Helen and Newton Harrison: Sierra Nevada: An Adaptation
Collection CAE1411

Introduction/Abstract
The Harrisons have created a project that proposes a series of long-term ecological responses to recorded temperature increases in the Sierra Nevada at the Sagehen Creek Field Station near Truckee, California as part of a fifty-year collaboration between the Museum and the Harrisons. Materials include books, manuscripts, maps, research materials, draft artworks, notes from meetings, and photographic documentation of Sagehen work.

Biographical Note: Helen Mayer and Newton Harrison
The Harrisons, often referred to as the "Grandparents of Ecological Art", create works that transcend human-created boundaries to encompass large bioregions. Their work, which starts as conceptual maps and texts before manifesting as built projects, uses poetry and visual imagery to create metaphors focused on solving ecological issues posed by the tensions between human land use and ecological needs.

Newton Harrison was trained as a sculptor, Helen Mayer Harrison as a psychologist. They taught at the University of California San Diego, where Newton chaired the Art Department. They retired as Research Professors emeriti in the early 2000s and moved to Santa Cruz, where they established the Center for the Study of Force Majeure at the University of California Santa Cruz. The majority of their work since Documenta 8 in 1987 has been in Europe. These works include large scale projects and proposals made for cities and city areas such as Sudra, Leipzig and Cergy-Pontoise, rivers such as the Sava in the former Yugoslavia, and regions such as the Transpennine area of England. In Europe, they have exhibited in museums, galleries and exhibition halls such as the Ludwig Forum in Aachen, the Neue Berliner Kunstverein in Berlin, the Bluecoat Gallery in Liverpool, the Kunst-und Ausstellungshalle, BRD in Bonn or La Villette in Paris. The Harrisons have worked with institutions such as Bauhaus Dessau or the Cultural Council of South Holland. They have had a D.A.A.D. in Berlin in 1988-89 and have exhibited there at the Neue Berliner Kunstverein, and in Denken und Denkmal at the Martin Gropiusbau. They exhibited in Art and Technology at the Los Angeles County Museum of Art in 1991, Projektí74 in Koln, the Venice Bienale(1976 &1980) and the Sao Paulo Bienale(1985)as well as Artecí 91 - the Nagoya Bienale in Japan. Newton Harrison had a work in the American Pavillion at Expoí70 in Osaka.

Scope and Content
In 2010 and after lengthy discussions with environmental scientists, the Harrisons proposed a series of long-term ecological responses to recorded temperature increases in the Sierra Nevada that are already beginning to degrade flora, increase erosion, and likelihood of wildfires. They proposed to test ensembles of plants that could succeed those disappearing in the range with resilient and beneficial effects, versus the degradation of the forest and meadows. They first presented their ideas in an exhibition early in 2011 at the Ronald Feldman Gallery in New York, and then again in late 2011 at the Museum in a 30-foot-long map of the mountain range, topographical sketches of its seventeen principal watersheds, and aerial photographs of sites in the Truckee and Yuba watersheds. Additionally, digital animations presented two various global warming scenarios revealing what could happen if nothing was done or if modest interventions were made, and conversely if landscapes were generated to serve cultural and natural needs. After presenting their concepts in exhibition, they formed a research center at the University of California Santa Cruz to support their work, formed an alliance with the UCSC Arboretum, and in late 2013 built a series of test beds for various plant ensembles a the Sagehen Creek Field Station near Truckee, CA. The Museum has committed to a fifty-year collaboration

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This archive is currently in process.

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