environmental groups to schools.
A shared expression of feeling is the foundation of any change. PLATFORM provokes desire for a democratic and ecological society. We create an imagined reality that is different from the present reality. For example, we have held up the image of a city with its lost rivers returned, or anticipated a very near future where an oil-based global economy is commonly seen as a bad dream, an act of suicidal and ecocidal folly. Seemingly impossible visions, but as people discuss them, write about them, dream them, believe in them, they gradually take shape and pass from the space of imagination and desire into reality. We use art as a catalyst. This art is not primarily about an aesthetic – it is creativity applied to real situations: initiating a 168 hour forum of international dialogue; setting up a support fund for striking hospital workers; creating a 10-week performance in a tent that crossed the city; installing a turbine in a river to generate light for a local school; cooking a fair-trade feast for 70 people coming together to discuss the ethics and problematics of engaging—even critically—with the corporate sector. All these acts we see as art—the process of molding form—all focus on physical and meta-physical change, change both in the tangible space of the material world and the intangible space of people’s hearts and imaginations.

Platform includes Dan Gretton, James Marriot, Jane Trowel, Greg Muttit and Emma Sanger.
3 RIVERS 2nd NATURE (Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania)
Questions of Art, Ecology, Access, and Advocacy.

3 Rivers 2nd Nature (3R2N) is a five-year project that addresses the meaning, form and function of the three river systems and 56 streams of Allegheny County.

We are primarily interested in strategic research and creative action that supports the form and function of the post-industrial public realm. This project builds on the success of strategic creative inquiry, ecosystem analysis and community dialogue developed by the STUDIO for Creative Inquiry through the Nine Mile Run Greenway project. We work with scientists, engineers, planners and policy experts. We have partnered with regulatory agencies, universities and non-profit organizations to conduct fieldwork to develop an ecological baseline for Allegheny County. Data collected includes three types of water quality, botany, geology, landscape ecology, public access and historic use. The project is also working with communities to address the cultural understanding of living rivers and water quality, as well as the potential to preserve and restore natural ecosystems in a post-industrial urban setting.

We have specific research questions. Can artists working as cultural agents affect the public policies and private economic programs that mark and define urban places and ecosystems? Can we help initiate a public realm advocacy that addresses the perception, meaning and form of nature, while expanding the creative act beyond the authorship of the artist?

The 3R2N Project Team develops strategic knowledge and broad community discussions about rivers and streams. Strategic knowledge helps us understand what is happening in and along our rivers and streams, and how we can either help or hinder their recovery. The Project Team has developed rigorous methods to acquire this knowledge, gathering scientific data that leads to a spatial understanding of the existing conditions. We then conduct map analysis to synthesize and understand the forces affecting specific areas. 3R2N seeks to identify the potential for preservation and restoration of natural and cultural systems. The work is about social and ecological change. The work is also fundamentally interdisciplinary (relational). We cannot rely on the art world as the only point of engagement and interpretation and we must utilize other social and intellectual frameworks and support networks.

Project products include:

- An Allegheny County conservation, restoration plan
- Policy reports on regional water quality and land conservation
- The Monongahela Conference and Residencies – on art and change.
Community participation is essential to our process, transformation starts at the moment when people gather to discuss their place. We believe that perception drives experience and leads to new values. Our work focuses on the foundation concepts that inform perception. We then craft onsite (on-river) public experiences. Each individual has different interests and struggles, different relationships to their place. Each community includes people who have observed and stood as witnesses for the nature that defines their region. Our goal is to find new ways to see, platforms for speech, new ideas and methods for creative engagement with our place. We are interested in experience, dialogue, shifting values, and diverse visions. We actively seek examples that have the power to change our own understanding of culture, nature, and place.

3 Rivers 2nd Nature includes is organized as an academic research project. Tim Collins and Reiko Goto are the principle investigators responsible for funding and project direction with research associates Noel Hefele, Priya Lakshmi, Jon Kline, Lauren McEwen, Beth McCartney and many others participating as science consultants over the five year period of the project. The project also maintains relationships with a science advisory board and an outreach advisory board made up of regional leaders.

The Nine Mile Run Greenway Project (NMR-GP) engaged cultural and aesthetic issues of post-industrial public space and ecology. The STUDIO team endeavored to generate an informed public conversation regarding Nine Mile Run, a brownfield site in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania being developed into a mix of housing and public greenway. Our goal at Nine Mile Run was to enable an equitable public dialogue about brownfields nature and public space. We saw our work in terms of a community consensus process and a public policy discussion about the form and function of post-industrial public space, a discourse that was missing and continues to be an anomaly in the current program of local brownfield development.

As our project team honed their philosophy, process and skills, it became clear that there was a set of basic guidelines which would guide our experiments in public dialogue and the broader intent of renewing post-industrial public life.

- Create images and stories that reveal both the cause and effect of the industrial legacy.
- Create works that illuminate and explicate conflict and points of dynamic change.
- Produce new forms of critical discourse that provide access, voice and context.
WOCHENKLAUSUR (Vienna, Austria)

The artist group WochenKlausur has been conducting social interventions since 1993. WochenKlausur, at the invitation of art institutions, develops and realizes proposals—small-scale but very concrete—for improving sociopolitical deficits.—WochenKlausur sees art as an opportunity for achieving long-term improvements in human coexistence. Artists’ competence in finding creative solutions, traditionally utilized in shaping materials, can just as well be applied in all areas of society: in ecology, education and city planning. There are problems everywhere that cannot be solved using conventional approaches and are thus suitable subjects for artistic projects. Theoretically, there is no difference between artists who do their best to paint pictures and those who do their best to solve social problems with clearly fixed boundaries. The individually selected task, like the painter’s self-defined objective, must only be precisely articulated. Interventionist art can only be effective when the problem to be solved is clearly stated.

It all started in the winter of 1992. For an exhibition at the Vienna Secession Wolfgang Zinggl invited eight artists to work on solving a localized problem. Within the normal time span of an exhibition, the group was to work in closed session to develop and realize a small but concrete measure to improve conditions for homeless people. This first project succeeded in making medical care available to this group. Since then, a mobile clinic has treated more than seven hundred homeless people per month free of charge. An invitation from the Zurich Shedhalle followed, where WochenKlausur—in a new line-up—developed a pension for drug-addicted women. A year later, the group established a social center with bocce court for the older residents of the Italian community Civitella d’Agliano. In Graz, seven immigrants were assisted in obtaining legal residency in Austria. Interventions in Salzburg, Berlin, Venice and Fukuoka followed. A total of fifteen interventions have been successfully conducted in recent years by alternating teams that have involved a total of over forty artists.

The prerequisite for every intervention is the invitation of an art institution, which provides WochenKlausur with an infrastructural framework and cultural capital. The exhibition space itself serves as a studio from which the intervention is conducted. The name WochenKlausur could be translated as “weeks of closure.” The German word Klausur is related to the English words enclosure, seclusion and cloister. The group’s projects are collective efforts that take place in the concentrated atmosphere of a closed-session working situation. A strictly limited timeframe—usually eight weeks—gives rise to an unusual concentration of the six participants’ energies, allowing the planned interventions to be realized very quickly. The issue to be addressed is usually established before the project begins. Rarely have art institutions approached WochenKlausur with a specific request. It is up to the group to inform themselves about local political circumstances and propose corresponding interventions before the project’s start. After extensive research, the group makes a final decision concerning what is in fact to be accomplished. Through its work, WochenKlausur would like to show that certain human living conditions do not necessarily have to be the way they are. Many people have no lobby: Of their own accord they can do little
to make themselves heard or improve their situation. In the industrial society, with its highly developed division
of labor, it is practically unquestioned that the right specialists are assigned to solve every problem. Still, many
problems cannot be so easily delegated and demand new and unorthodox approaches.

Wolfgang Zinggl led WochenKlausur until 1997. Since then, interventions have also been organized by Stefania
Pitscheider, Katharina Lenz and Pascale Jeannée. Past and current members include Katharina Lenz, Pascale
Jeannée, Susanna Niedermayr, Stefania Pitscheider, Erich Steurer and Wolfgang Zinggl. WochenKlausur’s office
is housed in a former storefront at Gumpendorferstrasse 20 in Vienna. It is responsible for conceiving and
organizing new interventions, recruiting local artists from the communities where projects are to be held, and
supporting professional implementation and follow-up work. Furthermore, it also serves as an information
center for activist art.
RESIDENCY ARTISTS
My commitment is to revitalize ecosystems while raising awareness that the vitality of any community and the continuity of its cultural heritage depends upon the health of the natural world that embraces and sustains it.

HUMBLE  [L. humilis low, small, slight, akin to humus, soil, earth
(see HUMUS)]

HUMUS  [L. earth, ground, soil  IE. *ghom-: see HOMAGE]

HOMAGE  [L. homo, a man  IE. *ghom-,  base *gheim-, earth, ground, whence L. humus, Gr. chthon, earth, OE. guma man]

Hidden in the roots of our words, we find what we seem to want to forget—that we are literally the same stuff as earth. My work explores this identity while undermining the assumptions and values that keep us from acknowledging it. I work in various ways depending on the possibilities and needs of the context. My work has grown from individual sculptures that are personal and intimate, to site-specific installations that explore how landscapes and cultures mutually influence each other in particular historical contexts; to collaborative, often community-based, water remediation projects that occupy most of my focus today.

I work to address the particular concerns of the community by collaborating with ecologists, landscape architects, bioengineers, and others to understand the particular ecological and structural needs of specific sites, and by working in close consultation/collaboration with the range of stakeholders the project serves. The final work weds sculpture's conceptual, metaphoric, and aesthetic capacities with ecological functionality and, at its best, serves as a focal point for community building, as well as building community awareness. The physical sculpture becomes a nexus—a natural system's means of remediating polluted water that is a visible manifestation—and, a reminder of a renewed relationship between the human and other-than-human worlds—an energy collector of a social process.

My desire to work with communities grew out of my project Of Earth and Cotton. From 1994-1998, I traveled throughout the rural South from the Carolinas to Texas, following the westward migration of the cotton belt, speaking with people who farmed and picked cotton by hand in the 1930s and ‘40s. For this project, I created a series of installations that included sculpture, documentary video, and historical photographs. But it was the less tangible part, my experiences with the cotton farmers, that changed my life and my art practice. The power of these conversations and relationships made me want to work with people, and at the grassroots level.

Most of my recent work addresses urban storm water issues—with current projects in Cincinnati, St. Louis, New York, and West Palm Beach. I also work in rural areas. This past year as artist in residence with the National Park Service Rivers and Trails Division, I worked in collaboration with Susan Steinman of Oakland, California in
two small rural towns in the Pacific Northwest. The focus was primarily about building community support for projects that link revitalization of local water resources with economic revitalization. Our goals were to create an interpretive trail along a long underappreciated tidal slough that is crossed by route 101 (Tillamook, OR), and to daylight a stream in downtown, Caldwell, Idaho. Grossenhain, a town of 17,000 in Germany, 30 km. west of Dresden, commissioned my biosculpture™ The Gift of Water as part of the constructed wetland that provides the sole filtration for their very large municipal swimming complex.
GROUNDZERO ACTION NETWORK (Pittsburgh, PA)

The GroundZero Action Network is an open network of doers, makers, and creative people who collaborate on projects focused on Pittsburgh’s urban environment and culture. Blurring the boundaries of social, political, cultural, and economic agendas we seek to capture the creative energy of the City. Our means to action are all-inclusive and boundless, with the general goal of providing a creative, multi-disciplinary approach to connecting people, harnessing ideas, and generating projects. We pursue projects with three interrelated themes: projects that encourage and spawn creativity and the arts, defined in the broadest possible terms; projects that advocate for a just, democratic, open, diverse, and sustainable city, region, and society; projects that strengthen social, cultural, and physical connections—bringing people together and making things happen.

We are not an incorporated entity. We have no offices, we take no money, and we have no formal hierarchical structure. Instead we are a loose all-volunteer network run by a core group of people who create and organize projects. We have three loose levels of structure: a core group of organizers, a series of project teams, a general membership of subscribers to our email lists, and participants in our events.

The core is an evolving group of 10-to-20 people who are active organizers and project leaders. Some have participated since the beginning, others have joined recently, and some have fallen away. Internally we have no official hierarchy among the core members. Our core members are involved with one or more of our projects and often have connections to related organizations. We meet monthly to share information, discuss projects, and direct the overarching organization.

Each project team is led by a core member(s) and is generally composed of volunteers assembled to formulate and implement the project idea. The structure of our project teams ranges from very informal to semi-non-profit-status boards. Project teams are responsible for seeking and securing independent funding sources to make the project happen. Some of our oldest projects have graduated from the organization, becoming autonomous entities with a dedicated funding stream and a more organized structure than the network itself.

Project: ACTIVATE PITTSBURGH
Activate Pittsburgh is about making Pittsburgh better from the inside out. It is our project that seeks to capture creative energy, engage new audiences and start new projects. A few times a year we hold a session to introduce people to GroundZero, provide a forum for discussion of ideas and projects and engage people in the network.

Project: ULTRAVIOLET LOOP
The UltraViolet Loop (UV Loop) is a new bus route that circles the city. It started as a small demonstration project. Since our initial project launch it has evolved into a non-profit UltraViolet Advisory Board which collaborates with the Port Authority of Allegheny County to run the buses. The UV Loop is designed to showcase many of Pittsburgh’s diverse neighborhoods and night time entertainment venues.
Project: MON-FAYETTE EXPRESSWAY

The Mon Fayette is a proposed expressway that will have a profound impact on many of the city's most valued amenities and assets. The Ground Zero Action Network played a significant role in the creation of the Mon Fayette Alternative plan based upon upgrading existing roads, introducing new public transit and reinvesting in existing communities. The expressway project has not yet been stopped.

The lead artists from the GroundZero Action Network will be Jonathan Kline and Christine Brill. With other local artists, designers and creative professionals, Jonathan and Christine co-founded GroundZero in 2000. Their work with GroundZero has included Activate Pittsburgh, a project to engage people in creative projects, Fifth and Forbes, a project advocating for the sustainable development of Downtown Pittsburgh, The Citizen’s Plan, an alternative to the proposed Mon-Fayette expressway, Urban Hike, a series of organized group hikes through Pittsburgh's disparate neighborhoods and communities, and ArtVotes, a project to make artists visible as a political constituency. Other GroundZero members will also participate in public, community-organizing sessions of the project.

Jonathan Kline
Born 1974 in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania
Jonathan Kline is an artist, architect, teacher. He is a core group member and co-founder of the GroundZero Action Network. As an artist Jonathan works across disciplines in a variety of media, including painting, drawing, mapping, architectural sculpture, urban design and community dialog. Jonathan is an adjunct professor of Urban Design and Architecture at the Carnegie Mellon School of Architecture, where he leads design studios focused on revitalizing communities in the Pittsburgh region. Prior to teaching Jonathan spent five years in professional urban design practice working with Urban Design Associates in cities around the country. Jonathan is also currently an Associate Fellow at Carnegie Mellon's STUDIO for Creative Inquiry where he is the Planning Coordinator for the 3 Rivers 2nd Nature project.

Christine Brill
Born 1975 in New York City, New York
Christine Brill is an architect and artist. She is a core group member and a co-founder of the GroundZero Action Network. As an artist, Christine pursues interdisciplinary projects that challenge the traditional boundaries of communities and emphasize the value of local place and culture. She works most frequently in a team environment and incorporates aspects of politics, activism, urban design, network development, community process and architecture in her work. Christine is currently a project manager with Pfaffmann + Associates, an architecture and urban design firm in Pittsburgh. Her projects with the firm include historic preservation, renovation, new construction, community planning and urban design. Christine has also taught children's classes in architecture at Carnegie Mellon University.
Over many years our work has addressed the co-evolution of biodiversity and cultural diversity most often, though not always, at watershed scale. Work often begins when we perceive an anomaly in the environment that is the result of opposing beliefs or contradictory metaphors. These moments, in which reality no longer appears seamless and the cost of belief has become outrageous, offer the opportunity to create new spaces, first in the mind and thereafter in everyday life.

Our methodology emerges from the interaction of our beliefs. We believe that every place is telling the story of its own becoming. This story results from the processes of everyday life, emerging from a complex conversation carried on at many levels—physical and biological as well as social and political, economic, and, aesthetic or, in rare cases, compassionate.

We believe that the cultural landscape, in all of its dimensions, is the outcome, in physical terms, of this conversation—mostly determined, or guided, or forced, by the dominant culture or ensemble of cultures in a place. Further, we see ourselves as embedded in this cultural landscape, and responsible, as is everyone else, in some manner for its well-being.

We believe that the urgency of the moment must be at play in any act of social change that comes about in a conflicted situation and is not simply the normal morphology of time. Most works that have been successful in some measure have engaged and argued for transformation in a perceived extremely urgent situation.

Our methodology for problem-solving takes a variety of forms, it is designed to address, infect, invade, transform, and expand planning processes. The basic terms of our work are quite simple: to be invited, to be networked, to let a vision emerge for transformation of place if it wishes to, to be non-possessive, and to always insist that whoever pays us or engages with us understands that our fundamental client is the cultural landscape itself, as best we, with the help of many, can perceive it.

Over many years our work has addressed the co-evolution of biodiversity and cultural diversity most often, though not always, at watershed scale. To begin, we find the boundaries of the watershed, look for emerging patterns, and then often focus on the condition of the river. This process has been followed for the Sava River in the former Yugoslavia, for the Mulde River as it flows into the Elbe in Germany and as it begins in the little Floha Mulde watershed at the Border of the Czech Republic. And for the watershed of the Touch River as it flows through farmland and city into the Garonne River in France, and for the Oder River as it flows down from the Czech Republic through Poland and into Germany, among others. We have proposed a genetic diffusion system
for the complex watershed of the Rhine and we are doing one for the Santa Fe watershed in New Mexico. We have spent considerable time pondering boundary conditions for the Green Heart of Holland, which are alternately accepted (in part or in whole) or are rejected, depending on the government in power. We have proposed for the natural purification of the headwaters of most of the rivers in Europe by restoring the forest, meadow, and grasslands of the high grounds, in a work entitled Peninsula Europe supported by the European Union and the Deutsche Bundes Umwelt Stiftung, the Schweisfurth-Stiftung, Munich, as well as foundations and museums, and galleries in four countries, so far. Always the strategy has been to impact the planning processes in a region, as the cultural landscape is so often formed by them.
Hood Design was established in 1992, in Oakland, California. The firm is committed to issues that address the re-construction of urban landscapes within towns and cities. Urban is defined as those landscapes where there is a collective density of inhabitants who share physical, social, political and economic resources. The firm’s approach is multi-dimensional, exploring the role of specific landscape typologies that together reinforce and re-make landscape into the city morphology.

The firm’s principal, Walter Hood, is a Professor and former Chair of Landscape Architecture and Environmental Planning at the University of California, Berkeley. Hood has worked in a variety of settings including community design, urban landscape design, art and research. He was a fellow at the American Academy in Rome in Landscape Architecture, 1997. He has exhibited and lectured on his professional projects and theoretical works nationally and abroad. His work was recently featured in Open, New Designs for Public Space, The Van Alen Institute, 2003-04. His work was also featured in the Cooper Hewitt Design Triennial, 2000, and his firm is designing the gardens and landscape for the New De Young Museum, San Francisco with Swiss architects Herzog and de Meuron scheduled for completion in 2005.

Walter Hood’s published monographs: Urban Diaries and Blues & Jazz Landscape Improvisations illuminate his unique approach to the design of urban landscapes. These works won an ASLA Research award in 1996. His essay “Macon Memories” is featured in Sites of Memory, Princeton Press, 2001. Hood participated in the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art’s “Revelatory Landscapes” Exhibition 2000-2001. He is currently researching and writing a book entitled Urban Landscapes: American Landscape Typologies, to be published soon. His area of teaching, the American Urban Landscape, is intertwined with his design work creating a didactic approach to the design of urban landscapes.

Hood Design is committed to the development of environments which reflect their place, time and social uses. Our interest in the re-construction of urban landscapes seek to develop new elements, spatial forms and objects... validating their existing familiar context. The firm’s method of design utilizes ‘research’ in lieu of standardized analytical practices. Research for each project include archival and oral histories, physical, environmental and social patterns and practices, to uncover familiar and untold stories. These elements are layered together through an improvisational design process which yields familiar yet new spaces, forms and elements. They assimilate the past and look forward into the future.
We have been creating socio-political art for 20 years. Over that time, our perspectives and methodologies have evolved with the art; however, our core concerns have remained intact. We have maintained a concern for disenfranchised people who are adversely affected by economic, environmental, and political issues beyond their control. We have been concerned with the consequences of globalization and large-scale extraction of power. We recognize that social and environmental issues cannot be separated. We have always believed we could make change through art.

Like Raymond Burr in the movie *Godzilla*, standing on a hillside out of harm’s way, reporting on Godzilla’s destruction of the earth, our early works were journalistic narrative art, which stood to witness global events. It was more an observation of a phenomenon than an overt critical statement. In the 90’s our methodology shifted. We stepped down from the journalist’s hillside vantage point to become more directly involved with the community experiencing Godzilla’s wrath. Our current methodologies have evolved from our earlier experiences, and we have developed a common process that can be applied, with variations, to most of our projects.

The genesis for a project is quite often derived from identifying some issue that has an element of environmental or social conflict. We try to identify the different stakeholders in the conflict and research their positions. We visit the area of the conflict to gather personal first-hand impressions, take photos, and possibly collect materials or specimens. We try to establish an understanding of what the issues are surrounding the conflict and what the agendas of the various stakeholders might be.

In all of the projects we have been involved in, all stakeholders believe that their positions are valid and their actions are justified. When they have the opportunity to openly state their position, it is apparent that it is a conflict of values and beliefs that fuels the conflict. The question that we pursue, but find very difficult to answer is how do we reconcile conflicting belief systems?

Tom and Connie Merriman collaborate on projects that combine traditional mark making with time based media and documentation systems to create installations that explore the relationship between natural resources and economic and political power. In the 90s the Merrimans created works in response to the development of Hydroelectric Dams in Quebec, Canada that displaced native people and destroyed a vast ecosystem. Recently they focused on a project that investigated Mountain Top Removal coal mining in West Virginia and its subsequent impact to the people and environment of that region. Tom is Senior lecturer in the Design Dept, at Carnegie Mellon University. Connie is an artist and educator currently working with The Pennsylvania Council on the Arts, Arts and Education Program.
Laurie Palmer’s interdisciplinary practice includes sculptural and public art projects, writing, and collaboration with the artists’ collective Haha, with whom she has worked for twelve years. She has exhibited both individual and collaborative work in the US and in Europe, recently completing a text-based public art commission in Linz, Austria, investigating the linked histories of countries along the Danube through fictional excerpts. She is currently an Assistant Professor in Sculpture, at the School of the Art Institute of Chicago.

Past projects like “3 Acres on the Lake: DuSable Park Proposal Project” (2000-03) and “Flood” (with Haha, 1993-95) were built as open-ended structures – a certain conceptual autonomy accompanied by indeterminacy as to how, and to some extent if, each project would develop. With Flood, a hydroponic community garden in a storefront space in Chicago growing vegetables for people with AIDS, the question was how (and whether) participants might use the garden space beyond its initial intentions, how they/we might extend its initial timeframe by finding new energy (and resources) to keep it going, and/or invent new structures from it. All of this happened, partially – though the garden as initially conceived no longer exists.

With “3 Acres...” (a public art project calling for proposals for an undeveloped plot of public land) the question was how (and whether) the exhibition and publication might influence the trajectory of the land’s actual development, without having to be sucked dry by the deadening city politics involved in promoting any one specific proposal. The 65 speculative proposals remained autonomous, free and clear of constraints based on safety or maintenance, while the project overall has accompanied, and amplified, efforts by activists to draw attention to the city’s abnegation of its promise to develop the land and to commemorate a black historical figure. The project has intercepted and changed the situation that provided its initial platform, while retaining a degree of the volatile virtual—or whatever you want to call it—a mote unhampered by the logic of “sense.”

A primary goal (along with insisting on the value of doing things that don’t make sense in an era of rationalized efficiency) is to create situations with multiple points of access – theoretical, social, material, spatial - that aim towards negotiation of very different conversations simultaneously. It takes time for indirect and qualitative projects to gather enough critical participation to contribute to their course; it takes time for potential to realize itself through indirection. Unsensational fragments accumulate insistence over time, allowing not just for “execution” but for evolution, participation, growing wisdom, changing understandings, shifting participants – development, but not along a pre-determined narrative – and surprise.

What if our first response to a radical proposal was not “that’s impossible,” but rather, “what does impossibility offer?” The possible involves what we can already see; the impossible is a link to what we don’t know (yet).
The Persephone Project is an eco-art project that connects the public to art and the environment by promoting gardening as a contemporary art practice and by recognizing gardeners as artists. My hope is that this connection will bring personal transformative change to the lives of those who can realize that they are involved in a creative practice through their gardening. My hope is to also bring transformative social-political change as the project breaks down the barriers (class, race, education) between artists and non-artists. And finally, my hope is to effect environmental change as the project promotes a respect for nature as collaborator in the work and in the world. The project takes its name from the Greek goddess Persephone whose return each year from the underworld brings the change of a dark barren world to that of light and growth—to spring.

I do the work in several intersecting spheres of methodology: conceptual, administrative, social/community, and art making. I see the entire project as a conceptual art project. I want to change the way people (particularly those not trained as artists) think about their own creativity and their ability to engage creatively. I intentionally employ art-world terminology when speaking about gardens: They are installations. When I ask the public to share the stories of plants in their garden with a component of the project called “Magic Penny Gardens,” I refer to the stories as narrative and memory. I want to honor, and more importantly I want gardeners to honor, their everyday backyard interactions with the environment and understand the internal creative spark that inspires, so that it may shine—not just in the garden—but also in many aspects of human and earth citizenship.

Discourse is one means that I employ to have an exchange about the place of the garden in post-modern culture. I give regular presentations to diverse groups where I have the opportunity to preach this gospel as well as listen and learn. I also visit many backyard gardens (studio visits) and talk to gardeners, which allows me to witness their approach (methodology), learn where they got their ideas (what informed their practice), and share thoughts (engage in discourse). I think the most significant methodology is developing shared ownership for the project. Because the work is social, it has to be done in a social context. My role as an artist is to be a medium, catalyst, and facilitator. The artist can share a vision (be the medium) and if there is resonance, others will get excited (catalyst). The next step is to invite those with the most enthusiasm into the inner circle of the process. This can take the form of a working group or committee. Now the idea or the project no longer belongs to the artist, but to the community. Continuing to reach out to larger and larger concentric circles of the community, the artist role switches to facilitator—facilitating the community “will” to make the project happen.
ANN ROSENTHAL (Baltimore, Maryland)

Supposition
There are too many answers and too few questions for the complex world we inhabit. As much as we try to “do the right thing” and “just get along,” we continue to make the same mistakes. Clearly, our desire for a better world is not enough to bring it about. In our attention-deficit-disordered world, with instant communication and sound-bite analysis, having the time and patience to think and act deeply borders on the subversive. Success in the 21st century is measured in speed, efficiency, and packaging. Where are places for contemplation, deep listening, and thoughtful action?

Postmodern theory tells us that our experience is socially constructed. If “reality” is of our own collective making, then we can fashion a different world, but we must first cultivate a deep understanding of how things came to be the way they are. Of course, there is no single answer. The process of questioning, however, can lead to insights and, eventually, to more sustainable solutions—in contrast to the “crisis responses” that have become the mainstay of postmodernity.

Foundation
My work and my life are guided by the following quotation by bell hooks:

Since the disruption of the colonized/colonizer mind-set is necessary for border crossings to not simply reinscribe old patterns, we need strategies for decolonization that aim to change the minds and habits of everyone involved in cultural criticism (hooks 4).

Through text and image, I seek to expose old patterns and disrupt the colonized/colonizer mindset through asking questions that destabilize what we assume to be immutable.

A potent strategy for decolonization is offering alternative histories. With the Western narrative of progress still firmly in place, environmental history is rarely acknowledged, let alone integrated into historical and cultural analysis. Whereas postcolonial theory has offered deep insights into relationships between humans, it has yet to be applied to our relationship with non-human nature. (Ecofeminist theorists are a notable exception and have made important contributions in this regard.)

Given the above insights and shortfalls of postmodern theory and historical critique, I have taken as my project over the last several years to challenge historical narratives and offer “alter-tales” (Haraway).

Intention
My professional background is a hybrid of writing and image making. As a result, my interests in design, publishing, artist books, collage, and installation have been consistent over 30 years. Integrating these forms and processes, my current practice complicates the social and natural histories of “place” through:

• Reframing the local urban/rural environment to see it anew;
• Suggesting how the nature/culture boundary has evolved;
• Questioning how personal and public decisions have been determined;
• Opening a dialogue to re-vision what we want our eco/social communities to be.
Underlying the above is an attempt to transform the way in which we relate to one another and the planet, including:

• Shifting from instrumentalist to systems/relational thinking;
• Perceiving the environment as “Self” rather than “Other”;
• Extending “community” to include non-human nature (Leopold);
• Rekindling our social desire for sustainable cultures and environments (Heller).

I acknowledge that this process of transformation must be reflected in my own life and cultural production. Thus the following are the values toward which I strive, as well as those I believe are common to ecoart practice:

1. Land Ethic—recognizing that we are members of an interdependent “community” that includes not only humans, but “…soils, waters, plants and animals, or collectively: the land.” (Leopold).

2. Systems Thinking—visualizing patterns and relationships across disparate information and knowledge systems; applying the lessons of ecosystems to our human communities (Capra).

3. Sustainability—designing our lives, work, products, social systems, and relationships to meet the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs (World Commission on Environment and Development).

4. Social and Biological Diversity—understanding that diversity among disciplines, cultures, and species is a prerequisite for systems health and resilience.

5. Social and Environmental Justice—insisting that all species have a right to a clean environment that supports our health and the integrity of the ecological systems that sustain life.

6. Collaboration—bridging the boundaries between disciplines, communities, cultures, classes, genders, and species, respecting what each contributes to designing solutions that work for everyone.

7. Integrity—closing the gap between what we value and how we act in the world.

If the work is intended to foster activism, then opportunities for individual and community involvement must be integrated into the work. I have found it highly effective to contextualize the work within a related public event, such as an environmental conference, an arts fair, or Earth Day/community celebration. Follow-up events could include a roundtable discussion with local environmental, community, and academic leaders who address issues suggested by the work. This is an ideal opportunity to involve and connect the many people and institutions who have contributed to the project.