

For immediate release
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RSA Arts & Ecology
Publishes *LAND, ART: A Cultural Ecology Handbook*
In partnership with Arts Council England

RSA Arts & Ecology is pleased to announce the publication of ***LAND, ART: A Cultural Ecology Handbook*** produced in partnership with Arts Council England. Edited by curator and writer Max Andrews, the publication presents a compendium of essays, dialogues and commissioned projects by international artists, ecologists, cultural theorists, activists and curators exploring art's varied modes of response to notions of territory, the Earth and the emergencies of the 21st century.

With contributors including renowned art historian Lucy R. Lippard, artists Thomas Hirshhorn and Rirkrit Tiravanija, Nobel Peace Prize winner Wangari Maathai, political strategists Michael Shellenberger & Ted Nordhaus and musician David Toop, *LAND, ART...* will be launched during RSA Arts & Ecology's two-day conference *No Way Back?*, on 12 December 2006 at the London School of Economics and Political Science. Like the symposium, the book has been produced within the Arts & Ecology programme—an initiative launched by RSA and Arts Council England in 2005 examining and addressing environmental concerns through the engagement of artists.

Today's understanding of ecology articulates a web of relations that goes way beyond 'environmentalism' and the notion of 'green'. Likewise, contemporary art is a radically diversified field that explores subjects as varied as corporate politics, urban planning, agriculture, tourism or ethnic justice. In part a genealogy of 'land' and what has been understood by 'the environment' since the 1960s—with the activities of 'Land artists' and the emergence of a popular 'eco'-consciousness—*LAND, ART...* proposes and tests if and how our conceptions of art and artists are relevant to a global debate about the future of the planet, and where, how and why art might operate—at the grass roots, at a tangent, as propaganda, as activism or as resistance, for example.

Contributions by Lara Almarcegui, Amy Balkin, James Boyle, Fernando Bryce, Susan Canney, Chu Yun, Jimmie Durham & Maria Thereza Alves, Feng Yuan, Futurefarmers & Free Soil, Tue Greenfort, Thomas Hirschhorn, Katie Holten, Jiang Jun, Jeffrey Kastner, Winona LaDuke, Learning Group, Lucy R. Lippard, Wangari Maathai, Jonathan Meuser, Jason Middlebrook, Nils Norman, David Naguib Pellow & Lisa Sun-Hee Park, PLATFORM, Natascha Sadr Haghigian, Paul Schmelzer, Peter Schmelzer, Michael Shellenberger & Ted Nordhaus, Cameron Sinclair, Stephanie Smith, Bruce Sterling, Kirstine Roepstorff, Rirkrit Tiravanija, David Toop, Vitamin Creative Space, Insa Winkler, the Worldwatch Institute and Zheng Guogu. Artists' 'plates' section: Claire Bishop on Francis Alÿs, Gemma Lloyd on Donna Conlon, Max Andrews on Henrik Håkansson and Insa Winkler, Diana Baldon on Marine Hugonnier, Mariana Cánepa Luna on Alfredo Jaar, Zoë Gray on Brian Jungen, Lars Bang Larsen on Aleksandra Mir, Richard Flood on Richard Prince, Alejandra Aguado on Tomás Saraceno, Francesco Manacorda on Simon Starling.

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Selected articles will be available from the RSA in PDF format from early November.

For contributors biographies, please visit

<http://www.thersa.org/arts/publications/publications.asp>

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NOTES TO EDITORS

The RSA

www.thersa.org

The Royal Society for the Encouragement of Arts, Manufactures & Commerce—commonly known as the RSA and founded in 1754—is a not-for-profit, independent, non-aligned, multi-disciplinary charity, supported by 25,000 Fellows. It encourages sustainable economic development and the release of human potential through a programme of projects and a national lecture programme, that continue to place it at the forefront of social, economic, political and artistic thought and action.

The Society stands as an influential and highly respected organisation, focusing on five strategic areas to deliver its mission. RSA manifesto challenges are:

1. To encourage enterprise.
2. To move toward a zero waste society.
3. To develop a capable population.
4. To foster resilient communities.
5. To advance global citizenship.

RSA ARTS & ECOLOGY

Examining and addressing the environmental emergencies of the 21st Century through the engagement of artists

The Arts & Ecology programme was launched by Michaela Crimmin, Head of Arts at the RSA, in partnership with Arts Council England in April 2005 to support the work of the arts in examining and addressing environmental concerns in an international arena. The entire programme—envisaged under the RSA’s manifesto challenge ‘moving towards a zero-waste society’—is informed by the notion of ecology as the study of relationships between an individual and their cultural, social, economic and natural environments, and by the belief that the arts can play a central role in providing creative—and sometimes radical—insights to the challenges facing contemporary society.

How the environment relates to poverty and party politics, conflict, global trade, desertification, waste and land use, among other topics, are pressing matters for a growing number of artists. RSA Arts & Ecology, in partnership with Arts Council England, has been exploring the various ways in which visual artists, writers and film-makers are currently addressing this field through a series of initiatives including conferences, workshops, research trips, education pilots, artists’ projects and commissions, a website and the publication *LAND, ART: A Cultural Ecology Handbook*. Each of these is produced by the RSA in collaboration with varied institutions and individuals that provide their own expertise and resources, and developed through a dialogue established with scientists, ecologists, writers, philosophers, other theoreticians, industrialists and the government.

RSA Arts & Ecology was initially established in partnership with Arts Council England. This has been extended to include the London School of Economics and Political Science, Creative Partnerships, the Royal College of Art, the Greater London Assembly, the Wildfowl and Wetland Trust, inIVA and Situations, among others. Work is very generously supported by a number of organisations including Arts Council England, Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation, Danish Arts Council and the Pontin Charitable Trust.

RSA Arts & Ecology **Other Projects**

International Conference

No Way Back?

11 & 12 December 2006 at the LSE, London

Speakers include Maria Thereza Alves, Lara Almarcegui, Andrew Freear, Tue Greenfort, Peter Head, Patrick Holden, Professor Zou Ji, John Jordan, Marjetica Potrč, Claudio Prado, Tomás Saraceno, Bronislaw Szerszynski, Dr Ken Yeang

Taking place at the LSE, the enquiry *No Way Back?* aims to provide different perspectives on ecological issues from major thinkers of our time. Bringing together artists, geographers, ecologists, economists, sociologists, architects, philosophers, anthropologists and others, it will focus on real places and issues. The exploration will include keynote presentations, workshops, panel discussions, walks, readings, screenings, artists' interventions and will encourage dialogue with and among the delegates.

No Way Back? is a joint RSA, Arts Council England and London School of Economics and Political Science event.

London Artists' Commissions

Tue Greenfort

Working in partnership with Arts Council England, London, the RSA is commissioning Berlin-based Danish artist Tue Greenfort to make work with an ecological interest for the capital. Tue's proposal was selected following a series of site visits in both London and Ghana. The first of two 3-month residencies has just begun. The artist will be based in London from September to December 2006, when he'll present his research at *No Way Back?*

This project is curated by Latitudes (Max Andrews and Mariana Cánepa Luna) and is supported by the Danish Arts Council, the Danish Embassy in London and Arts Council England.

Bristol Artists' Commissions

Funded by the Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation, and curated by Claire Doherty, artists Heather and Ivan Morison and Grace Ndiritu have been selected to use media and environmental agencies in Bristol as research bases to develop work which communicates ecological issues.

Bat House Project

An initiative by Jeremy Deller

RSA Arts & Ecology is working in partnership with artist Jeremy Deller (Turner Prize winner 2004), the Arts Council England, the Bat Conservation Trust, the Greater London Authority, plus equals, and the Wildfowl and Wetland Trust, to develop Deller's initiative to launch a national competition for the design of a large-scale home for bats at the London Wetland Centre.

Bringing together the worlds of art and ecology, and pursuing collaborative practice, the Bat House Project aims to raise awareness of the importance of bats in the urban environment, and to stimulate creative conservation among architects, builders, the general public and children.

The winning entry will be built at the WWT London Wetland Centre in Barnes, and selected designs will be showcased in an exhibition and publication.

www.BatHouseProject.org