

# Framing the Problem and Environmental Art

**Robert Glenn Ketchum, aerial photograph, Southwest Alaska**



## UN DECLARES 2008 YEAR OF PLANET EARTH...

- What are some current environmental concerns? In Arkansas? United States? Globally?
- What are some arguments for and against environmental conservation or change? Oregon teacher argues for...

# Individual and Collective Responsibility

## Moral imperative?

- What can we do as individuals? How can we affect change on a local and global scale?
- “Trickle Down Ecology”
  - National newspapers report that northwest Arkansas is conducting a huge eco-experiment – making it a “green valley icon of sustainability” Led by whom... WAL - MART?
  - A 1.5 million corporate grant given to U of A for a new Applied Sustainability Center
  - Members of Chemistry club at Parkview High School, AR are raising money to make a school bus run on old cooking oil and solar power... will be used to transport Parkview’s clubs, band and choir
  - Additional examples?

# What is Environmental Art?

- Your Definitions and responses...

## Artists on Environmental Art

### Anu Kiiskinen

- Combines sculpture, environmental art and landscape architecture.
- Primarily concerned with formation of meaning and of content as a result of the interaction between environment and artwork.
- Opposes aesthetic qualities of an 'autonomous object' and instead seeks art's communicative, functional and social aspects.



## The Artist as Activist

### Ketchum, *Bristol Bay, Alaska* (mines, gas and oil drilling?)

- “Environmental art is like a growing relationship that connects art with the earth; the definition itself grows as artists find their own ways to explore and depict nature.”
- Ketchum initially portrayed the landscape in its inherent beauty but eventually chose to take what he described as an “overtly politically active” stance in his work.





**Andy Goldsworthy, *Pebble Circle*, Kinagashima-cho, Japan**





**Robert Smithson, *Spiral Jetty*, created April 1970**

*Progress has not followed a straight ascending line, but a spiral  
with rhythms of progress and retrogression, of evolution and dissolution.*

- Johann Wolfgang von Goethe

[flatrock.org.nz/topics/intellect\\_and\\_entertain/pink\\_water\\_white\\_salt\\_black\\_rock.htm](http://flatrock.org.nz/topics/intellect_and_entertain/pink_water_white_salt_black_rock.htm)



**The Human Impulse to Shape Nature**  
***Nazca Lines, 200 bce -700 ace, Peru***



**Richard Long, *A Line Made By Walking***



# Earth and the Atmosphere

Walter de Maria, *Lightning Field*, New Mexico

400 stainless steel poles in a grid



Ahmad Nadalian, Persian Gulf Environmental Art Festival

Shell Art – Persian Festival Artists  
Nadalian, *Red Earth* or *Soragh*, *Painted Faces and Bread*





- **Nadalian:**

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**“I have always been interested in making bridges. Bridges between ancient symbols and new media. Bridges between folk art and intellectual art. I want to take intellectual art to the areas where ordinary people live. On the other hand, I am interested in bringing the existing values from the culture of folk art to the art centers where intellectual art is practiced. I love to take an issue which is local and make it global. Today environmental crises can be seen in our villages and also in global village. The same can be said about bridges between Iranian and American environmentalists...”**

Architecture, Environment and Sustainability

E. Fay Jones, *Thorncrown Chapel*, Eureka Springs, Arkansas

