

Moving Toward a Balanced Earth Kick the Carbon Habit

2008-2010 Exhibition Proposal
Art for the Environment Initiative

*Te Papa Tongarewa Museum, Wellington, New Zealand
World City Expo, 2009, Incheon, Korea
Bogata, Colombia*

Presented by the Natural World Museum in partnership with
The United Nations Environment Programme



ART FOR THE ENVIRONMENT INITIATIVE

Our traveling curatorial program model is designed to highlight regional environmental issues through art to educate and motivate the public in taking personal action in local and global conservation efforts. Under this initiative, the Natural World Museum (NWM) and the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) produce a major launch exhibit for each annual World Environment Day (WED) event. WED is one of the principal vehicles through which the United Nations stimulates awareness of the environment and enhances political attention and action, commemorated each year on June 5, for the past 30 years a different country hosts this international celebration.

From the host city, the exhibit travels to other partnering museums around the world to yield continuous opportunities for communities on local, national, and international levels. In addition to our annual traveling exhibits, NWM makes these exhibitions available to the greater public through virtual exhibits online and through exhibition catalogues distributed world-wide. In order to engage the public, we design our exhibits for broad and diverse audiences by featuring an interesting and evocative mix of painting, sculpture, photography, multimedia and conceptual installations. The exhibits function as a cross cultural and interdisciplinary interface between humans and nature, the storyline behind the artwork brings the environmental message alive.

Through WED programs, we demonstrate the intricacy of nature through culturally relevant contexts, and empower citizens from around the world to generate new avenues of environmental stewardship. A primary goal for the NWM is to make its programs affordable and accessible to *all* members of the community, equipping people with resources on how to become a part of the environmental solution. Programs include international symposia, opening reception events with artist awards ceremonies, eco fashion shows, environmental films, musical performances, and educational outreach activities. Each year the annual environmental topic of World Environment Day serves as the base theme for our exhibits and programs.

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Moving Toward a Balanced Earth

For the 2008 WED, UNEP continues to explore and address the theme of climate change, with an emphasis on moving toward a low carbon economy with their 2008-2009 motto, *Kick the Carbon Habit*.

Nature strives for balance, including balancing the levels of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere. But the rate at which humans are moving carbon into the atmosphere by burning fossil fuels has surpassed Earth's ability to maintain balance. As a result, the climate is changing.

Carbon balance is one part of nature's balancing act. Humans, collectively and individually, also strive for balance.

In this exhibition, we ask the artists to help us find new visions and new choices for a balanced Earth. What does it mean to be in balance as individuals and communities? How do we get the Earth in balance? What does balance look and feel like?

The answers are as varied as the artists. Their stories reflect both the consequences of our current path as well as the opportunities for new ones. One artist calls this dilemma of balance "existential slapstick" while another calls breath and clean air the necessary first step for balancing ourselves and the planet. Some artists explore new energy sources for the future, while still others remind us to trust Mother Earth and the shared energy and wisdom that has always been here — if we take the time to look, listen and receive.

Collectively, the artists ask us to consider the connection between Earth's imbalance and ours. Can we use nature as a model and mentor to find equilibrium? Nature reacts by adapting or going extinct. How will we react?

Curator: Randy Jayne Rosenberg

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NWM Art Exhibitions

Project Overview and Requirements

In honor of the annual UN World Environment Day celebrations in June 2008, the Natural World Museum is pleased to present the exhibit, *Earth in Balance*, in partnership with the United Nations Environment Programme. This contemporary exhibition of works by approximately 25 artists from 17 countries is designed to generate awareness of global climate change and issues regarding the environment while inspiring a positive change in people's attitudes and actions toward the environment.

Scheduling

The Exhibition is available for 2-4 month intervals. When dates are agreed upon, a contract will be sent to confirm the dates. A 50% deposit is required upon contract signing, and the balance due 30 days prior to the opening of the show.

Participation Fee –or venue-related costs

TBD.

Space Requirements

We are anticipating a need a minimum of 5000 square feet with rooms for video installation. There show will include a mix of painting, photography, video, sculpture and installation artwork.

Registration, Insurance, Shipping

Each artwork will have handling and installation instructions. Participating institutions are required to fill out a condition report book for all incoming and out-going artworks.

Participating institutions are responsible for liability insurance. NWM covers artwork insurance. Shipping costs will be determined on a case-by-case basis.

Exhibition Text and Publicity

Labels and wall text will be included as digital files. The host venue will arrange for the graphic design, translation and fabrication of the wall text and artist labels.

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Press package will also be included digitally with press release, high resolution photographs and information on the artists.

Security

The institution must be a single-use, locked space with a fire-alarm and an electronic alarm system or a watchperson/guard on site when the exhibition is open to the public.

Support Staff

The participating venue will provide support staff including 1) an exhibition designer/scenographer who will create a floor plan identifying the layout and placement of artwork with the input of the exhibition curator; 2) an installation crew; 3) lighting designer; 4) registrar to oversee unpacking and crating of artworks and coordinate arrangements to ship the artwork to next venue destination.

Preparation of the Host Venue for the exhibition

The participating host venue will provide freshly painted and prepared walls for hanging artwork and any necessary video electronic equipment.

Storage Facility

The participating venue will make arrangements to receive the artworks from prior venue either on site or at an identified secured, climate-controlled storage facility familiar with handling artwork.

Contact

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Curator

Natural World Museum

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Participating Artists

AES & F Group	Russia
Ken Aptekar	USA
Lise Bjerne	Norway
Lien Botha	South Africa
Antonio Briceno	Venezuela
Enrique Martinez Celaya	Cuba
Alison Clouston	New Zealand
Shane Cotton	New Zealand
Bill Culbert and Ralph Hotere	New Zealand
Geoff Dixon	New Zealand
Chris Drury	UK
Mounir Fatmi	Morocco
Peter Fend	USA
Isa Genzken	Germany
Ilya & Emilia Kabakov	Russia
Walangari Karntawarra	Australia
Ik-Joong Kang	Korea
Gabriela Morawetz	Poland
Susan Norrie	Australia
Jun Nguyen-Hatsushiba	Vietnam
Susan Plum	Mexico
Ken Rinaldo & Amy Youngs	USA
Alexis Rockman	USA
Harriet Russell	UK
Soledad Salame	Chile
Lars Siltberg	Sweden
Superflex	Denmark
Cyprien Tokoudagba	Benin
Bill Viola	USA

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Lars Siltberg, Sweden
Man with Balls on Hands and Feet, 1999-2001
Looped video trilogy

A fit man tries out the obstacles of gravity on three types of floors: ice, water and an airstream. Attached at the end of each body limb are balls, worn as if they are actual body parts.

The video portrays a symbolic test of balance in all spheres of our lives. The tension of us staying upright in life is crucial – social, economic, environmental, and physical control to stay upright is central to us. The existential slapstick of the video shows this complex challenge of keeping our earth in balance in a simplistic way.



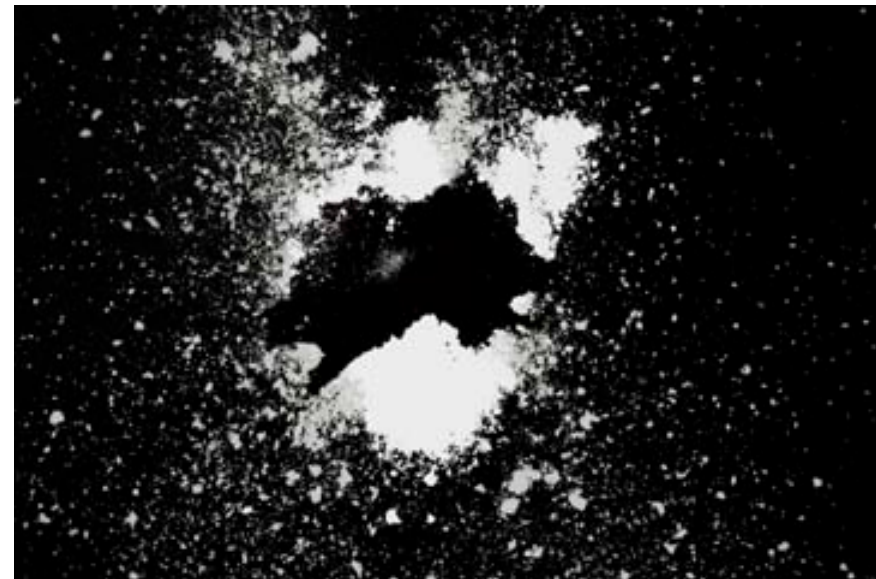
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Lise Bjerne Norway
Breath Series, 2008
6 Rayographs

Inspired by Man Ray's rayographs, the *Breath Series* are created in the darkroom without using a camera. The artist breathes, screams and yells onto a light sensitive paper. This procedure captures the trace of the artist's out-breath along with movement of her body's action: her knees, hands and mouth have left empty dark areas on the image.

The action of enlarging one's breath is a metaphor for the connection of all mankind. Our breath is the first step toward moving into balance—inside and out.



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Jun Nguyen-Hatsushiba, Vietnam
Breathing is Free: 12,756.3, 2008
Photography and video installation

"Breathing is Free: 12,756.3" is the most recent episode of the "Memorial Project" series and portrays the artist as he attempts to run the distance of 12,756.3 km (the diameter of the earth), the shortest distance to the other side of the planet.

The work is an ongoing project that has been created in 10 different cities in Asia and Europe. The artist's travels are tracked via GPS. Such data of the run are transferred onto aerial photographs of cities. The paths become the lines to make a large drawing over the infrastructure of the land. The artist addresses our environment and pollution from the most fundamental level--we must be able to breathe to exist.



Double Ten Flowers to commemorate the Independence Day, October 10th in Taichung, Taiwan



Photos from Ho Chi Minh City (top row), Luang Prabang (two middle rows), Taichung, Taiwan (bottom row)



Installation views from exhibition at National Taiwan Museum of Fine Arts (top & bottom images)

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Ocean Earth, USA

Water-Cycle Self-Reliance, 2008

Photo-documentation, rig, video

Seeking a synthesis of art and science Peter Fend founded the Ocean Earth Construction and Development Corporation in 1980. He assembled artists, architects, and scientists with the aim to research alternative energy sources.

Bladder kelp, which is found throughout the temperate and polar Southern Hemisphere, and in the Northeast Pacific, is the fastest growing plant on earth. It can grow 30 cm a day. At 71%, kelp also has the highest conversion rate of plant weight to methane gas.

In the spirit of earth art, *Ocean Earth* demonstrates through photography, video and storyboard documentation, how efficiently one can convert a natural strand of algae, also present throughout New Zealand, into methane gas. Ocean Earth foresees algae as a viable energy source for the future.



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Ken Aptekar, USA

The answer is blowing in the wind, 2008
four panels, oil on wood, sandblasted
glass, bolts

After: Eugene Verboeckhoven (1798-
1891), *A Panoramic Summer
Landscape with Cattle Grazing in a
Meadow*, 1864

The artist recycles old paintings. He
paints on wood panels, then bolts glass
sandblasted with text over the panels.
Using the history of art as his
playground, he appropriates paintings
from the past, and connects them to the
present. His work carries the implication
that these old paintings mean
something when the audience begins to
“talk back” to them.

In this painting, the artist uses a little-
known 19th c. Dutch painting of a
windmill in an idyllic landscape. The title
of the artwork is borrowed from a Bob
Dylan song that became the anthem of
earlier movements to raise awareness.
The simplest, most natural solutions to
problems--such as renewable energy--
can be beautiful.



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Superflex, Denmark
Untitled, 2008
Biogas ball, photographic documentation

The [Danish](#) collective of artists, Jakob Fenger, Rasmus Nielsen and Bjornstjerne Christiansen, under the name of Superflex, have been working together since 1993.

In 1996, Superflex began developing applications for their two-chamber biogas unit, a \$250 sustainable system that continually produces clean energy. The artists state, "*The intension has been to construct a simple biogas unit that would produce sufficient gas for the cooking and lighting needs of a single family. The main focus is to make a system that would meet the efficiency, economic resources and style demands of a modern African consumer. This means for a modest sum, an African family will be able to buy a biogas system and achieve self-sufficiency in energy.*"



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Ken Rinaldo & Amy Youngs, USA

Farm Fountain, 2008

Multi-media Installation with aquaculture, plants, fish and water

This living sculpture is designed to inspire participation in lowering greenhouse gas emissions through personal and local food production. It is a functional garden, fish farm, chandelier and fountain ecosystem.

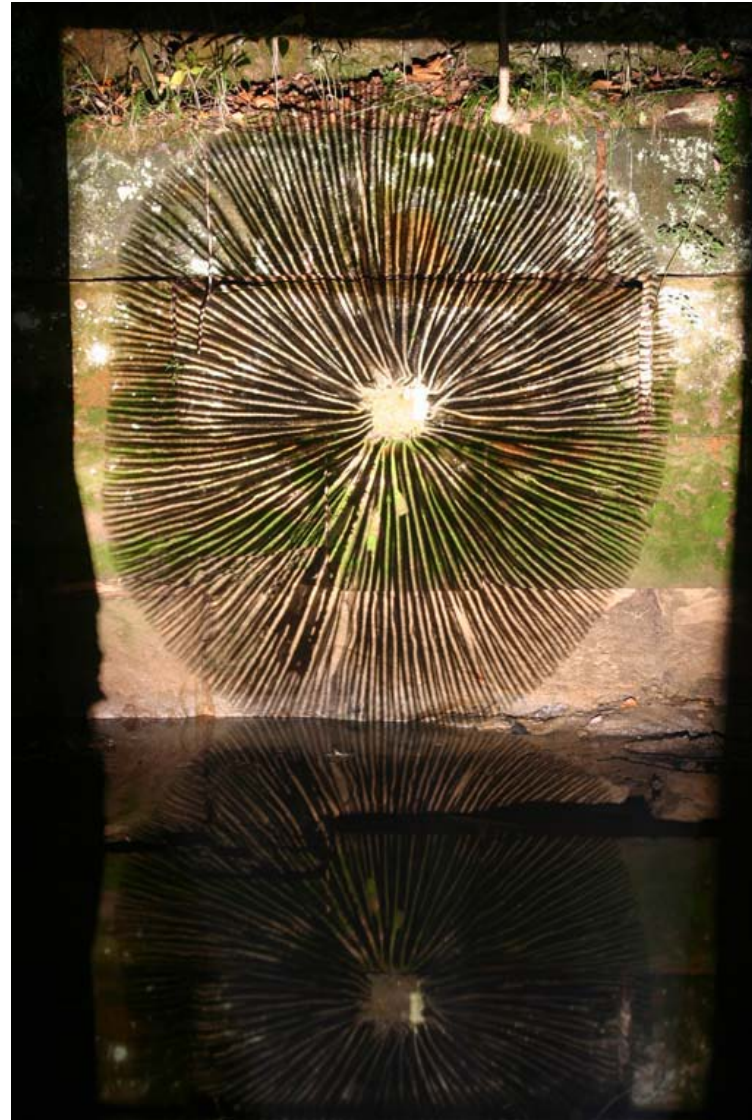
Much of produce purchased in the US travels an average of 1,500 miles from the farm to fork. The artists are presenting a home-sized, personal hydroponics system that could become a year-round alternative to purchasing vegetables that have been grown on distant, petroleum-powered farms and trucked to grocery stores. In lessening the impact, they have created an aesthetically-pleasing system that could reduce our impact on greenhouse gas emissions, while at the same time inspire others to build their own home versions.

The plants growing include a variety of lettuces, cilantro, mint, basil, tomatoes, chives, parsley, mizuna, watercress and tatsoi. The fish in this work are Tilapia, a type of fish that has been farmed for thousands of years in the Nile delta.



Chris Drury UK
Spore Waves, 2008
Video installation

We live out of balance with the Earth. The circle of renewal has been broken. The mushroom, for its healing properties is the great recycler of nature breaking down dead matter back into the soil. Coupled with its circular “mandala-like” shape, the mushroom is a perfect reflection and reminder that without renewal our soils will not support the biodiversity of life, and will lead to our own demise.



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Lien Botha, South Africa

Amendment, 2006

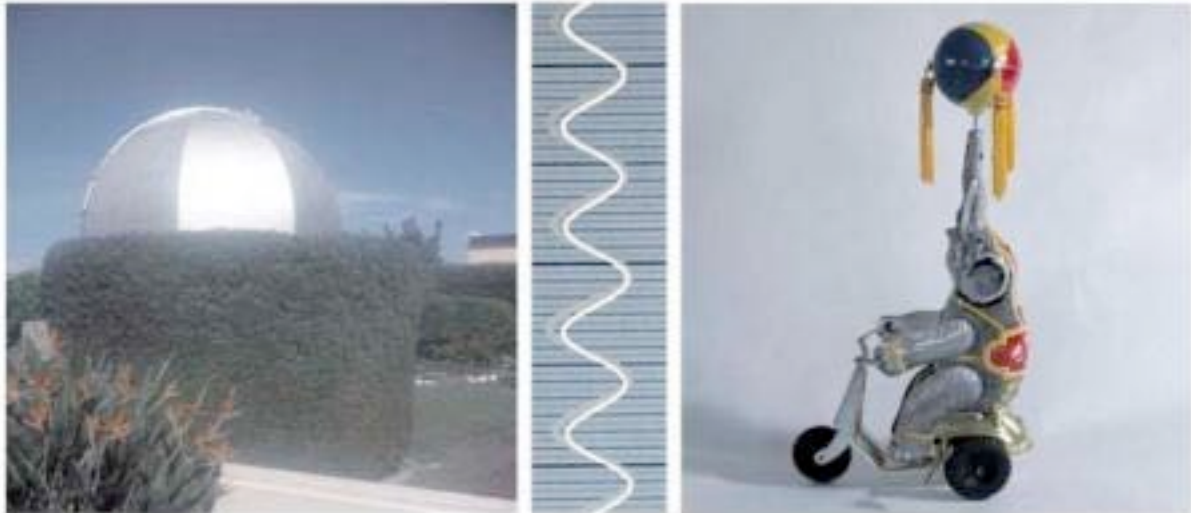
Series of 14 triptych color photographic ink-jet prints

Letters to Linnaeus 1 & 2, 2008

Two triptych color photographic ink-jet prints

Amendment is a visual poem with 14 parts. *Letters to Linnaeus 1 & 2* were created specifically for this exhibition and are an addendum to *Amendment*.

Amendment is the artist's reflection and meditation on the environment in peril. This ever-changing process includes the acts of correction, addition, deletion and amendment to what we know and see. The journey seems to express the writer, T.S. Elliot's sentiment that "We shall not cease from exploration, and the end of all our exploring will be to arrive where we started and know the place for the first time."



Amendment 6: the case of swimming with the moon



Amendment 8: the case of a drowning river

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Isa Genzken Germany

XXL, 2007

Plastic foil, punched eyelets, screen-printing and collage

XXL is part of the larger art installation titled *Oil*, which was first viewed at the Venice Biennial in 2007. *XXL* is an expression of the times in which we live and reduces the complexity of our global consumption to a meaningful image used in slogans. This image has come to symbolize the crisis of the future, as well as an expression of freedom.

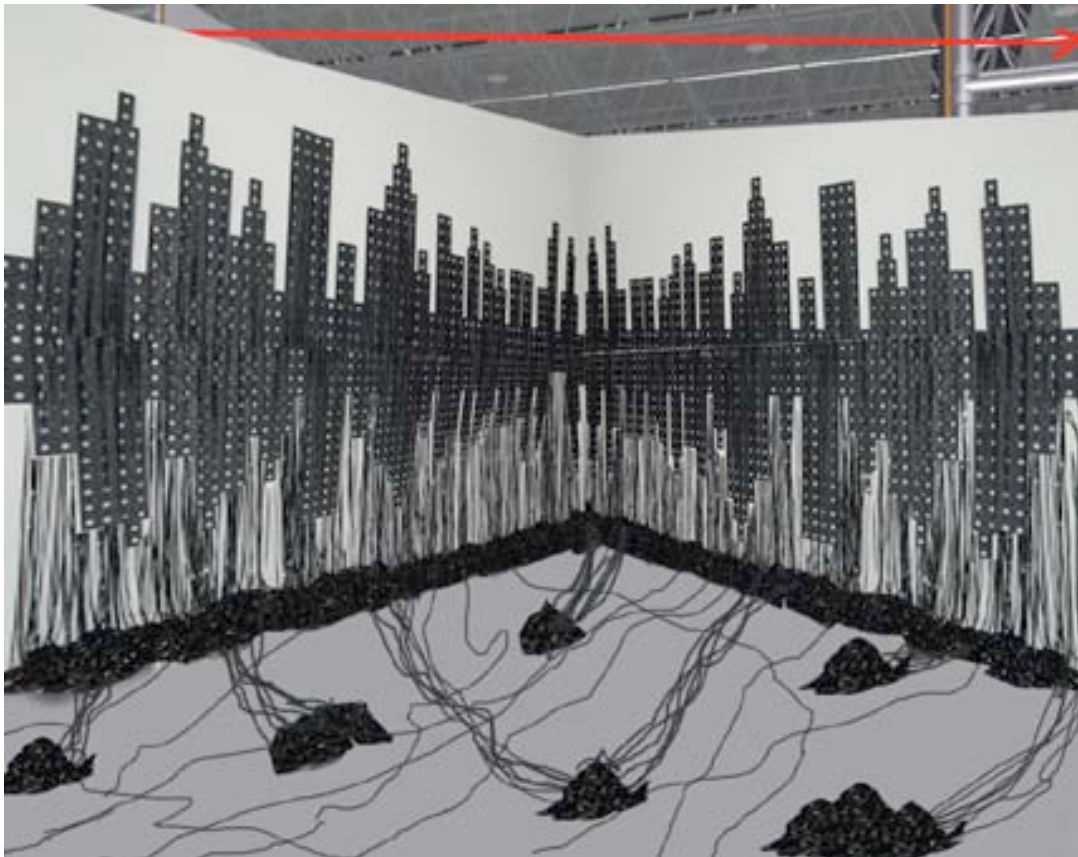


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Mounir Fatmi, Morocco
Skyline, 2007
Assemblage

Using VHS cassettes, Fatmi builds an exterior façade of a cityscape while symbolically portraying an interior sense of vulnerability and exposure through the no longer housed, and unraveled videotape. He equates the work to an article of clothing that no longer offers protection. The city skyline, often a symbol of economic triumph is not impervious to the collective behaviors of human beings and forces of nature.



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Alison Clouston, New Zealand
Diamond Python, 2007
Copperhead, 2007
Ink, watercolor, calfskin

Clouston symbolically re-colonizes disappearing indigenous creatures back into the pastoral landscapes by drawing into cow's hide. As if to find shelter there, the drawing, bleeding into the leather like a tattoo, becomes permanent and not destined for extinction. The drawing of bones, creating a new architecture, is an elegy for what we have lost and what we are about to lose. It is a warning of resource depletion, the archeology of culture collapse. The snakes shed and renew their skins, so that they can begin afresh. Their coiled repose suggests the cyclical nature of the world.



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Geoff Dixon, New Zealand
Large Takahe Diptych with Sparrow/Found, 2008
oil and enamel on canvas

While the paintings appear as large bird portraits they are intended as a metaphor for our own survival. Protected for thousands of years by geographical isolation, endemic New Zealand birdlife are easy indicators of climatic change and the health of the planet. The irony is that although wide spread, the common sparrow is seeing a decline in population in some countries.



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Enrique Martinez Celaya Cuba
TBD , 2008
Oil and wax on canvas

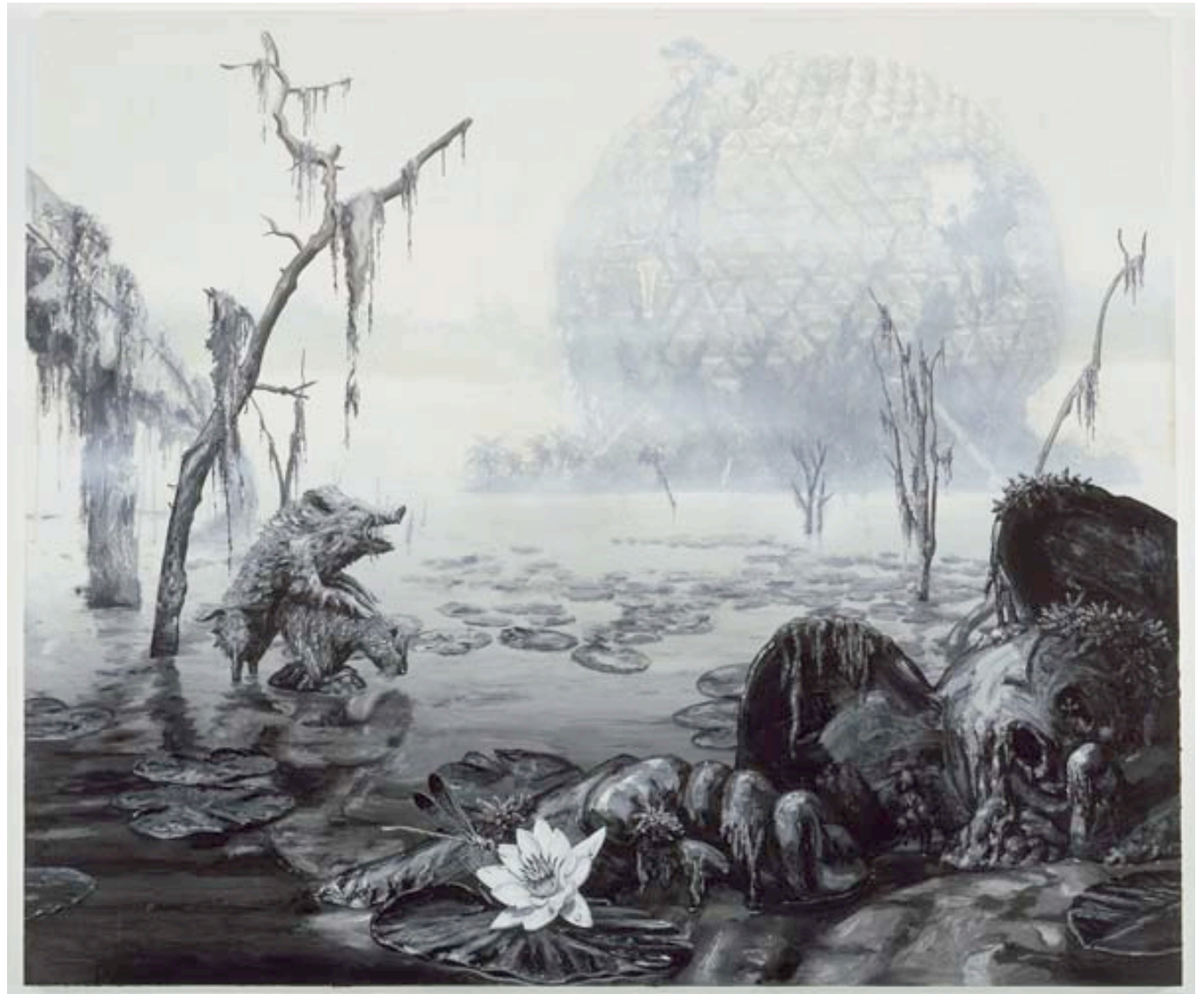


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Alexis Rockman, USA
Disneyworld 2005.
Oil on wood

The artist considers global warming to be one of the most important issues of our time. His paintings force us to confront a vision of the future implicit in the choices we make as a contemporary society



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Ilya & Emilia Kabakov, Russia

Palace of Projects, 2003

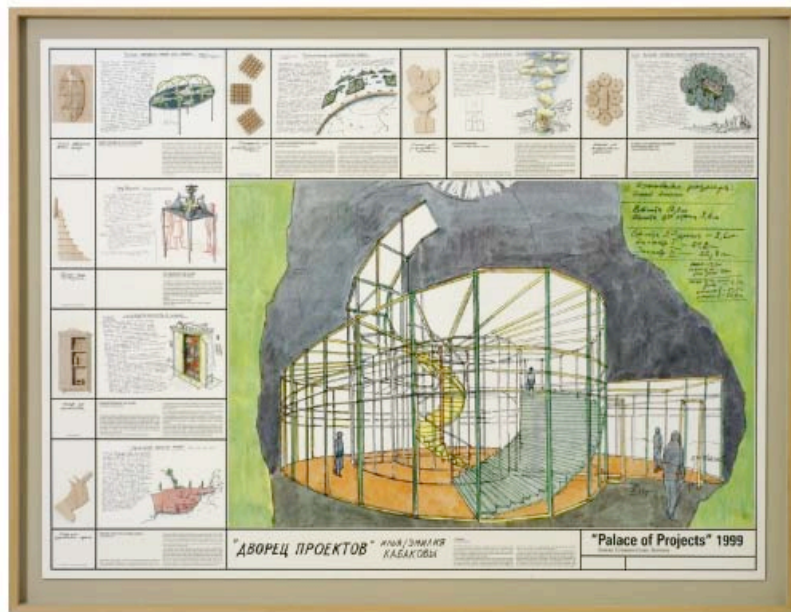
Digital Print

The Palace of Projects is the Kabakovs' utopian archive of ideas and stories told by fictional Soviet citizens. These "65 projects" or visionary plans include models, paintings and writings that propose remedies and suggestions for the challenges of daily life, improving our environment and personal growth. The projects encapsulate ordinary people's dreams, neurosis, ideals, problems, and obsessions and provide visitors with intimate glimpses into private moments that have universal resonance.

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Ik-Joong Kang, Korea
Mountain Wind, 2008
Mixed media on wood

Mosaic-like and often colossal, Kang's installations explore community, culture, and human interrelation through the complementary lenses of intimate personal experience and global unity.

The iconic and massive moon jar, named so for its ample, full-moon shape, is unique to Joseon Dynasty (1392-1910) Korea. Made of austere white porcelain, devoid of ornament, and celebrated for its unique natural contours, the moon jar reflects Korea's Neo-Confucian virtues of purity, clarity, and humility, and self-expression. "Its rounded figure exudes the feeling of cosmic compassion necessary for a balanced earth. "



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AES & F GROUP Russia

Last Riot Tondo #3, 2005

Last Riot Tondo #5, 2007

Digital Print on Canvas

Courtesy artists, MAC (Moscow) and Triumph Gallery (Moscow).

Since 1995, the Russian artists, Tatiana Arzamasova, Lev Evzovich, Evgeny Svyatsky and Vladimir Fridkes have been working together to form the artist collective AES+F GROUP. Their conceptual artwork incorporates photography and computer-based art and video.

Inspired by actual events publicized in the media, AES+F's artworks portray people in startling relationships with their environment. They create virtual worlds that transform, expand and mutate. Here, the inhabitants are genderless and becoming more like angels with only one identity--that of participants in the last riot. In this world all boundaries are lost.



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Harriet Russell, UK Endangered Species, 2008
 Printed illustrations

Endangered Species was a special commission created for the Canadian Centre for Architecture in conjunction with their exhibition catalog, '1973: Sorry Out of Gas.' In this children's book, with her distinctive drawings and hand-lettered text, Ms. Russell uses humor to describe the role of oil in daily life, and to suggest alternatives to this rapidly diminishing resource.



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Soledad Salame, Chile
20 NOTES, 2008
Mylar drawings embedded in resin

These individual artworks utilize drawings from a personal archive that the artist developed between 1997 and 2002, of insects, and their disappearing environments. In creating these “notes,” the artist revisits and reinvents the drawings, to engage us in a dialogue about the beauty and importance of our earth. Each note relays a different thought relating to man’s impact on the natural world. The use of resin for the notes stems from a desire to encapsulate time and preserve a record of today’s terrestrial life.



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Susan Norrie and David Mackenzie in collaboration with Justin Hale, Australia

Havoc, 2006-2007

Video Installation

Camera, editing and location sound: David Mackenzie

Journalist and translator: Justin Hale

Driver and guide: Wowok (hadi ernowo)

Sound mixing : Robert Hindley

Norrie's work portrays the world in a state of both beauty and terror. We shudder in response to the natural and unnatural events that verge on the catastrophic. The viewer is immersed in images of ominous tempests, delicate spring blossoms, bubbling mud pools, swirling clouds of dust, and scientific experiments and ultimately cannot make sense of these phenomena. The range and scale of images has a vertiginous and unsettling effect that pulls at the viewer's unconscious. The voices of a man and woman chant their prayers from the Koran for this world.

This project is dedicated to the people of Porong and East Java, especially the Korban Lumpur (the victims of the mud) – those who have lost their lives, and to the many survivors who have lost their homes and land.



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Walangari Karntawarra, Australia

Water Dreaming, 1995

Snake Dreaming, 2000

Acrylic on canvas

Australian Aborigines believe that Spiritual Ancestors come together to discuss problems, solutions and how people should live in the Dreamtime. It is from these foundations that the Aboriginal people have been able to cope, and maintain the traditional values of sharing, caring and respect for the environment. The Water Dreaming and Snake Dreaming are two of the most powerful Dreaming Stories.



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Antonio Briceno Venezuela

Gods of the Americas; A Natural Panteon

Muu Demar, the Sea-Grandmother, 2005

Mma, Mother Earth , 2005

Tzipushawe, the Wisest One, 2001

Paba, Father God , 2005

Botoque, Thief of the Fire, 2006

Bepkororotí, Owner of Storms , 2006

Buoka, 2003

Photography

For many indigenous cultures, the shamans are the reservoir and keeper of wisdom. They are the link between humans and the gods, devils, wild spirits and forces of the Nature. The Shamans can guide their people to a more balanced existence.

The aboriginal communities photographed by the artist are from South and Central America. They hold a deep respect for Mother Earth. Each hill, lake, river, desert, valley and stone plays a role in the creation of their Cosmos. Since these cultures consider themselves a part of Nature, there is little abuse or excess in the way that they live—in balance.



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Susan Plum, Mexico

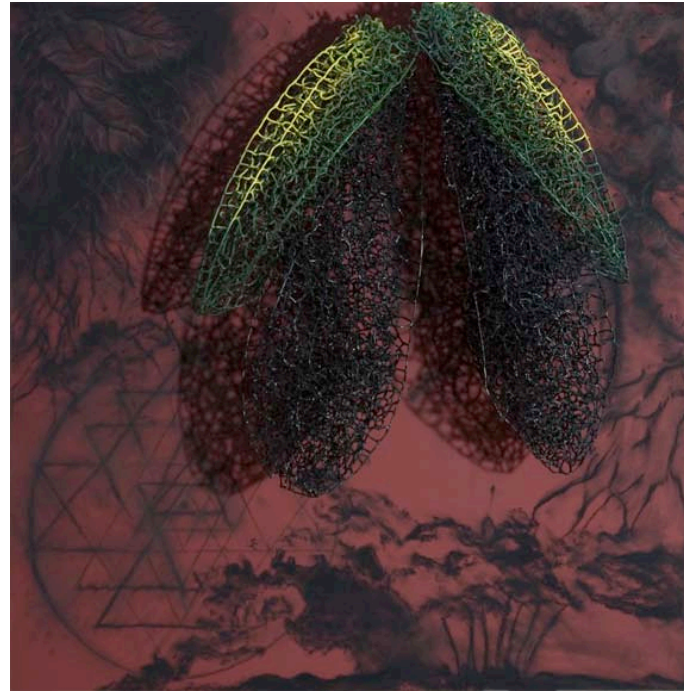
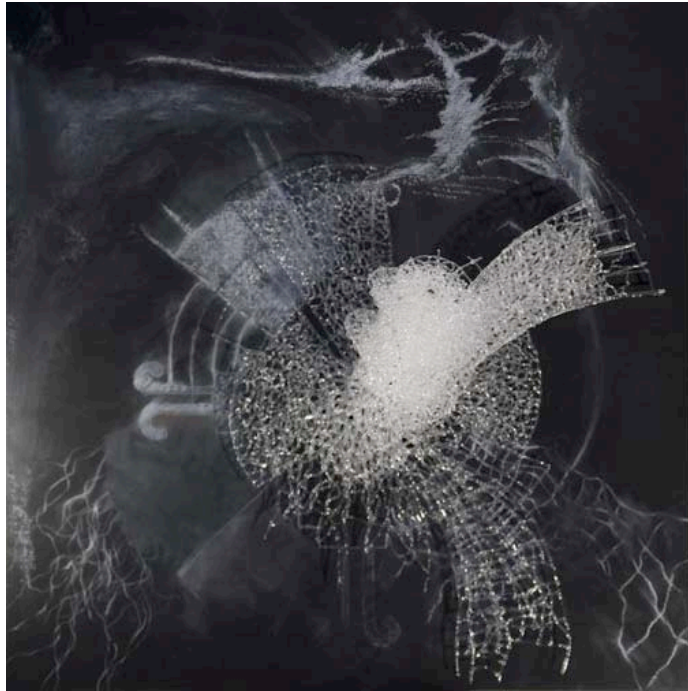
Corazon del Cielo (heart of the heavens), 2007

Corazon de la Tierra (heart of the earth), 2007

Glass lamp work on painted board relief.

In the Mesoamerican cosmology, the universe is made up of filaments or cords. The job of the day-keepers (observers of the ancient 260 day Mesoamerican calendar/ ritual specialists) or shamans, is to unravel these sometimes tangled cords both through other dimensions in space and time, as well as in peoples personal lives. The intent is to bring harmony both to the cosmos, humanity and the world.

This ancient philosophy resonates with the contemporary superstring theory where the fabric of space tears and repairs itself. Through these works, the artist is “weaving glass” threads to promote healing. The drawing and color on the boards create a blueprint for the cooling and balancing of an overheated earth.



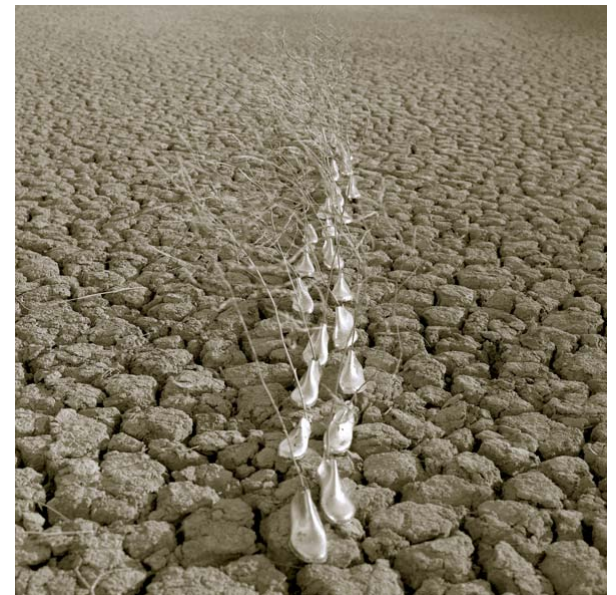
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Gabriela Morawetz, Poland
Waterfinder Abecedaire, 2008
Etched granite slabs and iron rod

Fata Morgana 1,3 & Terre 1, 2005
Photographic transfer on canvas

The shoes symbolically represent human beings during their lonely journey, which is actually life itself. In these images, nothing else is left on the earth—only infinite walking in some choreography that eventually becomes a new pattern of movement, language and direction.



Bill Viola, USA

Chott el Djerid, (A Portrait in Light and Heat), 1979

Video projection (color, sound) 28 minutes

Chott el Djerid is the name of a vast, dry salt lake in the Tunisian Sahara Desert, where mirages are most likely to form in the midday sun. Here the intense desert heat manipulates, bends, and distorts the light rays to such an extent that you actually see things that are not there. Trees and sand dunes float off the ground, the edges of mountains and buildings ripple and vibrate, color and form blend into one shimmering dance. The desert mirages are set against images of the bleak winter prairies of Illinois and Saskatchewan, Canada, some of them recorded in a snowstorm. The opposite climactic conditions induce a similar aura of uncertainty, disorientation, and an unfamiliarity that causes us to reevaluate our perceptions of reality and realize that we are looking at something out of the ordinary.



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Cyprien Tokoudagba, Benin

Lissa, God of Nature, 2008

Tohossou Alokpe; God of Water, God of the River, 2008

Acrylic on canvas

The two gods, revered by West African culture, are creators, caretakers and protectors of the natural world. Lissa is the god who created the skies and the earth. She embodies the symbols of the sun and the moon. Tôhossou, the god of water incarnates in human bodies. Represented as a feminine figure, she is bedecked in jewels reserved for royalty.



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