



MAN

Notions of Landscape from the Lannan Collection

MADE

DEBBIE FLEMING CAFFERY THOMAS JOSHUA COOPER OLAFUR ELIASSON RONI HORN
AN-MY LÊ SARAH PICKERING VICTORIA SAMBUNARIS ROBERT SMITHSON JAMES TURRELL



Thomas Joshua Cooper
An Indication Piece,
The English Channel—Looking
S, SW Towards the New World,
Rame Head (Number 2), Near
Plymouth, Cornwall, England,
1998–2001
Photo: Astilli, Inc.

COVER: Victoria Sambunaris
Untitled, 2000
Photo courtesy of the artist

One of the threads that runs through the Lannan Foundation collection is the relationship of humankind to the world at large. This is not landscape in its most literal or picturesque sense, but the “man-altered landscape,” to borrow the term coined by the landmark 1975 George Eastman House exhibition *New Topographics*. Since the 1970s, when human presence upon the landscape was noted as an emergent style in art, Rebecca Solnit has observed that “most photographers have concentrated on some version of the social landscape, on inhabited wildernesses; dystopias; comic, disastrous, and mystic engagements with place, land, and nature.”¹

Through the ages, humankind has sought to comprehend the land intellectually and physically by navigating through it, mapping it, or making marks upon it. These three approaches to landscape are evident in the works in *Manmade: Notions of Landscape from the Lannan Collection*.

TO NAVIGATE

To navigate is to move through three-dimensional space, usually with an intention and destination in mind. It suggests making the necessary turns and detours to reach a given endpoint, perhaps even overcoming obstacles. One category of navigating is the road trip, which became an American institution with the publication of Jack Kerouac’s 1957 Beat novel, *On the Road*. Regardless of the protagonist or vehicle of choice, the impetus to navigate through a landscape typically parallels an inner search or quest to understand the world around us.

Victoria Sambunaris traverses the country to explore its industrial and geological innards. A self-admitted road warrior, she has followed in the footsteps—or tire treads—of author John McPhee, who in the 1980s and 1990s created a multi-volume geological study of the United States along I-80. She has also driven the Alaska Pipeline, traveled the border towns of the Rio Grande, and photographed the artifacts of commerce, specifically the trailers, trains and warehouses that inhabit the industrial landscape.

If Sambunaris’s quest is American in scope, Thomas Joshua Cooper’s voyage navigates the currents between Old and New Worlds. By plane, boat, car, helicopter, and foot, Cooper journeys to numerous points of contact between the Atlantic Ocean and the bodies of land that surround it. A revisitation of the points of contact between peoples and lifeways is implied, and often recalled directly in the extensive titling that invites the viewer to imagine the historic moments the landscape witnessed. Cooper’s photographic practice demands extraordinary time, physical duress, and frequent brushes with

danger. As Bruce Ferguson and Vincent Varga once observed, "Cooper's investigation is always at once a pilgrimage and a crusade."² This terminology, rooted in a mindset of bodily and spiritual seeking and sacrifice, is consistent with Cooper's ethos. His equipment and peripatetic means of travel are more in keeping with 19th-century expeditionary photographers of the American West, such as Timothy O'Sullivan, to whom he has been compared.

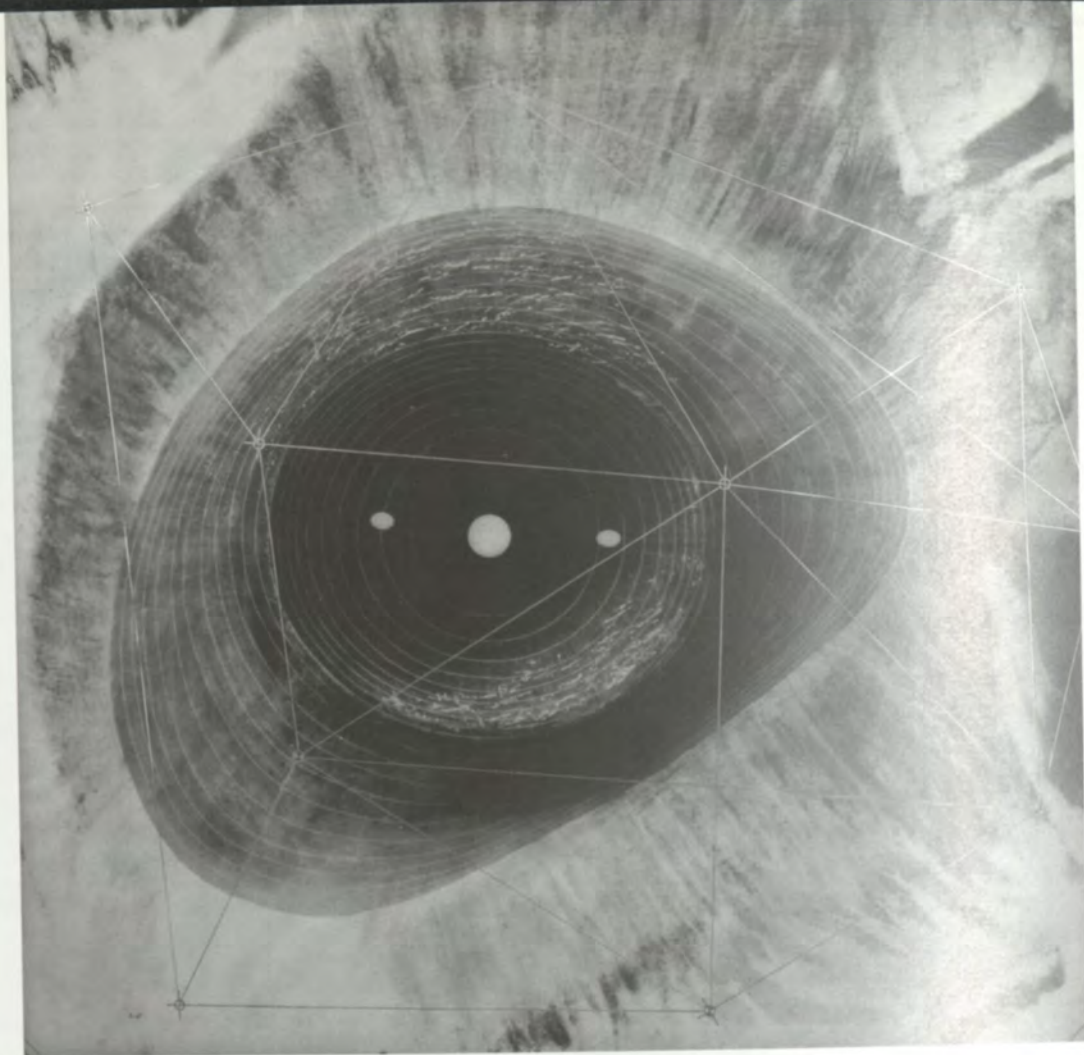
Standing at the edge, where water and earth meet, a lighthouse also bears witness to history's unfolding within the landscape, or seascape. A sentry, a figura-

tive monolith at a geological border crossing, the lighthouse guides the way for vessels to safely make the transition from sea to land. Before more modern navigational tools, they (along with constellations) were essential features of seafaring life. Olafur Eliasson's lighthouse photographs are at once a gridded classification of a type of manmade structure and a diaristic return to family roots. This series is one of many made on annual pilgrimages to his ancestral homeland of Iceland. Like Sambunaris's and Cooper's quests, Eliasson's navigating of the landscape is a means to an intangible end.



Olafur Eliasson
The Lighthouse Series, 1999
Photo courtesy Tanya Bonakdar
Gallery, New York

James Turrell
Original Crater Contours
in Grey, 1992
Photo courtesy of the artist



TO MAP

To map is to represent in two dimensions a three-dimensional place and to situate a person in relation to that place. Historically there have been distortions conveyed and artistic license taken in the creation of maps. At times, cartographers invested these visual representations with fanciful imaginings about the world, complete with cannibals and Amazons, all reflecting the map-maker's notions of savagism and civilization. Due to incomplete knowledge, a particular worldview, and little in the way of tools to aid in visualizing the world, the subjectivity of mapping is evident in scale distortions, what occupies the center

of the map, and even the colors and names attributed to particular places.

Robert Smithson worked with maps, mapping, and what Ann Reynolds calls "cartographic actions."³ These actions include works such as *Map of Broken Glass (Atlantis)*, which is what Smithson regarded as a three-dimensional map of a prehistoric land mass, a "[map] of material, as opposed to maps of paper."⁴ *Map of Broken Glass (Atlantis)* transposes a two-dimensional map of the lost civilization of Atlantis from Lewis Spence's book *History of Atlantis* (1927) into a three-dimensional mass of several tons of clear broken glass. In a sense this "cartographic action" is the inverse of Smithson's non-sites, which displaced

matter (earth) from a particular site, moving it from outdoors to indoors while still pointing to the original site by way of an adjacently displayed map. The action dematerializes the site, and emphasizes idea over matter. The displacement that occurs in *Map of Broken Glass (Atlantis)*, in contrast, takes an abstract idea (the map) and gives it volume and physical presence. The action materializes the map, and emphasizes matter over idea.

James Turrell likewise works with “cartographic actions” through his long-term project Roden Crater, an extinct volcano outside of Flagstaff, Arizona. Since 1979, Turrell has been metamorphosing this land formation into an earthwork that will allow the viewer to observe the skies. Here, the mapping that takes place is of the firmament as an extension of landscape. When complete, Roden Crater will allow the viewer to experience the skies from the perspective of the land. But in the case of Turrell’s hand-worked aerial photographs of the crater, one experiences the land from the perspective of the skies. These images have the attitude of a geologic survey. Indeed the feat of engineering that is Roden Crater has involved many surveys to plan the subterranean vaults. Photography is an integral part of the cartographic action of documenting this epic, ongoing project.

If Smithson’s *Map of Broken Glass (Atlantis)* maps land and Turrell maps the skies, Roni Horn’s project *Still Water (The River Thames, for Example)* maps water. Each of fifteen images is a detail of water—each unique like a fingerprint though the source is the same river. The cartographic action in

this series is the superimposition of numbers over the image, each directing the viewer to a particular footnote at the bottom of the composition. Like the navigational symbols that appear on a map to locate the journeyer with respect to a geographic site, Horn’s symbols situate the viewer with respect to a historical or cultural moment: a song lyric, a poem, a phenomenological observation, a suicide.



Robert Smithson
Map of Broken Glass (Atlantis),
1969 Installation view at
Dia:Beacon, Beacon, New
York Photo: Florian Holzherr,
courtesy Dia Art Foundation.
Reproduced courtesy James
Cohan Gallery, New York
© Estate of Robert Smithson/
Licensed by VAGA, New York

Roni Horn
*Still Water (The River Thames,
for Example)*, 1991
Photo courtesy Hauser
& Wirth, Zurich



TO MARK

To mark the land is to record human intervention in the landscape. Petroglyphs throughout the American Southwest, the Nazca lines in Peru, the cave paintings of Lascaux, the Great Wall of China and even walls built between neighbors—all are enduring evidence of humankind's hand upon the earth. Just as written language inscribes individual and collec-

Sarah Pickering
Landmine, 2005
Photo courtesy of the artist



tive thoughts that are specific to place, time, and author(s), mark-making on the land circumscribes a particular historical moment and voice. To varying degrees of scale and permanence, we continually create and recreate the man-altered landscape.

Sarah Pickering's photographs of explosions document British military detonations for training purposes. The mark-making in these images takes the form of a scarring of the peaceful countryside. One can imagine the years it will take for nature to reconstitute itself and heal the marred earth from these fiery simulations. At the same time, while the juxtaposition of pyrotechnics within the pastoral is a jarring sight, these blasts are clearly more sterile and staged than a real-world situation, when they would be accompanied by chaos, bloodshed, and uncontrolled damage to earth, man, and the manmade.

The scarring from the simulations that An-My Lê photographs is of the same order as Pickering's, only sited in the California desert rather than the English countryside. Karen Irvine has compared Lê's *29 Palms* photographs of war simulations in the desert to "U.S. Geological Survey photographs of the 1870s, or Ansel Adams's work from the 1930s and 1940s," in which the landscape is presented "in lush detail, as epic and imposing," "sublime," and emphasizing "the relative insignificance of man."⁵ The man/nature dichotomy positions the two in opposition to each another, with one or the other prevailing at any given moment. In Lê's night operations photographs, in which there is ambiguity as to whether we are witnessing lightning or missiles, it becomes clear that what is "man" and what is "nature" is not always clearly delineated.

In addition to the physical destruction of terrain, the man-altered landscapes of Pickering and Lê bear the residue of an age of anxiety, in which stories of bombings, mishaps, and unexpected manmade conflagrations inform the world's worldview. It is not only the *politics* of landscape but the *psychology* of landscape that is engaged. Like the hidden histories in Cooper's imagery, Pickering's and Lê's landscapes reveal the invisible scars of human intervention.

One such invisible scar, which illustrates just how interdependent the natural world and manmade world are, is the realm of natural disasters. It is now widely maintained that human activity, yielding carbon emissions and deforestation, has led to global warming. The ferocity and number of natural disturbances, particularly hurricanes, have been attributed to the warmer oceans. When nature reacts, human strongholds may be stripped from the land (even if temporarily), and towns or peninsulas may be sent to an underwater grave (like Atlantis). Hurricanes Katrina and Rita wreaked their paths of destruction, causing the manmade levees to fail and flood parts of the Gulf Coast, most notably New Orleans. Debbie Fleming Caffery's photographs of the aftermaths of these storms show the marks left by human-aided natural disasters.

The landscape is an active participant in its relationship to humankind. It is not merely a passive recipient of our actions upon it, though we may navigate, map, and mark its terrain. Paths and roadways can be overtaken and overgrown by the natural world, just as the waters of the Gulf of Mexico submerged New Orleans. Maps change over time, depending upon



political alliances and realignments. And scars and gestures upon the land may be erased over time. As you navigate the artworks in *Manmade*, the ever-changing nature of the balancing act between nature and society is evident. Our view of utopia is obstructed by manmade constructions, clouded by explosions, and hindered by roads paved with good intentions.

—Laura M. Addison, Curator of Contemporary Art

Debbie Fleming Caffery
*Gator Guard, Cameron Parish
after Rita*, 2005
Photo courtesy of the artist

An-My Lê
29 Palms: Night Operations I,
2003–2004
Photo courtesy Murray Guy,
New York

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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EXHIBITION CHECKLIST

All works Collection
Lannan Foundation.

Debbie Fleming Caffery
Gator Guard, Cameron Parish after Rita, 2005
Gelatin silver print
20 x 20 inches

Debbie Fleming Caffery
I Have a Dream, St. Roch, New Orleans, 2005
Gelatin silver print
20 x 20 inches

Debbie Fleming Caffery
Jesus at Devastated Holly Beach, 2005
Gelatin silver print
20 x 20 inches

Thomas Joshua Cooper
Boca Grande and Golfo de Paria—The Gulf of Paria, Playa Macurito, Macuro, Peninsula de Paria, Sucre, Venezuela, 2005–2006
(From the only continental land-site that Christopher Columbus actually set foot on in the New World of the Americas and near the East-most point of the Peninsula)
Selenium and gold chloride-toned gelatin silver print
28 x 36 inches

Thomas Joshua Cooper
The End of the World, Last Light—Polar Cyclone, Drake Passage, Cabo de Hornos—Cape Horn #4, Isla Hornos—The Island of Horn, Islas Hermitas, Antarctica Chilena, Chile, 2006
(The South-most point of all South America)
Selenium and gold chloride-toned gelatin silver print
40 x 54 inches

Thomas Joshua Cooper
An Indication Piece, The English Channel—Looking S, SW Towards the New World, Rame Head (Number 2), Near Plymouth, Cornwall, England, 1998–2001
(The Last View of the English Coast that the Pilgrim Settlers would have seen upon their leave from England for the New World)
Selenium and gold chloride-toned gelatin silver print
28 x 36 inches

Thomas Joshua Cooper
Moonrise over The End of the World, Furthest West—The Mid-Atlantic, "The Lighthouse at The End of the World," Faro Orchilla, The Isle of El Hierro, The Canary Islands, Spain, 2002
(Near the West-most point of the Entire Canarian Archipelago) (The ancient geographer Ptolemy designated this particular point—0 Longitude—or the official ancient End of the World...) Selenium and gold chloride-toned gelatin silver print
40 x 54 inches

Thomas Joshua Cooper
A Premonitional Work, Cape Cod Bay—Looking N, NE, Towards the Old World, First Encounter Beach, Near Eastham, Cape Cod, Massachusetts, U.S.A., 2000–2001
(From this site the Pilgrim Settlers first encountered Native Americans)
Selenium and gold chloride-toned gelatin silver print
28 x 36 inches

Thomas Joshua Cooper
West—The Mid-North Atlantic Ocean, Punta de la Calera, The Island of La Gomera, The Canary Islands, Spain, 2002
(The West-most point of the Island, and, most likely, the last "Old World" landfall to be seen by Columbus and his men on their first voyage of discovery in search of "The New World") Selenium and gold chloride-toned gelatin silver print
28 x 36 inches

Thomas Joshua Cooper
The World's Edge—Near Furthest West—Brandon Bay and The North Atlantic Ocean, St. Brandon (Bhreandain) Point, County Kerry Ireland, 2002
(Near the West-most point of mainland Ireland) (Place from which St. Brandon the Navigator began his Great 6th-century sea voyages of pilgrimages and monastic exploration that, in part, led to his later recognition as one of Lanzarote's Patron Saints) Selenium and gold chloride-toned gelatin silver print
40 x 54 inches

Olafur Eliasson
The Lighthouse Series, 1999
20 color photographs
each 9.5 x 14.125 inches
overall 60.75 x 67.75 inches
Edition 6 of 6

Roni Horn
Still Water (The River Thames, for Example), 1991
15 offset lithographs
each 30.5 x 41.5 inches

An-My Lê
29 Palms: Night Operations I, II, 2003–2004
Gelatin silver print
26 x 37.5 inches

An-My Lê
29 Palms: Night Operations III, 2003–2004
Gelatin silver print
26 x 37.5 inches

An-My Lê
29 Palms: Night Operations IV, 2003–2004
Gelatin silver print
26 x 37.5 inches

Sarah Pickering
Artillery, 2005
Lambda print
49 x 49 inches

Sarah Pickering
Fuel Air Explosion, 2005
Lambda print
49 x 49 inches

Sarah Pickering
Landmine, 2005
Lambda print
49 x 49 inches

Victoria Sambunaris
Untitled, 2000
Type-C print
39 x 55 inches

Victoria Sambunaris
Untitled, 2001
Type-C print
39 x 55 inches

Victoria Sambunaris
Untitled, 2001
Type-C print
39 x 55 inches

Victoria Sambunaris
Untitled, 2001
Type-C print
39 x 55 inches

Robert Smithson (1938-1973)
Map of Broken Glass (Atlantis), 1969 (exhibition copy)
Glass
4 x 16 x 20 feet
Long-term loan to
Dia Art Foundation

James Turrell
Early Site Plan & Section with White Bowl, 1992
Mylar, beeswax, emulsion, ink, liquitex, wax, pastel
39.5 x 58 inches

James Turrell
Original Crater Contours in Grey, 1992
Mylar, beeswax, emulsion, ink, liquitex, wax, pastel
40 x 40 inches

James Turrell
Shadowed Bowl in Grey, 1992
Mylar, beeswax, emulsion, ink, liquitex, wax, pastel
39.5 x 39 inches

NOTES

- 1 Rebecca Solnit, "Poison Pictures," in *Storming the Gates of Paradise: Landscapes for Politics* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 2007), 136.
- 2 Bruce W. Ferguson and Vincent J. Varga, *Longing and Belonging: From the Faraway Nearby* (Santa Fe: SITE Santa Fe, 1996), 141.
- 3 Ann Reynolds, "Cartographic Images—Cartographic Actions," in *Robert Smithson: Mapping Dislocations* (New York: James Cohan Gallery, 2001), 4.
- 4 Paul Toner and Robert Smithson, eds., "Interview with Robert Smithson," in *Robert Smithson: Mapping Dislocations* (New York: James Cohan Gallery, 2001), 27.
- 5 Karen Irvine, "Under the Clouds of War," exh. guide (Chicago: Museum of Contemporary Photography, 2006), unpaginated.

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