

**PLANETARIAN ART PRACTICES**, Anna Siekierska<sup>1</sup>, <sup>1</sup> Sculpture Faculty, Academy of Fine Arts in Warsaw Krakowskie Przedmieście 5, 00-068 Warsaw (anna.siekierska@cybis.asp.waw.pl).

**Résumé** Les pratiques artistiques contemporaines qui tiennent compte à la fois des perspectives biologiques et géologiques sur l'environnement offrent une contribution inspirante à la prise de conscience géologique croissante dans les sciences humaines. La reconnaissance et le respect des relations avec les formes de vie non humaines et aussi avec la Terre minérale semblent être une condition nécessaire pour que notre espèce parvienne à une meilleure compréhension de nos propres problèmes écologiques planétaires..

**Introduction:** I entitled the abstract Planetarian Art to emphasize a much wider phenomenon than just Land art - a trend initiated at the turn of the 1960s and 1970s in the United States. At that time, ecological, feminist, antiracist activist movements began to form particularly strongly. In 1970, Earth Day was celebrated for the first time. This is the time when scientists started talking about the limits of growth, the depletion of natural resources, and global warming. Art quite quickly shows an interest in emerging problems. Treated as a method of generating knowledge, it has a number of "wierd tools" different than those used, for example, in science. Artists often work on emotions, they make it possible to "jump in the imagination" by confronting herself/himself and the audience with the unknown. The goal is not necessarily a thorough study, which in the natural sciences is usually associated with the destruction of the researched object (sections, boreholes).



Joseph Beuys, Bog action, Germany, 1970



Teresa Murak, Sculpture for Earth, Poland, 1974

**Geological approach:** As visual culture theorist Nicholas Mirzoeff claims, "we need to look at the ways we have been taught about the world and begin to imagine a new relationship with what we used to call nature". Art comes to the rescue using a variety of methods. In the 1970s, artists began to work directly with organic matters, showing their lability. Attempts were made to free the art work from its materiality understood as "a monument more durable than bronze". The decomposition process may have become the main theme of the artistic work. Artistic practices entered all fields of life without hesitation. Housework, tree planting, waste disposal - all this has become not only a topic represented by art, but also a direct artistic practice (Mierle Ukeles, Joseph Beuys among others). The artists introduced geological thinking to art. Inter-

ventions of Land Art artists such as the terraforming of Robert Smithson, walking of Richard Long or ephemer practices of Ana Mendieta or Teresa Murak are just few examples.



Robert Smithson, Spiral Jetty, USA, 1970



Mel Chin, Revival Fields, USA, 1990-1993

Looking at life on Earth, it can be concluded that what is assumed to be alive is not much different from what we used to call inanimate. The inanimate enters into countless relationships with the animate: it feeds, it is a shelter, it builds the tissues of living creatures' bodies. The hen forms an egg shell within one day. In the animal's body, small mineral forms are formed in an amazingly short time: kidney stones. The only dead cells in plants forming the wood tissue, which is used to nourish the plant, supply it with water and mineral salts. Geological timescale thinking is an important political postulate. We already know that plastic conglomerates or coats of varnish from car factories create new geological forms. Artists such as Agnieszka Kurant, Bonita Ely, Diana Lelonek devote their projects to them.



Aliciaspence-Agnieszka Kurant, Postfortdit e, 2020

**Space Art:** In a way, meteorites operate at the opposite extreme of long-term thinking. They suddenly reverse the layers of soil that have been depositing in a given order for millions of years. In the blink of an eye, they only form the surface of the Earth in the right way. Stone and metal aliens have been the source of myths and beliefs for centuries. What message are they carrying with them? Writers, scientists, musicians, visual artists try to answer this question. The main character of the mythology created by Lovecraft: Cthulu is a being that appeared with the events of Tunguska. Lovecraft's prose is the starting point for many contemporary posthuman philosophers (Donna Haraway, Timothy Morton, Graham Harman). Ebola Ape is using in his music the astral sounds. Ryan Thomphson is photographing a collection of Meteorwongs – the objects wrongly defined as meteorites. Pratchaya Phinthong is showing a polished meteorites interior.



**My research:** In my PhD project I am researching the site of the fall of the Morasko meteorite. A nature reserve with an area of 54 ha was created there. There are 7 distinct impact craters on its territory. The meteorite, however, had a much greater range than just the area of the reserve. Its shards were found in the fields by local farmers. I am interested in the relationship between what is local, bodily and everyday with what is planetary and cosmic. The 97% iron meteorite also brought to Earth two minerals that had never been here before. It completely changed the living conditions of the creatures who lived here. Is the meteorite influence still present here? Nettle that is one of the most popular plants in the world, it grows profusely in the reserve. One of its properties is the uptake and binding of iron in its tissues. I create objects from nettle fiber and seeds. I speculate about their cosmic properties. In an artisanal process, I obtain the fibers of a plant rich in cosmic iron, and make a fabric from it, which is to show the relationship that connects us with the world. I

am making a movie about a meteorite in which it will return to "its" crater - an opposed practice than the one of science. Using non-intellectual methods, such as working with the body, matter, intuition, and ritual, I study the relations between the mineral, plants and animals.

**Conclusion :** During the reading, I will tell in detail about the most interesting artistic practices related to the earth-soil, Earth-planet and what comes to us from outer space. Art will not save us from a catastrophe, but it can teach us to be compassionate, to sensitize us to the needs of other species that live with us in this world.

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