

Clockwise from upper left:

## **Untitled Land Art drawing (Garden Slot), 1969**

Graphite and charcoal on paper

## **Untitled Land Art Drawing, 1968**

Graphite on paper

## **Perpendicular Slot, 1969**

Ink & pencil on paper

## **Substrata Wash Series: Spur, 1969**

Graphite and charcoal on paper

Collection of Nevada Museum of Art  
Center for Art + Environment Archive Collections.  
Gift of Randolph Sims.

Randolph Sims drawings enabled him to envision both excavated “negative” and “positive” large-scale Land Art works that would insert metal plates and other elements into the ground.

## **One — Line on Surface, 1969**

Mixed media on graph paper

## **Sporadic 360° Line: Lime Line on Surface, 1969**

Mixed media on graph paper

Collection of Nevada Museum of Art  
Center for Art + Environment Archive Collections.  
Gift of Randolph Sims.

Although Randolph Sims realized only a few large-scale Land Art sculptures, he created numerous temporary, or ephemeral works in the landscape.

These two paintings are sketches for what Sims called “fixed line drawings” that he proposed for the Thimble Islands in Connecticut. The circular design was never realized, but Sims did complete a straight-line drawing on the islands. Photographs of that piece appear in the case to the right.

In 1968 Sims created *Excavation Drawing*. The proposals were modeled after Michael Heizer's first "negative sculpture" built near Lake Tahoe in early 1967. Heizer invited Sims to help him dig *Triple Landscape* on California's Coyote Dry Lake in 1969 using a hydraulic excavator driven by an operator. It was with this piece of heavy equipment that Sims realized his first Land Art piece, which he named *Excavation Spur*.

Sims designed and made cloth maquettes for a series of *Strata-Wash* and *Hypothetical Crotch* proposals in 1968 and 1969. His first maquettes were installed in Stony Creek, Connecticut, where he moved from New York City in mid-1969. He also created maquettes in the Cargo Muchacho Mountains of the Colorado Desert in California that same year.

Heizer suggested to Sims that he show his drawings and photographs to art critic and curator Lucy Lippard. She subsequently included him in two exhibitions in Seattle (1969) and Vancouver (1970), where his work appeared alongside works by Vito Acconci, Michael Heizer, Nancy Holt, Sol LeWitt, Ed Ruscha, Richard Serra, Robert Smithson, and many other well-known conceptual, minimalist, and land artists. For the exhibition his two spray painted two lines on trees were executed on the campus of Simon Fraser University.

The largest line drawings Sims made in the landscape were completed in 1969 on two of the Thimble Islands off the coast of Stony Creek, Connecticut. A resident on a nearby island, who could see the painted lines from his house, forced him to erase the four-inch-wide lines soon after they were completed.

Sims supported himself as a graphic artist and carpenter, moving from the East Coast to Nevada City, California in the 1970s. He stopped making art until 1986 when he began making ephemeral drawings in water and glycerin (used to slow evaporation) on the deserts of California, Arizona, and Baja California. His designs often resonate with ancient, native designs from the region and around the world.