

LAND

LESS

NESS

But as in landlessness alone resides the highest truth, shoreless, indefinite as God – so better is it to perish in that howling infinite,

than be ingloriously dashed upon the lee, even if that were safety! For worm-like, then, oh! who would craven crawl to land!

with the external fact or we perceive nothing, and can neither grasp nor enjoy the immensity without, but Bachelard's immensity has no external dimension at all. It is a concept so abstract and internalized that he can equate the immensity of the desert with that of "the world beneath the sea." I cannot believe that this could have happened had he any concrete experience of either; but for both, he relies on the writings of Philippe Diolè, a good and natural diver who copes with his own perceptual problems with the desert by filling it with water in his imagination: "*J'emplisais d'eau le décor du désert!*"

With guides like that, Bachelard doesn't stand much of a chance with the real desert, but if he had followed even that guide a bit further he could have got into such a real mess that the sheer absurdity of that approach might have sprung him into a real if literary awareness, because he could not have got far in the early Cousteau period of literature on deep diving without coming upon that marvelous concept "*Tivresses des grands profondeurs*," the intoxication of great depths. Surely that must be something like the obsessions and incommunicable pleasures of the desert?

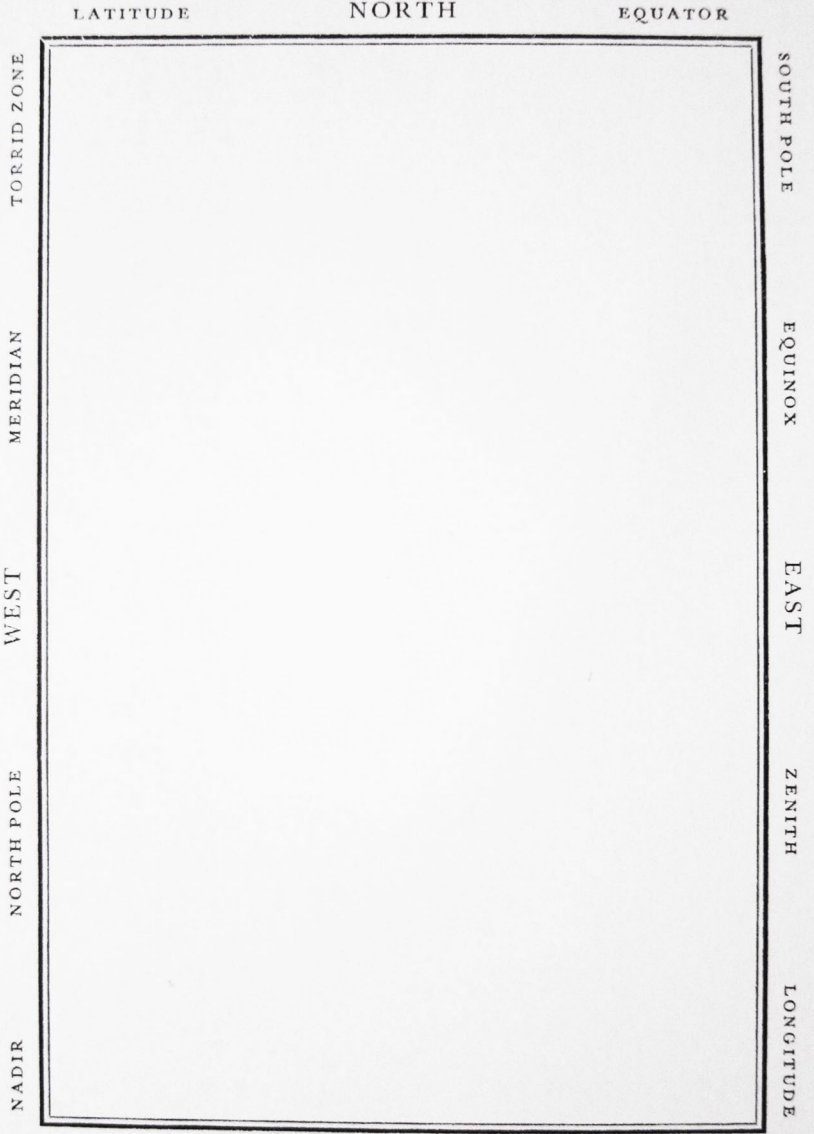
It is not, and the ways in which it is not are very instructive: problems with underwater experiences are nearly all directly physiological, beginning with the disturbance of customary visual processes by the refractions of light at the interface of water and goggles lens, and ending with the literal intoxication caused by breathing highly pressurized atmospheres—the reported euphoria preceding death at great depths is not rare spiritual exaltation but dreary everyday drunkenness and impaired judgment. The less-than-terminal conditions in which the diver believes himself at one with the deep are commonly admitted, in my hearing, to be minor states of inebriation, frequently followed by the most mundane types of headache and boring muscle cramps.

True, in very hot and very high deserts, oxygen deprivation can be combined with dehydration to produce hallucinations and dislocations of vision, but the "intoxications of the sight," the "exaltations of perception" which desert lovers attempt to describe are

common at much lower altitudes and temperatures. Even so, I am marginally inclined to look warily at my sense of exaltation on seeing the view south from the crest of Delaney's Rim: the temperature was cool, but the altitude was above 6,000 feet, a height at which I occasionally notice shortness of breath. Still, "occasional discomfort" (as the airlines say) is not the same thing as disorientation and hallucination; in any case, I have enjoyed these sentiments of heightened awareness at much lower altitudes, and so have others to whom I have spoken. In which case, this rejoicing in the sheer expansive dimension of space and emptiness, the vast dome of an uninterrupted sky, must have other sources than plain physiological derangement. Both the physical natures of the two immensities—the deep and the desert—and their cultural resonances are fundamentally different.

*Where are your monuments, your battles, martyrs?
Where is your tribal memory? Sirs,
in that grey vault. The sea. The sea
has locked them up. The sea is History.*

Derek Walcott

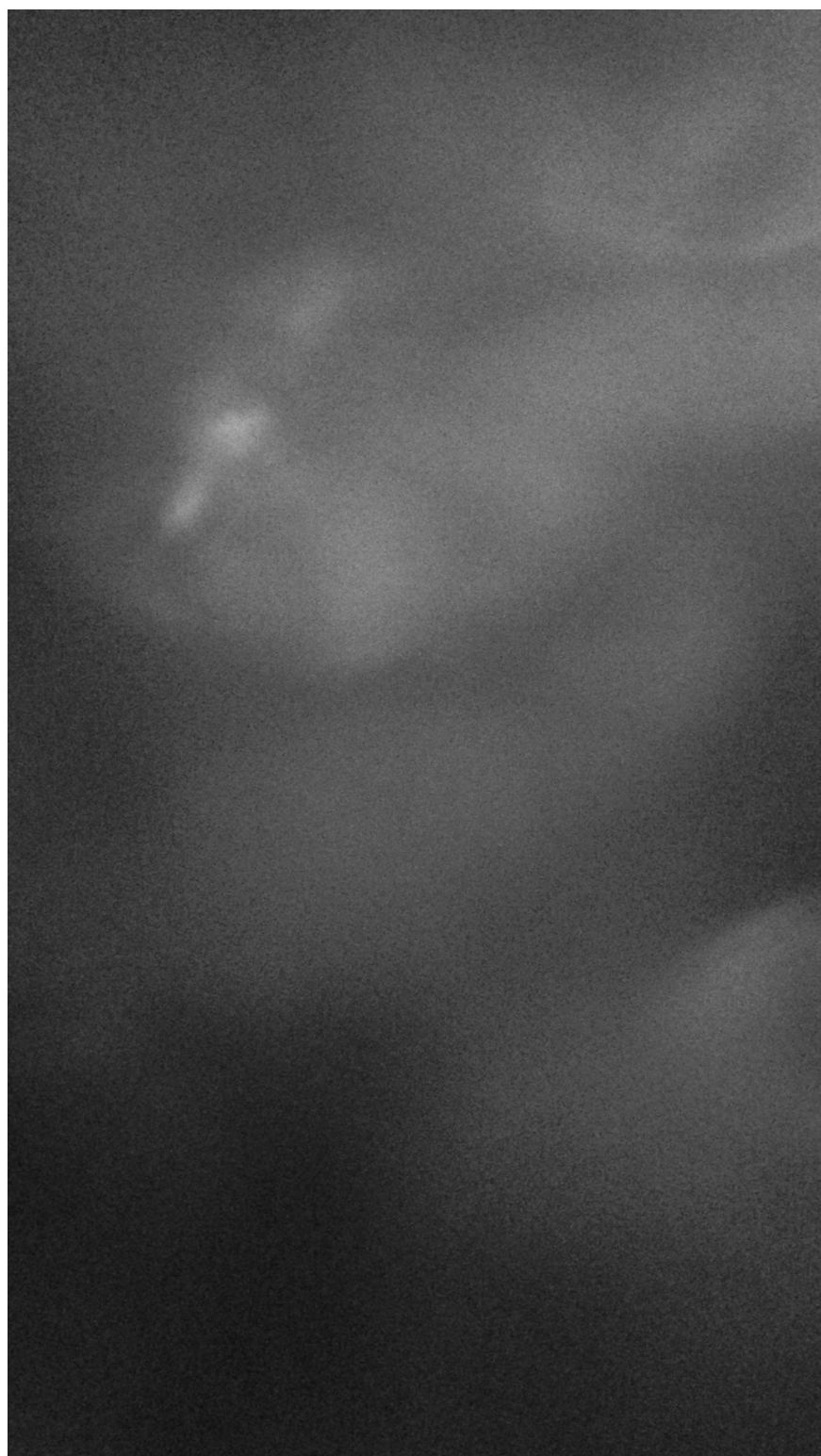


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Scale of Miles.

OCEAN-CHART.

This summer, while on a walk in Santander, my cellphone (accidentally) took over 30 consecutive videos and a few photographs from my back pocket. This is one of the photographs.



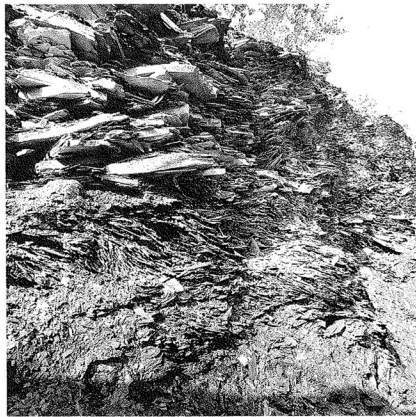
**A SEDIMENTATION OF THE MIND:
EARTH PROJECTS (1968)**

The earth's surface and the figments of the mind have a way of disintegrating into discrete regions of art. Various agents, both fictional and real, trade places with each other—one cannot avoid muddy thinking. When it comes to earth projects, or what I will call "abstract geology," one finds that the earth is in a constant state of erosion, mental rivers wear away the banks, brain waves undermine cliffs of thought, ideas decompose in the unknown, and conceptual crystallizations break apart into deposits of reason. Vast moving faculties occur in this geological miasma, and in the most physical way. This movement seems motionless, yet it is a landscape of logic under glacial reveries. This slow flowage makes one conscious of the turbidity of thinking. Slump, debris slides, avalanches take place within the cracking limits of the brain. The entire body is pulled into cerebral sediment, where particles and fragments make themselves solid consciousness. A bleached and fractured world surrounds the artist, who organizes this mess of corrosion into patterns, grids, and subdivisions, a synthetic process that has scarcely been touched.

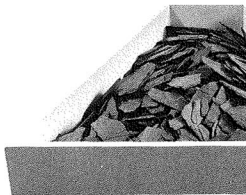
The manifestations of technology are at times less "extensional"

Artforum, September 1968

The Bangor Quarry. Slate site in an uncontained condition before being contained in a *Non-Site* by Robert Smithson. (Photo: Virginia Dwan.)



ROBERT SMITHSON, *Non-Site*, 1968. (Slate)



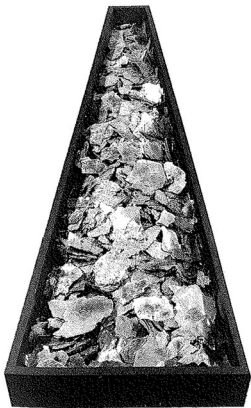
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(Marshall McLuhan's anthropomorphism), than they are aggregates of elements. Even the most advanced tools and machines are made of the raw matter of the earth. Today's highly refined technological tools are not much different in this respect from those of the caveman. Most of the better artists prefer processes that have not been idealized, or differentiated into "objective" meanings. Common shovels, awkward looking excavating devices, what Michael Heizer calls "dumb tools," picks, pitchforks, the machine used by suburban contractors, grim tractors that have the clumsiness of armored dinosaurs, and plows that simply push dirt around. Machines like Benjamin Holt's steam tractor (invented in 1885)—"It crawls over mud like a caterpillar." Digging engines and other crawlers that can travel over rough terrain and steep grades. Drills and explosives that can produce shafts and earthquakes. Geometrical trenches could be dug with the help of the "ripper"—steel toothed rakes mounted on tractors. With such equipment construction takes on the look of destruction; perhaps that's why certain architects hate bulldozers and steam shovels. They seem to turn the terrain into unfinished cities of organized wreckage. A sense of chaotic planning engulfs site after site. Subdivisions are made—but to what purpose? Building takes on a singular wildness as loaders scoop and drag soil all over the place. Excavations form shapeless mounds of debris, miniature landslides of dust, mud, sand and gravel. Dump trucks spill soil into an infinity of heaps. The dipper of the giant mining power shovel is 25 feet high and digs 140 cu. yds. (250 tons) in one bite. These processes of heavy construction have a devastating kind of primordial grandeur, and are in many

ROBERT SMITHSON, *Non-Site*, 1968. (Mica from Portland, Conn.)



Buckwheat Mineral Dump. Rock site in an uncontained condition before being contained in *Non-Site* #3 by Robert Smithson. (Photo: Nancy Holt.)



Here are my first thoughts:
when I read the word 'Landlessness'
I immediately have a sad feeling -
like it's someone who is in exile.

Without a home. Without the mother land.
Wandering. Outcast. Nomadic as necessity.
Forced off the land.
I think of it as something stolen.

Then when I read on, and read the quote from
Melville (one of my all-time favorite books,
probably the only thing I remember and
truly received as a gift from High School,
not counting the amazing art teachers I
had who literally saved my life)
I see it here as a blessing!
Something that provides the closest equivalent
to God, infinity, and truth! Wow.
That is not how I read it at all.
So then putting myself in Ishmael's shoes
(who I assume said that)
I am confronted w/ a conundrum.

Could it be that landlessness is a good thing?

Well, the answer is yes. For some. For some not.
And that, dear reader, becomes the truth for all things:
for some it is good, for others it is bad.

There are no absolutes, are there?
And you can be a worm out at sea, too.

Death as a form of landlessness. Literally no longer having feet on the ground or being limited to a time/place. The possibility of orchestrating a convention of the dead - non plan tickets, no hotels, no meals necessary - as a way to redirect current dialogue and resist myopia.

Itakos on Osore-san - mediums at Devil Mt in Northern Japan. Mediums in general in any culture as the gatekeepers, one foot in "both worlds." Communicating and communing with the dead via an intimate encounter/gathering between living peoples. Visit a real-deal medium in NYC, or SF?

The rabbit in the moon making mochi. And how things are different depending on where you locate yourself.

Wishing on stars for the deceased - regardless of where they/you are.

Color language and it's ability to traverse or trans-verse logic of location and culture and symbolic language.

Capital is landlessness...

Voodoo - similar to color, in it's ability to operate beyond symbolic state-issued order - or at least in it 's own way unsanctioned and uncontrollable by authorities but perpetuated by belief, myth, and intimate exchange.

queerness - as a form of landlessness

In the title, land is referred to and yet stated to be absent (sort of thinking of Lacan vs Freud here, Freudian "lack", penis envy... reactionary politics..

Running or moving through space or meditating in a transcendental way - runner's high etc. Leaving the specificity of being land-locked, gravity-bound for an experience that transverses mental states.

How can this work exist formally in-line with the theme - what does a landless form look/feel/act like?



Mara



Flo Jo



Mokin



Marzanna



Kali

"The duende....Where is the duende? Through the empty archway a wind of the spirit enters, blowing insistently over the heads of the dead, in search of new landscapes and unknown accents: a wind with the odour of a child's saliva, crushed grass, and medusa's veil, announcing the endless baptism of freshly created things." — Garcia Lorca, "Theory and Play of the Duende," 1933

Duende

... in regard to nature's elements, we have no gratitude, for what delights and for what outrageous uses does one not subserve mankind? She is flung into the sea, or dug away to allow us to let in the channels, water, iron, wood, fire, stone, growing crops, are employed to torture her at all hours and much more to make her minister to our luxuries than our sustenance. Yet in order to make the sufferings inflicted on her surface and mere outer skin seem endurable, we probe her entrails, digging into her veins of gold and silver and mines of copper and lead. We actually drive shafts down into the depth to search for gems and certain tiny stones; we drag out her entrails.

-Pliny the Elder in Natural History

*There was nothing but land: not a country at all but
the material out of which countries are made...
I had the feeling that the world was left behind,
that we had got over the edge of it,
and were outside man's jurisdiction.*

-Willa Cather, *My Antonia*, 1918

THE WATER FRONT,

Becca Albee 11, 23

Amanda Curreri 17, 18

Jennifer Nagle Myers 16

Pablo Guardiola 7, 10

Nina Elder 5, 13, 20, 21

Organized by Carrie Hott

Ortega y Gasset Projects
April 19-May 18, 2014