

# Fieldwork: Marfa

## Symposium March, 14<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> 2012

### at Crowley Theater, Marfa TX

Held by  
ESBA Nantes Métropole, HEAD-Genève  
and Gerrit Rietveld Academie in Amsterdam.

In collaboration with  
SKOR Foundation for Art and Public Domain,  
The Netherlands.

| fieldwork  
| marfa  
| international research program  
| run by ESBA Nantes Métropole, HEAD-Genève  
and Gerrit Rietveld Academie, Amsterdam

[www.fieldworkmarfa.org](http://www.fieldworkmarfa.org)

## Fieldwork and land use

Moderation Etienne Bernard

10:45

Fieldwork as a methodology

Research in residency

Presentation by Emily Verla Bovino

Emily Verla Bovino asks: Might the passage from fetishized archive to totemized fieldwork lead to a break with the taboo of ethics? Consider this scenario, an art critic's late 20<sup>th</sup> century caricature of the artist-as-ethnographer has become naturalized in the early 21<sup>st</sup> century researcher-in-residence. Funded to map and mine for ready-mades and representations, the researcher transubstantiates this material into surveillance data and cultural capital. In the popular imagination, the artist is a swindler, a charlatan, even a pedophile. The year after the death of Ramon Karam, a philosopher across the ocean writes, "Art is too self-confident, audaciously self-confident, and too high-flown, for it is in no way bound to answer for life. It is not only mutual answerability that art and life must assume, but also mutual liability to blame."

Emily Verla Bovino (1980) is author of the fictional character, the hyperthymestic RK, and curates encounters between the possible histories of RK and the actual world. Her ongoing project is the epic life-log of the fictional character, edited into episodic scenographies or performative environments, for occasional access by users. Episodes feature the narrative and imaginary landscapes RK encounters over the course of his lifetime, from the late nineteen seventies until the mid twenty fifties. Artistic fieldwork in preparation for this project involves composing a series of never-ending suggestions entitled "What We Should Do With Our Brain." These suggestions take the form of articles, proposals, timelines, informal conversations and talks. They employ the rhetorical device of parrhesia to illuminate juxtapositions among disciplines otherwise regimented to separation by the sentimental despotism of capital. RK-LOG debuted for screening online for the occasion of the 2011 &NOW Festival of New Writing.

Research in residency

Presentation by Johan Lundh

The proliferation of residencies over the last two decades has been unparalleled. In a couple of decades, they have become an integral part the institutionalized art world, adopting similar formats across the globe. As with any rapid development, a critical self-reflection is needed, from organizers and participants' points of views. What are the successful models, the inept formats? What are the ethics of operating residencies and participating in them? Can we utilize residencies to foster creative expressions and social relations which wouldn't be possible without them?

Johan Lundh is an curator and writer, presently dividing his time between Berlin, Derry, and Stockholm. Together with artists, curators, theorists, designers and others, he engineers frameworks for artistic actions and discursive formations. Lundh is presently Co-Director/Curator of Centre for Contemporary Art Derry-Londonderry, Northern Ireland. He has previously curated exhibitions and events for such organizations as Botkyrka Konsthall, Stockholm; Index Foundation, Stockholm; Phillip, Vancouver; Konsthall C, Stockholm; Overgaden ICA, Copenhagen; Stiftelsen 3,14, Bergen; and Western Front, Vancouver. His writing has appeared in publications such as Art Lies; Art Papers; Canadian Art; C magazine; Phillip; Metropolis M; Mousse; Paletten; Yishu, as well as catalogues and books.

DAY 1: Wednesday, March 14<sup>th</sup> / 10:30 – 13:00

## Fieldwork and land use

Moderation Etienne Bernard

12:00

The Ultra-peripheral:  
New proposals for land use  
Statement by Theo Tegelaers

Presentation by PLAND - Erin Elder,  
Nina Elder and Nancy Zastudil

Theo Tegelaers started his art practice in 1987 and experimented with making exhibitions in collaboration with other artists. Tegelaers founded the non-profit space BEAM, Nijmegen (1992) and fully dedicates himself to curating and producing exhibitions. Tegelaers was appointed as director of W139, Amsterdam (1994 - 1999), and shifted the focus of the program from the local scene to a more international context. He worked as a freelance curator on national and international shows and projects (1999 - 2002). In 2000 he received a grant for a half year residency at ISCP in New York and from 2001-2005 Tegelaers worked for the Chief Government architect as curator and coordinator of art projects for governmental buildings and offices, where he realized projects with Monika Sosnowska, Liam Gillick, Lara Almarcegui, William Speakman, Dan Peterman and others. He worked simultaneously as affiliated curator of De Appel, Amsterdam (2002 - 2005) and curated solo shows with Katerina Grosse and several groupshows as The Gravity in Art with works by, amongst others, Bas Jan Ader, Bruce Nauman, Keith Arnatt, Slater Bradley and Fiona Tan. Tegelaers is curator for the Rijksmuseum Amsterdam on contemporary art projects related to the renovation of the building. Within this program projects were realized by Bik van der Pol, Germaine Kruijff and Simon Starling. Still in progress are works by Richard Wright and Cyprien Gaillard. Since 2006, Tegelaers is senior curator at SKOR | Foundation for Art and Public Domain, where he has worked on projects with Aernout Mik, Francisco Camacho, Job Koelewijn, Rosa Barba, Mariana Castillo Deball and currently the ongoing project for Maasvlakte 2 Portscapes in the Port of Rotterdam with Fritz Haeg and Tomas Saraceno. Most recently, he produced and co-directed with Nancy Holt the film BREAKING GROUND : BROKEN CIRCLE / SPIRAL HILL (1971-2011), 2011, on the 'earthwork', which Robert Smithson realized in 1971 in Emmen, the Netherlands.

PLAND, Practice Liberating Art through Necessary Dislocation, is a multi-disciplinary organization that supports the development of experimental and research-based projects through a variety of on and off-site programs. Headquartered off-the-grid near Tres Piedras, New Mexico, PLAND is a hands-on, exploratory approach to Do-It-Yourself, alternative living.

Founded in 2009 by Erin Elder, Nina Elder, and Nancy Zastudil, PLAND finds its inspiration in a legacy of pioneers, entrepreneurs, homesteaders, artists, and other counterculturalists who – through both radical and mundane activities – reclaim and re-frame a land-based notion of the American Dream. PLAND brings artists, students, innovators, and others into a direct experience of limited natural resources via its rural, off-grid locale and minimal amenities. Part alternative school, part laboratory, part homestead, part art studio, PLAND is an active solution for merging art and life.

Learn more about PLAND at [www.itspland.org](http://www.itspland.org)

DAY 1: Wednesday, March 14<sup>th</sup> / 14:00 – 17:00

---

## Fieldwork and Fictocriticism: Politics of the Essay

Moderation Jeroen Boomgaard

14:00

Fata Mogana

Statement by Yann Chateigné Tytelman

A series of artists' practices share a documentary approach to explorations of spatio-temporal unknowns: operating at the border of the visible, these investigations focus on white zones, blind spots, and fragmented narratives documenting dispersed indexes, recounting the untold remnants of past events, speculating on invisible histories, and questioning the writing of history itself, a practice that lies, as Michel de Certeau asserts, "between science and fiction". From geological explorations by artists Nancy Holt, Robert Smithson, Michael Heizer or Donald Judd to the "archaeologies of the future" studied by thinker Fredric Jameson, contemporary landscape, and especially non-sites and deserted spaces are places which resound with manifold stories and representations, and lie, like floating in the historical time, as though it held traces of cosmic and antiquity. In their attempt to locate the "islands of history" (anthropologist Marshall Sahlins), these artists seek out spaces of reinvention, of permanent revolution, that contravene the conditions of possibility for history itself. Diving below official histories, they explore uncharted and obscure zones, scarcely-recounted events and palimpsestic traces of transformation. As much as these artists employ documentary or anthropological methodologies of fieldwork, and reflect the current modes of production and transmission of knowledge, the absence of tangible and verifiable proof suspends meaning in a place of indeterminacy, leading to a more vivid experience and a freer role for the spectator.

Yann Chateigné Tytelman (1977) is a critic and curator. He currently acts as Dean of Visual Arts Department at Geneva University of Art and Design. He previously served as Chief Curator at CAPC Museum of Contemporary Art in Bordeaux. He has curated and co-curated several cross-disciplinary projects, programs and exhibitions including The Curtain of Dreams. Hypnagogic Visions (IAC Villerubanne, 2011-12), The Mirage of History (Kaleidoscope Project Space, Milan; LiveInYourHead, Geneva, Whitechapel, London, 2010-11), Fun Palace (Centre Pompidou, Paris, 2010), IAO. Explorations in French Psychodelia (CAPC Museum of Contemporary Art, Bordeaux, 2008), A Theater without Theater (Macba, Barcelona; Museu Berardo, Lisbon, 2007-08). He is a regular contributor for Artforum, Frieze, Art in America, Kaleidoscope, Art Press and Criticism.

DAY 1: Wednesday, March 14<sup>th</sup> / 14:00 – 17:00

---

## Fieldwork and Fictocriticism: Politics of the Essay

Moderation Jeroen Boomgaard

14:45

Research in residency  
Discussion with Charlotte Moth

Charlotte Moth (1978 U.K), lives in Paris, France. Since 1999 she has been developing a collection of analogue photographs called the 'Travelogue'. This image bank begins by looking at the phenomenology of architectural spaces and functions as a form of research that provides a conceptual space to construct connections between experiences and ideas that develop works in a diverse range of mediums. Recent solo exhibitions include 'Visual Discourses' Fundação de Serralves and SONAE, Porto, (2011) 'Noting Thoughts' Musée départemental d'art contemporain Rochechouart (2011) The Absent Forms, Halle für Kunst, e.V, Lüneburg, Germany (2010), Comma 18, Bloomberg London (2010), 'remade', Marcelle Alix, Paris (2010), Schaufenster project space Kunstverein Dusseldorf (2009). Recent group exhibitions include Dagmar Heppner Hannah James Charlotte Moth, Cole gallery, London (2012) Associations, Arcade London (2010), After Architects, Kunsthalle Basel (2010). 'Une Exposition (du) Sensible' Synagogue de Delme (2010). Its not for reading, Its for making, FormContent, London (2009). Upcoming solo exhibitions include Frieze NY (May 2012), and the Centre d'art contemporain Genève (May 2012).

16:00

Research in residency  
Discussion with Elisa Larvego

Elisa Larvego is a photographer and filmmaker living in Geneva. Since her diploma in visual art at the Geneva University of Art and Design in 2009, she's been working on a two years project about hippie communes situated in a remote Colorado valley. This work is assembling still photographs, videos and a feature film. These photographs and videos have been shown, amongst others, in a solo exhibition with TMproject gallery and in collective exhibition in the Centre d'art contemporain of Geneva for the "Bourses de la ville de Genève". The feature film, Huerfano Valley, is going to have its world premiere in april 2012, at Visions du réel, International film festival in Nyon, Switzerland. Always near of an anthropological approach, her main interest is to observe the relation between a person and his environment through images and sounds. Her recent project has been started during a residency at Fieldwork: Marfa. Still working with photography and video, she's following a six years old girl living between the US and Mexico.

DAY 1: Wednesday, March 14<sup>th</sup> / 14:00 – 17:00

---

## Fieldwork and Fictocriticism: Politics of the Essay

Moderation Jeroen Boomgaard

15:30

Producing landscapes/Producing Identity  
Statement by Frank Westermeyer

The research project “producing landscape, producing identity” will contribute to and innovate from an interdisciplinary perspective and methodology in the examination of the relations between landscape and identity with particular focus on the south Chilean region of Araucania in the 19th and 21st centuries. This artistic research project is based at the Geneva University of Art and Design and develops at the intersection of art and different discursive fields. The disciplines like anthropology, ethno-history, art history, art theory and art production allows us to be aware about the history of the culture and colonization in Chile, of the distribution and the exploitation of the territory, of the production of space and of it’s artistic representation. Together they draw the outlines of different facets of a postcolonial concept of landscape. The notion of performativity of landscape serves as the shared approach for the interdisciplinary collaboration. In this work, the artists have been confronting the performativity of landscape for the indigenous Mapuche people, the European settlers, and the Chilean state. The painter Carl Alexander Simon (1805-1852), a social utopian who migrate from Germany to Chile is at the centre of our work for his landscape paintings of the southern region of Chile. In his work, he represents the Mapuche indigenous population in its original landscape. We are particularly interested in the way the Mapuche produce “their” landscapes and how these are deeply shaping their identity as “People of the Earth” (mapu = earth; che = people). The vernacular landscapes have been strongly affected since the end of the 19th century by the colonization processes and the implantation of extensive tree plantation and industrialization.

Frank Westermeyer (1971, Essen) is an artist, teacher and researcher. He lives and works in Berlin and Geneva, where he teaches and leads the Information/fiction program at Geneva University of Art and Design. His work, done in collaboration with Sylvie Boisseau (1970, Paris), uses mostly video and film and has recently been shown at VTape (Toronto), Academie Schloss Solitude (Stuttgart), Kunstmuseum Bern, Center for Contemporary Art (Geneva), Gaité Lyrique (Paris).

[www.filmerei.de](http://www.filmerei.de)

DAY 2: Thursday, March 15<sup>th</sup> / 10:45 – 12:30

---

## Entropical and Man-altered landscape

Moderation Yann Chateigné Tytelman

10:00

Entropical Zones  
Statement by Katharina Hohmann

Entropy is the measure of the unstoppable disorder of the parts that constitute physical space. The concept of Entropy, physically and mathematically described in the second law of thermodynamics, means change or reversal, and expanded in the last 150 years in an almost cultlike manner to become an increasingly rather imprecise concept included in economy, ecology, philosophy, the social and artistic sciences, archeology, literature, music and even art production. In the texts of Joseph Beuys and Robert Smithson, for example, it can be seen that Entropy was a central question of their artistic research since the mid-1960s. For each adaptation of the concept from physics into the real, conceptual or symbolic worlds, we could of course describe an individual genesis. What seems important, however, is that Entropy is always shaped by new developments, that oddly, even in its defeatism, its instoppableness, it always seems precisely to push into the now.

Katharina Hohmann, born in Sorengo (CH), grew up in Northern Italy. Art studies in Berlin and Marseille. She lives and works as an artist, curator and professor in Berlin and Genève, where she has been directing the sculpture, installation and space-related / Construction program at Geneva University of Art and Design, since 2007.

[www.katharinahohmann.de](http://www.katharinahohmann.de)

10:45

Breaking Ground Broken Circle /  
Spiral Hill - Robert Smithson

Forty years after the completion of the work Broken Circle/Spiral Hill, the film that Robert Smithson was never able to finish due to his untimely death has been completed in close collaboration between artist Nancy Holt and SKOR | Foundation for Art and Public Domain.

As an integral part of his earthworks, Smithson made films that reveal the spatial and environmental context of the work. Aerial shots in a symmetrical pattern were combined with close-ups, documentary footage of the construction of the work and views of the surrounding landscape. In this way, visitors to galleries and museums were introduced to the earthworks produced by Smithson in remote locations. As a result of a tragic aircraft accident during a reconnaissance flight in 1973, Smithson's life and work came to a premature end. Smithson was never able to finish the video Broken Circle/Spiral Hill.

Forty years later, a video incorporating the original film footage has been completed on behalf of the Land Art Contemporary program in a collaboration between artist Nancy Holt and curator Theo Tegelaers of SKOR | Foundation for Art and Public Domain.

DAY 2: Thursday, March 15<sup>th</sup> / 10:45 – 12:30

---

## Entropical and Man-altered landscape

Moderation Yann Chateigné Tytelman

11:30

The Altered Landscape:  
the mechanisms of a mythicization  
Statement by Etienne Bernard

In the 1970's, the wilderness, as the historical and seminal refuge value of the relationship that the United States has with nature by way of the landscape genre, made way for a new tangible reality of contemporary America: the altered landscape, an artificial system of spaces overlaid on the earth's surface, functioning and evolving no longer in accordance with natural laws but to serve a community. It became a vernacular landscape, defined by the American sociologist and geographer John Brinckerhoff Jackson in 1984 as a "succession of traces and imprints which are overlaid on the ground. In this sense, the landscape is like a work of art, earth, soil, nature, being like materials which people give shape to on the basis of cultural values which differ in time and space", and would be furthered in 1982 by the British architectural historian Reyner Banham, who admitted his irresistible attraction for the southwest American desert in *Scenes in America Deserta*.

Etienne Bernard (1979) is a Paris-based art critic and a curator. He collaborates to French magazine *02* among others. He was granted an MA in Aesthetics from the University of Paris 1 Pantheon-Sorbonne in Paris in 2004. His academic researches were focused on documentary American landscape photography. From 2007 to 2009, he was directed the International Poster and Graphic Design Festival of Chaumont as well as an exhibition program for the CAPC Museum of Contemporary Art in Bordeaux. As a freelance curator, he led various projects in art institutions in France and internationally. Etienne Bernard also teaches in art theory at the University of Paris 1 Pantheon-Sorbonne in Paris and at Ecole Supérieure des Beaux-arts in Nantes. Since 2010, he coordinates Fieldwork Marfa international research-in-residency program in Marfa, Texas for ESBA Nantes Metropole.

12:00

Research in residency  
Discussion with Benoit-Marie Moriceau

Benoit-Marie Moriceau is a French artist working and living in Rennes. Through various interventions, which often extend beyond the limits of the exhibition space and whose scale is expandable, Benedict Mary Moriceau performs work which questions the specificity of the site in relation to history of the installation. Seeking to disrupt and to reveal the place he invests, these projects experiment a space or a situation. Borrowing from history and public domain strategies of dissimulation or sensationalisation, he set up installations with strong fictional dimension. Thus, with *Psycho* (2007), it embodies a simple and radical idea which is to paint in black the entire surface of a residential house in which he is invited for an exhibition. In 2009, he integrates a bright white cube in the middle of a container port area. In summer 2010, he illuminates with powerful floodlights referring to sports facilities and construction sites, the front of the Palais de Tokyo and the Museum of Modern Art of the city of Paris. Born in 1980 in Poitiers, his solo shows at *Tripod* (2011), *the Spot* (Le Havre) in 2009 and *40mcube* (Rennes) in 2007.

DAY 2: Thursday, March 15<sup>th</sup> / 14:00 – 20:00

---

## Art in public space

Moderation Jeroen Boomgaard

14:00

Making Things Public  
Statement by Jeroen Boomgaard

Jeroen Boomgaard is Professor of Art and Public Space at Gerrit Rietveld Academy, Amsterdam. He is also head of the Master of Artistic Research of the University of Amsterdam. In 2011 he published an extended essay about art and public space: Wild Park. Commissioning the Unexpected.

Presentation by Noura Wedell

Noura Wedell is a writer, scholar and translator. She received her Ph.D. in Comparative Literature from Columbia University, and was assistant director of the Center for Studies in Poetics (now The Comparative Studies and Research Center on Creative Art) at the Ecole normale supérieure, Lyon, France from 2007 to 2011. During her time there, she co-founded a creative writing program with the Ecole Nationale Supérieure des Beaux-Arts, Lyon, and worked with both the Lyon Art Biennale and the Lyon Contemporary Art Museum. Wedell has organized a number of conferences and colloquiums, notably a symposium on the expanded field of writing in the works of Robert Morris, the collected papers of which are currently in press. Her research centers around experimental and conceptual writings, theory, the relation between text and image, and the intermingling of politics with aesthetics. She belongs to the editorial committee of French Experimental Writing Magazine Nioques. Editor and translator for Semiotext(e), she has translated Maurice Dantec, Tony Negri, Guy Hocquenguem, Paul Virilio, as well as Pierre Guyotat. She is currently translating Guyotat's latest novel. Her first book, Odd directions, was published in 2009.

Presentation by Sean Dockray

Sean Dockray is an artist involved in collaborative, long-term, public projects, often elaborated through media. He initiated The Public School and [AAAARG.ORG](http://AAAARG.ORG) and is a founding director of Telic Arts Exchange, a non-profit arts organization providing a critical engagement with new media and culture. Dockray has participated in exhibitions at the

Encuentro Internacional de Medellín 2011, the California Museum of Photography, and at the Royal College of Art in London. Sean speaks internationally on topics of archives, education, copyright, and infrastructure, including recent lectures at the 29th São Paulo Biennial, "Speak, memory" at the Townhouse Gallery in Cairo, and the Modern Art Museum of Fort Worth. His writing has been published in Cabinet, Bidoun, X-TRA, Volume, and Phillip. Dockray lives in Los Angeles.

15:15

Research in residency  
Discussion with Wilfrid Almendra

Wilfrid Almendra is an artist based in Cholet (France). He confronts the utopian forms of the New Babylon project by Dutch artist Constant Nieuwenhuys with those of suburban neighbourhoods and peri-urban zones. Nieuwenhuys' New Babylon – which remained in project form – is the map of an ideal city in which humanity must be reformed on new foundations. Built in a vertical fashion like a hanging garden, it was designed as a place of genuine fulfilment for its inhabitants. Reconstruction of a Monument II reactivates this work by borrowing its form. To produce it, the artist used aluminium sections from verandas recuperated from Faute-sur-Mer, a French village that was devastated by a fatal storm in 2010. The work evokes the passage of time, from collective utopias to individual ones.

DAY 2: Thursday, March 15<sup>th</sup> / 14:00 – 20:00

---

## Art in public space

Moderation Jeroen Boomgaard

15:45

Open Sky Museum by Eden Morfaux,  
artist-researcher at ESBANM

Open Sky Museum, as its name suggests, involves a plastic, concrete, artistic proposal entailing people finding themselves once again “in front of artworks” in a particular context, that of an open sky museum, in a peri-urban space and outside current forms of circulation, where the works are accessible for spectators to freely look at, with no mediation, curatorship or surveillance, at the mercy of time—and (bad) weather. Today the group is made up of Jean-Gabriel Coignet, Claire-Jeanne Jézéquel, Eden Morfaux and Véronique Verstraete, grouped around their respective—and at times antagonistic--uses of the modernist legacy and Minimal Art in particular. The issue of territory as envisaged by the working group put together around the OSM project has to do, first and foremost, with the way in which artists conceive the relationship between their works and the places surrounding them, a major issue, especially for 20th century art. The OSM project highlights the term “Museum”, a critical contextual figure. Today, the Chinati Foundation, at Marfa, is still a fine example of some of the obsessions nursed by Judd, and they are in turn of interest to us. In this respect, he talked about an “ideal context”—the one which the artist develops for himself and with his peers.

Eden Morfaux a French artist born in 1977 and living in Paris, has been drawing his inspiration from, in particular, the architectural sphere. Its shapes, its stories, its materials, its implications, as well as its influence on how we live and consider the common public space, are in the center of his work; should same be exhibited in an art center, in the city or in the landscape. Thus, Block, completed in Summer 2009 for the Skulpturenpark in Berlin, showed such will to give shape to a thought on what constitutes the urban fabric nowadays. Whether it creates behaviours (Foundations, 2008; Around the fire, 2009-2012) or images (Etude, d'après Saint-Jérôme dans son étude, Antonello da Messina, 1475, 2008; Réalité augmentée, 2009), his art work forms a corpus exploring artistic, aesthetic and ideological potentialities of architecture. He's been involved as artist researcher at ESBA Nantes Metropole since 2010. He also currently works on an art project in public space with the city of Gentilly.