

# บทความปริทรรศน์: ความคิดสร้างสรรค์ที่เกี่ยวข้องกับศิลปะเพื่อสิ่งแวดล้อมจากช่วง ปีทศวรรษที่ 60 เป็นต้นมา

## Article Review: Creative Thoughts Associated with Environmental Art From the 1960s<sup>1</sup> Onwards

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### บทคัดย่อ

ศิลปะทุกแขนงสามารถสร้างแรงบันดาลใจในแนวความคิดสร้างสรรค์ให้กับงานภูมิสถาปัตยกรรมหรือสาขาการออกแบบสิ่งแวดล้อมสร้างสรรค์อื่นๆ ได้ในช่วงปีทศวรรษที่ 60 ศิลปะเพื่อสิ่งแวดล้อมเริ่มต้นจากการมุ่งต่อต้านศูนย์แสดงศิลปะและพิพิธภัณฑ์ศิลปะโดยสร้างสรรค์ศิลปะด้วยองค์ประกอบธรรมชาติบนพื้นที่ภายนอกอาคาร ศิลปะเพื่อสิ่งแวดล้อมอยู่ในรูปแบบที่หลากหลายเช่นประติมากรรมขนาดใหญ่ หรือศิลปะที่ติดตั้งเพื่อพื้นที่ที่เฉพาะ เป็นต้น นักปราชญ์ทางศิลปะหลายคนเช่น Rosalind Krauss (1979) และ Spyros Papapetros & Julian Rose (2014) ชี้ว่า ไม่มีหลักการหรือข้อตกลงร่วม หรือแนวคิดทางทฤษฎีที่ชัดเจนในการกำหนดแนวทางการศิลปะที่สร้างสรรค์ร่วมกับภูมิทัศน์นี้ แต่อย่างไรก็ตาม การศึกษานี้ได้พยายามที่จะรวบรวมความคิดสร้างสรรค์หลักที่เกี่ยวข้องกับศิลปะเพื่อสิ่งแวดล้อมภายใต้รูปแบบศิลปะกว้างนี้ซึ่งสามารถแบ่งออกเป็นกลุ่มความคิด 6 ประการคือ 1) แนวคิดสมัยใหม่นิยม 2) แนวคิดหลังสมัยใหม่นิยม 3) อัจฉริยลักษณ์หรือจิตวิญญาณของพื้นที่ 4) แนวคิดเกี่ยวกับสุนทรียศาสตร์ทั้ง 3 จากศตวรรษที่ 18 5) สิ่งแวดล้อมนิยม 6) กาลเวลา หลังจากนั้นการศึกษาค้นหาความเป็นไปได้ของการบรรจบกันการแสดงผลออกทางศิลปะระหว่างภูมิสถาปัตยกรรมและศิลปะเพื่อสิ่งแวดล้อม การศึกษาสรุปลงด้วยแนวทางการสร้างสรรค์ศิลปะเพื่อสิ่งแวดล้อมในปัจจุบัน

### คำสำคัญ

ศิลปะเพื่อสิ่งแวดล้อม

สมัยใหม่นิยม

หลังสมัยใหม่นิยม

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กาลเวลา

## **Abstract**

All arts can serve as an inspiration of innovation ideas for landscape architectural design as well as other built environmental design disciplines. In 1960s, environmental art originated with aiming to rebel against the art gallery or museum by creating innovative art using natural elements setting on an outdoor location. The art is taken in various forms such as large sculptural artworks and, also, the installation art for a specific site, etc. Several artist scholars such as Rosalind Krauss (1979) and Spyros Papapetros & Julian Rose (2014) marked that there are no specific principles or general agreement or specific theory in terms of the approaches to exploring landscapes entangled with the art. However, within broad terrain of practice of the environmental art, this research attempted to provide core creative thoughts applied to the art, which can be divided into 6 themes including 1) Modernism 2) Postmodernism, 3) Genius loci or spirit of place, 4) concepts of eighteenth-century aesthetics, 5) environmentalism and 6) passage of time. Accordingly, the study explores possibilities in convergences in design expression between landscape architecture and environmental art. Summarization of the study includes with current approach of the environmental art.

## **Keywords**

Environmental Art

Modernism

Postmodernism

Genius Loci

Aesthetics

Passage of Time



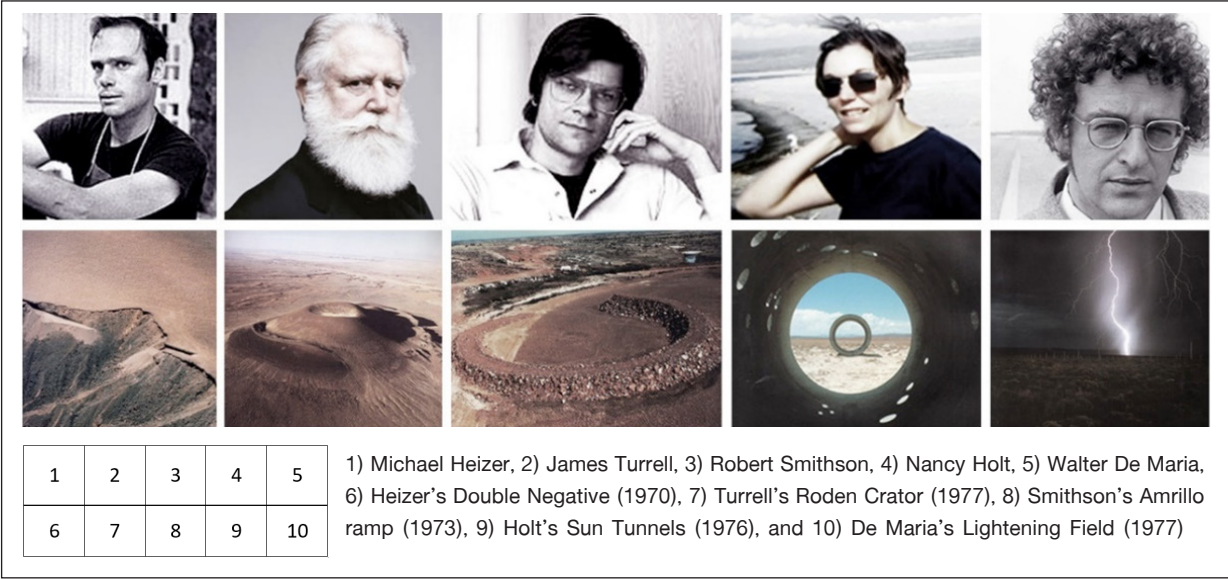


Figure 3. Some eminent American environmental artists and their artworks.



Figure 4. Some prominent European environmental artists and their artworks.

in the 1960s, the technology in developing photographs was already rapidly advanced, reproducing any scenery with image accuracy. Therefore, photography became increasingly accessible to the general public. Environmental artworks were captured through photography for two main reasons. The first was the grand scale of the art, as artists were developing a sense of territorial expansion. Art turned into spacious landscapes, allowing massive terrestrial rearrangements, which could best be appreciated from the air (Boettger, 2002). The second was the art's aspect of transience, disappearing or transforming over time,

or designed as temporary interventions for particular issues or locations. Photography became the primary way to capture environmental artworks permanently. Jeffrey Kastner (1998) the environmental art could also be merchandised through the reproduction of photography. In the reproduction process, size of the artwork's photography can be enlarged, minified, reorganised or recombined with other artworks and images. The artwork itself, which was once original and authentic, becomes much less important.

## 2. Creative Thoughts Associated with Environmental

## Art

Looking into historical terrain of environmental art, it can be said that there are no particular rules or general agreement within environmental art in terms of the approach to exploring landscapes. There is also no specific theory applying environmental art, but general theory of visual art, philosophy of art<sup>3</sup> and aesthetic, which entangled with art discipline and its sub-disciplines for many centuries. Within the realm of theory and philosophy applying in art discipline, the environmental art artists uniquely developed a series of different creative approaches and diverse ideas, all of which attempted to explore new strategies for art creation. The social and cultural ambiances of each art project are also influential factors. However, drawing on various literature, environmental art is associated with six school of thoughts and ideas, comprising 1) Modernism, 2) Postmodernism, 3) Genius loci or spirit of place, 4) concepts of eighteenth-century aesthetics, 5) environmentalism and 6) passage of time will be paid special attentions.

### 2.1 Modernism

Although many different styles are encompassed by Modernism, there are certain underlying principles that define modernist art: A rejection of history and conservative values (such as realistic depiction of subjects); innovation and experimentation with form (the shapes, colors and lines that make up the work) with a tendency to abstraction; and an emphasis on materials, techniques and processes. Modernism may not be influential as before, yet it is considered as a part of art history and still relevant in the art world (Crouch, 1999). Environmental art is associated with three major genres of Modern Art, namely Minimalism, Conceptual Art and Process Art, all of which emerged at around the end of the 1960s. (Weilacher, 1996). Several environmental artists such as Robert Morris, Robert Smithson, Walter De Maria, Richard Long, are impacted by more than one movement in Modern Art (Kastner, 1998). How each

Modern Art movement is related to environmental art is subsequently reviewed.

#### 2.1.1 Minimalism

Minimalism challenged the idealism of the art object by removal of any trace of emotion to render its audience conscious with its art and reflect meaning to the space of art (Meyer, 2010). Minimalism is also concerned with the role of discourses in the production as well as the experience of art (Osborne, 2002). Like its other characteristics, its objective approach is also pure: only a single dominant message is usually shared within Minimalist artworks. Aspects and characteristics of Minimalism were passed on to early development of the art particular to ones in monumental sizes. Bold simplified artworks, eliminating secondary elements or detail, created a sense of monumentality, which described its form as open and extended to be more or less environmental. The artworks thus extended the environmental focus resulting from the broad transition in spatial orientation across twentieth-century sculpture from the vertical to the horizontal. With the influence of Minimalism, the art expresses its indifference to the site, rendering itself autonomous and self-referential (Kwon, 2004). Therefore, the art becomes transportable, placeless, and nomadic (ibid). Some environmental art influenced by Minimal art are illustrated in Figure 5.

#### 2.1.2 Conceptual art

Conceptual Art, or sometimes called Conceptualism, is an art which emphasises the concept or ideas with less concerned with aesthetics and materials (Osborne, 2002). The experiences of its audiences through the ideal systems of spatio-temporal relations are considered radically challenged for Conceptual Art (ibid). Often, the art also presents its audiences with a series of questions about itself in the large scale of the artworks. Walter De Maria is an eminent environmental artist, whose works tie in with Conceptual Art (Kastner, 1998). His Vertical Earth Kilometer (1977) is located in the Friedrichsplatz Park in Kassel, Germany. The art consists of one-kilometer-long solid brass round rod, five centimeters





Source: Stephanie Clayton (2012)

**Figures 5.** Walter De Maria's Vertical Earth Kilometer (1977)

in diameter, surrounded by a two meters by two meters square red sandstone plate (Dia Art, 2016). The rod and the sandstone plate are sunk into the ground. Only the end of the rod, centrally placed, flush with the surface, and about the size of a coin, can be seen. Therefore, the large size of the artwork exists only in the viewer's mind (ibid). In front of the museum, Fridericianum, are four footpaths whose intersection marks the sculpture's location. According to Godfrey (1998), although its moment has passed, its critical challenge remains. The impact of Conceptual Art continues to be felt across the whole field of current art practice (ibid). Figure 6 present examples of Conceptual Art.

### 2.1.3 Process art

Process Art places its emphasis on the initiation of actions - how actions can be defined and entails the motivation and intentionality of the art creation process (Wheeler, 1991). Robert Morris, an eminent environmental artist, also famously wrote an essay about anti-form as a theme in Process Art (The Art Story, 2015). Therefore, forms of Process Art are the results of specific materials of the art creation process justified by the artists (Tate, 2015). In other words, pure human expression is perceived as an art. For Process Art, nature itself can be perceived as art; however, the symbolisation and representation of nature is omitted (Wheeler, 1991). The materials of Process Art are usually left exposed to natural

phenomena, such as time, weather, temperature and gravity. Like the two previous art, Process Art explicitly presents in the way that viewers interact with the artworks and on a large scale; therefore, its audiences are able to walk around, inside and through the artworks to obtain the art's visual experiences of physical spaces. The Process Art and environmental art movements are directly related. Process Art is elaborated in the works of environmental artists such as Richard Serra and Robert Smithson. Examples of Process Art are illustrated in Figure 7.

Other Modern Arts that are also associated with environmental art include traditional sculpture, De Stijl, Cubism, Assemblage,<sup>4</sup> as well as the work of sculptors such as Constantin Brancusi (1876–1957). However, these items are not within the mainstream of the practice (Weilacher, 1996)

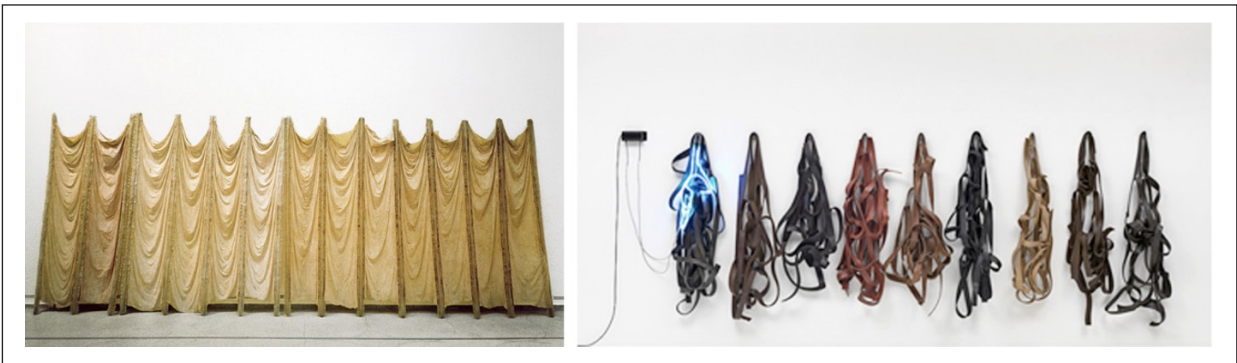
## 2.2 Postmodernism

Postmodernism emerged around the 1960s, is typically referred to a broad collection of ideas and cultural trends in literature, art, philosophy, history, economics, architecture, fiction and literary criticism. Rather than a total rejection of Modernism, Postmodernism is often perceived as a fracture of Modernist ideas, which accommodate various viewpoints and histories (Adamson et al., 2011). Over the past decades, critics and theorists have offered differing views on Postmodernism. In general,



Source: James(2015)

**Figures 6.** Michael Heizer's *Isolated Mass / Circumflex* (1968)



Source: Guggenheim (2015)

**Figures 7.** Eva Hesse's *Expanded Expansion* (1969) and Richard Serra's *Belts* (1966-67)

Postmodernism involves sensitivity to context and history (Barrett, 2007). It seeks a more pluralistic approach that embraces contexts of a given site with multiple interpretations and uses (ibid). The meaning of Postmodernism is gained through ongoing experiment, re-examination and re-interpretation of history, site location and surroundings (Hargreaves, 1983). However, in the realm of Postmodernism, there is no such thing as the way to do anything; each individual artist constructs their own truth in ways that are significant to them (Barrett, 2007). Thus, Postmodernism cannot be confined to a fixed set of theories.

Postmodern Art is characterised by layers of meanings, content, subject matter and symbolism in artworks (Raaij, 1993). Postmodern Art shows an unrestrained use of colour, forms, shapes and styles with a high imagination and a carelessness towards conventional artistic conformity (Adamson et al., 2011).

Postmodern Art is interested in the process of art creation, which overlaps with the two Modernist movements, Conceptual Art and Process Art. The art is also concerned about the exploration of culture and issues of site location and surroundings; meanings are socially constructed and as such can be read as text (Kastner, 1998). This contextualist framework of Postmodernism matches with the agenda of environmental art, which involves intense re-exploration of the existing surroundings and sets out consciously to address issues in each particular site location. Thus, even though impacted by several Modern artworks, environmental art itself is often categorised as Postmodernist Art. Using models of spatial and environmental engagement, environmental artists critically analyse public issues and redefine cultural production. Postmodern spaces in environmental art thus are typically complex and fragmented.

### **2.3 *Genius loci or spirit of place***

The genius loci or spirit of place, one of the core concepts of environmental art originated in Egypt during the Pre-Dynastic period (Gardenvisit, 2014).

According to ancient Roman belief every independent being has its genius, its guardian spirit. This spirit gives life to people and places, accompanies them from birth to death, and determines their character or essence. (p.18)

The concept aims toward having a good relationship with their natural environment (Norberg-Schulz, 1980), which is manifested as spatial configuration, site location and characterising expression (Shirazi, 2008). To preserve the genius loci is to actually respect these factors.

The artists are interested in the exploration of what is happening and what has happened in the site for their art creation process. In that process, artists consider not only physical compositions, geography, locality, topography, community and history, but also the art's sensuous qualities, which are investigated through local history and interaction with local people. Artists respond to both the physical and sensuous qualities of the site in their individual ways. The site location and its investigation process profoundly influence the forms, materials and concept of environmental artworks (Maltisky, 1992).

In environmental artworks, site location seems to be treated in two different approaches. The first is an aspect of Postmodernism. The art is resistant to the characteristics of the art but gives itself up to its context at the site, being formally determined or directed by it. The art may not be directly about the site, but it brings viewers closer to it through illustrations of landscapes and having direct experience of the artworks (Boettger, 2002). The artworks focus on establishing a relationship between the work and its site by framing their artworks against the characteristics of the site contexts (Kwon, 2004). Meanings of the site context are relocated within the art object. When placed in urban space, the art is regarded as 'art as public spaces' (p.95), seeking

integration between art, architecture, and the landscape (Kwon, 1997). An example of environmental art in Postmodernism is Robert Smithson's Spiral Jetty (1970), in which the artwork is created against the character of the site context, the Great Salt Lake, Utah (Balmori, 2010) (Figure 8). Other works are those such as Christo and Jeanne-Claude's Running Fence (1976) (Figure 9) and the rolling hills of Sonoma, California, or Nils Udo's 80 Ton Birds Nest (2005) and woodland of Clemson University's Botanical Garden, South Carolina (as illustrated in Figure 10). The second approach in environmental art is in the realm of Modernism, in which the site is perceived as an actual location and a tangible reality, in which its identity derived from a combination of physical elements of the site (Kwon, 2004). In this approach, the conception of genius loci or spirit of the site of environmental art is disregarded. The art is not truly site-specific; the understanding of the natural environments is ignored (Weilacher, 1996). The space, form and expression of the art in Modernism is then uncontaminated and is pure idealism. Examples of environmental artworks in the regard of Modernism include those such as Walter de Maria's Mile Long Drawing (1968) in the context of the Mojave Desert, Carl Andre's Secant (1977) in the context of a meadow background, Robert Morris's Steam (1974) in the forest background of Washington University, and Christo's Running Fence (1970) in the rolling hills of California.

### **2.4 *Concepts of eighteenth-century aesthetics***

In the seventeenth century, beauty and sensibility had been discussed among several eminent scholars across Europe (Batey, 1994). The three aesthetic categories, the beauty, the sublime, and the picturesque were examined in terms of their sensation, imagination and judgement in the experience of art (Kelly, 1998). The sublime represents feelings of solitude, vastness, terror, or the power of the instinct of self-preservation (Strelow & David, 2004). The beautiful, on the other hand, is stood for the quality





Source: Kim Smith (2013)

**Figure 8.** Robert Smithson's Spiral Jetty (1970) and Great Salt Lake, Utah.



Source: Christo and Jeanne-Claude (2015)

**Figure 9.** Christo and Jeanne-Claude's Running Fence (1976) and rolling hills of Sonoma, California.



Source: Bizarre Beyond Believe Magazine (2015)

**Figure 10.** Nils Udo's 80 Ton Birds Nest (2005) and woodland of Clemson University's Botanical Garden, South Carolina.

of smoothness, gentleness, and delicacy (Strelow & David, 2004). The third aesthetic category, the picturesque – which is neither serene, like the beautiful, nor awe-inspiring, like the sublime – was later introduced to describe the missing characters of roughness and sudden variation joined to irregularity appearing in 17th century utopian landscape paintings, especially those of landscape painters Jan van Goyen (1596–1656), Claude Lorrain (1600–1682), Salvator Rosa (1615–1673), Gaspard Dughet (1615–1675) and Jacob van Ruisdael (1629–1682) (Thompson, 2014).

As Pattamon et al. (2019) noted the three aesthetic categories reconnected with art again in works of environmental artists such as Robert Smithson, James Pierce and Walter De Maria. Remarkd in his article “Frederick Law Olmsted and the Dialectical Landscape” (1979), Smithson placed the art as a continuation of the 18th century English landscape, which could act to resolve social conflict (Martin, 2011). Smithson was also linked with Frederick Olmsted, whose landscape design was greatly inspired by the English landscape. He took Olmsted’s phenomenological method further in his series of Site and Non-Site artworks. The art slipped into an undifferentiated state, which allows the materials of the site to structure the sensing experience of sight (Commandeur & Riemsdijk-Zandee, 2012). Walking on the eroded path and physical disorder between the Spiral Jetty (Figure 8), Smithson’s masterpiece and the condensed saline water of the Great Salt Lake creates the experience of a collapse between subject and object consciousness (Martin 2011). The aspect of the picturesque which impels its audience to view the site from certain points of view is also included in the Spiral Jetty (ibid).

Form of the picturesque aesthetic could be found in James Pierce’s Pratt Farm (1982), a historical garden composing of around twenty unique pieces of environmental artworks on the seventeen acres of meadow and woodland in Central Maine (Center for Land Use Interpretation, 2015). In his farm art, Pierce created Earthwoman, inspired by the prehistoric Venus

of Willendorf,<sup>5</sup> in the central area of the garden (Beardsley, 1998). The Earthwoman, lying face down with thirty feet long and five feet high, is in linear line with the sunrise on the summer solstice. The sun rise can be seen through her body in a symbolic fertilisation (ibid). Pierce’s Pratt Farm and Earthwoman are as presented in Figure 11.

The sublime could be experienced in Walter De Maria’s the Lightning Field (1977) (Figure 12), located in New Mexico (Beardsley, 1998). The field was originally built as a lightning conductor during storms, and audiences could capture and experience the feeling of the sublime, a heightened romantic perception of nature, when the natural lightning phenomenon appeared at the field of the Lightning Field (Kastner, 1998). As the Lightning Field is intended to be viewed by no more than six people at one time, only few are fortunate to witness and experience the natural lightning phenomenon (Beardsley, 1998).

## 2.5 Environmentalism

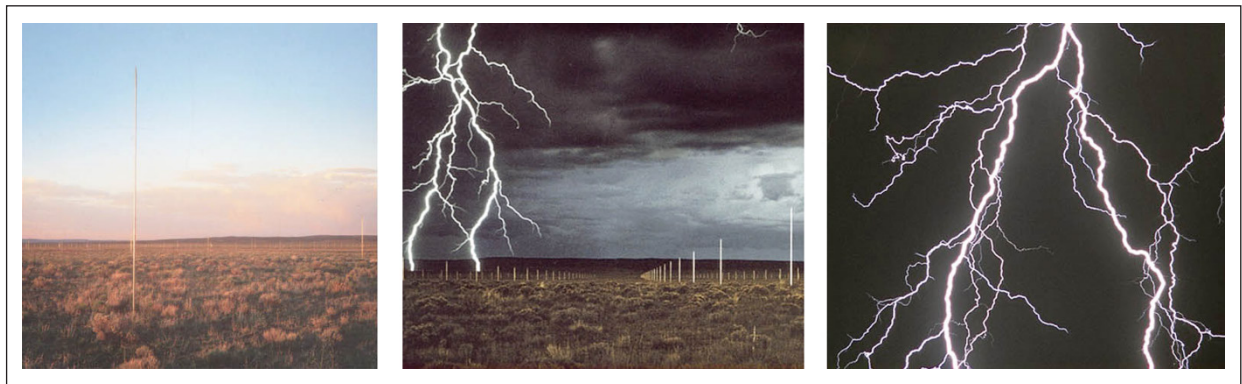
Environmentalism is an area of concern within the discipline of environmental philosophy, which encompasses a set of vital issues regarding the relationship between humans and nature (Belshaw, 2001). Since the nineteenth century, concerns over protecting the environment from harm caused by human actions have been raised. With his 1864 publication of *Man and Nature* (or *Physical Geography as Modified by Human Action*), George Perkins Marsh is acknowledged to be the first American environmentalist, in the sense that he raised concerns about the destructive impact of human activity on the environment, and argued for development to be assessed for its potential disruption of nature (Barry, 1999). In the 1960s, concerns in environment became more widespread (Cronon, 1996). A number of seminal books on environmental issues published during this period propelled environmental concerns considerably. Rachel Carson’s *Silent Spring* (1962) alerted the world to the effect of pesticides on animal life and human





Source: Selanon, Srilertchaipanij & Saleh-Bala (2019)

**Figure 11.** James Pierce's Pratt Farm (1970-1982) and Earthwoman (1976-1978)



Source: Selanon, Srilertchaipanij & Saleh-Bala (2019)

**Figure 12.** Walter De Maria's Lightning Field (1977)

well-being, contributing to the subsequent growth of environmental awareness in North America and Western Europe (Carter, 2001). Many believe that the first published photograph of Earth in 1972 or called the Blue Marble profoundly hit consciousness in the collective worldview and helped spark the modern environmental movement (Buckingham & Turner, 2008). The photo also came to symbolize Earth Day and it propelled the work of environmental non-profit-making concerns, such as the Natural Resources Defense Council and the Environmental Defense Fund (Earthday Network, 2015).<sup>6</sup>

In response to the environmental movement, environmental artworks became platforms for the artists to express their concern and educate their audiences on environmental issues in the North America and Europe. The artworks were mostly presented in the form of reclamation and remediation of damaged environments, restoring ecosystems in

artistic ways. In Europe, environmental art was taken to a different shape and form. The environmental issues in Europe seemed to be less striking. Therefore, although there was a tendency of artists in Europe to follow developments of environmental art in America, most of the environmental artworks in Europe were presented in the form of interpretation of nature and its processes to re-envision their relationship to nature and propose ways for humankind to co-exist with nature. Such artworks were created to prompt the experience and appreciation of art and nature. This art appeared in the works and thinking of many other artists, particularly the avant-garde European artists, including Andy Goldsworthy, Richard Long, Joseph Beuys, Ian Hamilton Finlay, Chris Drury and Christo Javacheff. Although different in approach, both traditions of environmental artworks re-envision and re-interpret the complex conception of nature.

Chameides (2013) the artists of the Hudson River School,<sup>7</sup> such as Thomas Cole (1801–1848) and Asher Durand (1796–1886), and their spectacular landscape paintings, were also given credit for inspiring the American preservation movement in the late 1800s, along with the transcendentalists Marsh, Thoreau and Emerson. Separated by more than one century of environmental thought, transcendentalist Henry Thoreau and his deep affinity with nature profoundly impacted on several 1960s environmental artists such as Richard Long, Robert Smithson, Andy Goldsworthy and Robert Morris.

For Richard Long, the landscape is a medium of his work representing his direct engagement with nature. Inspired by Henry David Thoreau's ideal image of walking in the forest (Kastner, 1998), Long travelled across the English landscape to challenge remote terrains and document long walks with text and photographs, while creating his artworks (Beardsley, 1998). His *A Line Made by Walking* (1967) (Figure 13) was created by placing small stones or other ephemeral installations along arbitrarily formed straight lines across the landscape. Through the long length of the pathways, Long never made alterations on the landscapes that his art passed through (Tate, 2015). These solitary pathways were represented either as books of photographs or as individual photographs with captions recording the time and place. Long's *A Line Made by Walking* became a milestone of environmental art in Europe (ibid). Many other environmental artists also have expressed their appreciation for the beauty and intrinsic values of nature through their artworks in similar fashion to

Thoreau. Interpretations of nature are taken in many forms of environmental arts through study, observation, and contemplation of natural phenomena. This type of art offers an entirely new way of interacting with nature and truly does create a relationship between the artist and nature.

Not only is art something that is pleasing to the eyes and serves as an object of beauty, it can also be something that conveys an important message. With its ability to interact with and educate the viewers, art can address or emphasise environmental issues spreading awareness about important topics. The early wilderness-colonising efforts of the first generation of environmental artists paralleled the ideas of conquest and exploitation that characterised the industrial era. However, John Beardsley (1998) stated, 'Many environmental artists desire not merely an audience for their work but a public with whom they can correspond about the meaning and purpose of their art' (p.127).

With the rise of modern environmentalism in the 1960s, the publication of Rachel Carson's *Silent Spring* (1962) and the first Earth Day celebration in 1970, environmental consciousness was radically changed. Within the movement's range of attitudes and diversity of approaches, environmental issues were variously interpreted. Solutions to restore nature and revitalise cities were proposed or implemented. Some were more environmentally conscious than others. Some of these approaches involved spatial practices in the city rather than in distant landscapes, but the conceptual approaches were similar.



Source: Richard Long (2015)

**Figure 13.** Richard Long's *A Line Made by Walking* (1967)



Helen Mayer Harrison and Newton Harrison's *Survival Pieces* (1971) (as shown in Figure 14) is a series of artworks focused on growing plants, farming shrimps and catfish, installed between 1970 and 1973 at various art exhibitions, including sites in London, Boston, and Los Angeles (Matilsky, 1992). Recognising the ignorance of how food is produced, the Harrisons sought to create a model of self-sufficiency (The Harrison Studio, 2016). Their work attempted to remind people that their survival depends upon plants and the death of other animals. The exhibition space was transformed into a field of growth, where the audiences could speculate on the processes governing life (ibid). Each exhibition was accompanied by a performance that featured the artists harvesting food, which was served to guests at the receptions. In essence, the Harrisons enacted the complete cycle of sustenance (Matilsky, 1992).

According to Dylan Cuddy (2015), the works of Joseph Beuys, a German artist, are based in concepts of humanism and social philosophy. In 1982, for the exhibition *Documenta 7*, Beuys proposed a plan for 7000 Oaks, each of which was to be paired with a columnar basalt stone approximately four feet high above ground, piling up on the lawn in front of the Museum Fridericianum and throughout the greater city of Kassel (as depicted in Figure 15). The column stones would be shrunk every time a tree was planted (ibid). By inviting the public to participate in the planting of the trees and installing the paired column, Beuys intended for his 7000 Oaks to be both an artistic and social act (Tate, 2015). Taking five years to complete, the 7000 Oaks remains as a benchmark urban renewal project of how such an endeavour can transcend art discourse to become a social action (ibid). The project was carried forward to other cities around the world as part of a global mission to effect environmental and social change (Cuddy, 2015).



Source: Peter Frank (2012)

**Figure 14.** Helen Mayer Harrison and Newton Harrison's *Survival Piece* (1971)



Source: This Hidden City (2015)

**Figure 15.** Joseph Beuys's 7000 Oaks (1987)

According to Elaine A. King (2011), many environmental artists aligned themselves with non-profit-making organisations dedicated to art and environmental issues, such as ecoartspace in New York. There have been curated exhibitions and programmes, providing a platform for artists who are working with scientists to address our global environmental issues; for example, Lucy Lippard's *Weather Report: Art and Climate Change* (2007), and *Criteria* (2009), an art exhibition curated by Jimena Acosta and Emiliano Godoy, at Chicago's Columbia College Art Gallery (ibid). The investigations of the environmental artists cover various techniques tackling different issues at macro- and micro-scales. Though the artists uniquely explore diverse territories, they are in the same realm as environmentalists, sharing similar aims about balancing nature and civilization.

## 2.6 Passage of time

Corresponding to natural living substances, which have a life cycle, environmental art associates with the attribute of time. The life spans of these natural elements are vastly diverse. Some elements such as soils and geomorphology have a long life span, while the others, such as shrubs and cover ground plants, are completely the opposite. Some of the elements are well anticipated; however, most of them are not particularly easy to foresee. This open approach to transience is embodied within environmental art in multiple senses. It not only helps to heighten perception, but often creates new space for the spontaneous, the unexpected and the experimental.

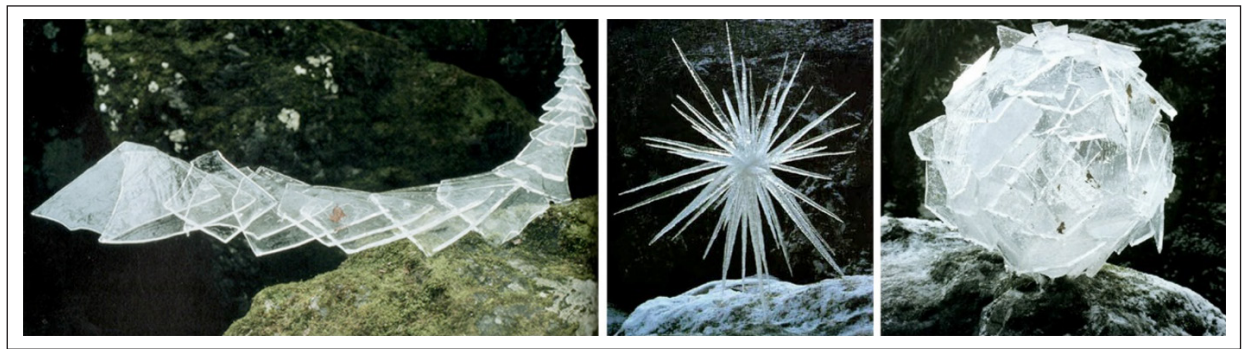
Jeffrey Kastner (1998) experiencing art in nature is provided through a phenomenological synthesis of anticipation, perception and memory. Thus, experience in exploring the artworks and surrounding landscapes is an essential dimension of environmental artworks; for example, travelling to the site, the duration of the visit, the hour of the day, the season of the year, and so on. Time and changes become intrinsic parts of experience. Udo Weilacher (1996) commented that appreciation of the artwork could be created through

this natural phenomenon; the colour of the earth or vegetation, the position of the sun in the sky and qualities of light create meaning. Some artworks may be sustained over a long period of time, the same as traditional sculpture. However, many artworks only survive for a brief period of time: a few months, days, hours or less, due to effect of the decomposition of the art's natural materials. Thus, the aspect of temporal process as a means of experiencing nature is a significant element of environmental art. Udo Weilacher (1996) also rather than relying upon the photograph taken on completion, some environmental artists also document this process as a part of the work.

Though many materials of environmental art have a brief lifespan as a finished object, Goldsworthy's precious ice sculpture seems to best represent the theme of the passage of time (Binkly, 2010). In his ephemeral *Ice Pieces* (1982) in Cumbria (Figure 16), Goldsworthy placed icicles on a rock in the middle of a river. The smallest temperature and light changes may cause his *Ice Pieces* to collapse, repeatedly, which is all part of Goldsworthy's process. Through his ephemeral *Ice Pieces*, Goldsworthy makes his audience realise the power of time and the truth of nature (Beardsley, 1998). Goldsworthy takes a series of pictures that capture their transformations due to the changing of seasons and time (Binkly, 2010). Goldsworthy's interpretation of the passage of time adds to the deep symbolic meanings of his works and the different perspective of nature. Through his extraordinary works, he inspires thoughts of how we interact with the environment and how time affects living on earth (Beardsley, 1998).

Alan Sonfist created his *Time Landscape* (Figure 17) for Manhattan, the heart of New York, in 1978 as the first work of environmental art in a public space. The *Time Landscape* (1978) portrays the three stages of forest growth from grasses to grown trees (The New York City Department of Parks and Recreation, 2015). Sonfist's efforts result in a slowly developing forest that functions as a time capsule representing the Manhattan landscape inhabited by





Source: Jeffrey Kastner (1998)

**Figure 16.** Andy Goldsworthy's Ice Pieces (1987)



Source: Avant Guardians (2015)

**Figure 17.** Alan Sonfist's Time Landscape (1978)



Source: Thomas Dreher (2008)

**Figure 18.** Robert Morris' Observatory (1971)

the seventeenth-century, pre-colonial landscape (ibid). Sonfist strives to convey a symbolic message that encourages future generations to restore the natural microclimate of their habitat. He also created artworks in the manner of the Time Landscapes in other cities, such as Circles of Time in Florence, Italy, documenting the historical usage of the land (Kastner, 1998). This emblematic work of art is celebrating its fiftieth birthday in 2015, and the exhibition at the Museum of Fine Arts, Budapest, is the first to commemorate this momentous anniversary (The New York City Department of Parks and Recreation, 2015).

Robert Morris evokes the spirituality and mystery of Stonehenge by creating its modern version in his Observatory (1971) located in Flevoland, in the Netherlands (Figure 18). The Observatory consists of two concentric earth mounds crossed by three V-shaped openings and separated by a ditch (Boettger, 2002). The interior circle mound is made by a wood structure to support earth covered in grass. The three openings in the central circle are oriented in order to frame the sunrise at some specific times of the year (Kastner, 1998). The middle steel visor shows the sunrise at the equinoxes. On the

northwest and southwest sides of the circles are two stone wedges, through which the sunrise on 21 June and 21 December are visible (ibid). Although relatively little time has passed on the land, the subject of Morris' environmental art project is the passage of time (Boettger, 2002).

### 3. Possibilities in convergences in design expression between landscape architecture and environmental art

Resemblance in form and design expression between works of the two disciplines are apparent evidently in at least two aspects. There have been many reviews and publications<sup>8</sup> regarding topographic forms by renown practitioners from both disciplines during the past decade.

John Beardsley (1998) pointed out that Peter Walker shaped land forms in a similar manner to earthwork artists such as Carl Andre, Ian Hamilton Finlay, Michael Heizer and Richard Morris, etc. Udo Weilacher (1996) remarked that Smithson's idea of presenting nature through artform in his Spiral Jetty (1973) (Figure 8) was referenced in George Hargreaves's Guadalupe River Park (1990) (Figures 19-20) in San Jose, California. In a more recent review, Conan (2000) remarked that there is an affiliation between the large S-shaped berm that Diana Balmori proposed for the site of the equestrian games and Robert Smithson's Spiral Jetty in the Utah desert. Considering periods of construction and apparent correlations in terms of forms and ideas between the projects, it is possible to argue that the ideas in creating environmental art may indeed directly or indirectly have an impact on landscape architectural design. In addition, some artists working with landscapes, such as Trudi Entwistle, who have been practising in environmental art for over a decade, even call themselves landscape architects, even though their works are categorised as environmental art. Artworks in landscapes by artists such as those by Entwistle (Figures 21-23) obviously lie in between

landscape architecture and environmental art. According to the above evidences, there does seem to be general agreement that both sets of practitioners initially look to the landscape for guidance and inspiration. The previous review of the creative thoughts and ideas associated with environmental art could be beneficial to both disciplines.



Source: Hargreaves et al. (2009)

**Figure 19.** George Hargreaves's Guadalupe River Park (1990)



Source: Hargreaves et al. (2009)

**Figure 20.** George Hargreaves's Guadalupe River Park (1990)



Source: Beardsley (1998)

**Figure 21.** James Turrell's Roden Crater (1979)





Source: The Center for Land Use Interpretation (2015)

**Figure 22.** Herbert Mayor's Mill Creek Canyon (1982)



Source: Trudi Entwistle (2015)

**Figure 23.** Trudi Entwistle's Fold (2003)

However, practitioners of the two disciplines practise with a wide range of skills and techniques, yet their specialities are unique and superior in their own ways. In addition, the creation or design expression is unique within the process of creativity and subjective to each individual landscape designer or artist. The forms of design or creation should be fluid and subjective to each individual artist or landscape designer. Each discipline definitely has its own approaches and specialties. Individual practitioners also have their own way of working, whether they are landscape architects or artists. However,

#### 4. Summary

In recent years, although monumental environmental artworks, similar to those of the 1960s, could still be seen, for example, in Charles Jencks's Northumberlandia (2012) in Northumberland, environmental art also takes various forms. Through collaborations with scientists and multidisciplinary teams, environmental art has advanced, allowing the

artists to work freely in investigating nature. Artists such as Tim Collins and Reiko Goto, Mel Chin, and Peter Fend, often created their artworks based on a collaboration with a scientist (Matilsky, 1992). In addition, an act of guerrilla gardening, first formed in the 1970s by a diverse range of people, including gardeners, could be considered as one of contemporary environmental arts (Lamborn & Weinberg, 1999). The Guerrilla Gardens or sometimes called street arts were aimed to apply an artistic aspect on landscape design of abandoned urban sites, neglected areas, or, in some cases, on private property in various countries across the world (ibid). The expansion of environmental art today has been radically transformed since its first emergence in the 1960s. Environmental artists continue to reflect the evolution of an environmental movement. Figures 24-29 depicts some examples of recent environmental artworks.



Source: Northumberlandia (2015)

**Figure 24.** Charles Jencks's Northumberlandia (2012)



Source: Collins and Goto (2015)

**Figure 25.** Tim Collins and Reiko Goto-Collins's Nine Mile Run: (Community Dialogues) (1997-2000)

Artists create artworks to communicate or express their thoughts and ideas, to provide their audiences with a cooperative learning experience that can motivate people to express their ideas in a variety of shapes and means. Art has the capacity to trigger reflection, generate empathy, create dialogue and foster new ideas and relationships and offers ways of expressing, sharing and shaping ideas. All types of art, including environmental art, can thus serve as a source of ideas and inspiration for landscape architectural design. Through all artworks, designers are enabled to learn complex thinking and cultivate innovative ideas (Belden & Fessard, 2001).



Source: Jeffrey Kastner (1998)

**Figure 26.** Mel Chin's Revival Field (1993)



Source: Jeffrey Kastner (1998)

**Figure 27.** Mel Chin (2015)



Source: Jeffrey Kastner (1998)

**Figure 28.** Peter Fend's Ocean Earth: Europa (1991)



Source: Hannah Allsworth (2013)

**Figure 29.** Guerrilla Gardens in London (2012)



## Note

- <sup>1</sup> หมายถึงช่วงทศวรรษที่ 60 ของศตวรรษที่ 20 คือ ปี 1960s
- <sup>2</sup> An art gallery, or art museum, in which art objects such as paintings, sculptures, decorative art, art installations, etc. are displayed, can be either public or private. The private art gallery is usually a commercial enterprise for the sale of art. The art gallery and art museum typically justify the values and merits of the art objects to be displayed in their art exhibition spaces. In the 1960s, the neutrality of galleries and museums and their affiliation with commercialization were called into question (Hoeveler, 1996).
- <sup>3</sup> Philosophy of art was rooted in Theory of Forms by Plato (427—347 B.C.E.), which laid the foundations of Western philosophy and science along with his teacher Socrates (469 – 399 BC) and his most famous student, Aristotle (384—322 B.C.E.) (Kivy, 1997). It is the study of the nature of art, and is concerned with the analysis and evaluation of particular works of art including the interpretation, representation and expression, and form of art (Encyclopaedia Britannica, 2015).

- <sup>4</sup> Assemblage is a form of art that is made by 'assembling disparate elements which are often scavenged by the artist, or sometimes bought specially' (Tate, 2015).
- <sup>5</sup> The Venus of Willendorf is a small prehistoric carving of a woman, which was found in 1908 by an archeologist near the town of Willendorf in Austria. It was estimated to be 30,000 years old (World History Chronology, 2015).
- <sup>6</sup> Earth Day marks as the annual celebration of what many consider the birth of the modern environmentalism movement in 1970 (Earthday Network, 2015).
- <sup>7</sup> The Hudson River School was a group of New York City-based landscape painters, who were under the influence of the English Thomas Cole (1801–1848) in the mid-nineteenth century (Avery, 2015).
- <sup>8</sup> For key examples see Weilacher, 1999; Braun, 2010; Balmori, 2011, etc.

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