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LAND ART MONT-SAINT-HILAIRE

Soyons réalistes et créons l'impossible

J'aime 1,2k

Par : John K. Grande 08 avril, 2014

In the mind of a preview on the next Mont-Saint-Hilaire's annual Land Art event planned for October 2014, here is a look back at the 2013 show.

An outdoors show that chooses as its theme Land Art, a movement that grew in the 1960s and 1970s in reaction to the predominantly urban, object-based contemporary arts scene, seems something of an anomaly in an era of new media, video. Mont St. Hilaire has chosen to support Land Art in its more contemporary manifestations which are far from what land art in the era of Robert Smithson, Michael Heizer and Dennis Oppenheim once was. The various ways artists now produce can be small-scale, eco-sensitive, decorative, or works that interface between culture and nature in ways that encourage a dialogue between the two. For the 2013 Edition under continuing direction of Jérémie Boudreault, the chosen site was not a desert, or no-man's land, but instead the Pavillon de la Pomme, a fully functioning apple orchard. In a way, urban installation art and earth art, as land art is sometimes referred to when the productions are less macho, and more ecologically integrative, can be seen to be fusing, producing works that combine the genius of Arte Povera's use of available materials with a *part permacultural*, *part media savvy* gaze at what art in nature is, or can be.

This year's artists include the duo Suzanne Ricard and P Sharron Kallis, Gilles Bruni, André Lapointe, Daniel Carpentier and Jane Wheeler, Pierre Tessier, Laura Santini, the trio of Sylvain Demers, Marianne Leclair and Nadia Loria Legris' fabulistic Land of Quilim forest intervention, Dominique Laquerre, Charline P. William and Felix Lemieux, Javier Vicente Izquierdo, Sandra Tannous and, Chantal Lagacé et Brigitte Gendron whose *Candel'Arbre*, a huge nature chandelier out of woven branches, was the Coup de Coeur at Land Art Mont St-Hilaire's latest edition.

While many of these works are less Land Art, than some kind of folkloric, *site-specific* craftwork with humanistic concerns, still others are breaking new ground by moving Earth Art or Land Art (whichever term you want) into the social sphere. The best example of this is France's Gilles Bruni whose *Niches* recreated around cut tree stumps, the ghosts of human intervention. Bruni produced a collectivity of mini-shelters, seats for visitors to sit in, so as to become aware of the natural environs, the site of nature his ephemeral and perception-oriented artwork was made for.

New Brunswick-based André Lapointe's living Garden of Eden allusion, *Adam's Dream*, used leaves to "cover" the hidden "heart" of this tree/art whose Cortland apples each had a bite taken out of it. Javier Vicente Izquierdo's raw and rough looking *Viera Viento* (*Vire Vent*) is a windmill that recalls the windmills from Don Quixote and references the wind power energy source of the

future while Laura Santini's Starfish-shaped assemblage made of blue clay and oyster shells from restaurants and fish stores alluded to the depopulation of oysters as a species from over fishing and the effects of acid rain.

A young Montreal artist who is an emerging talent is Sandra Tannous from Co-op Lezard. Her Lisiere intervention was truly in the spirit of the original Land Art movement, but with a more feminine, cultural and historical accent. One part of the installation comprised an earth pit and observation platform. What one could observe from this vantage point was a series of somewhat fragile, cross-shapes hanging in the forest interior. The inner forest assemblage elements, inspired by a Viennese engraving from the 18th century brought a deeper cultural referencing to Tannous' dramatic and contemplative intervention. Another of the more progressive interventions, less about object production than the process of artmaking in an ecological context was by British Columbia's Sharon Kallis. Kallis' *Potential Dreams: The Future* using stripped willow bark that emerges from the top of an apple tree. As Kallis comments, "I was attracted to this tree because it was dying. It was more sculptural and has a vine growing up the side of it. It inspired me how a tree at the end of its life begins to support other life." The apples hanging from the branches of this tree were woven "nature forms" made with the help of women from Le Cercle des Fermières (a rural womens' group that has existed for over a century in Quebec). These local women collaborated with Sharon Kallis embroidering, knitting, weaving and sewing the fruit forms with materials provided by nature like corn husks, stinging nettles, bull rushes and pine needles. At the base of the living installation were apple peels, recycled into art.

Mont St. Hilaire's annual Land Art event parallels René Derouin's Laurentian venture at Val David. The two events are part of a slowly evolving movement that is about developing a language of art that integrates nature's own procreative systems into the art. Land Art now metamorphoses into Earth Art, and integrates the new language of our era with artistic processes that work with nature's own systems.

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with nature, yet integrate aspects of the new visual language of our era. The challenge for this growing Art in Nature movement to move beyond the production of decorative, object-based sculpture (what the original Land Artists were dead set against) towards a process-oriented, integrative, ecologically attuned, sustainable arts practice. Nature is the art of which we are a part!



Sandra Tannous
Lisière



Sandra Tannous
Lisière

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