



ARTISTIC

PRACTICE

FOR

INCREASED

AWARENESS

KAYLA BYRNE



ARTISTIC  
PRACTICE  
FOR  
INCREASED  
AWARENESS

CREATING ART THAT  
RESPONDS TO A POST-INDUSTRIAL LANDSCAPE  
AND IS SHOWN IN A PUBLIC EXHIBIT  
TO PROMOTE AWARENESS

KAYLA BYRNE



# APPROVAL

Submitted June 2016 in partial fulfillment for the  
degree Master of Landscape Architecture at the  
University of Oregon.

Liska Chan, *Master's Project Chair*  
Dave Hulse, *Master's Project Committee Member*  
Chris Enright, *Master's Project Committee Member*



# ABSTRACT

The question I intend to answer with this project is: **Can artistic practice stimulate the designer and the public to interact in ways that will promote public awareness of a local post-industrial site?** The aim of this project is to show the potential of artistic practice to stimulate awareness in the design of parks on post-industrial sites. The case-study site is Alton Baker Park in Eugene, Oregon a large park with a layered and multivalent history. Considering these layers of historical complexity and the timeline of this project, I have specifically chosen to narrow this inquiry further by creating art works that only reflect the industrial past of the Whilamut Natural Area, formerly known as the Day Island Landfill. At the public showing of the created works, I asked visitors to complete a brief survey that focused on their experience at the exhibit and their knowledge of post-industrial landscapes. The results of this project demonstrate how art can enhance and sharpen awareness of post-industrial landscapes while learning.



# AKNOWLEDGEMENTS

First, I would like to thank Liska Chan for her unwavering support and guidance throughout this process. Thank you for your invaluable mentorship.

To Laura Hughes-Trumble and Chris Hortel, for believing in my abilities and encouraging me to pursue a master's degree. This experience could not have been possible without your confidence in me. Thank you my dear friends.

To mom, dad and Patrick for encouraging me to follow my heart. Thank you for all your love and support.

Finally, to my furry family, Macy and Huey, thank you for calming my anxieties and reminding me that life is good.

INTRODUCTION ..... 1  
A Call for Innovation  
The Making of a Post-Industrial Site  
Testing the Art Exhibit and Public Awareness  
Desired Outcomes

## CHAPTER 1

### SUPPORT FROM BEYOND THE FIELD

ARTISTIC PRACTICE ACROSS DISCIPLINES. .... 13  
Creative Practice in Landscape Architecture  
Creative Practice as Research  
Creative Learning and Theory  
Art as an Agent of Change

## CHAPTER 2

### METHODS

MEASURING RESEARCH & DEFINING  
ARTISTIC PRACTICE ..... 33  
Visual Studies in landscape Architecture  
Artistic Practice  
Descriptive Social Survey

# CONTENTS

## CHAPTER 3

### CATALOGUE

ARTWORKS CREATED AND SHOWN .....	47
DIG	
Landscape Narrative	
Landscape Narrative	
This Natural Site	
Imagine Your Park	
This Land is Your Land	

## CHAPTER 4

### RESULTS

SURVEY .....	73
Survey Results	
Summation of Results	

## CHAPTER 5

### DISCUSSION

PROJECT REFLECTION .....	87
Survey and Exhibit	
My Artistic Practice	

BIBLIOGRAPHY .....	92
IMAGE SOURCES .....	94

*“... design strategies that focus primarily on the ecological processes of remediating a toxic industrial site fail to account for the intermingling of the natural, social and industrial processes that permeate such sites ... We need design strategies that make visible the past connections between individual human behavior, collective identity, and these larger industrial and ecological processes”*

*- Elizabeth (Beth) Meyer, Landscape Architect and Theorist (1992)*

# INTRODUCTION

*The following chapter consists of sections which lay-out some necessary information for understanding this project.*

*'A Call for Innovation' introduces the problem posed by Beth Meyer and her request for solutions on which this project was founded.*

*'The Making of a Post-Industrial Site' gives a brief history of the post-industrial nature of the selected case study site, the Whilamut Natural Area.*

*'Testing the Art Exhibit and Public Awareness' gives light to the method in which I plan to respond to Beth Meyer's call.*

*'Desired Outcomes' reveals the goals and aspirations I wish to come from this investigation, for both the future of art in landscape architecture and my artistic practice.*

## A CALL FOR INNOVATION

In the essay “Uncertain Parks: Disturbed Sites, Citizens, and Risk Society”, Elizabeth (Beth) Meyer, prominent theorist of landscape architecture, writes about designing large parks that engage social agency. She suggests atypical modes of inquiry specifically, to give rise to new design strategies that unveil a more authentic recognition of how culture has shaped the landscape. Meyer writes of the risks we face in simply masking (eg. greening) these post-industrial sites. This masking of process, history and condition, although not perceived by the average person, is destructive to a growing society and undermines the integrity of the land culturally and environmentally (Meyer, 2001). To treat post-industrial sites as a blank slate is to deny the legacy of the site. This masks potential contaminants as well as the decision made that led

to environmental degradation in the first place.

Post-industrial landscapes are layered with cultural complexity and because of the sensitive nature of these sites, the design strategy for these sites should reflect their intricate narratives. This assertion begs the questions for landscape designers: How do we instill a sense of experimentation or of ‘thinking outside the box’? Of iteration and exploration when processing complex temporal information? This project is rooted in the claim that the opportunities to conjure new and imaginative ways of representing post-industrial parks is found within artistic practice. It is through the iteration of creative processes that one can define their own artistic practice. The designer will find ways of looking, interpreting and designing that is particular to their practice. The application of artistic practice within the design process not only can strengthen the

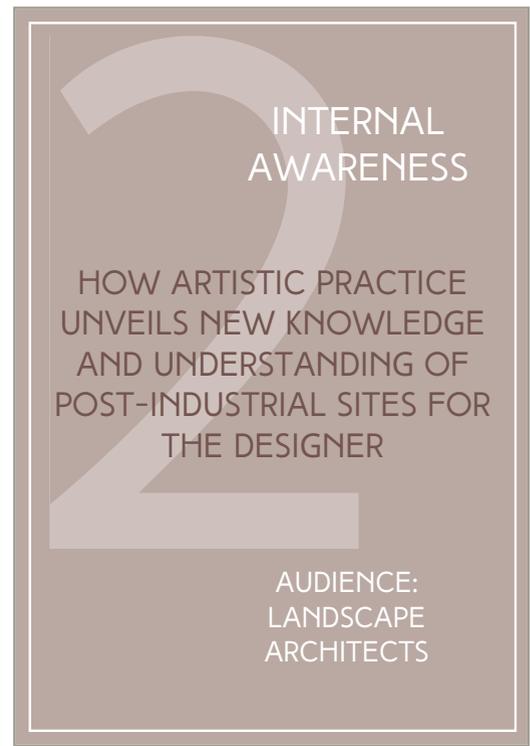
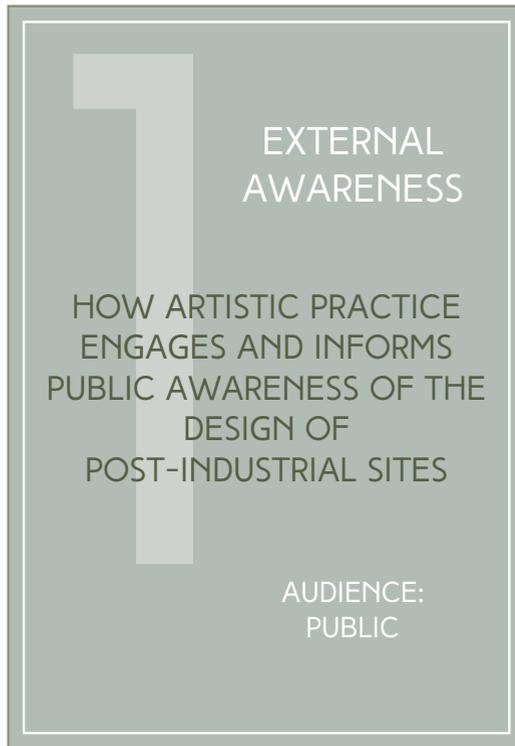


Figure 1 - This project investigates two types of awareness. External awareness in this inquiry refers to the awareness of the public and the influence the works created and exhibited have had on public awareness of the Whilamut Natural Area. Internal awareness refers to the increased awareness and knowledge the landscape architect gains from making the art work.

public's desire to understand a place, but also offer landscape architects a better understanding of their design decisions. The intention of this project is two-fold: first is to use art as a communication device aimed at

facilitating responses and awareness to post-industrial sites. The second intention of this project is to examine the effectiveness of artistic practice as a way for the designer to develop a more intimate understanding of the

post-industrial site (Figure 1).

Artistic practice has been influential to some landscape architects, especially in promoting new ways of thinking about landscape. Meyer cites the atypical modes in which Anu Mathur and Dilip da Cunha create images to understand and communicate the uncertain and temporal nature of landscapes. With these professionals in mind, I have worked toward representing the complexities of a post-industrial park, the Whilamut Natural Area of Alton Baker Park (WNA of ABP) in Eugene, Oregon, and to sharing them to communicate to the public.

Beth Meyer's claims that large parks should engage and promote social agency to influence cultural perception and behavior; however, given that post-industrial landscapes are a representation of human behavior, I assert that it is not the landscape alone that should hold this respon-

sibility. Art is a collective agent that has the influence to engage people, to communicate ideas, to cause a reaction and to create change. Landscape designers should look to past cultural movements that have challenged mainstream perceptions. Of all the art movements that have challenged the status quo, none have done so more clearly than the Feminist Art Movement of the late 1960's. Chapter 1 explores the work of artists such as Suzanne Lacy, Barbara Kruger and Martha Rosler and how they were a part of the movement that shed light upon the issues women face. The lessons learned from the successes of Feminist Art Movement are transferable to other cultural concerns, such as what industry has done to our landscapes.

Figure 2 illustrates the basic phasing of this project. This research demonstrates how art can be used to inform the design of post-industrial parks that resonate with social agency.

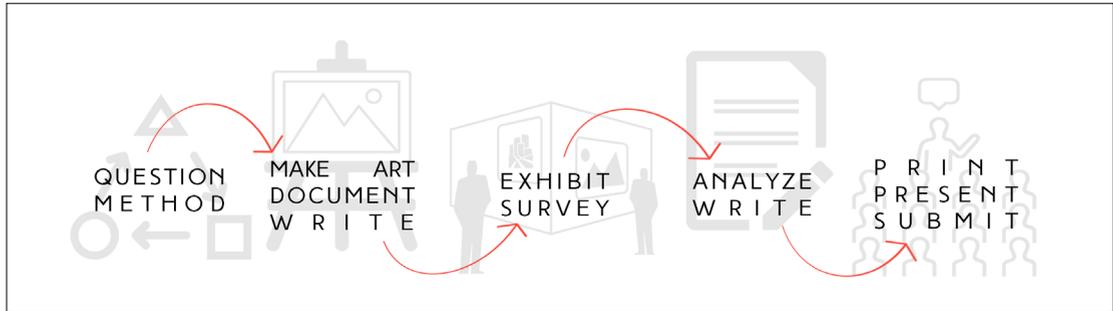


Figure 2 - Project Process Diagram

## THE MAKING OF A POST-INDUSTRIAL SITE

The history, including both cultural influences and environmental effects, should be top priority on the research agenda for any designer of post-industrial landscapes. Although the subject of this project is not the Whilamut Natural Area (WNA), the site is the subject of my case-study for the use of creating art works in the public promotion of and education about post-industrial sites. The following is a brief history of the WNA which influenced overall analysis as well as

the art work.

Before the settlement of Euro-Americans, the part of the Willamette Valley that is now Eugene-Springfield was home to the Native American tribe called Kalapuya. These people depended on the land for their survival, and today Alton Baker Park, Eugene's largest urban park, rests on a 400-acre portion of this land specifically, along the north bank along the Willamette River. Included within the large park are 237 acres set aside as a natural area named the Whilamut Natural Area to honor and respect the Kalapuya who once entrusted their livelihood to the land.

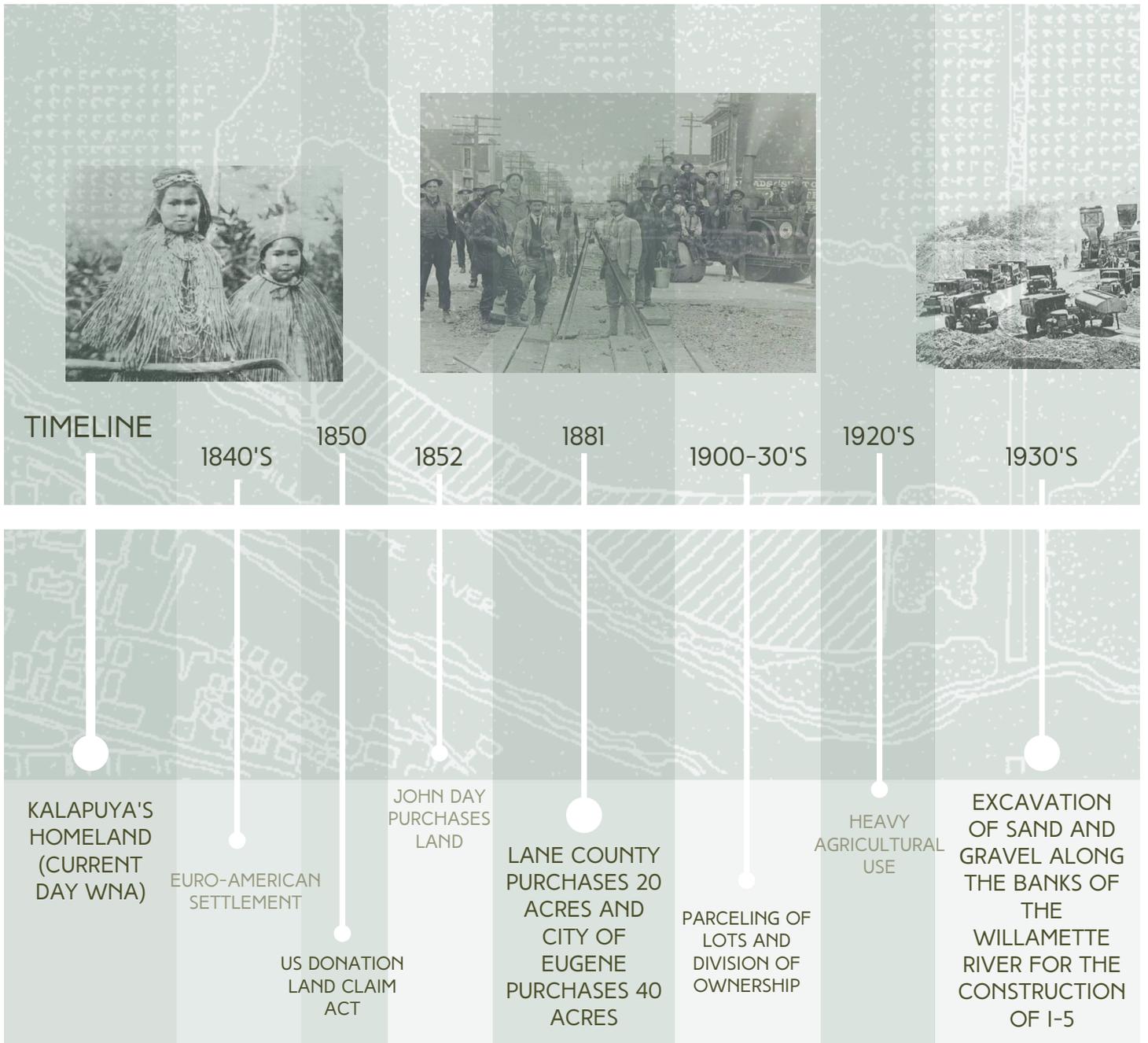


Figure 3 - Whilamut Natural Area Timeline: This figure shows a general timeline for the 237-acre portion of land known today as Whilamut Natural Area and the change of events leading to a 70-acre landfill created within this area.



CITY PARKS  
MOVEMENT

COUNTY  
PURCHASES  
PIT  
LANDFILL  
BEGINS

POLLUTION AND  
CONTAMINANT  
TESTING BY EPA

LANDFILL  
CLOSED

REMEDIAION  
MASTER PLAN  
ADOPTED

VOLUNTEER  
REPLANTING  
EFFORTS  
BEGIN

RE-NAMED  
WHILAMUT  
NATURAL AREA

TALKING  
STONES  
INSTALLED

UPLAND  
PRAIRIE  
HABITAT IN  
RESTORATION  
WNA A  
MAJOR  
PEDESTRIAN/  
BIKE PATH

'Whilamut', is a Kalapuya word meaning "where the river ripples and runs fast" (City of Eugene). Of this 237 acres, just over 70 acres have been used so extensively that the land is anything but original.

During the 1840's exploration of the west and the arrival of European settlers led to the discovery of the fertile lands nestled within the Willamette Valley. These highly sought after plots of land were obtained through the United States Donation Land Claim Act of 1850. In 1852, Mr. John Day acquired a majority of the land known today as Alton Baker Park. Between 1900 - 1930's parceling and subdivision of the lots took place which defined private and public uses for the parcels. These lots deemed as a desirable park location, primarily because of its location in the floodplain making the land unsuitable for development, were eventually acquired by the city with the intent of establishing Eugene's

first metropolitan park. Over the years, before damming controlled the river, annual flooding left sand and gravel deposits along the north and south banks of the Willamette River. Beginning in the 1930's the north and south banks of the Willamette River, adjacent to current day Whilamut Natural Area, were excavated for sand and gravel. These materials were used for the purposes of development throughout the city of Eugene, but primarily for the construction of Interstate-5. By the 1950's excavation spanned ten acres. Other than a strip of vegetation that remained along the bank of the Willamette River, the entirety of the site had been wiped clear of vegetation; prompting Lane County to purchase the site in 1963 for use as a landfill. Day Island served as a waste site for nearly ten years. In its entirety the landfill spans 70 acres and covers the land with depths anywhere from two to thirty feet deep. (Finney, 1995).

The Day Island Landfill, which is now known as the Whilamut Natural Area of Alton Baker Park, has been capped for over 40 years. In some areas of the site, the soil barrier between the walkable surface and the waste decaying below is just six inches and the mound raises up to 25 feet above the bike path near the river (French, 2005). The current condition does not allow for the native vegetation to grow easily, instead the area is covered with invasive plant species and grasses. However, group efforts are being made to restore an upland prairie habitat by control of invasive plants and planting of native plants. As an upland prairie restoration site, many birds and insects are present but the most apparent signs of life were song birds and Canadian Geese. Whilamut Natural Area houses a network of biking and running trails, along with a series of “Talking Stones” honoring the Kalapuya. There is nearly no mention of the post-industrial or geomorphological

history that have impacted the physical landscape through which visitors travel and recreate (Finney, 1995).

## TESTING THE ART EXHIBIT AND PUBLIC AWARENESS

Through the implementation of a descriptive social survey coupled with the venue of an art exhibit, I attempted to record the effect of an art exhibit and the role it plays towards increasing awareness and informing perception of a local post-industrial site. Awareness, I argue is the first step towards stimulating agency (Figure 3).

## DESIRED OUTCOMES

With this project I hope to have added to the discussion of the role of artistic practice within the design process, especially regarding public sites. The venue of the exhibit paired with the survey engaged people in ways that sparked curiosity and

stimulated ideas. By using an untraditional public inquiry process (the public exhibit) as an event to gather the public, I hope to have taught visitors about a post-industrial site within their locale. Another purpose of this project is to test a method for not only exposing the general public to the decisions made in their community but also making the participation of public input easy, accessible and enjoyable.

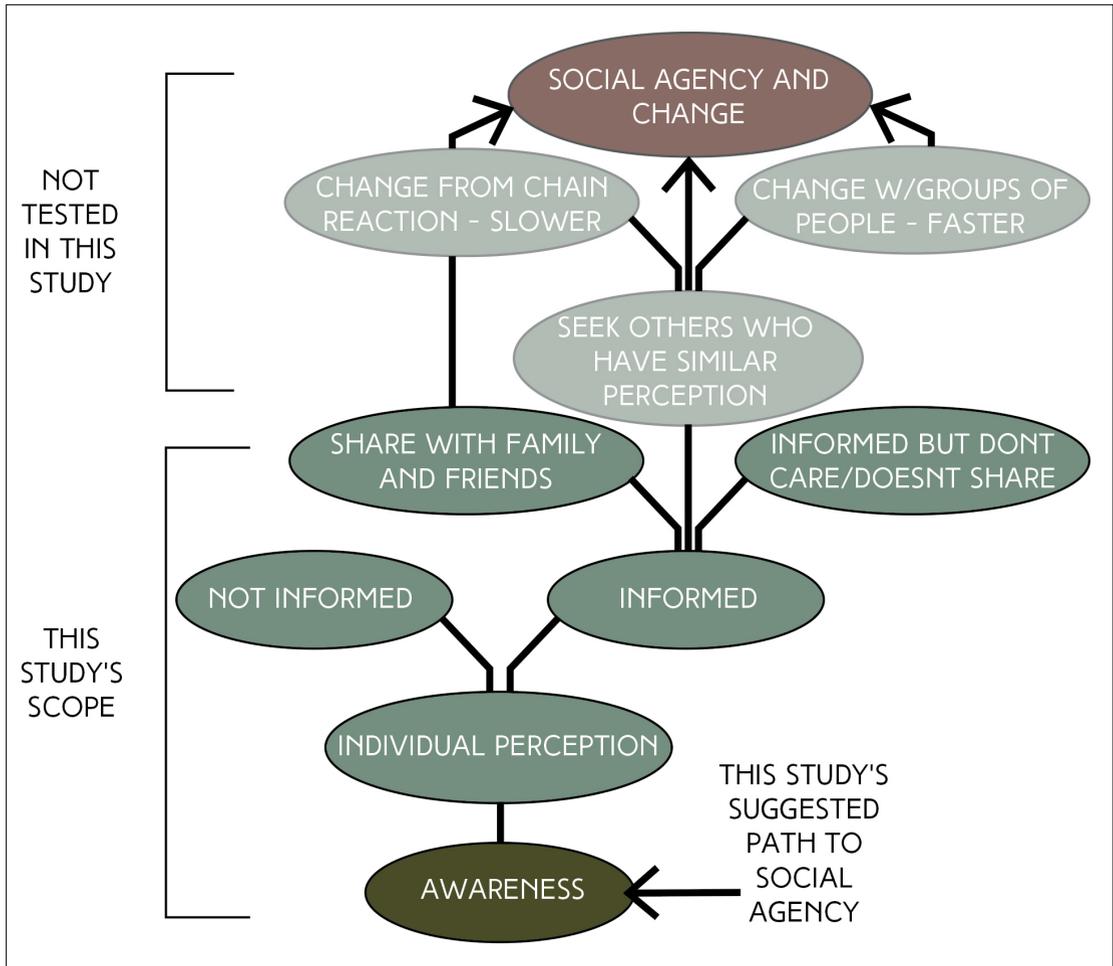


Figure 3 - Path to Social Agency: The above figure shows the scope at which this project is focusing on within the development of social agency. For instance, if a participant comes to the exhibit, then their perception of the WNA can be either informed or not informed, meaning that they have learned something or have not. Then if the participant learns something from the exhibit they have the decision to share or not to share what they have learned. The survey given to participants at the exhibit was positioned to reveal if this learning and sharing of information occurred.

*"We value artworks, in part, because they afford the opportunity for us to exercise our sensibilities, to recognize and to distinguish different qualities in the appearance of things. The aesthetic properties of artworks alert us to the qualitative dimensions of the world at large and improve our capacities for discovering them."*

*- Noel Carroll, American Philosopher and leading figure in contemporary philosophy of art (1999)*

# CHAPTER 1

## SUPPORT FROM BEYOND THE FIELD

### ARTISTIC PRACTICE ACROSS DISCIPLINES

*Chapter 1 describes the current state of creative practice in the landscape architecture profession and refers to the only text written about landscape research within the field. This chapter also offers examples of practitioners from different fields of study who use creative practice as a means to understand their research and who aid in the legitimacy of art as research. This chapter also lists examples of art from the Feminist Art Movement of the 1960's that have impacted cultural perceptions, and awareness*

## VISUAL STUDIES IN LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE

The curriculum of landscape architecture operates on a wide spectrum. The technical and environmental realms are empirical and fact-based, and learning them requires memorization and practical experience. Design, of course, requires creative thinking and practice. Yet, as within the technical realm, knowledge is only informed by data and not typically influenced by cultural perception. And on the other end of the spectrum, visual literacy is essential knowledge for good design. Catherine Dee, a respected landscape theorist and architect states that, "Visual studies require (re)viewers to respond critically, just as they do to written papers" she then recommends that "wider literacy in visual culture may be required" (Dee, 2004). But how do we learn to obtain this

essential knowledge? My stance is that in our temporal and complex world, we will need to encourage and embrace the surfacing of creative methods of knowing, such as artistic practice. It is in the proficiency of artistic practice that visual communication and literacy skills are acquired.

This topic of visual literacy is not unknown to those in the field of landscape architecture, in fact, Catherine Dee promotes the discourse of visual studies as research in her article 'The Imaginary Texture of the Real: Critical Visual Studies in Landscape Architecture: Contexts, Foundations, and Approaches'. Here she examines the opportunities for visual research in the field of landscape architecture and investigates the gap between practice and theory (Dee, 2004). To continue this discourse while responding to Beth Meyer's aforementioned calls for action, I use methods involving creative practice, case-study, and descriptive social survey

to guide this project.

Not only is there discourse about creative practice as research, but there are landscape architects who practice and employ their own artistic practice to their process of design. As mentioned in the Introduction, Meyer cites the creative methods of admired landscape architects Anu Mathur and Dilip da Cunha (Meyer, 2001). These individuals facilitate and inform their designs through the use of materials and processes typically practiced by artists. Their work on the 'Mississippi Floods', expanded the horizons for landscape architects to express landscapes that possess many layers of complexity. Mathur and da Cunha conveyed the spanning the narrative of this region's history; from times of slavery in the cotton fields to the land management and engineering by the United States Army Corps of Engineers. Mathur and da Cunha have skillfully incorporated artistic materials and processes into their

understanding and communication of these complex histories. Included in their work for the Mississippi Floods, Mathur and da Cunha composed a series of art works titled, 'Mississippi Horizons: Mapping a Shifting Terrain', in which they use a variety of screen printing and collage techniques to layer maps with

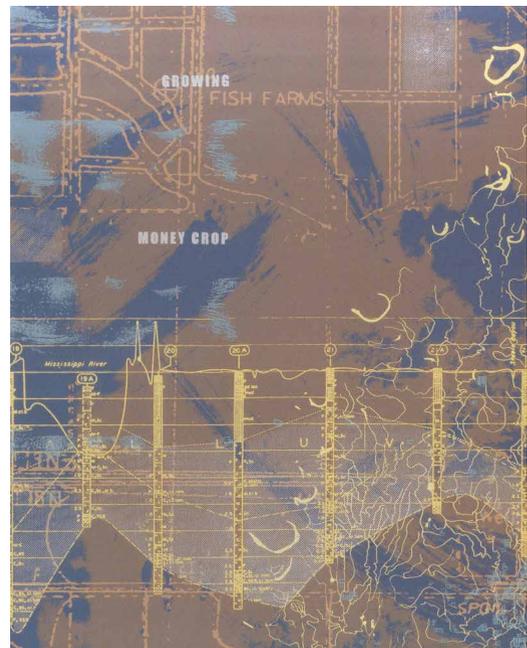


Figure 1.1 - 'Flooding Soil' Mathur and da Cunha works from their Mississippi Horizons series (Perkins, 2001).

illustrations and data that reflect the geologic and cultural issues of the region (see Figure 1.1 and 1.2). Mathur and da Cunha refer to these maps as “generative and explorative”. Also included within this series of work are exquisite paintings, panoramas, and sketches which “record the horizons of [their] travel”, (Figure 1.3) (Mathur, 2001).

Artistic expressions of place are especially important to understanding culturally significant landscapes because it is these expressions that have the ability to engage audiences (including the designer) in ways that bring a more empathic understanding of place. It is through emotion that people can begin to understand one another and to relate and develop empathy. It is particularly necessary to seek these connections when designing sensitive spaces that cater to unfamiliar cultures and places. A change in land use, like a change from one crop to another, could be

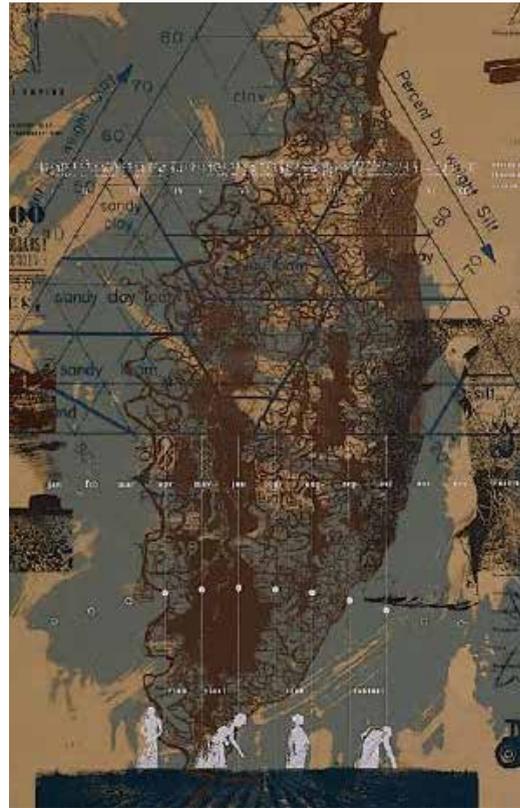


Figure 1.2 - 'Raising Hollars' Mathur and da Cunha works from their Mississippi Horizons series (Horwitz, 2001).

interpreted as a minute alteration of the landscape, but each decision like this has a cultural impulse that has caused this reaction on decision. It is in creative practice that we can tell

this narrative to create an emotive understanding that speaks volumes louder than many essays or graphs. Although it is obvious to many, there are ongoing discussions about creative or visual forms of research and the proper application in the field of landscape architecture. Elen Deming and Simon Swaffield, who wrote the only book thus far on research in landscape architecture, aid in clarifying how creative practice can be situated within landscape architecture research.



*Figure 1.3 - 'Delta Crossings' Mathur and da Cunha horizon painting form their Mississippi Horizons series (Horwitz, 2001).*

## CREATIVE PRACTICE AS RESEARCH

Creative Practice is, relative to other methods of inquiry, an ambiguously defined method of research, especially in regard to the field of landscape architecture. Elen Deming and Simon Swaffield, authors and educators in environmental design and research, describe inquiry by design as, “an investigative strategy [that] remains poorly understood and inconsistently applied” (Deming, 2011). Within the arts and humanities, methods of ascertaining produces new and innovative ways to learn, formulate ideas and communicate information, all by means of creative engagement. These methods can often include unplanned experiences, which result in a new appreciation and alternative ways of approaching the subject. This unpredictability does not follow the traditional pattern of empirical inquiry. With this project I contribute to the discussion of creative practice

as inquiry by shedding light upon the value of ascertaining using creative practices. While doing this, I kept the method open to the ambivalence that comes with any artistic.

For the purposes of this report, I have identified artistic practice as a method that falls under the broader umbrella of creative practice, see Figure 1.4. Artistic practice is the methodological phasing an artist takes to ultimately communicate their concepts by means of making art. The assertion that underlies this investigation is that art has the capacity to create individual agency, which then has the potential to lead to social agency. However, in order to create social agency, individual agency must be initiated. How do people begin to think about their decisions and influences on the world in which they live? In this study, I test the influence art has on the ability to engage participants by deploying the social platform of an art exhibit and

# CREATIVE PRACTICE

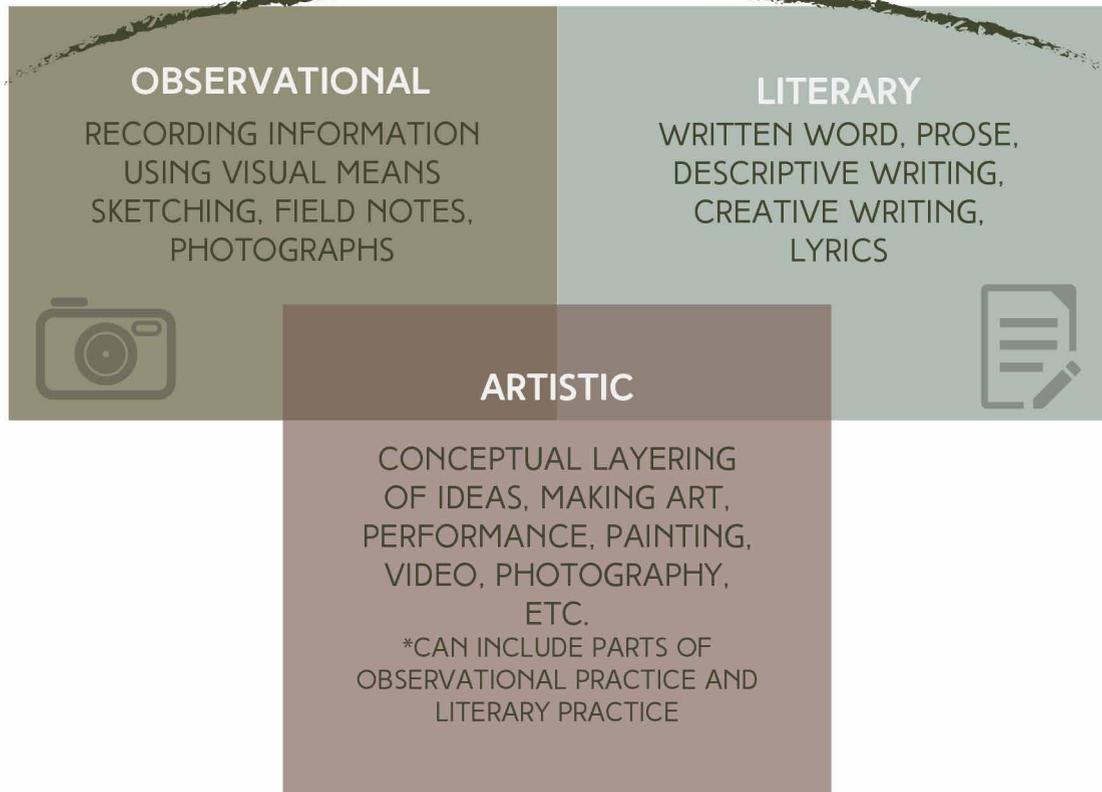


Figure 1.4 - Creative Practice Umbrella, although many creative works can be made, this diagram shows there are different types of creative practice, all of which can inform the other. The distinction that makes Artistic Practice its own category is the emphasis on making things for conceptual understanding and layering of ideas. Photographs and sketches can be made in observation and may use similar materials that artists would, however, these are observations for recording. If these sketches were to be used in a conceptual manner, then they would fall into the realm of artistic practice.

the research strategy of a descriptive social survey.

The method employed in this study is explained more in depth in the chapter titled 'Method'. My hope for the 'Method' chapter is that it provides a basis for landscape architects who wish to take on a similar mode of inquiry, especially for individuals who may not have the prior experience of developing their own artistic practice. Similarly, I hope that this project will inspire others to investigate their own practice, leading to more accounts of creative inquiry strategies. It is my aspiration that these studies will then lead to a more informed and refined understanding of the application of creative practice as research strategy. For this reason, this report is aimed at providing the most transparent process of inquiry possible.

## CREATIVE LEARNING AND THEORY GROUNDED COGNITION

Fundamental to this project, especially for the internal inquiry (explained in the 'Introduction'), is the affirmation that by physically making art the designer is able to acquire new knowledge and ways of imagining. This is supported by the field of Cognitive Science, specifically among theorists focused in an area of research known as grounded cognition, which "proposes that modal simulations, bodily states and situated action underlie cognition" (Barsalou, 2008). Within the past ten years, cognitive experiments have shown empirical evidence that "simulations, situations and bodily states play central roles in cognition" (Barsalou, 2008). The work of landscape designer, professor and author Catherine Dee is aligned with this theory in her article 'The Imaginary Texture of the Real...' by stating that

“The very act of making images in response to both text and other images, or as a vehicle for studying a subject, changes understandings. If researchers make images they look at other images in different ways and thus improve visual literacy and critical ability” (Dee, 2004). Although I agree with Catherine Dee, I recommend not narrowing visual studies to just images, which suggests the study of only two-dimensional works. The act of creating three dimensional things (sculpture, installation, etc.) and even four-dimensional (performance and video) will also improve critical ability while giving a hands-on approach to materiality and problem solving. This area of creation requires the creator to consider similar aspects that are required when designing landscapes, for instance, materiality, construction, phasing, spatiality, time management, etc.

## THICK DESCRIPTION

The book, ‘Thick Description: To-

ward an Interpretive Theory of Culture’, by anthropologist Clifford Geertz (2002) is an assortment of writings from years of research and investigation about cultures and meaning. By bringing this work together Geertz found his standpoint on interpretation of cultures. Geertz admits that his approach to theory may seem odd or perverse, however he defends this process as typical for cultural anthropologists. The Theory of Thick Description not only looks at human behavior but also the contextual influences that would make the behavior a part of that culture. By culminating on thoughts and observations, and then expanding on these ideas while considering contextual influences, the researcher is able to collect data on phenomena that is unmeasurable in science. It is with this Theory of Thick Description that one can bring the sketchbook or journal to the respected level of a reference book. The sketchbook in this instance is a powerful tool, used to record

ideas, observations, happenings, and to link these all together. By having these markings on paper a thicker description of place is represented and thus more fully understood by the researcher.

Both artists and designers employ the power of the sketchbook. Using this tool to record first-hand encounters and to make connections across place and time is essential in the understanding of a place. It is through the experience of being situated that one can fully comprehend the experience of place. In a sketchbook, the researcher is able to record real-time happenings and experience the impact and the feeling of these events. By being situated in an environment the researcher is also able to empathize with the inhabitants of that place. All of these recordings accumulate to a thicker description of place and are considered in the humanities as a legitimate form of research.

The debate over what entails legitimate research is a current issue in the relatively young field of landscape architecture, especially concerning creative practice as research. In order to inform this debate and to take the value of art into a more modern perspective, I poise that we look into the field from which landscape architecture emerged, the fine arts, to investigate its legitimately to inform the design and research of landscapes.

## ART AS AN AGENT OF CHANGE

Today, we face major issues concerning the practice of natural resource and land management. With these issues at hand we must reimagine and shed light upon our post-industrial landscapes. How do landscape architects do this? There is no single answer, but I suggest that we look to the Feminist Art Movement of the 1960's to find inspiration and

precedent on how to use art to raise awareness about the issues we face as a culture.

During the 1960's, a time marked by protests for equality, the civil rights and queer rights movements were among the demands for equal treatment of all Americans. Each of these movements had their own impact however, of the protests, none have made more of an impact on artistic practice and cultural change as the Feminist Art Movement. These artists wanted to create change by using their art to expose the issues women face in society at that time. Not only did they bring to light these issues, they also changed the already established art world by denying the venue of museums and galleries. They pushed the boundaries of new media in which to communicate their concepts by creating work from materials that were not already contextualized by men. "By creating alternative structure (eg. cooperative

galleries), pursuing art forms that can exist outside gallery and museum contexts (eg., site specific sculpture, temporary installation, public art, performance, video), and creating overtly political art, these artists indeed challenged the mainstream" (Gouma-Peterson, 1990). Artists such as Suzanne Lacy, Barbara Kruger and Martha Rosler were among the women who created and openly displayed art works that were controversial and challenged the culture of gender roles in America. Lacy used performance and installation to bring awareness to violence against women. Kruger was responsible for the ad-like graphic art that slandered ads that relayed the ideas men had about what women should be. Rosler addresses women's roles in public and private space by creating video art that uses satire that references television programs aimed at women. These women not only impacted cultural perceptions, but also introduced the mainstream to new ideas of what

art can be.

## SUZANNE LACY

The artistic strategies Suzanne Lacy employs include public drawings, performances and installations all staged within three weeks during the month of May for the purpose of creating a public response (Figure 1.3). By explicitly writing the dates of specific rapes on the sidewalk near where the attacks took place, she calls attention to the frequency of sexual assaults on women. In her article featured in *NWSA Journal*, Vivien Green Fryd, writes of Lacy's strategies to engage the public through art, Fryd states, "Lacy's activist-aesthetic tools, which emerged from her strong commitment to feminism and political activism, have become a classic lexicon artist seeking to engage diverse audiences with issues relevant to their lives. The practice seeks to transform its viewers into participants, even collaborators, with activist art" (Fryd, 2007). The main

strategy to engage the public was to stage her work in a "non-art space to augment the element of surprise and the political impact, as well as to reach a wider audience" (Fryd, 2007).

Lacy deliberately took her artwork out of the gallery space and into the public realm so that she could bring attention to these unfortunate issues women regularly face. Of the many issues facing women at the time was that the "majority of women artists were denied exhibitions and gallery representation based on the sole fact of their gender" which Lacy's work addresses this attitude ("Feminist Art", 2016). Lacy networked with city officials so that her work would have the support of people who managed public spaces. She then was strategic in the placement of her work sites, she would situated the artwork in spaces that were exposed to both government workers and the public so that they could witness her installations. This was important because

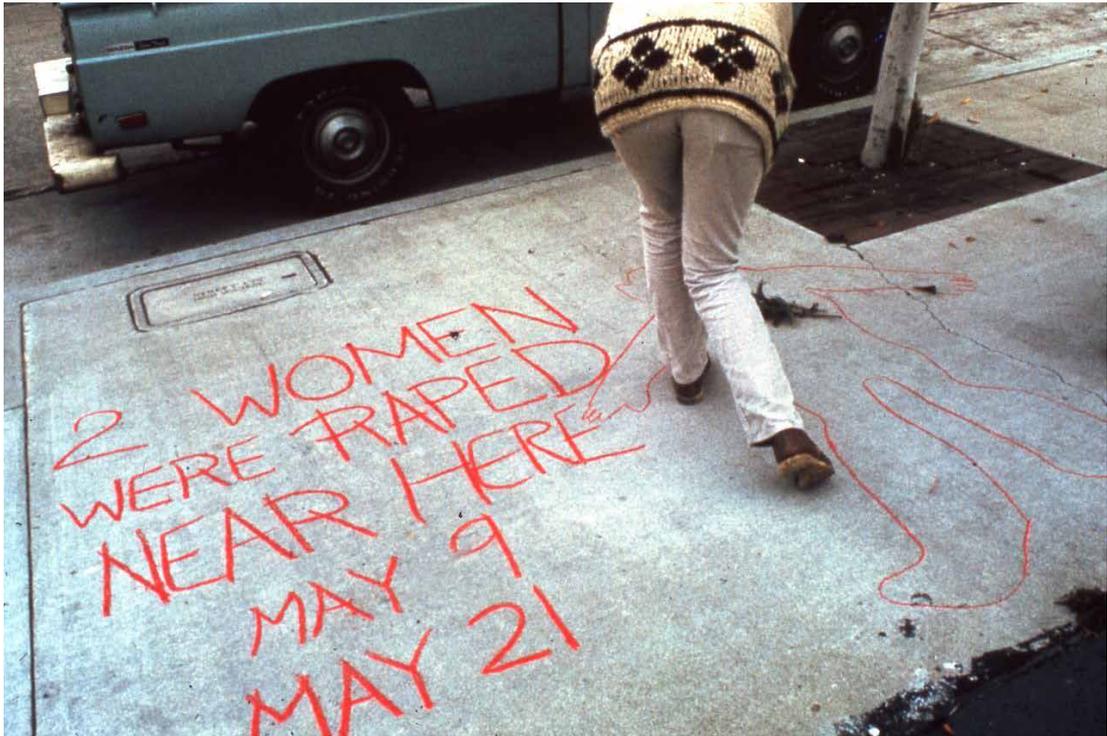


Figure 1.3 *Three Weeks in May* (1977) by Suzanne Lacy, in just one of her many pieces during her three-week long art series. This image documents Lacy replicates a situation where police trace the outline of a body at the scene of a crime. By labeling this piece with specific dates, Lacy draws attention to the frequency of violent assaults on women near this locale.

she knew that some government workers had the influence to make political changes. If the public were to have an opinion on the matter, then the government workers would see the issues people care about. By taking the artwork outside the gallery she was also calling into question traditional artistic practices which typically catered to mainstream audiences and the elite.

## BARBARA KRUGER

Artist Barbara Kruger's work was influenced by Suzanne Lacy and carried on her tenacity of bringing feminist issues to the forefront. However, her strategies to engage public opinion were different than those of Lacy. Kruger, a former graphic designer, used these skills to create a series of silkscreen images representing the ads seen at the time. By turning to her experience, Kruger was able to use the media tactics that she was protesting to turn the message on its head. She created art works that were

similar in design to advertisements made by the male dominated advertising industry (Figure 1.4). Kruger protested the problem with these ads, which were aimed at telling women what they wanted. These ads created an expectation for women by enforcing the male ideal of a "femininity" or "wifeliness" through media, think 'Mad Men'. "[Her work] is a reminder that most of the media that is geared toward women is based on men's assumptions about women's desires, lives, and ideals, interrogating the belief that women only need material objects to feel happy and that men can keep them under their control by those means" ("Feminist Art", 2016).

## MARTHA ROSLER

Similar to the previously mentioned artists, Martha Rosler goes beyond traditional norms when communicating concepts about women's roles in the household. Rosler presents her work, 'Semiotics in the Kitchen'



Figure 1.4 Untitled (*I shop therefore I am*), (1987) by Barbara Kruger utilizes the public reach of the media she criticizes to bring attention to the manipulation women face. Her prints overlaid with clever phrases that bring awareness to the influence men have on women through the male dominated industry of advertising.



Figure 1.5 *Semiotics of the Kitchen* (1975) by Martha Rosler, is a 6-minute short film performance of Rosler posing as a female show host, in the video she defines the meaning of the tools in the kitchen. Using a monotone voice Rosler holds each object and performs their use in the kitchen. This work challenges women's roles in the home and the portrayal of those roles in mass media (*"Feminist Art"*, 2016).

using video art (Figure 1.5). In this video, Rosler imitates using the tools of the kitchen, such as ladling liquid that is not there, her use of the kitchen tools used for imaginary food lends a humorous feel to the video. While talking directly to the viewer, Rosler holds a monotone voice which contrasts the exaggerated performance with the kitchen tools. Her performance in the kitchen is seemingly laborious, hinting at the labor involved to work in the kitchen. In this performance she aggressively challenges the roles of women and men in the workforce. She is also making a critical statement about the housewife image of perfect, smiling women enjoying her role.

It was the Feminist Art Movement that made a significant impact on redefining the art world by expanding the horizons of media and taking the work outside the museum (Gouma-Peterson, 1990). The use of video art was a rather new technology at the

time this work was made. It was this branching out that gave way for feminist artists to make their mark in the art world. Feminist artists, such as Rosler, Kruger and Lacy, “have used art as a form of legitimated public discourse, a conduit through which to enter ideas into public discussion” (Molesworth, 2000).

What can landscape architects learn from the Feminist Art Movement? The aforementioned artists took the issues into their own hands by creating artwork that stimulated cultural change. By bringing awareness to the issues facing women these artists were a part of the bigger movement to solve the problem of unfair cultural bias and behaviors. If landscape architects are able to connect with the public especially for the design of post-industrial sites, then awareness for these sites and the bigger issues can be raised. It is important to note that as with most art, viewer and critic responses to the work create the

meaning and define the impact of the work. This definition of the work is tied to the public's perception of the subject. There is no empirical method to know exactly what the impacts are, but one can see how powerful art along with other influencing agents have been to promote awareness and change.

Beth Meyer speaks to the importance of acknowledging post-industrial sites, in her essay *Uncertain Parks: Disturbed Sites, Citizens and Risk Society*, she asks "What does the large metropolitan park constructed on a site degraded by the processes of human consumption and industrial production mean? . . . What kinds of citizens and society are associated with these large parks on disturbed sites?" (Meyer, 2002). In today's world the experience of the large park is changing from those conceived in the 19th century. Meyer's concern is of the deception that comes with masking the truthfulness of the processes tak-

ing place under the veneer of manicured park lawns. By bringing this issue to light landscape architects can be a part of the discussion of a much bigger issue. Meyer describes how large parks can become more meaningful to the public once the history is known. She continues with a quote from Mira Engler, a prominent landscape theorist and professor, which refers to the landfills "As the greatest earthwork monument of our times and a cogent symbol of our consumer culture . . . a dump can be held as a mirror to our culture" (Meyer, 2002). The larger issues of consumption and production are sited within every landfill. However, to steer this dialog towards a strategy that raises awareness we must begin at the local level and not sweep it under the turf. This project attempts to do just that, expose the issues and ask the public how to interpret them on site so that there is continued awareness.



*“This very process of institutionalization may have exacted a cost, over the course of time, in a needless narrowing of the profession’s vision of its own work, the range of sources in which it might draw, and the freedom with which it pursued new goals or alternative ways of arriving at the same goals.”*

*- Catherine M. Howett speaking to the harms of only teaching tech and science in landscape architecture (1985)*

# CHAPTER 2

## METHOD

### MEASURING RESEARCH AND DEFINING ARTISTIC PRACTICE

*The following chapter describes the steps involved in carrying out this project. This chapter may be especially helpful for landscape architects who wish to take on a similar mode of inquiry, especially for those who may not have prior experience developing their own artistic practice.*

## VISUAL STUDIES IN LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE

The method that furthers the research for this study is the integration of a tool commonly conducted in the humanities to gather information that is difficult to quantify. Deming and Swaffield have titled this tool the descriptive social survey. This method involves the investigator designing “the research to systematically ask other people to provide information on the topic of interest, using a formal survey instrument such as a questionnaire or an interview that is structured around a standard set of questions” (Deming, 72).

The survey given in this study is positioned to provide information regarding ways the exhibit has influenced the viewer’s awareness of the Whilamut Natural Area. The intention of this survey is to document re-

sponses and the voices of people who have the ability to transform environments (this includes professionals in or near our field). By opening the exhibition and survey to public participants (since these are the people for whom we design for) it opens the dialog regarding post-industrial sites, (in this case the former landfill) which also promotes awareness, which is a key factor that coalesces to create social agency. The methods used in this project are not solely a “descriptive social survey” but also include creative practice, which includes an exhibit of the art work. The art making process is documented to record any changes in awareness on the part of the designer, then the art is shared at a social venue, and responses to the work are collected through the survey.

For the purposes of this report, artistic practice is the methodological steps an artist takes to create art that communicates their concepts.

The steps employed in this study are shown in Figure 2.1. The following subheadings in this chapter refer to these steps and are sequentially listed, particularly for those who wish to replicate this artistic practice. The following text aims at providing a clear and concise record of the process that lead to my findings. To see

the final works that came from these steps refer to the 'Catalogue' chapter.

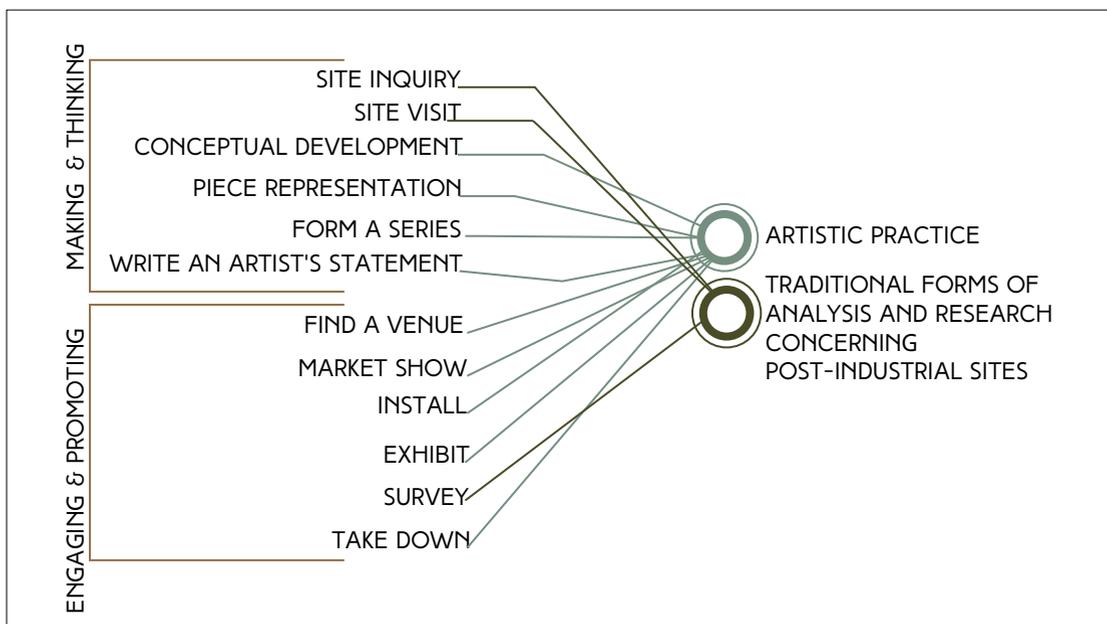


Figure 2.1 Identifies project steps from my artistic practice that have been integrated to help research history, perceptions and biophysical conditions of the Whilamut Natural Area. The steps in blue are common tasks artists take to further their conceptual investigations and can also be interpreted as a loss of information if not adopted more frequently during traditional landscape analysis. Steps in green are more likely to be used in traditional landscape analysis.

## ARTISTIC PRACTICE SITE INQUIRY

Site inquiry refers to researching the biophysical conditions and history of a site, which is essential to understanding what might be experienced upon the site visit. For instance, the Whilamut Natural Area has been greatly affected by its past land uses (as many post-industrial sites have). As mentioned in the 'Introduction', the Whilamut Natural Area was shaped by many influences over a great span of time, leaving it with specific constraints regarding design possibilities. Similarly, the background of the site influences the conceptual development step of artistic practice. Knowing the history helps to inform the landscape architect about the site's character, which could influence the design of a significant cultural landscape. Furthermore, post-industrial sites are rife with cultural concerns and the investigation of them will lead to increased awareness of these brown-

field sites. For instance, given the extraction and landfill history of the Whilamut Natural Area, the site is a reflection of many different cultural issues, most notably production and consumption culture.

## SITE VISIT

Conducting site visits is an essential part of landscape analysis. On a number of site visits I observed the influence of humans, plants, animals and the surrounding context of the site. It must also be noted that the site visits were mainly carried out during the winter to early spring seasons due to time restraints of this study. Typically, experiential (most subjective) information is included in a traditional site analysis but also more technical (or measurable) qualities are noted as well. For this project site visits were more focused upon the subjective and experiential.

## CONCEPTUAL DEVELOPMENT

This term may seem ambiguous, but I offer this definition; conceptual development is the mind's process to compose a coherent idea influenced by knowledge and experience over a period of time. From my experience, this includes research, iteration, exploration and an open mindedness from the artist. The following listed topics are always a part of the conceptual development phase of my artistic practice. That is not to say other factors have never influenced this development, but for the purposes of defining the steps for this study the following are provided:

### OBSERVE

The observational phase of conceptual development requires me to keep an open mind. Allowing alternative views and inspiration from unpredictable sources into the observation process is key to keeping the conceptual possibilities broad in scope.

At this step it is important to journal and photograph.

### EXPAND

It is typical for a novice artist to overwork a concept just as easy as it is for one to muddy paint colors. Careful selection of information is crucial to developing a concept that is justified and backed by not only experiences but information. Finding resources and reading materials regarding the concept directly and even indirectly creates an interesting and sometimes unexpected avenue to visually communicate the concept. At this stage it is helpful to look to other artists for guidance, whether they be in the history books or at the supply store. Talking with others reveals insight to unexpected conceptual ideas.

### JOURNAL

In order to record and create an uninterrupted flow of thoughts, I journal words, phrases, and describe images that flash through my mind as seen

in Figure 2.2. Also represented in this figure are omitted ideas or thoughts as shown in the non-highlighted areas. It is important to note any trace of an idea in the conceptual development stage because it may be an idea that develops later. This phase may occur in the studio or at the end of the day. Regardless, having a sketchbook close by frees my mind to ruminate. For example, during this study many ideas were revealed on the edges of sleep, therefore it was important to keep paper and pen at my bedside.

#### SKETCH

When words cannot communicate ideas effectively, diagrams and quick sketches are sufficient ways to record a thought. Each image creation has the potential to be revisited and made complete, therefore, it is important to record the image in one's mind as brief and as concise as possible in order to move on to the next thought. Later, these sketches can

evolve into new ideas. It is important to remember the sketchbook is a tool and not the final piece.

These phases in conceptual development are not necessarily in any particular order, however, for those who wish to replicate this method in an orderly fashion the given organization of the above phases can be replicated sequentially. This regimented process will lend order, however, it is possible that the wholeness of a concept conceived in such a manner may not have the depth or interest as one conceived through a casual reiteration of these phases. Revisiting steps will only strengthen the work.

#### INDIVIDUAL PIECE COMPOSITION

Each piece is created with its own combination and emphasis on the following artistic compositional factors. The following are not the only ways for an artist to express their concept, however for the purpose of

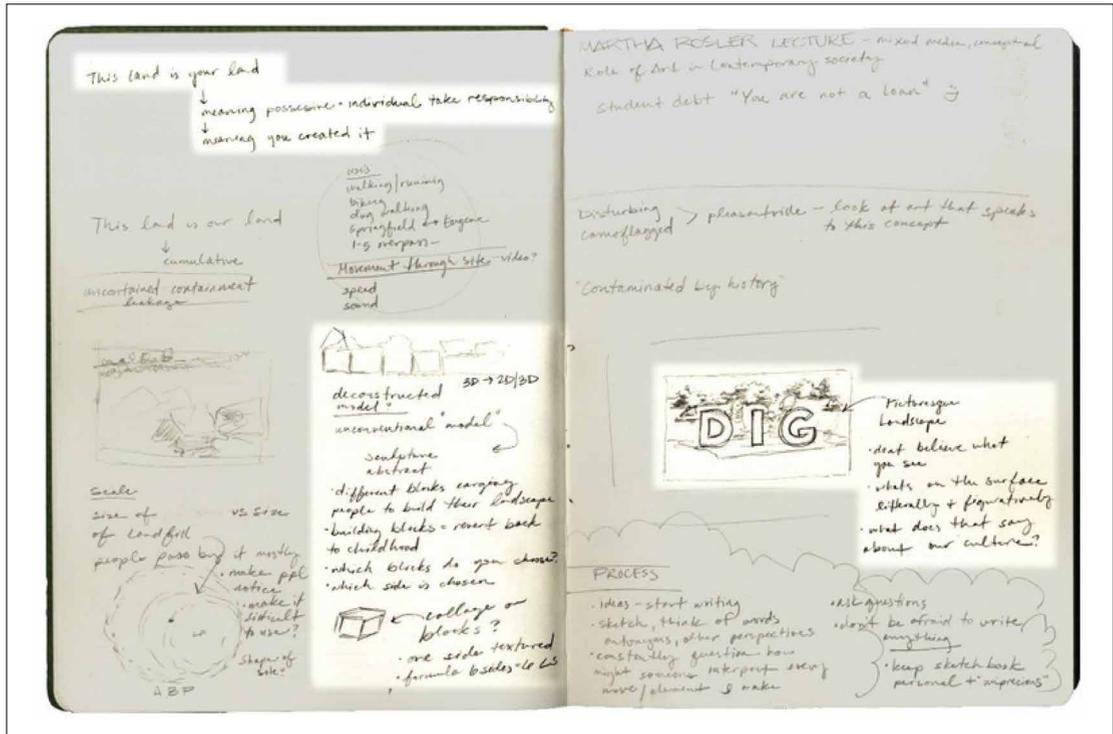


Figure 2.2 Sketchbook Example: An example of how sketchbooks are used for a variety of tasks during conceptual development. In this image, the illustrations highlighted are the beginnings of conceptual development. The final piece for selected sketches are shown in the 'Catalog' chapter of this report.

this report, I have identified the most frequently used steps regarding the work made for this study.

## ARRANGEMENT

Referring to the spatial placement of information and how its presented.

This includes choices of whether or not to use perspective, balance, focus, disproportion, and orientation to aid the concept and aesthetics.

## MATERIALITY

For this step I ask, "What material

will best communicate the concept?” On occasion, I have found material to inspire the concept because of its uniqueness or its ability to provoke a response. Materials will also determine the display of a piece. For instance, if the piece is to be suspended, then the artist must think through how that would be constructed and chose a material that can suit that purpose. For instance, stone or ceramics may be a challenging material to work with if the art work is displayed suspended above the viewer. Referring to precedent and making models will be beneficial when experimenting with materials. At times it may be best to go with instincts and use a material that intriguing and follow the characteristics of the materials to guide the creative exploration. If at any point the motivation is lost or if there is frustration (unless that’s the concept) take time away from the piece, when you return you most likely will see things more clearly.

## STYLE

Knowing how to present the information in a way that is unique. For example, the art works in this study are unique in that the materials are different, but the overall portrayal of the subject is consistent. Style is often made apparent to an artist by making work over a period of time.

## SERIES COMPOSITION

### AUDIENCE

Identify who is intended to ‘read’ the art. For the series in this study the work was directed toward a wide audience of community members in the Eugene community.

### NARRATIVE

Have a clear concept or story, this is where revisiting the conceptual development phase is important. By clarifying the story, the selection of pieces to exhibit becomes more clear. This means that not all the work that is made must be shown, but select-

ing pieces that effectively communicate the concept are what should be shown.

### BALANCE

Just as the artist is selective of the individual pieces, they must be just as thoughtful about the arrangement of the works for the exhibit. Often times, professional galleries will have a curator who has the experience to take care of this step. In this case, I was the curator. The decision for selecting works for this show was based on maintaining the interest of the visitor hoping that their interest will compel them to fill out the survey. From my experience, work that is intriguing and/or difficult to comprehend can hold the conceptual interest of the viewer more than work that is simply aesthetically pleasing. However, it is important to maintain a balance of different works in order to not overwhelm the viewer.

### INSTALL, EXHIBIT, TAKE DOWN

In the field of fine arts, the exhibit has been used as an aid for artists to communicate and engage with the viewer. These often communal spaces, whether in a museum or outdoors, are energized environments where ideas are exchanged and issues are addressed. For these reasons, the public showing of works created for this project set an open stage for conversation of consumer culture and post-industrial landscapes. By using a local site, the Whilamut Natural Area of Alton Baker Park, in conjunction with a public space located in the same locale, the Broadway Commerce Center, this arrangement supported this study. The close proximity of the site to the exhibit creates a more informed public to survey. Furthermore, if the viewer is not familiar with the Whilamut Natural Area, then they have the ability to access the site. By bringing the subject close to home a visitor may be more

likely to change their perception thus enticing the possibility for them to change their behaviors.

## SURVEY

The application of the descriptive social survey gathered information that answered the driving questions to this project. Upon creation of the survey it was helpful to revisit these questions:

What are ways that artistic practice can aid designers in the conceptualization of information regarding the complexities of a post-industrial site by serving as a platform from which to gain public input?

What are ways that artistic practice can stimulate designers and the public to interact in ways that will unearth alternative solutions for a post-industrial site design while contributing to overall public awareness of the way culture shapes landscapes?

The project was compelled by the assertion that art has the capacity to provoke an individual to make changes in his/her behaviors by changing an individual's perception and/or attitude. In order to test this assertion within the time frame of the Master's Project, the scope of the question was narrowed to -What compels an individual to change his/her perception? Whether one person or many choose to act, the idea to act must first come from a person's perception. Therefore, to influence a person's perception, information must be presented in a compelling manner. With this in mind, I designed the survey to test the awareness and perceptions of people who visited the exhibit, see Figure 2.3.

"The key to research design decisions in a descriptive social survey strategy relate to the framing of the questions, the selection of the people who will be asked to respond, and how to gain access to them" (Deming, 2011).

## FRAMING THE QUESTIONS

The survey questions were structured to provide information that could be used to help better understand how the exhibit may or may not communicate and engage with the community. Basically, the survey addresses questions such as: Does the exhibition communicate cultural issues centered around this site? Has the exhibit changed people's awareness of the Whilamut Natural Area? Are people aware of post-industrial sites within their locale? Rather than conducting a survey that asked personal questions which could identify a respondent, the survey was kept "open" so as to gain responses that were unrestricted. Deming writes of the advantages and disadvantages of conducting an "open" survey, stating that respondents have the ability to choose their own words but challenges arise during the interpretation and analysis of the responses (Deming, 2011).

## SELECTION OF THE PARTICIPANTS

Upon consideration of the people surveyed, it was important to gather a wide range of people who are in the Eugene area. The responses from various groups of people were important to the outcome of the survey. The respondents to the survey was dependent on who chooses to visit the exhibit which was hosted in one of Eugene's social hubs, the downtown area. Effective marketing of the event is also crucial to the outcome. The marketing materials used to bring people to the exhibit were thoughtfully dispersed throughout the Eugene community. Areas of distribution included local schools and universities, local businesses, public institutions (library, city offices, city hall), social media sites and local parks. In addition to my own marketing practices, I was able to arrange exposure from the Lane Arts Counsel by submitting my work to correlate with the First Friday Art Walk. Dur-

ing this well-known local event, participants are guided through downtown Eugene via brochure and map, to visit the exhibitions and interact with artists.

## DISTRIBUTION OF THE SURVEY

On April 1, 2016, at the opening reception exhibit visitors were asked to complete a brief survey, shown in Figure 2.3. After being greeted by the artist or artist's assistant, respondents were handed the survey and asked to fill it out as best they could and with complete honesty. Collection of surveys was limited to respondents submitting them to a drop box at the exhibit. At the end of the reception, the surveys were collected.

## SURVEY ANALYZATION

Survey answers were analyzed by individually counting and recording each respondent's answers on a spread sheet. The totals were converted into percentages and then

inserted into a visual data program which provided the pie charts seen in the 'Results' chapter. The pie charts and bar graphs were made to make sense of the numbers on the spread sheet. This representation of data also offers a simplified visualization of the data which coincides with the premise of this project.

Thank you for taking the time to complete this survey. Your contribution goes toward furthering knowledge in the field of landscape architecture.

Please circle Y (yes) or N (no) to the left of the indicated questions. Further comments are welcome. If more space is needed, please write on the back of this paper. Please DO NOT reveal any personal information (name, age, status, etc.) Should this information be revealed, your survey will be forfeited from this study.

**Y / N Q: Prior to this shows opening, did you know what a post-industrial or brownfield landscape was?**

**Y / N Q: Prior to this shows opening, did you know that the portion of Alton Baker Park known as the Whilamut Natural Area was a former gravel extraction and landfill site?**

**Y / N Q: During this exhibit have you exchanged ideas about the Whilamut Natural Area with any of the following individuals? Circle all that apply.**

Landscape designer	artist	community member	city official
Friend	family member	Yes, but I don't know their title	
Other: _____			

**Q: What do you think is the best interpretive tool to tell the history of a post-industrial site? Circle all that apply.**

Permanent sculptures	artistic series	signage / kiosk
commemorative viewing area	Pamphlets	interpretive trail
Other: _____		

Figure 2.3 The descriptive social survey visitors were asked to complete upon visiting the exhibit.

*“It is not insignificant that many painters and sculptors often admit to not knowing where they are going with their work when they first begin. Instead, the work “unfolds” as the artist is personally engaged with the medium and the possibilities that emerge from the work . . . During the time of engagement there occurs a spontaneity of feeling and expression arising both from a reactive response to the medium and the imagination that cannot be intellectualized or thought of external to experience.”*

*- James Corner from ‘Representation and Landscape’ (1992)*

# CHAPTER 3

## CATALOGUE

### ART WORKS CREATED AND SHOWN

*The following chapter shows the series of works that were created in response to the Whilamut Natural Area's post-industrial history and its current state. The title of the series is 'DIG', of which the explanation is in line with the conceptual statement of the piece 'DIG'. Along with an image of each piece, there is a conceptual statement which attempts to explain the inspiration, process and/or concept of the piece. Accompanying the conceptual statement is a detail of the piece that correlates to that statement.*

DIG  
YARN ON PLYWOOD  
2 X 4  
2016



# DIG

The overarching message of the exhibit was to get the public involved and aware of post-industrial sites within their community. 'DIG' exemplifies this message while also encouraging the public to be involved or even concerned with what is happening to their public landscapes, especially ones like the Whilamut Natural Area of Alton Baker Park. 'DIG' is not only a depiction of a view from the WNA it is a laborious piece that continued throughout this study. This labor is reflective of time it took for people to create this landscape. During the duration of creating this

piece, much time was allowed for reflection of how cultural landscapes are defined and represented. The following are the questions and concepts that emerged throughout the process of making this piece.

'DIG' commands the viewer to dig, this is represented by the camouflaged word "DIG" within the image. Viewers see traces of the common pattern of vertical lines made of yarn which contrast against the more organic yarn line forms, and in observation of this pattern the viewer searches (or digs) for what this pat-

tern is within the image. Like an illusion, the viewer is able to discover the word “DIG” which is made up of only vertical yarn lines. Once the viewer finds the word “DIG” they have done just that.

‘DIG’ also commands those to dig into the site, not literally, but into the literature, history and simply just be familiar and aware of their surroundings. The façade of a natural area is seemingly distracting with its desirable habitat making us feel as though we are content because we have set aside some natural areas for the native species because this is a “Natural Area”. If one were to dig they would find this habitat is not what is once was and can never be because of the human intervention which has restricted the restoration of native habitat. The message is for people to not accept what the surface reveals, and to be curious, get involved, dig into your public spaces, and encourage an honest interpretation of such sites.

When on this particular site, it is not suggested that one should physically dig due to the landfill settling just inches below the surface. However, if one were to dig on this site, much like an archeologist would, one would discover evidence of a culture just in a different historical context. This piece raises question such as: Does the historical context of this site change the value or desire for those to acknowledge this culture? How do we choose which cultural landscape is shared with the public, and what does it say about the civilization that dismisses this history? What does it mean to bury our past and how does that help our growing society?

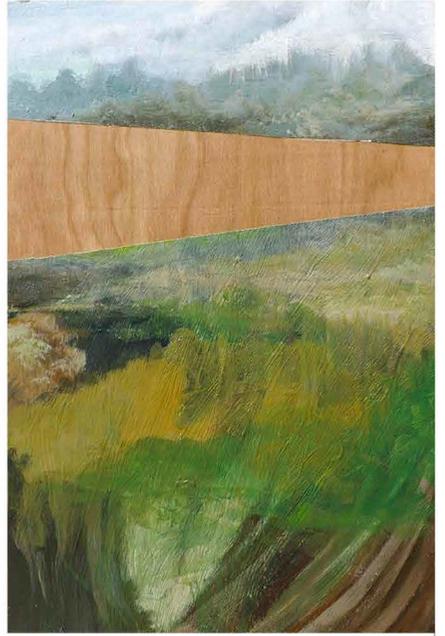
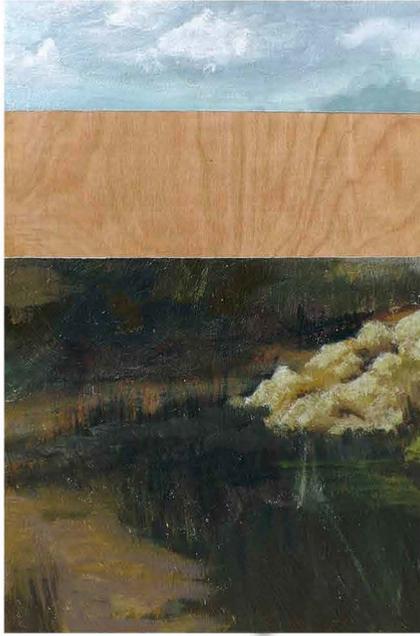


# LANDSCAPE NARRATIVE

ACRYLIC ON HARDWOOD

(3) 10 X 12

2016



# LANDSCAPE NARRATIVE

'Landscape Narrative' shows a generalized story of this site. The triptych format supports the arc of this story, by showing a beginning, a middle, and an end. This narrative is further represented in the changing sky across the panels. Although each piece of the triptych refers to a specific time in this landscape's narrative, the entirety of the three come together to create the bigger picture. With the horizon line omitted the painting feels unfinished with a significant formal piece missing from the composition. This exclusion reflects the very significant details of this sites

history that are not addressed on site. This painting portrays a non-formal trail on the site, created by the users of this park. The trail signifies the continued effect humans have on the site even after it has been 'restored', thus continuing this landscape's narrative.

The first panel on the left is the beginning of this landscapes narrative, the sky is clear with fluffy white clouds and in the distance, a hint at a untamed landscape. The trees in the distance vary in height and size, which, when compared to the far

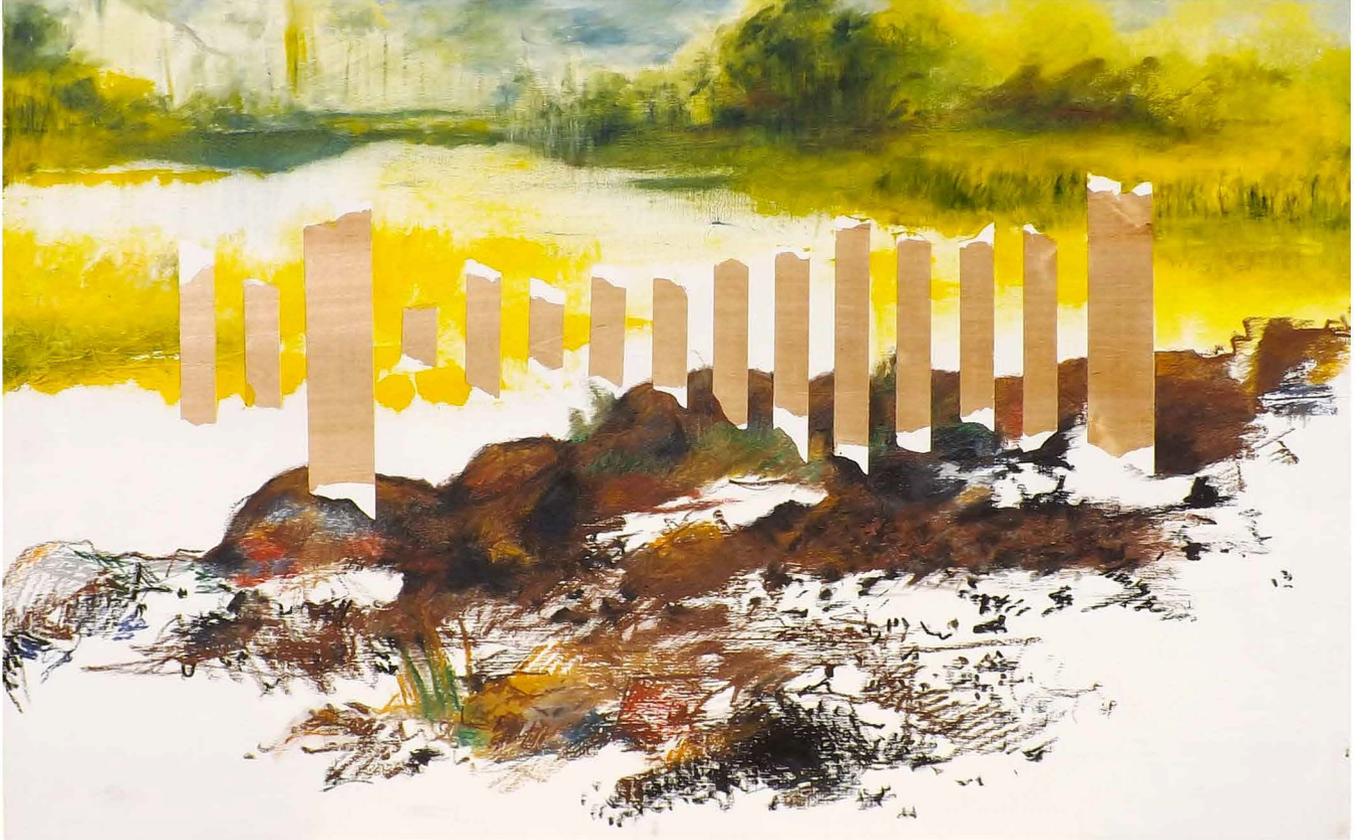
right panel, suggests less controlled environment. Reading the piece from left to right (the typical narrative format), the sky darkens and clouds cover much of the blue sky signifying a negative change at this time in the landscape's narrative. Perhaps this refers to the time when there was dramatic change which greatly impacted the authenticity of the land. The middle panel is slightly darker for this reason. Progressing into a time where impacts on the land have come to resolve but still heals from the disruption of the prior events. The far right panel shows a clearing sky with rain clouds which represents the resolve that is in progress and the bright green vegetation represents the new growth and recuperation of the land. The background also shows a more unified tree line suggesting that there is more control over the land in this part of the narrative.

During the creation of this piece,

questions arose about the idea of narrative and who translates the story. If there were no humans would there be a landscape narrative? If so, then who would be a part of it and how would that story be different? Is the idea of 'landscape narrative' a concept derived due to the evidence of how powerful culture can be? And what does that say about the culture?



INCOMPLETE LANDSCAPE  
OIL PAINT AND PASTELS ON HARDWOOD  
2 X 4  
2016



# INCOMPLETE LANDSCAPE

The creation of 'Incomplete Landscape' is a reflection of the ambivalence of art. Starting out as one concept and evolving into another all because of the change in materials. As one of the first pieces created for this study, it began as an oil painting that aspired to be conventionally beautiful, which was to speak to concepts of external beauty and what's underneath the surface. However, with the restraint of time and deadlines looming, oil paints were no longer an option. Determined to continue with this painting and concept, oil pastels became the primary me-

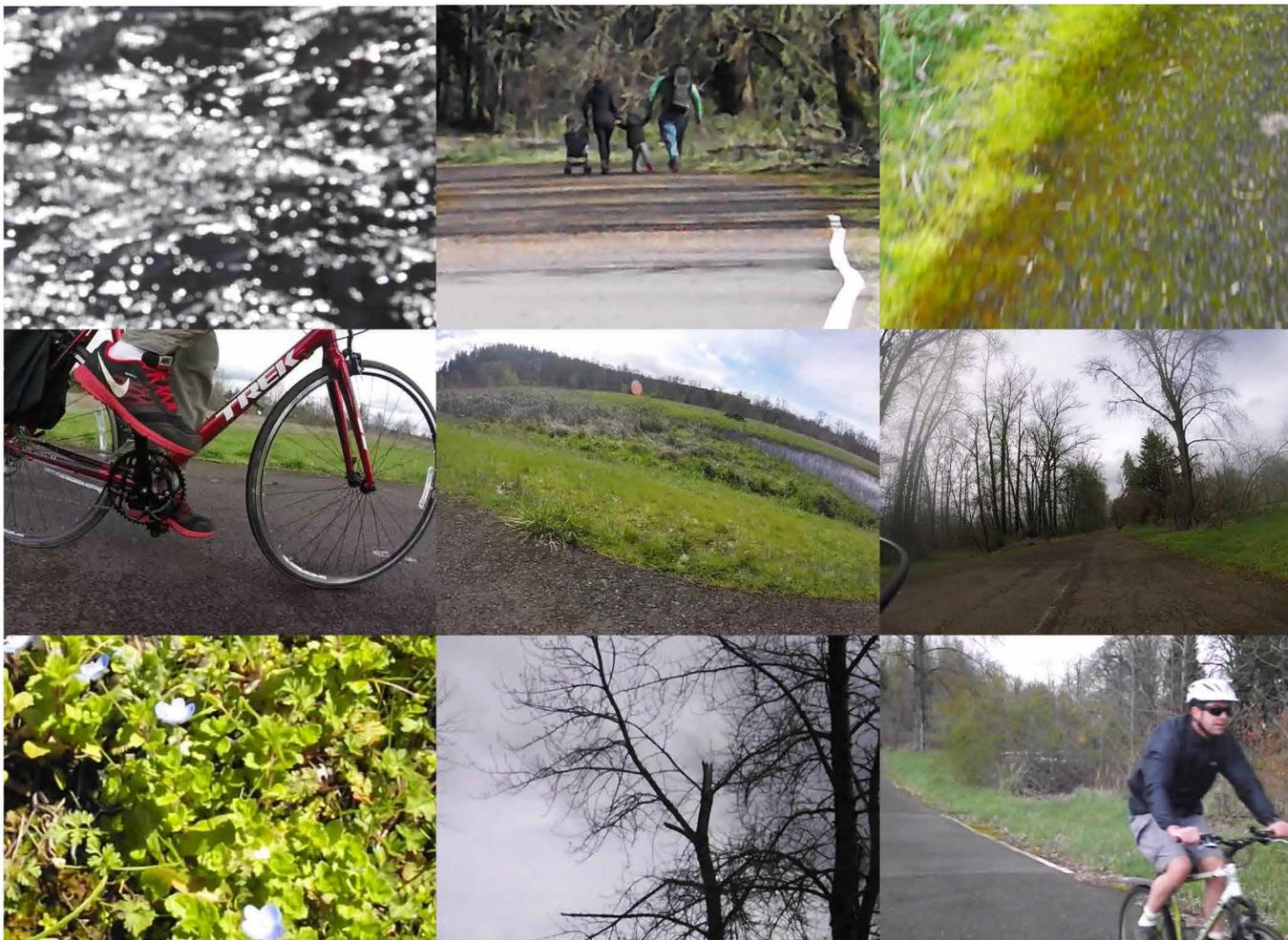
dium. Never having used oil pastel on rough gesso surface, the textures and effects were surprisingly unique, still, resolute to get a unified effect I labored to manipulate this material to be like another. After some time away from this piece I realized that my treatment of this work was reflective of what people have done to so many post-industrial sites. With a closed mind I had been forceful and manipulative, determined to achieve the image it was supposed to be. After this realization, I wanted to have a more honest experience with the materials, so I loosened up, stopped

meticulously blending and allowed for the process to show through. This process is seen in the background, where layers of paint are strategically overlapped to form the horizon line. This is also true for the overlaying of oil pastels to create the foreground. Here, marks are left unblended adjacent to those that have been to reveal part of the process to create this image. Landscapes, like many paintings, are built upon layers, with each layer adding information to the

narrative. This piece reveals to the viewer the layers that make up what is seen but also allows for them to fill in the incomplete areas, encouraging them to use their imagination. By allowing the viewer to see the piece as a process, I am challenging them to see alternative outcomes for this scene, much like a landscape architect. Rather than finishing the piece for them, they are free to visualize for themselves what this park could be.



THIS IS NATURAL  
VIDEO  
2016



# THIS IS NATURAL

'This is Natural' is a compilation of video footage edited together to create a series throughout the Whilamut Natural Area. The video is meant to document the site in a way that provides the viewer an experience. From observations on site, the majority of users are cyclists, thus the majority of footage is from the perspective of moving quickly through the site. To counter this movement, clips that portray points of interest are deliberately slowed down, which also distorts the sound. Some shots were filmed using a fish-eye lens and also varied from close detailed

shots to distant panoramic shots. This variety in filming was meant to give the viewer a holistic impression of the site while creating a sense of uncertainty. The combination of varied movements and sounds were meant to create this feeling of uncertainty. What is heard versus what is seen plus the video distortion all add up to an experience that is unlike the typical ride through the park. The aspiration for this piece is to evoke a feeling of uncertainty so that the viewer may suspect that there is something more to this parks story than what is on the surface.



IMAGINE YOUR PARK  
WATERCOLOR AND INK ON PAPER  
3 X 6  
2016



# IMAGINE YOUR PARK

'Imagine Your Park' asks viewers to contemplate what they expect in their community parks. A space is depicted here showing a landfill on the left side and a typical park on the right. The two landscapes have entirely different uses, however they have a common audience – the public. So is the public consulted in the establishment of these land uses? How do we delineate what is a landfill and what is a park?

Public parks are evolving from those once created in the 19th century. Today, the boundaries are becoming

blurred and landfills are becoming parks. 'Imagine Your Park' attempts to visualize the two land uses side by side so that the public can see the relationship of the two, especially since what is typically seen is one or the other. If the practice of turning landfills into large parks continues to be a common solution to space and waste problems in metropolitan areas, then how do designers delineate the authenticity of such a site? How do we design a recreational large park where the public is to spend leisurely time, on a site that expels discomfort?



# THIS LAND IS YOUR LAND

ACRYLIC SUMI INK ON WOOD BLOCKS

(36) 3 X 3

2016



# THIS LAND IS YOUR LAND

'This Land is Your Land' places the viewer in the shoes of the designer. This interactive piece breaks the "no touch" barrier that is typically enforced at an art showing. By inviting people to interact with the sculpture, there are opportunities for those who directly interact with the piece to also interact with others from the community. This interaction is important because it encourages people to step out of their comfort zone and potentially converse with other community members. Also by allowing people to touch and play with the block sculpture their desire to design or

create is heightened. Interaction and willingness to creatively work together are the cornerstones for design charrettes, a strategy employed by many designers to aid in the design process.

As a completed piece the blocks come together to form a painting in the round. 'This Land is Your Land' portrays the Whilamut Natural Area as an object, more specifically an object for people to manipulate. The completed sculpture depicts views from the path. All these views look inward towards the landfill which

replicates a bike ride a visitor could take around the site. Once the blocks are taken apart, the viewer uncovers another layer of this site. The interior of this piece represents the sub-surface of the landfill at the WNA. The inside blocks are covered with varying surface techniques, some of which look organic and others much

less. The use of sumi ink adds to the surface of the blocks by coating them in places with an oil-like sheen. This effect is representative of the pollution that caught the attention of the EPA in the 1970's. As the viewer continues to dismantle the sculpture, they uncover a message at the bottom, this message is simple, "DIG".



*“Today users are demanding that they be involved in the entire process of designing neighborhood spaces. Meaningful participation is necessary for neighborhood design to be socially suitable, because only through involvement will users overcome their lack of understanding of how the decision-making process operates to change their neighborhood . . . [it is then that] design can then adequately serve the user client and produce socially suitable neighborhood space.”*

*- Randolph Hester Jr. from ‘Community Design’ (1974)*

# CHAPTER 4

## RESULTS SURVEY

*The 'Results' chapter shows the totals counted from the surveys completed at the 'DIG' exhibit. This chapter looks closer at each question on the survey and reveals the outcome for each.*



**“ D I G ”**

**APRIL 1, 2016**  
**5PM - 8:30PM**  
 REFRESHMENTS & SNACKS AVAILABLE

BROADWAY COMMERCE CENTER 44 W. BROADWAY  
(AT THE INTERSECTION OF SIZZLE PIE-BARNLIGHT-KILLER BURGER)

>>>> A FINE ARTS EXHIBIT <<<<<

HOSTED IN CONJUNCTION WITH  
**FIRST FRIDAY ART WALK**



BY ARTIST & **KAYLA** AN EXHIBIT HOSTED IN PARTIAL  
 LANDSCAPE **BYRNE** FULLFILLMENT FOR THE DEGREE  
 DESIGNER **ARCHITECTURE** MASTER'S OF LANDSCAPE

Figure 4.2 - The materials printed and distributed were meant to spread interest to the public. These materials were posted at local businesses in Eugene, Oregon. Figure 4.1 was designed to be used as a bookmark, with hopes that individuals will keep and carry the advertisement with them. These were places near the register and in waiting areas at local businesses. Figure 4.2 is the flyer that was posted on community bulletin boards and at local businesses.

## SURVEY RESULTS

After close of the exhibit, the surveys were collected and counted. There were a total of 89 completed surveys. In some cases, people omitted their responses to one or two questions on the survey, however these surveys were still beneficial for the inquiry. The chart on the next page (Figure 4.3) shows the accumulated results tallied from the surveys. Questions 1 and 2 are yes/no answers and can be represented by a simple pie chart. Questions 3 and 4 are more complex in that they ask the participant to select all the answers that apply and also included room for further comment or other suggestions. Questions 3 and 4 required interpretation regarding the written answers and were interpreted and then grouped as similar types within the “other” category. Since the written answers did not make a large portion of the answers, they were counted as a group in the “other” category. Although these written answers were grouped to-

gether it is important to note what made up the “other” category. To see the survey given to participants visit chapter 2, Figure 2.3.

The following is a breakdown of the survey questions and answers. Here, the intended purpose and the actual contribution each question provided to this study will be revealed. This will then be followed by a brief reflection of the survey, including what could be improved the next time this type of study is conducted.

QUESTION	YES	NO	UNANSWERED
1	39	47	3
2	31	58	0
3	54	29	6
4	N/A	N/A	3

QUESTION	LANDSCAPE DESIGNER	ARTIST	COMMUNITY MEMBER	CITY OFFICIAL
3	14	20	14	5
	FRIEND	FAMILY	DON'T KNOW TITLE	OTHER
	29	16	2	7

QUESTION	PERMANENT SCULPTURES	ARTISTIC SERIES	SIGNAGE/ KIOSK	VIEWING AREA
4	32	29	31	26
	PAMPHLETS	INTERPRETIVE TRAIL	OTHER	
	10	49	14	

Figure 4.3 - The table to the left and the above tables show the results of the descriptive social survey that was given to participants of the "DIG" exhibit. Question 1: Prior to this shows opening, did you know what a post-industrial or brownfield landscape was? Question 2: Prior to this shows opening, did you know that the portion of Alton Baker Park known as the Whilamut Natural Area was a former gravel extraction and landfill site? Question 3: During this exhibit have you exchanged ideas about the Whilamut Natural Area with any of the following individuals? Circle all that apply. Question 4: What do you think is the best interpretive tool to tell the history of a post-industrial site? Circle all that apply.

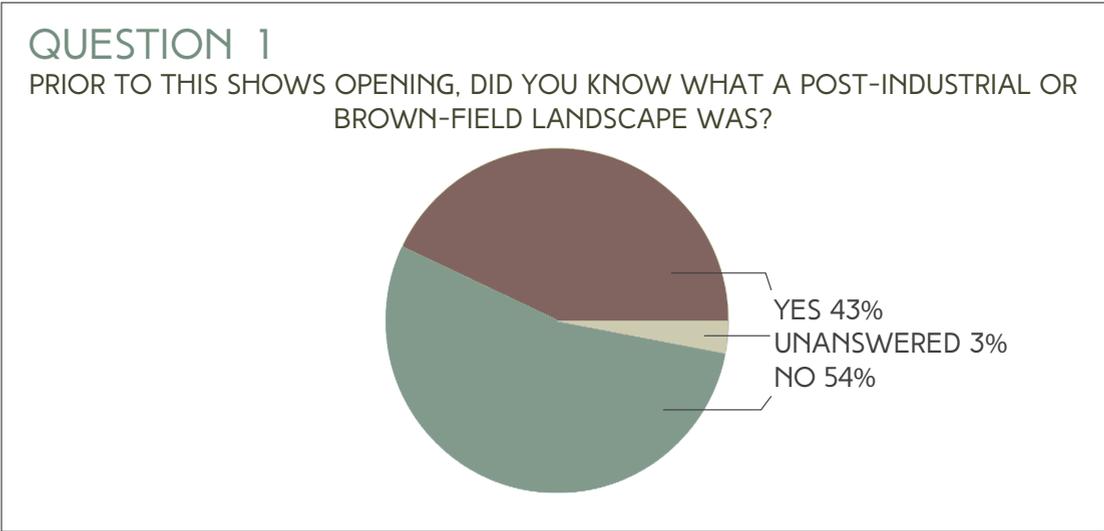


Figure 4.4

**QUESTION 1** is aimed at understanding the participant's knowledge of post-industrial landscapes. This is helpful in this study because it situates the context of survey and also brings the subject of the exhibit to the forefront. By asking about the participant's knowledge prior to the exhibit, I am able to gauge the impact the exhibit has had on their awareness and knowledge of post-industrial landscapes. However, this is completely dependent on the individual and

how much information they are willing to absorb at the exhibit. It is completely possible for an individual to fill out a survey, not knowing about post-industrial landscapes, and leave with the same lack of knowledge. On the other hand, there is no way to investigate whether or not they may seek knowledge about what they saw or heard at the exhibit in the future, that investigation is far beyond the scope of this study.

## QUESTION 2

PRIOR TO THIS SHOWS OPENING, DID YOU KNOW THAT THE PORTION OF ALTON BAKER PARK KNOWN AS THE WHILAMUT NATURAL AREA WAS A FORMER GRAVEL EXTRACTION AND LANDFILL SITE?

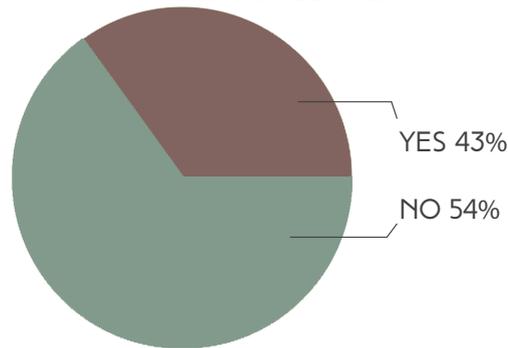


Figure 4.5

QUESTION 2 is aimed at gaging the participants' awareness prior to this show's opening of the Whilamut Natural Area's history as a post-industrial site, more specifically, as a former gravel extraction and landfill site. As the pie chart above shows, over half of the people who participated in this survey were not aware of the WNA history.

Awareness was increased not only by taking the survey but also by the

experience at the exhibit. It is impossible in this study (given the questions asked) to know how people learned about the WNA, but one thing is certain, they learned about the WNA's post-industrial history while attending the exhibit paired with the survey.

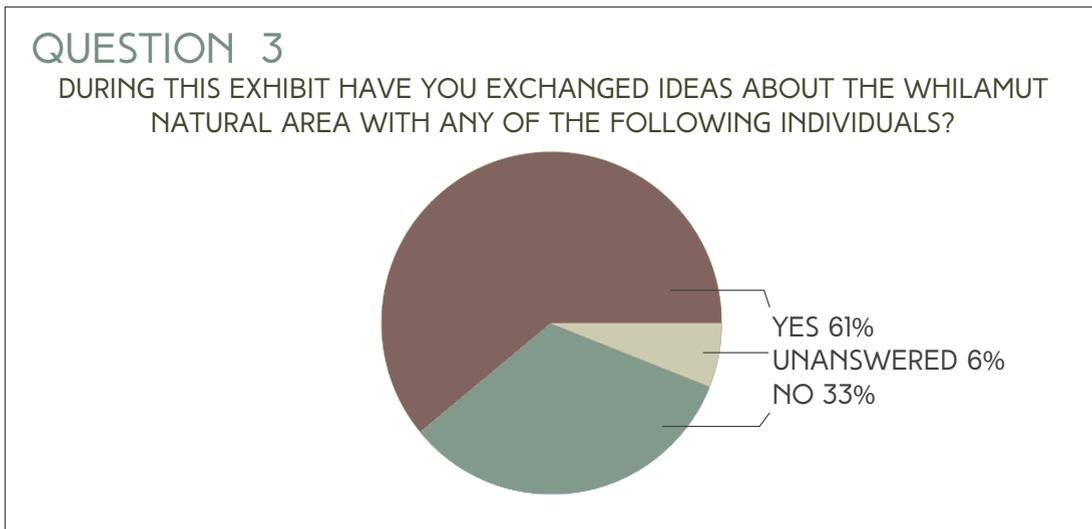


Figure 4.6

**QUESTION 3** is aimed at understanding the participant's experience and their willingness to share information or seek out information. This question shows that people had discussions with other individuals at the exhibit about the Whilamut Natural Area. There is no way to monitor the respondent's honesty or what the participants discussed or to the level of complexity of their conversations; this is beyond the scope of this study. The answers to this question simply

show the willingness of participants to converse with other visitors within the exhibit setting. Of the categories selected most people answered that they spoke with friends and/or the artist. This result was expected because in my experience people tend to stick with what is comfortable. As far as speaking with the artist is concerned, the artist is the most approachable person who is able to explain the work in the exhibit, thus, the artist is a crucial person to be

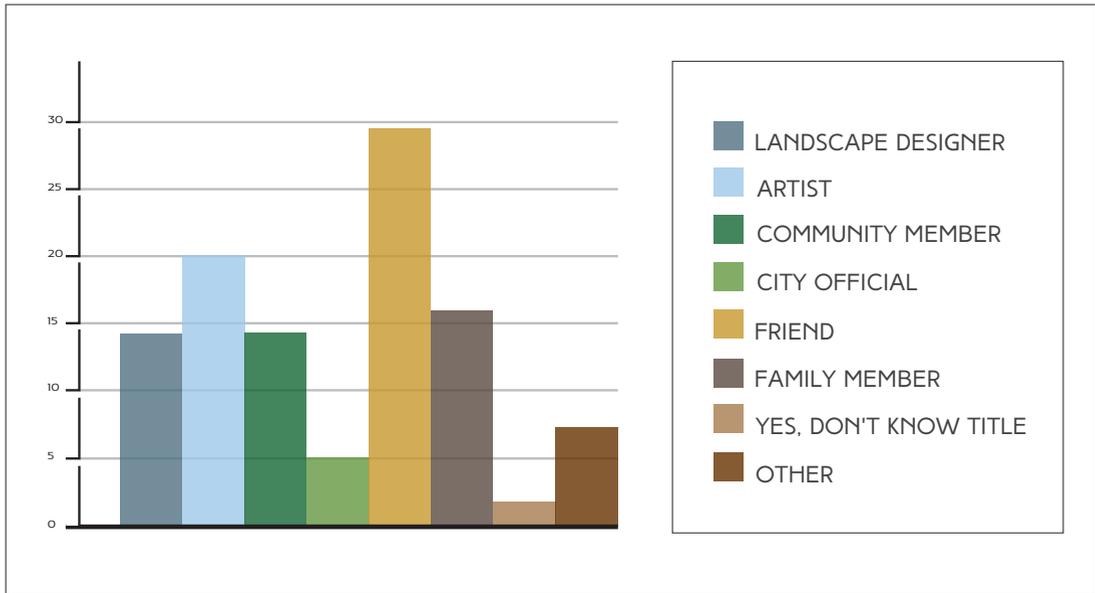


Figure 4.7 - Question 3 respondent's select all that applies answers.

present at the exhibit.

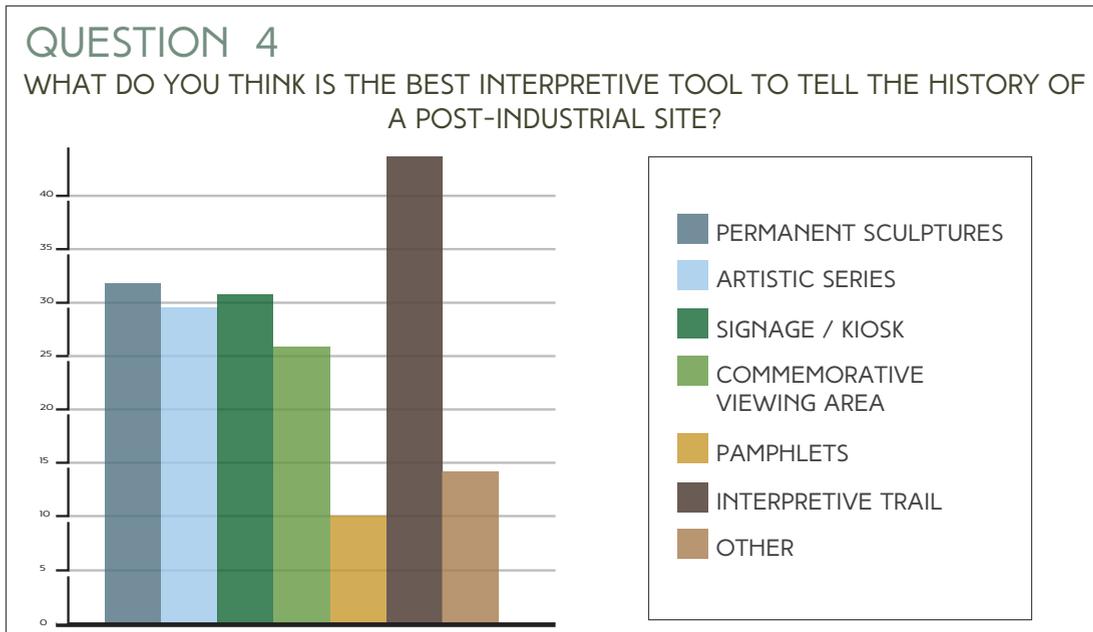


Figure 4.8 - Question 4 respondent's select all that applies answers

QUESTION 4 was designed to allow the respondents to think, for a moment, like a landscape architect. This question was asked to gain insight on what people think are the best strategies to relaying information while on site. A surprising number of individuals would like to see an interpretive trail more than any other interpretive strategy. Sig-

nage, art and kiosks were all around the same level of interest, which are often interpreted as objects in the landscape, rather than objects that work with the landscape. The talking stones on sight are more like an artistic series or permanent sculpture, but they rest alongside the trail. Perhaps, an interactive art piece or a trail system that is dedicated to

each significant history of the site. For instance, the John Day Trail, the Brownfield trail, or the Quarry trail, each could have its own story to tell using a technique like the talking stones, where the story is embedded in the landscape.

Question 4 was most informative towards integrating the public in the design process. This question could have been explored further by including example photos or sketches of what each technique looks like on site. This would have given a clearer picture to those who may not know the possibilities of a commemorative viewing area or what was meant by artistic series. There was room for individual interpretation throughout the survey. Creating a complex and controlled system, such as an interview style questionnaire, to survey individuals was not the intent of the survey. Rather an open format questionnaire was administered. For this reason, respondents were provided

a space with question 4 for written answers should they choose to offer more information. This is where recording the completed surveys included interpretation and then grouping of similar strategies that participants listed in the “other” space.

Other suggestions for interpretive strategies included a few suggestions for the use of media and technology. This included QR codes along a trail and hand held walking tour guide. Technology in the landscape is a widely disputed topic and would need further review from the public and city before deciding whether and how to implement it. Other suggestions were to have human guided tours, send out a mailing list or subscribe to a park newsletter, and educational outreach to schools and community. Some of these “other” suggestions are creative and would include more organization and do not necessarily fall under the category of interpretation for site design,

but are certainly a part of promoting awareness for post-industrial landscapes.

## SUMMATION OF RESULTS

The process of viewing the exhibit and participating in the survey brought awareness that the WNA was post-industrial site. Furthermore, the survey offered a chance for the public to be involved in a design process that was non-committal, which created a relaxed atmosphere for individuals to explore their own design ideas (see Figure 4.9) as well as increased awareness of design possibilities for the interpretation of such a site. The art show, even for an evening brought the public together and informed participants' awareness of post-industrial sites and gave them an example within their own community. Because the exhibit and survey were non-committal in nature, the setting of the exhibit worked

well to engage the public and to get participants thinking and talking. However, due to this leisurely environment the results of this study are a bit more generalized and less specific than originally conceived. However, the process of conducting the survey along with the exhibit made for observations that I think would greatly improve future studies similar to this one.



*Figure 4.9 - Participants interacting with 'This Land is Your Land'.*



*“While there are many horizons yet to explore, and tangled thickets, barren fields, and perilous areas within the intellectual landscape, there is also, to my mind, an emerging structure. Much interesting exploration awaits us over the next fifty years.”*

*- Simon Swaffield, Landscape Architect and Author (2002)*

# CHAPTER 5

## DISCUSSION

### PROJECT REFLECTION

*The following chapter critiques this project and offers insight on how to improve future projects like this one. After reflecting upon the survey and exhibit, this chapter concludes with a reflection on how this project addressed Beth Meyer's inquiry and how this experience has influenced my artistic practice.*

## REFLECTIONS FOR THE SURVEY AND EXHIBIT

There is always a delicate balance when asking the public to contribute or commit to anything, especially if it has a cost (whether that be time, money, resources etc.). In order to get people to participate, I designed the survey to be as simple as possible, especially since I was surveying people who either had to commit to attending or just happened to attend the exhibit. This strategy helped with the number of surveys completed, however, the information gathered is not as detailed if one were to conduct a face-to-face questionnaire or survey people over a long period of time. All questionnaire styles have pros and cons, but overall this survey was successful for the inquiry of this study.

Next time this type of study is conducted; it may be helpful to implement more participatory art works in order to encourage more interaction

between community members and design. The piece that had the most involvement from multiple groups of people was the sculpture made of large cubes titled 'This Land is your Land', to view this piece bein used in the exhibit visit page 84. This type of group interaction is important to the exchange of ideas from individuals with different backgrounds. Through this interaction people are better able to empathize to the issues and concerns of fellow neighbors. At this show visitors were creative with the blocks they stacked, turned and arranged the blocks in many different ways. This participation was recorded using photographs. With more of a guided discussion, either by the artist, an aide or a more intricate participatory piece, the potential to have the types of discussions that could lead to solutions possibly creating more broad sense of understanding amongst different groups of people is more likely. Much like the design charrette, the exhibit can provide

the public a stage to be creative and work together towards a common goal which can also lead to a stronger community ties.

## REFLECTIONS FOR MY ARTISTIC PRACTICE

By referring to the previously mentioned professionals in chapter 2, Anu Mathur, Dilip da Cunha, Clifford Geertz, Suzanne Lacy, Barbara Kruger and Martha Rosler, who use art to elevate their practice, I was able to develop a more informed and transparent artistic practice. In fact, it has made me think more systematically about my process. For example, before this study I made art that I could explain to myself and other artists without documentation of the process, but by documenting the process so that others (non-artists) may better understand artistic practice, I have gained a better understanding of my own artistic practice. I hope that this work can aid landscape pro-

professionals to pursue creative practice in ways that unveil alternative strategies for design. Learning through making has not only revealed alternative ways to design but also unexpected inspirations and relationships while exploring materials. The process of making should be freeing, it should open the mind to explore possibilities while manipulating what is seen in order to create something innovative and beautiful. The subject of post-industrial landscapes aided in the openness to experiment with forms of representation by allowing a messier and uninhibited process. I think this free form was represented in the art works shown at the exhibit and was felt by the individuals who visited the exhibit. The willingness and enthusiasm to which they interacted with the artwork, specifically the 'This Land is Your Land' piece, made me think about how that enthusiasm could be brought by a fusion of a design charrette and art exhibit experience. This type of event

would aid in familiarizing the public not only with the field of landscape architecture but also the field of art.

At the beginning of this study I sought to answer Beth Meyer's call for innovative design strategies that respond to post-industrial landscapes by conducting a descriptive social survey in the setting of an art exhibit that was focused around a post-industrial park. The "innovative design strategy" was to create art in response to a post-industrial landscape to aid the designer (myself) in better understanding the WNA. Then I showed those art works in a public exhibit located within the same community as that post-industrial landscape to create awareness. Through implementing this strategy, I have learned a great deal about the process of conducting a social descriptive survey. I think that this design strategy, with many more iterations, could be a useful beginning to the design of post-industrial landscapes.

The evidence provided from this survey has shown that the exhibit increased awareness that the post-industrial site existed and that there was some discussion about the site, whether that was amongst friends or with another individual. Given these results I assert that this study touched upon what could be the start of creating a park that resonates with social agency.



# BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Carroll, Noel. *Philosophy of Art: Contemporary Introduction*. London, GBR: Routledge, 1999. Pro Quest ebrary. Web. 2 March. 2016.
- City of Eugene. Citizen Planning Committee for the Whilamut Natural Area of Alton Baker Park. Web. 1 March. 2016. <<https://www.eugene-or.gov/1728/Whilamut-Natural-Area>>
- Deming, M. Elen, and Swaffield, Simon R. *Landscape Architecture Research : Inquiry, Strategy, Design*. Hoboken, N.J.: Wiley, 2011. Print.
- Finney, Kevin. "Overview of Former Day Island Landfill". East Alton Baker Park Plan Appendix. May 1995.
- French, Pat. "Restoration and Management Plan for the Landfill Cover and the Adjacent Riparian Area Whilamut Natural Area". City of Eugene Parks and Open Spaces. July 2005.
- Fryd, Vivien Green. "Suzanne Lacy's Three Weeks in May: Feminist Activist Performance Art as "Expanded Public Pedagogy"" *NWSA Journal*. 19.1. (2007): 23-38. Jstor ebrary. Web. 2 March. 2016
- Geertz, Clifford. "Thick Description: Toward an Interpretive Theory of Culture." *Cultural Sociology*. 2002. Cultural Sociology. Print.
- Gouma-Peterson, Thalia. *Woman's Art Journal* 11.2 (1990): 38-42. Jstor ebrary. Web. 2 March. 2016.
- Howett, Catherine M. "Landscape Architecture: Making a Place for Art". *Places Journal* 2.4 (1985). web. <<http://escholarship.org/uc/item/0632j8hh>>
- Kruger, Barbara, and Linker, Kate. *Love for Sale : The Words and Pictures of Barbara Kruger*. New York: H.N. Abrams, 1990. Print.

- Mathur, Anuradha, and Cunha, Dilip Da. *Mississippi Floods : Designing a Shifting Landscape*. New Haven, Connecticut : Yale University Press, 2001. Print.
- Meyer, Elizabeth. "Uncertain Parks: Disturbed Cites, Citizens and Risk Society." *Large Parks*. Ed. James Corner, New York: Princeton Architectural, 2007. 59-85. Print.
- Molesworth, Helen. "House Work and Art Work". *October* 92 (2000): 71-97. Jstor ebrary. Web. 2 March. 2016.
- "Feminist Art". The Art Story Foundation, 2016. Web. 26 March. 2016. <<http://www.theartstory.org/movement-feminist-art.htm>>
- Oregon Department of Environmental Quality. ECSI ID#849 Day Island Landfill. Web. 1 March. 2016. <<http://www.deq.state.or.us/lq/ECSI/ecsidetailfull.asp?seqnbr=849>>
- Senie, Harriet., and Webster, Sally. *Critical Issues in Public Art : Content, Context, and Controversy*. 1st ed. New York: Icon Editions, 1992. Print.
- Swaffield, Simon R. *Theory in Landscape Architecture : A Reader*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania, 2002. Print. Penn Studies in Landscape Architecture.
- Sullivan, Graeme. *Art Practice as Research: Inquiry in the Visual Arts*. 1st ed. Thousand Oaks, California : SAGE Publications, 2004. Print.
- Truniger, Fred. *Filmic Mapping : Film and the Visual Culture of Landscape Architecture*. Berlin: Jovis Verlag, 2013. Print. *Landschrift* ; 2.
- Vivien, Green Fryd. "Suzanne Lacy's Three Weeks in may: Feminist Activist Performance Art as "Expanded Public Pedagogy"." *NWSA Journal* 19.1 (2007): 23,31,33-38. ProQuest. Web. 6 Apr. 2016.

# IMAGE SOURCES

- Horwitz, Jamie; & Bressi, Todd W. (2002). Mississippi Floods - Designing a Shifting Landscape [EDRA / Places Awards, 2001-2002 -- Research]. Places, 15(1), 38. Retrieved from: <http://escholarship.org/uc/item/3f97f56k>
- Perkins, Michael. "Between Maps & the Mississippi". University of Westminster. 2014. web. 28 April, 2016. < <http://www.michaelperkins.co.uk/architecture/projects/mississippi/> >



# ARTISTIC PRACTICE FOR INCREASED AWARENESS

Cultural landscapes are significant spaces which speak to societal behaviors and values both past and present, these sites are important representations of how culture shapes the land. As landscapes evolve over time, so does our knowledge of the impact our culture has on the environment. Of these cultural landscapes, the post-industrial are landscapes which reflect a culture of production and consumption. It is important to remember these histories as they have shaped our behaviors and environments. 'DIG' takes a critical look at a post-industrial landscape within the center of Eugene, the Whilamut Natural Area of Alton Baker Park.

By using the exhibit as a platform to gain public input, Byrne investigates how artistic practice can stimulate designers and the public to interact in ways that will unearth alternative solutions for a post-industrial site design while contributing to overall public awareness of the way culture shapes landscapes. In order to track the results of this study, the artist asks that visitors complete a brief survey. The results of this survey aid in the argument for artistic practice as a research strategy, while contributing a valuable design strategy to address internal awareness and external awareness of post-industrial landscapes.



*Kayla Byrne, a master's candidate (2016) studying Landscape Architecture at the University of Oregon, is a passionate advocate for the arts and seeks to show the value for creative practice as a way of ascertaining in the field of landscape architecture. Throughout her childhood she observed and appreciated the natural world, she recreated her environment on pages of scratch paper, continuously drawing and imagining, her skills developed and ultimately lead her to pursue a Bachelors of Fine Arts from Washington State University (2010). During a challenging period in life, the artist experienced the healing properties the landscapes around her. Sensing that others may have similar needs, she sought to create public spaces that everyone can access their own inner peace. Kayla is especially interested in designing public spaces and engaging with communities via creative strategies to improve the public health and well-being.*