

NEVADA
MUSEUM
OF ART
+ ENVIRONMENT
CONFERENCE



ART + ENVIRONMENT CONFERENCE OCTOBER 2 – 4, 2008

FINAL CONFERENCE PROGRAM

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 2, 2008

7–9 pm

Opening Reception

Conference speakers, sponsors, attendees, Museum staff and Trustees are invited to this special launch event.

8–9 pm

Feature Tours/Talks

Artists Chris Drury and Michael Light will host tours of their exhibitions.

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 3, 2008

9–10:30 am

Groundwork: Why Here | Why Now?

With programming and permanent collections focused on art and the environment, and key partnerships with the environmental and science communities, the Nevada Museum of Art looks toward building an active network of people who are shaping the future of this field. Conference Moderator William L. Fox sets the broad international context for such an endeavor, while NMA Executive Director/CEO David B. Walker suggests the unique role an art museum might play as a forum for this interdisciplinary dialogue. NMA Curator of Exhibitions and Collections Ann M. Wolfe looks at the Museum's past and ongoing contributions to this field, with a particular focus on the *Altered Landscape* photography collection. Architect Will Bruder will describe his design for the Museum facility and its unique relationship to the northern Nevada landscape.

Participants: David Walker, William L. Fox, Ann M. Wolfe, Will Bruder

11–11:30 am

Lita Albuquerque: The Pull of the Pole

The recipient of a grant from the National Science Foundation's Antarctic Artists and Writers Program, Lita Albuquerque recently completed phase one of a two-part project that traces the stars above the Arctic and Antarctic. Albuquerque discusses the Stellar Axis project, her experience working in the Antarctic, and the relationship between her work and the fields of science and astronomy.

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- 11:30–12:30 am Whirlwinds and Black Holes: Art(work) and Science in Extreme Environments**
The impulse to explore the world's most extreme environments has long been a scientific and creative pursuit. This session brings together artists and scientists who have spent significant time working in extreme desert and polar regions. Lita Albuquerque joins Chris Drury, who recently completed an artist residency in the Antarctic with the British Antarctic Survey, to discuss the challenges of making work in unfamiliar territory. Desert Research Institute scientist Lynn Fenstermaker offers insight into her recent collaboration with Drury at the Nevada Test Site, her research on deserts, aerial patterning, and climate change, and the potential for continued collaboration between artists and scientists.
Participants: Lita Albuquerque, Chris Drury, Lynn Fenstermaker
Moderator: William L. Fox
- 2:05–2:30 pm Kindling the Art Flame: Crimson Rose on Burning Man**
Thousands of people come together each year in Nevada's Black Rock Desert (100 miles northeast of Reno) for the annual Burning Man gathering. Crimson Rose outlines a brief history of the event, from its countercultural roots to its present. She discusses the ongoing grant program for artists, the goals of the Black Rock Arts Foundation, and the environmental challenges facing Black Rock City.
- 2:30–3:15 pm Burning the Man: Artists Navigate the Mainstream**
Since its inception, Burning Man has been a gathering dedicated to radical self-reliance, self-expression, and art. An 11-year veteran of Burning Man, photographer Michael Light has long embraced the creative freedoms encouraged by the gathering, but has come to recognize changes in the event that have led him to criticize it in recent years. As attendance numbers soar and major Burning Man artworks are acquired by museums (such as the Nevada Museum of Art), event participants and organizers continue to debate the changing spirit of the gathering.
Participants: Michael Light, Crimson Rose
Moderator: Ann M. Wolfe
- 3:45–4:15 pm Take Back the Lawn: Fritz Haeg on Redesigning Landscape**
Architect, designer, and educator Fritz Haeg redesigns conventional suburban and urban spaces to reintroduce ecological and animal diversity into threatened environments. Haeg discusses his ongoing *Gardenlab* project, including *Edible Estates* and *Animal Estates*, as well as the events programmed through his ecology initiative *Sundown Schoolhouse*.
- 4:15–5:30 pm what's neXt: Artists Imagining the Future**
In his recent book *X Saves the World*, Jeff Gordinier suggests that Gen X innovations in art, technology, and activism have come to define the way we live today. This session brings together Gen X artists, designers, and writers whose work aspires to change the way people view and experience the world. Katie Holten explains how her artwork engages the natural landscape while investigating the relationship between the individual and his or her environment, and artist Kianga Ford explores narrative sound installations in an effort to alter the way viewers understand the changing demographics of urban and natural environments. Jason Houston, of *Orion Magazine*, discusses how he uses photographs to frame the way a new generation of environmentally conscious readers will view and understand the world.
Participants: Fritz Haeg, Katie Holten, Jason Houston, Kianga Ford
Moderator: Jeff Gordinier

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Art + Environment Celebration

Continue the conversation and meet new friends at the Art + Environment Conference Party. Enjoy complimentary cocktails, an assortment of specialty “small plates” and dessert. Event hosted by Stremmel Gallery.

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 4, 2008

9–9:30 am

Ben Aleck and Ralph Burns: Paiute Stories and Environmental Stewardship

For thousands of years, indigenous cultures have populated and sustained the region surrounding Pyramid Lake, just 50 miles northeast of Reno. Ben Aleck and Ralph Burns, of the Pyramid Lake Museum/Visitors' Center, tell stories in the Paiute language and discuss the lessons of environmental stewardship and history reflected in the Tribe's oral tradition. This session is co-sponsored by the Pyramid Lake Museum/Visitors' Center.

9:30–11 am

Placing Space | Spacing Place

This session brings together individuals who have worked to develop interdisciplinary networks of artists, designers, and scholars to explore the nature of place and placelessness. As Director of LandArts of the American West, Bill Gilbert speaks to the shifting role that landscape has played for artists in the past, and how it continues to shape contemporary practice. Matthew Coolidge, who directs the Center for Land Use Interpretation and uses creative methodologies to engage and inform the public about topical land use issues, discusses current place-based investigations. Cheryl Haines, Director of the For-Site Foundation in Nevada City, California, presents her initiative to support the creation of new art about place. Geoff Manaugh, writer and author of BLDGBLOG, offers his thoughts on the social benefits that technological discourse offers to this expanding field.

Participants: Bill Gilbert, Matt Coolidge, Cheryl Haines and Geoff Manaugh

Moderator: William L. Fox

12–12:30 pm

Techno-Sublime: JoAnne Northrup on the Art of Jennifer Steinkamp

Artist Jennifer Steinkamp creates immersive virtual environments using video and new media to explore ideas about architectural space, motion, and perception. Steinkamp's groundbreaking work will be discussed by JoAnne Northrup, author of the 2006 *Jennifer Steinkamp* monograph published by Prestel, and curator of the artist's recent touring survey exhibition. Northrup, Senior Curator at the San Jose Museum of Art, discusses how Steinkamp's artwork responds to pre-existing environments, the role that nature plays in the artist's work, and how nature operates within traditions of the art historical sublime.

12:30–1 pm

Dan Goods on Art and Science in the Age of Information

In the year 2008, humans will likely produce more information than in the entire cumulative history of our species. Dan Goods is an artist and the Visual Strategist at NASA's Jet Propulsion Laboratory in Pasadena, California, where he interprets scientific phenomena using a range of artistic media that make complicated concepts more accessible and meaningful to the general public. Goods will discuss his own work in relation to the ways that other contemporary artists and scientists translate data gathered from a range of human and scientific sources.

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1:15–2:15 pm **Vito Acconci: Operating (on) the City**
Artist and designer Vito Acconci speaks to the role architecture plays in designing peoples' everyday experiences, as well as, the architect's potential to affect social behavior by reconsidering the conventional language of environments. A conversation between Acconci and Geoff Manaugh follows the presentation.

2:15–2:45 pm **Ruminations Postulations Speculations by W.J.T. Mitchell**
Renowned cultural critic W.J.T. Mitchell reflects on the issues raised at the 2008 Art + Environment Conference and suggests potential directions for the future of this dialogue.

3:30–7:30 pm **Saturday Afternoon Excursion to the Nevada Desert**
The Museum will host an afternoon excursion to Nevada's scenic desert including the Pyramid Lake region. Enjoy the open spaces of northern Nevada, walk the same land as those from centuries prior, and listen to indigenous Paiute stories told by Ben Aleck and Ralph Burns of the Pyramid Lake Museum/Visitors' Center. Leading the excursion will be Peter Goin, photographer and Foundation Professor of Art at the University of Nevada, Reno.
Participants: Peter Goin, Ben Aleck, Ralph Burns

Additional Cost: \$50 per person including refreshments and transportation (bus departs the Museum at 3:30 pm and returns at 7:30 pm). Event fee must be prepaid with registration. This session is co-sponsored by the Pyramid Lake Museum/Visitors' Center.