THE SPACES

ART | | BY ELLEN HIMELFARB

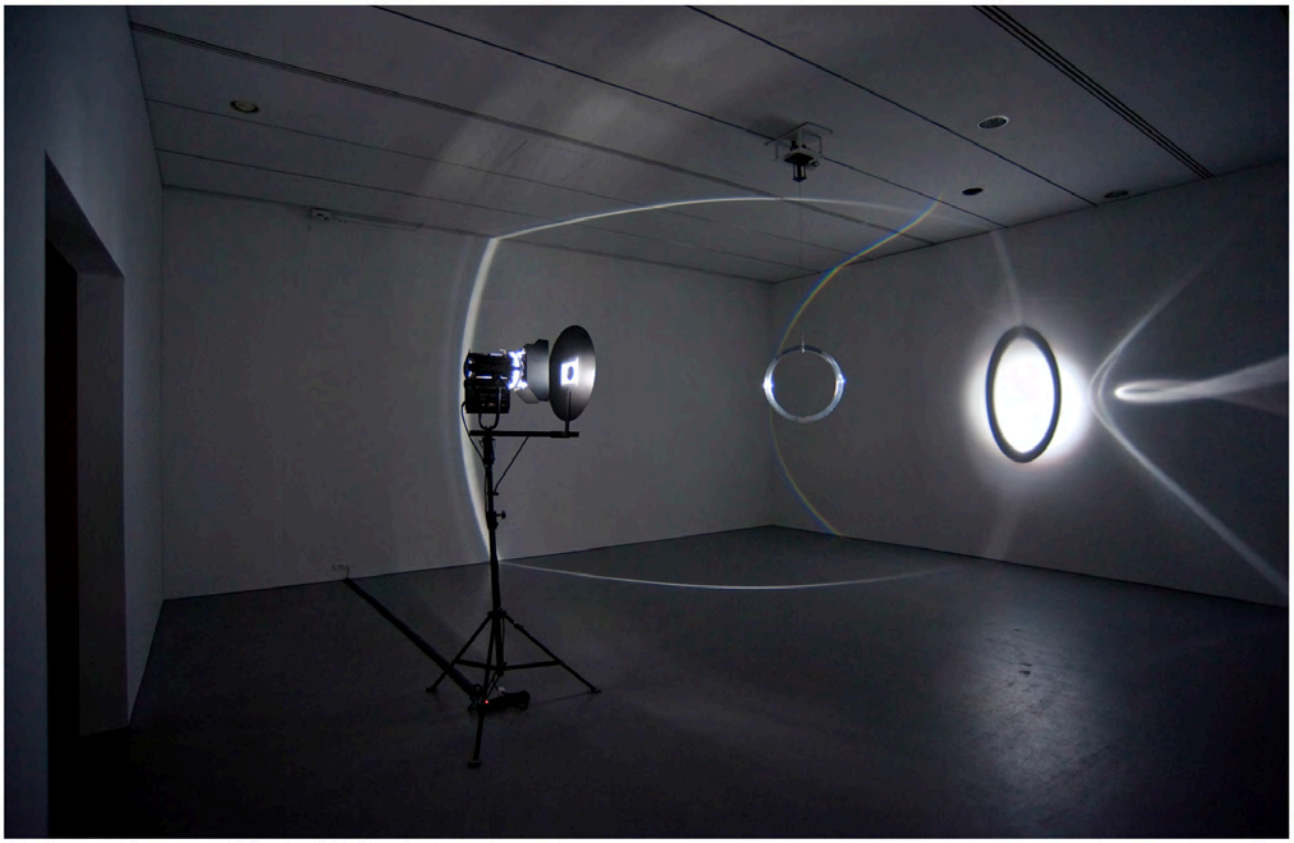
Five seminal art installations headline DC's latest blockbuster

'Big Things for Big Rooms' opened at the Hirshhorn last month

Sam Gilliam's original 'Light Depth', from 1969, opens Big Things for Big Rooms. Photography: courtesy of Hirshhorn.

When, midway through the last century, a disparate group broke out of art's established parameters and explored a world in 3D, they were unwittingly inventing a genre. In California, Robert Irwin was using light to expand, literally and figuratively, the definition of art. Ditto Dan Flavin, New York's neon maestro. Sam Gilliam, in Washington DC, ripped free vast canvases doused in colour from their stretchers and suspended them out from the wall to create spaces within spaces, like a child might build a fort.

In the late-1950s, the artist and critic Allan Kaprow put a name to the un-genre. 'Environments', he reckoned, defined artworks that required active viewer engagement. He was inspired by Jackson Pollock's dynamic lashes of paint: environments emerging off the paper. But according to the Smithsonian's Hirshhorn museum in Washington DC it was Gilliam who gave the term material form. His 'Light Depth', from 1969, kicks off the museum's latest exhibition Big Things for Big Rooms, the second half of its 50th-anniversary celebration that began last year, on view until mid-2027. Taking up, like all other pieces in the exhibition, an entire gallery room, it's considered the finest of his Drapes series of colour-washed canvases. 'It doesn't invite people to touch it,' says Evelyn Hankins, the show's curator, 'but it engages the body. Gilliam was responsible for creating that bridge between art and installation, representing a broader shift in what we define art to be.' As with other cultural shifts of the '60s and '70, she says, 'viewers were ready'.



Olafur Eliasson's 'Round Rainbow' from 2005. Photography: courtesy of Hirshhorn.

On paper, the 10 large-scale artworks chosen by Hankins appear to have little in common – save for their power to immerse and their determination to push at the boundaries of art. When viewed in succession, they recount the evolution of environmental artwork from the 1960s to the present day. 'A lot of them extend the space in different ways,' says Hankins.

A Robert Irwin scholar, Hankins creates a cavernous space for his cantilevered disc in blow-molded acrylic, spotlit from four directions. 'You walk along it and envision yourself taking the path of the artist,' she says. The artwork is not the hard material, she says, but the light. This segues into Richard Long's marble-paved 'Carrara Line', which blazed a 40-foot trail when the English artist first laid it in 1985; the Hirshhorn purchased it for the gardens nearly 20 years ago. Next is Flavin's ''monument' for V. Tatlin', his ode to Russian expressionism that reaches the senses with its tubular fluorescent girders.

The museum had the foresight to acquire most of these works over the decades – including, more recently, Mika Rottenberg's 'Tropical Breeze' from 2004, a raw wood shipping container concealing a screening room that has never been shown publicly. Rashid Johnson builds a historic composition of books, ceramics, living plants and barely solid shea butter, arranged in a sculpture that is strikingly minimalist in form. Paul Chan projects light and shadow across his gallery – and across a replica of the table in Leonardo's The Last Supper – to explore themes of creation, time and transcendence. 'All of these works are kind of groundbreaking in their own ways,' Hankin says.

'3rd Light' by Paul Chan, created in 2006. Photography: courtesy of Hirshhorn.

The show ends with Chan's light extravaganza but visitors can go on to examine the Hirshhorn's building, which is itself an environment worthy of contemplation. Gordon Bunshaft, the late Pritzker Prize–winning architect who designed the space-age atrium and surrounding cylinder, spoke about it as 'elevated sculpture'. 'In the 1970s when the building was opened it was criticised brutally,' says Hankins. 'I just love the idea that it's incredibly strong and sculptural and each gallery has its own presence. Despite its strong characteristics it really allows these works to shine. And it challenges the artists.'

The backdrop for Mika Rottenberg's 'Tropical Breeze', from 2004. Photography: courtesy of Hirshhorn.

LISSON GALLERY

The Sunday Times
26th April 2025

THE TIMES

Behold the National Gallery's surprising showpiece – a splatter of mud!

Artist Richard Long brought a plastic bag of tidal sludge from River Avon to London and created the centrepiece for the revamped Sainsbury Wing

Richard Long with his artwork Mud Sun in the new Sainsbury Wing

CHRIS MCANDREW

Are you ready to rediscover a host of our greatest artistic treasures? Then prepare for a trip to the National Gallery because at last, after more than two years of building work, the refurbished Sainsbury Wing — home to what arguably counts as the finest collection of early Renaissance masterpieces outside Italy — is about to reopen. What will visitors find as they eagerly mount the grand staircase?

When the Museum of Modern Art (MoMA) in New York reopened in 2020 it made Matisse's jubilant *Dance* its celebratory centrepiece. Twenty-five years ago Tate Modern lured its first callers into the clutches of an oversized spider, courtesy of Louise Bourgeois. At the end of its £41 million revamp almost two years ago the National Portrait Gallery threw open doors freshly decorated by that most daring and delightfully controversial of British contemporaries, Tracey Emin.

Will Piero della Francesca's *The Baptism of Christ* be christening the overhauled National Gallery building? No. The Sainsbury Wing will be welcoming you with a great splatter of mud. It is all but flung in your face as you climb the staircase. What on earth ... or rather, what on earth-mixed-with-water are the curators trying to say?

Richard Long's A Line in Norfolk at Houghton Hall

This artwork is by the artist Richard Long (who will be 80 on June 2). Against the matt-black background of a high wall on which, if you look at the original drawings of the architects Venturi Scott-Brown, a painting was always supposed to be displayed, Long has created ("not painted", he insists. "A painting is made with a brush") a big circle out of tidal mud that he gathers from the banks of the River Avon in his home town of Bristol.

After carrying it up to London in a plastic shopping bag ("it's amazing how little you need"), he applies it in scrapes, sweeps and scrabbles of his fingertips. The radius of the circle is 195cm, although the splatters, dribbles and splashes that break out energetically from its circumferential bounds make it bigger. It gleams silvery grey as the *Mud Sun* of its title.

Is this the latest eruption of the infamous "monstrous carbuncle" debate that King Charles started, 40 years ago, about this particular building project?

Long is far from unfamiliar with criticism. He went to art college at a time when they were just beginning to be revolutionised by an influx of new young teachers. "I began to do wacky things ... though they weren't wacky really, just wacky in comparison to what I should have been doing ... like making a footpath across my studio or a sculpture out of stepping stones."

In his second year he won the painting prize. But in his third he suddenly found himself chucked out. “I was just a shy, monosyllabic little boy, very reticent. I still am ... but my parents were told, ‘We think your son is mad.’ The principal called me into the office and said, ‘We don’t want you to speak to any of the students either inside the college or outside the college again.’”

Four years later (having gone on to study at St Martins), Long’s ascent was such he was showing at MoMA. “I sent the principal an invitation, but he never replied.”

In 1964, while earning a living doing odd jobs in Bristol, Long went for a winter walk and made what would come to be acclaimed as his first landmark piece. “I started making a snowball and kept rolling it till it was so heavy I couldn’t move it any more.”

Snow trail on the road by Richard Long, c 1980

He photographed the ephemeral track it had left in the snow. “And that,” he explains, “was basically what I was going to do for the rest of my life: making something with my own physical effort, using the materials of the place, then recording it in an image to show people what I’d done.”

In the course of his subsequent 60-year career, Long — a tall, gaunt figure with beetling black eyebrows and a practical dress sense (“I’m always ready for walking, one of the few things I’m a specialist on is boots and blisters”) — has yomped thousands of miles across moorlands and mountains, deserts and steppes.

He has visited the Antarctic, climbed Kilimanjaro and followed rainbows across the Great Rift Valley. But he comes back with nothing more than, perhaps, a photograph of a stone circle he has constructed, or a pathway he has stamped, or a pattern he has formed by pulling the heads off meadow flowers. Sometimes he creates no more than a list of starkly evocative words.

To the art world, Long is a pioneer of the conceptual, a personification of British “land art”, which is far less bombastic than its American counterpart. “I don’t use machines like the Americans; I’m not interested in the monumental ... I don’t want to create a famous destination spot on the planet,” he says.

Long working on his artwork Stone to Stone in Regent's Park in 2004

"My work comes and goes. Serendipity is very important. Nothing is perfect. Everything is a little bit improvised. I just do the work and that's it; whatever happens, happens. And I don't have any great message," Long insists (slightly tetchily because it's the third time I have pressed him). "I just want to do my work and show people what I've done."

This simplicity — so Zen-like in its complexity — is perhaps what earns Long pole position in the Sainsbury Wing. *Mud Sun* alludes to the earliest origins of image-making. It is daubed, like prehistoric cave art, on a wall with his hands (although having discovered that blood stains he now wears plastic gloves). Mud is a primeval material.

"The Avon Gorge, my childhood playground, has the second highest tides in the world," Long says. "Its mud was made billions of years ago when the moon was much nearer the Earth and there were enormous tides ... and the sun is the energy of all our life on this earth. So this wall piece might be something to do with all these cosmic forces. But the work itself is my human energy."

Richard Long's artwork at the National Gallery, London, opens to the public on May 10

LISSON GALLERY

Time Out
8 May 2025

News

First look: inside the £85 million National Gallery revamp opening this weekend

The Sainsbury Wing has been closed for refurbishment for the last two years

Written by Chiara Wilkinson
Deputy Editor, UK
Thursday 8 May 2025

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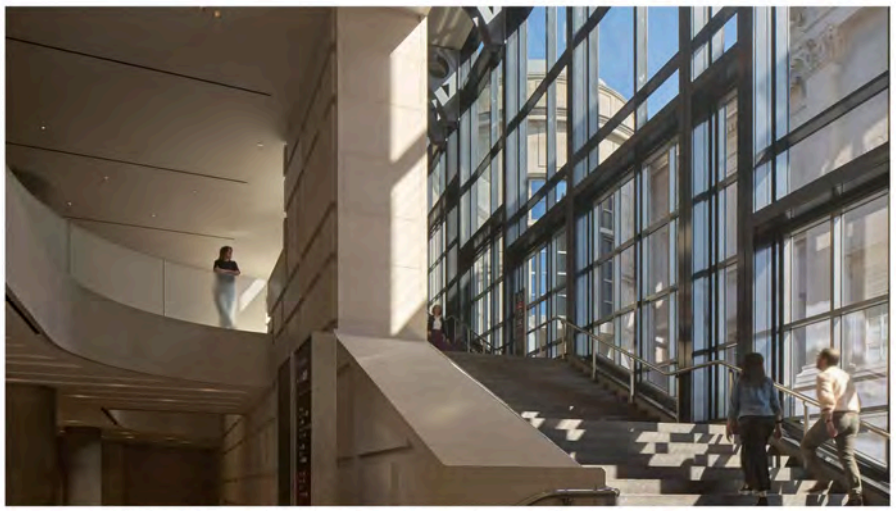
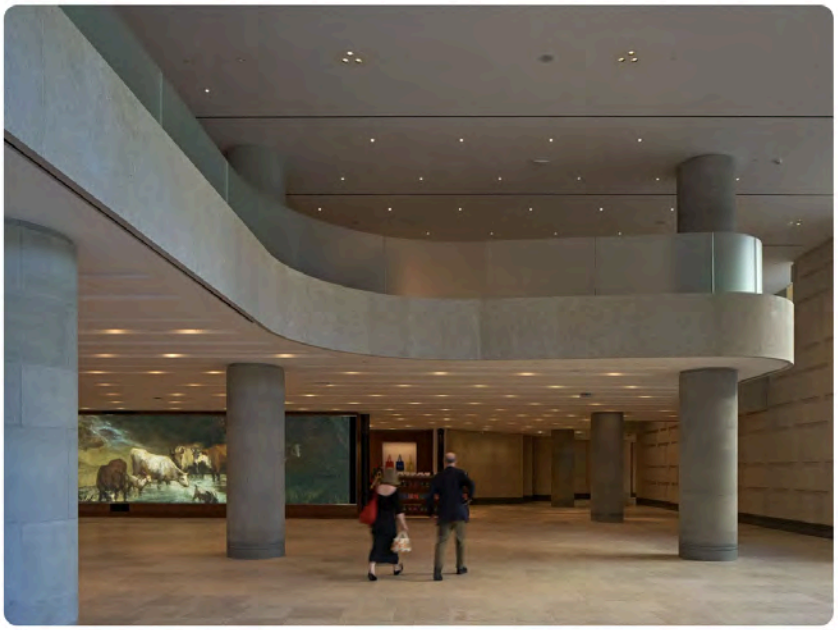


Photograph: Edmund Sumner / National Gallery | The new Sainsbury Wing staircase

Step foot in the National Gallery's new-look Sainsbury Wing and you'll be greeted with a genuine sense of anticipation. A sanctuary from the pigeons, buskers and walking tours crowding Trafalgar Square, neutral limestone shades and vast expanses of glass encompass a wide, open foyer.

Your eyes are immediately drawn to one of three digital HD screens – a large horizontal stretch at the back of the room, and a smaller two on pillars to your left – each showing a slow-moving pan of a painting housed in the floor above. Look closer, and you can see every crack of oil paint, every scratch, every immaculate stroke. Now *this* is a proper welcome to one of the world's greatest art museums.

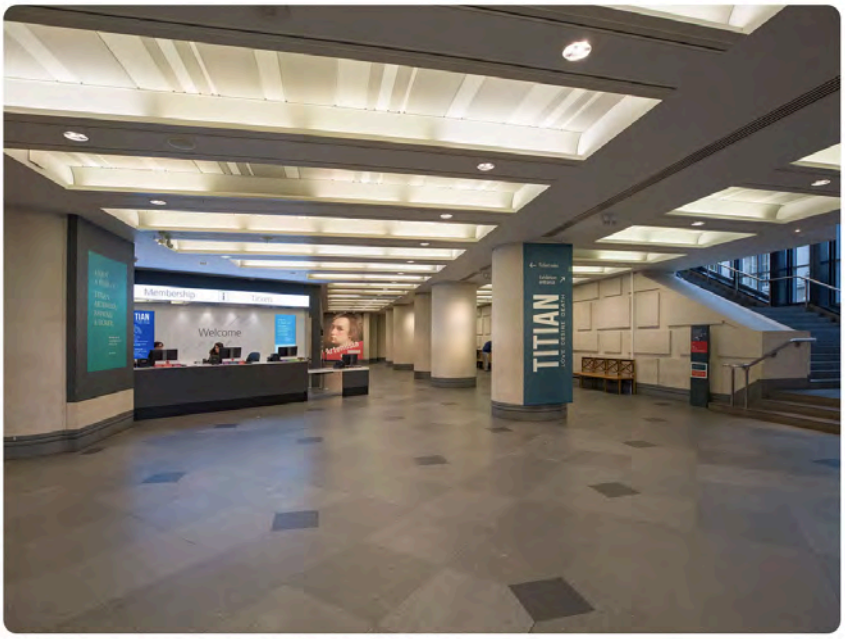


Photograph: Edmund Sumner / National Gallery | Sainsbury Wing Foyer looking North

Designed by US postmodernists Robert Venturi and Denise Scott Brown, the Sainsbury Wing originally opened in 1991 as an addition to the main gallery building – but the foyer was dark and low-ceilinged, cluttered with false columns and dimmed by shaded windows.

Needless to say, not everyone was a fan. During the wing restoration last year, contractors discovered a regretful note from benefactor Lord Sainsbury inside one of the hollow columns, writing: 'Let it be known that one of the donors of this building is absolutely delighted that your generation has decided to dispense with the unnecessary columns.'

Old Sainsbury might have been glad to hear that after two years and a £85 million spend, the refurbished Sainsbury Wing is now fully completed. It opens to the public this weekend, along with the 'Wonder of Art': a major rehang of around 1000 works in the gallery's collection of European painting.



Photograph: National Gallery | The old Sainsbury Wing Foyer

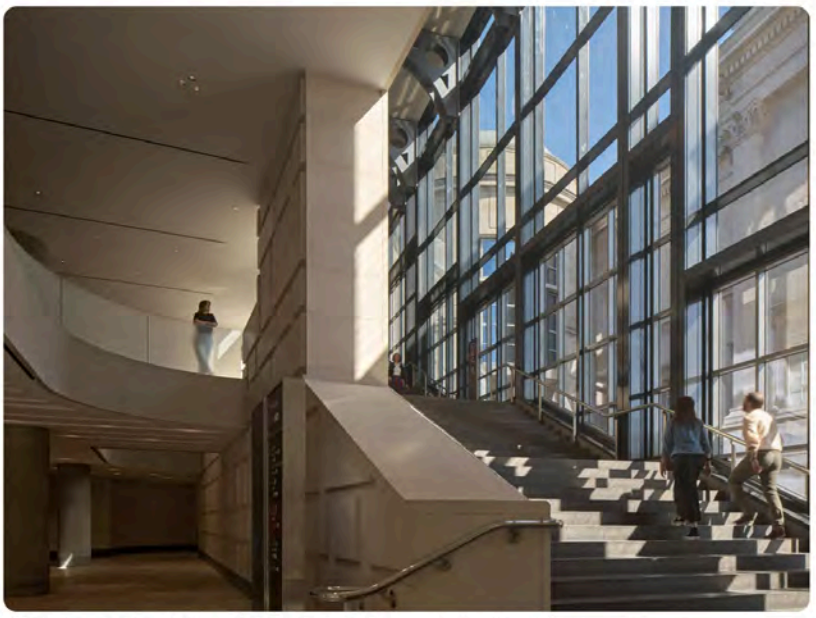
Photograph: Edmund Sumner / National Gallery | Sainsbury Wing Foyer

'We thought the welcome could be better,' said Gabriele Finaldi, Director of National Gallery, speaking about the wing refresh in a speech today. The museum utilised architect Annabel Selldorf, whose credits include the expansion of New York's Frick Collection, to lead the refurb in line with the gallery's bicentenary celebrations.

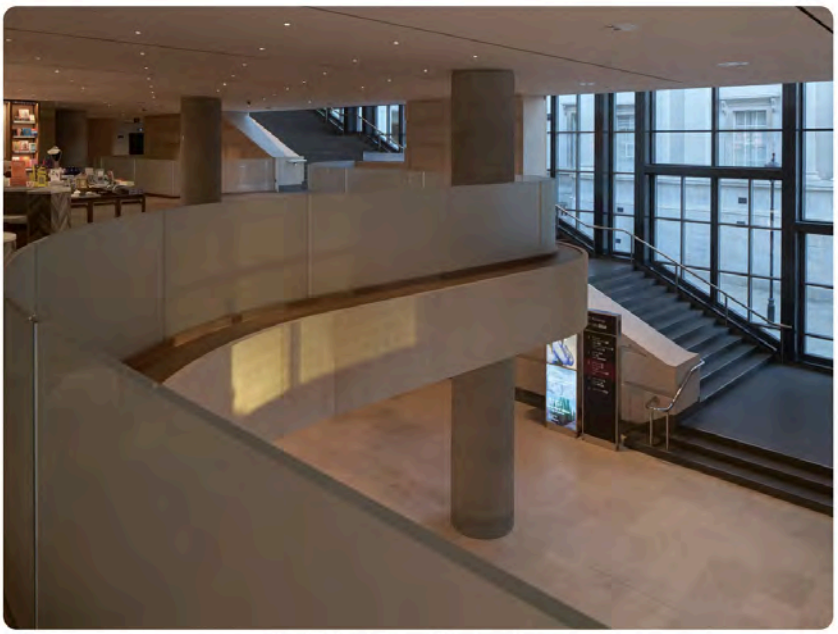
Lively and inviting, the result is a triumph. Reimagining the entrance as a 'place to rest and think, to meet your friends', the stairs were opened up, dark glazing swapped for clear glass and several columns removed, doubling the height of the foyer. On a quiet day, it's a lot of empty space – according to the *Guardian*, there is 60 percent more room than before – but that's surely the point; you can imagine it filling up fast with groups of school trips and tours.

The Sainsbury Wing now acts as the main entrance for the gallery – and with a new exterior sign, it's near impossible to miss (goodbye, days of running between queues with your phone out). Look left inside and you'll find a swish seating lounge next to Bar Giorgio, which is run in collab with Searcy's and serves great coffee (and £9.50 Mortadella rolls).

Head down to the basement for the refreshed teal-blue Pigott Theatre with a larger improved lobby (in time, there are plans to build an underground tunnel link to take you to the main building), or turn right to the brightly lit main staircase, leading up past a mezzanine housing a shop and the new Locatelli Italian restaurant – and up into the gallery hosting the very oldest works in the museum's collection. Names of major artists are subtly etched into stone on the side of the staircase walls – Bellini, Leonardo, Raphael – and in pride of place at the top, you'll see Richard Long's newly commissioned 'Mud Sun'; an intricate, planet-like shape made with mud from the River Avon, acting as a bridge between the Medieval and Early Renaissance worlds of the gallery and the present day viewer.



Photograph: Edmund Sumner / National Gallery | The new Sainsbury Wing staircase



Photograph: Edmund Sumner / National Gallery | The new Sainsbury Wing mezzanine

Onto the collection itself. As you might expect, this is not a radical rehang – it's a subtle, clever, tasteful one, all white, light and clean, allowing the paintings to pop under the towering high ceilings. Throughout the rooms, which are loosely structured around chronological and geographical themes such as 15th century Netherlandish illusionism and early renaissance Florentine altarpieces, you'll spot all manner of world-famous works, like Jan van Eyck's Arnolfini portrait and Leonardo da Vinci's 'The Virgin of the Rocks'.

But you'll also encounter stuff that makes you stop in your tracks, such as an early 16th-century triptych unusually displayed with closed doors to show off its decorative exterior panels, or Segna di Bonaventura's 14th-century crucifix suspended high from the ceiling. Teeny tiny panels, vast golden triptychs, battle scenes, portraits, dozens and dozens of devotional works: this is a mind-boggling abundance of stunning, fascinating, invaluable paintings from Western art history.

There is a fair amount of criticism about the revamp – the building is, after all, Grade I-listed, and the original extension is still regarded as a postmodern icon – but there's no need to wax lyrical. A real, modern visitor will take space and light over a Trafalgar Square cellar any day. The new Sainsbury Wing is exactly what an art building should be – and most importantly of all, it is still completely free.

The National Gallery's Sainsbury Wing reopens on Saturday, May 10.

The Guardian
15 November 2022

The Guardian

Interview

'I've drunk from every river on Dartmoor': land artist Richard Long on changing the face of art

Mark Hudson

'I feel as though each time I go on a walk I carry the history of all the other walks I've done with me in my rucksack' ... Richard Long. Photograph: Jack Hems/Courtesy Lisson Gallery

Richard Long never carries water with him when he walks. The legendary British land artist, who famously turned walking into an art form, has tramped for days, sometimes weeks, through terrains as barren as the South African Karoo desert, India's tribal lands and the Hoggar mountains of southern Algeria without once taking so much as a canteen, a flask or - God forbid - a plastic bottle with him.

"It's just a question of what's practical," he says. "Water is heavy. Finding it is one of the things that determine where I go. When I got to the Sahara it had just rained. I could see it shining on the ground. I followed it till I got to the first dried-up watering hole."

Now 77, Long is tall and rangy, as you might expect of an inveterate walker, 6ft 4in, with a wayward glint beneath his beetling black eyebrows and an air of slight restlessness, as though he might get up and bound out of the door at any moment.

So I take it the title of his new exhibition, Drinking the Rivers of Dartmoor, isn't intended metaphorically? "Not metaphorical at all," he says shortly. "I've been drinking from every river and stream on Dartmoor all my adult life."

Traditional sculpture was about the space between objects, and here I was extending that into 1,000 miles

The afternoon in 1967 when Long, then a 22-year-old student, decided to walk back and forth across a field until he had created a line of flattened grass, then photograph it and call it A Line Made By Walking is one of the great mythic moments in British art. In one simple gesture, Long set the tone for British conceptual art and initiated an entirely new art form: land art, which in its British form, personified by Long, was more fugitive, less monumental than the American variant - about gestures rather than bombastic structures. Long would go on epic walks and come back with nothing more than a photograph of a ring of stones he'd made on a mountain top or the briefest description of where he'd been. That would be the work.

Long has extended that idea into gallery-based art, with elemental circles of shattered slate and wall-filling drawings of smeared mud, winning every major accolade - Turner prize, Venice Biennale, CBE. Yet art conceived and created in the landscape, which deals with time and space, but seems to exist in a permanent present, remains the core of what he does. So it's interesting, and surprising, to see him looking back in this new exhibition, not just to older work from as far back as 1970, but to recent pieces with a retrospective, even autobiographical feel.

Richard Long, Drinking the Rivers of Dartmoor, at Lisson Gallery, London. Photograph: Courtesy Lisson Gallery

The title work, Drinking the Rivers of Dartmoor, a wall-filling text, is essentially a list of 14 streams (Yealm, Erme, Plym etc), laid out like a piece of concrete poetry - though he stresses such works absolutely aren't poetry. It's based on a six-day "ritualised walk around one of my life's prototype landscapes" - not so far from his home in Bristol - "that I've used as a tabula rasa, a blank page, to do whatever I want. Dartmoor has been in a way my studio.

"I now have a lot of history. I feel as though each time I go on a walk I carry the history of all the other walks I've done with me in my rucksack. And why would I not?" he adds in a faintly challenging tone.

While I've always imagined Long as aloof, ascetic, probably privileged in the classic mode of the British explorer, in person he comes across as very much a bloke from Bristol. There's an earthiness, despite the air of slight otherworldliness, a sense rare in our increasingly globalised art world - where artists typically work between several major centres - of profound rootedness in the cultural and geographic terrain that shaped his work and worldview.

Richard Long, Rhythm and Blues, 2011. Photograph: Ken Adlard/Courtesy Lisson Gallery

Born in 1945, the son of a primary school teacher, Long was raised in Clifton and grew up using the towpath along the nearby Avon Gorge as his "playground". The knowledge that this area has the second highest and lowest tides in the world, which allow Bristol to function as a port, gave him his "first awareness of the cosmic forces that control everything". While such a realisation feels only natural in an art of time and distance in which planetary and seasonal movements have an essential role, he seems uneasy at this admission, concerned it will make him appear pretentious.

Yet it's essential to Long's sense of himself that he has "always been an artist". His teachers were sufficiently impressed by his abilities to excuse him morning assembly so he had "half an hour's painting time on my own every day". That "on my own" feels significant. Long insists he enjoys meeting people, but the path he has taken has always been his own.

While it was clear he would start at Bristol's Royal West of England Academy at the earliest opportunity, he was soon at loggerheads with his teachers, as his early passion for Van Gogh made way for a form of self-devised installation art. After seeing a floor-based sculpture by the Japanese-American sculptor Isamu Noguchi at the Tate, at a time when he was reading Bertrand Russell's pop-science book The ABC of Relativity, Long made a plaster path through the college studio to "explore relative movement, using the body as a moving object over still things". This sounds pretty far out for a 17-year-old who by his own admission had "no idea what was going on in art". But the RWA staff were less than impressed and, after informing his parents that their son was "mad", promptly expelled him.

Long, however, had no intention of giving up. While his breakthrough work, A Line Made by Walking, tallied with the most advanced developments in global art, you get the sense that Long, left to his own devices, might have arrived at that era-defining conclusion quite independently.

Richard Long, Mangrove Line, 2013. Photograph: Courtesy Lisson Gallery

In the freezing winter of 1964, while doing odd jobs for Bristol council, Long went up on to the Downs, the open green space adjoining Clifton, made a snowball and "kept rolling it till it was so heavy it wouldn't move any more". He then photographed the dark track through the snow as a "drawing". "It was," he says, "the perfect prototype for what I was going to do in the rest of my life: something I did with my own physical effort, using the materials of the place, then recording it in an image to show people what I'd done."

But was the work deliberate, knowing, or had he just been mucking about with a snowball? He racks his brains. "It must have been deliberate, because I had the camera with me. When you're a young artist you don't understand what you're doing. I just had the feeling of the potential of the world outside the studio."

Cut to 1967, when as a student on the advanced sculpture course at London's St Martin's College, where he was part of a famously experimental year that included Gilbert & George, Long effectively restaged this performed sculpture in the work that was to make him famous.

"I took a suburban train out of Waterloo. As soon as we were in the countryside, I got off at the first station. I found the first field I came to, and I made the line." This was at the height at the Summer of Love, in a moment when pop art had run its course, and no one in Britain knew where art was going next. "There was all this fantastic music being made, the Beatles, psychedelia. But I was quite proud that what I was doing had nothing to do with that. I knew I was doing something really important - expanding the territory of art."

Succeeding walks became progressively more ambitious. After creating what he intended as the world's highest work of art, by leaving a flag at the top of Kilimanjaro, he produced A Thousand Hours, A Thousand Miles in 1974, a spiral walk through central England, including the middle of Birmingham. "In A Line Made By Walking I made a trace on the land, and that was the work. But in this piece there was no trace. The symmetry of the idea was the work. You could say that traditional sculpture was about the space between objects, and here I was extending that into 1,000 miles."

Richard Long, Circle in the Andes, 1972. Photograph: Courtesy Lisson Gallery

It's one of the core ideas of minimalism, with which Long has been closely associated, that art shouldn't evoke anything but the material actuality of its own form. Yet Long's art is hugely evocative on many levels. His elemental forms feel familiar to people, whether they're a cross in a meadow formed by pulling the heads off daisies or a circle of boulders left in a high mountain pass. They seem to echo the primal traces left by ancient cultures: the vast "ground drawings" created by Indigenous Peruvians or Britain's Neolithic stone monuments.

Long declares himself open to the coincidences that naturally occur between forms and cultures. He'll even concede there's a spiritual aspect to his work, though he doesn't want to talk about it for fear of appearing - again - "pretentious".

He has always denied, however, that his work has any connection with Wordsworthian English Romanticism. "Not at all, no," he snaps, with the words barely out of my mouth. But isn't there also time, distance, seasons and circles in, say, Turner's paintings? "Of course there is! And I'm a product of England, brought up on an island, going for holidays on the coast, always looking at the ocean."

Lockdown made him realise how much he could do by walking out of his front door, exploring the labyrinth of footpaths around his home just outside Bristol, a couple of miles from where he was born.

"I've been very lucky," he says. "Making art by walking has given me the freedom to work anywhere in the world. But I've come to realise that if I'd been confined, for whatever reason, within a 10-mile radius of Bristol, I could still have achieved everything I've wanted to do as an artist."

- Richard Long: Drinking the Rivers of Dartmoor is at Lisson Gallery, London, from 16 November to 21 January.

The Independent
17 November 2022

INDEPENDENT

‘Every walk is about a different idea’: Richard Long on the art of seeing the world

The pioneering land artist speaks to **William Cook** about the many miles he has travelled – from Alaska to Lapland, the Andes to the Himalayas – and the joy it brings him

13 hours ago • Comments

Solitary man: Long has left footprints around the world *(Courtesy Lisson Gallery)*

In an upstairs room at the Lisson Gallery in London, Richard Long is telling me about his new one-man show. He's matter-of-fact, but if you're not familiar with his artworks his words may need some explaining – for this is a man who virtually created his own art form.

Is he a sculptor? Is he a photographer? Is he a poet or a painter? He's all these things, and more. He's been making art for half a century, yet even after all these years his work still feels like something completely new. "I realised that art could be made by walking," he says. "That brought time and distance into a work – and once I realised that, I had an amazing freedom to make work on an enormous scale."

Most of Long's artworks consist of short descriptions or photographs of solitary walks he's undertaken – over long distances, in remote places, in Britain and around the world. Often, he makes simple sculptures in the landscape he travels through, from natural objects that he finds en route. A stone circle is his favourite motif. Yet these sculptures are incidental, rather than the central activity.

"I often say that if a work in the landscape takes more than about half an hour to make, there's probably something wrong with it," he told the curator Lucy Badrocke. "Quite often, I have the urge to make a sculpture and then the need to keep on walking takes over." What makes walking so alluring? "It's the best way to see the world," he tells me. "It's a different type of attention, a different scale."

His pioneering work has won him widespread acclaim: the Turner Prize in 1989, a CBE in 2013 and a knighthood in 2018, but there's nothing grandiose about him. As Nicholas Logsdail, the founder of the Lisson Gallery, observes: "He's happiest when alone outdoors with a rucksack on his back." Spending so long outside in isolated places has shaped his body and his temperament. Walking has kept him fit, of course. His voice is quiet yet forceful. He chooses his words with care.

Rather than reshaping the earth in his own image, he leaves a light footprint. The sculptures that he makes on his travels aren't meant to be preserved for posterity. Their precise locations remain unclear, so they're very rarely visited. They're mostly very difficult – nigh on impossible – to find. Some of them are spectacular, but most of them are surprisingly subtle and discreet. Some may last for centuries, others may only last a few weeks.

Richard Long: Circle
(Courtesy Lisson Gallery)

Long doesn't seem to mind much either way. For him, making these sculptures is all about being in the here and now, in a particular time and place. What happens to them afterwards is of no concern to him. They're not monumental monoliths, like Stonehenge, erected to last for all eternity. They're more like sandcastles, waiting to be washed away by the incoming tide. "A water drawing can dry in the sun in five minutes, but a stone on the roadside could last another thousand, two thousand, ten thousand years," he explains. "The stones that I leave along the way, they don't disappear. They exist in people's minds because they know about it as my work."

Usually, his photographs are the only evidence that these sculptures ever existed. Sometimes, he doesn't even take a photo – he simply writes a short account of the walk he made. He's an excellent photographer, and his descriptions of his journeys are poetic, but the description and the photograph are both secondary. "The world outside the studio was far more interesting for me," he says. "Clouds or grass or rivers or rain, the whole territory of the landscape." The main artwork is the walk itself.

Long also makes sculptures for permanent display in galleries and sculpture parks, and one of these sculptures, called Rhythm and Blues, is included in this show. They're a lot like the sculptures he makes on his travels, typically stone circles, but even though they work well in isolation, to me they feel like relics of previous journeys or signposts of journeys yet to come.

Even in his late seventies, Long is still racking up some impressive distances
(Courtesy the artist and Lisson Gallery)

Many of these journeys are truly epic in their size and scope. This show alone, comprising 20 artworks, encompasses journeys in Arizona, Argentina, Iceland and China. A lot of these treks entailed mammoth amounts of walking – hundreds of miles in total, often 20, 30, even 40 miles a day. "I can make many works on Dartmoor or Exmoor, but then I can make a work in the Antarctic," he says. "Everything is usable. I feel very free to make work anywhere."

Inevitably, at the age of 77, some of the marathons he used to do are no longer feasible. "I walk slower now," he says. "Obviously, I'm not as fit as I was. I can't believe some of the mileages I did when I was younger!" Yet these journeys, great or small, weren't mere excursions or endurance tests. There was something else going on, something more profound and elemental. There's an atavistic element – living the life of the nomad, the wanderer, closer to the way we used to live.

"Richard reminds us that life can be more straightforward than our modern existence," says Nicholas Logsdail. "There is a little bit of all of us in Richard's work." There's something intensely spiritual about his sculptures, something that evokes the timeless majesty of the landscape, the fragility of nature, the fleeting trajectory of human life. His work isn't overtly religious, but it's reminiscent of religious ritual – the retreat into the wilderness, the pilgrim on his lonely path.

Richard Long: Circle Stones
(Courtesy Lisson Gallery)

But despite its potent mysticism, his work is never wilfully obtuse. "It's also a celebration. It's about beauty as well – about beauty of ideas and beauty of places, about the beauty of the planet." Walking and camping are things he enjoys tremendously, and that enjoyment is infectious. He makes you want to put on your walking boots and follow in his footsteps. "A lot of my art is actually based on things that give me pleasure."

Long's journeys make connections with the rhythms and patterns of the natural world, connections that were familiar to our ancestors, but which have become far removed from the frantic bustle of our urban lives. There are numerous examples of his deep affinity with nature, but one artwork in this exhibition sums it up. It's called Walking at the Speed of Spring, from Spring in Cornwall to Spring in Caithness. "A south to north walk of 1030 miles in 33 days," reads his sparse description, "starting from the Lizard on April 2 to ending at Dunnet Head on May 4."

That was 24 years ago, when Long was in his early fifties - over a month of constant walking, averaging over 30 miles a day, a phenomenal mileage for a middle-aged man. Yet even today, in his late seventies, he's still racking up some impressive distances. Another artwork in this show, called Daffodils Along the Way, chronicles a nine-day walk he made this year, across England from west to east. This walk took him from shore to shore, across moors and dales, through Lancashire and Yorkshire, but his description doesn't chart the route so much as the things he saw and heard: the dawn chorus, a full moon, a starry night sky…

Long: '[My artwork is] about beauty of ideas and beauty of places, about the beauty of the planet' *(Courtesy Lisson Gallery)*

He also includes more humdrum stuff – a drystone wall, a missed turn – but there are two phrases that leap out at you, "Sometimes You Don't Need to Go Far," and "More Road Behind Me Than the Road Ahead." Long has made art on every continent, including Antarctica, but the title of this exhibition, Drinking the Rivers of Dartmoor, references a more familiar landscape, a lot closer to his West Country roots. The title refers to a trek he made last year: "A six-day walk around some of the headwaters of my life." Today, with a lot more road behind him than ahead, it feels like coming home.

"Since 1969, Dartmoor has been my studio – I've used Dartmoor in many ways," he says. "I like the idea that I'm probably the first person to walk across Dartmoor in a straight line. It interests me to do something original like that. I've also made works about water on Dartmoor – I made a walk in a certain area where I use all the riverbeds as footpaths. Then another work was to walk around Dartmoor carrying a stone from one river to the next river, so it was a combination of the rivers and the stones.

"And then that got me thinking – all my life, all my walks, have taken me to places where, obviously, I can walk, but also where I can find water. So then I thought, 'Well, I've been walking on Dartmoor all my professional life and drinking the water of Dartmoor.' And then I had the idea to make a walk specifically focusing on that very idea – of drinking the rivers." Hence the title of that work, Drinking the Rivers of Dartmoor, which became the title of this show.

> ***They're not monoliths, like Stonehenge, erected to last for all eternity. They're more like sandcastles, waiting to be washed away by the incoming tide***

He was born in Bristol in 1945, the eldest of three children. His father was a primary school teacher, his mother was a homemaker. It sounds like a happy childhood, playing on the Downs, and along the banks of the River Avon. "The Avon gorge, and the towpath, and the cliffs and the screes – that was my childhood playground," he says. "My parents gave me a lot of freedom to roam around." Buried in a deep, steep valley, the Avon is one of the world's most tidal rivers, and the sudden shift from low tide to high tide is dramatic. Long's childhood was comfortably suburban, but this river was a prelude for the rugged landscapes of his artistic life.

Long excelled at art from an early age – he only ever wanted to be an artist. "It was always my language, really – ever since I was a tiny little boy," he says. "I was always the school artist, ever since my first infant school. I had my own easel when I was five years old." His parents recognised his passion for art, and nurtured it. "They decided to redecorate our front room, and they took the wallpaper off, and instead of putting new wallpaper back on, they said, 'You can make a big mural on the wall,' which I did."

Richard Long: Walking at the speed of spring
(Courtesy Lisson Gallery)

At primary school, he had a "wonderful" headmistress, who spotted his talent and allowed him the liberty to develop it. While his classmates were singing hymns in assembly, he was left alone to paint. His secondary school was similarly supportive. "I used to be the boy who'd paint all the scenery for the school plays," he recalls. "I had a very enlightened art master. In my last year, before I went to art school, they let me come in every day in the summer holidays and I painted a big 45-foot mural in the dining hall."

In 1962 he went to West of England College of Art. In his second year, he won the painting prize. In his third year, they threw him out. "I think I was just too precocious," he says. "I was doing very experimental, environmental work." For a lot of youngsters, such an emphatic rejection would have been a huge blow, but this apparent setback didn't shake Long's self-belief in the slightest. "It was the luckiest break in my whole life!" He didn't know anything about the art world, but that became a blessing. Right from the start, he always followed his own path. "I was extremely absorbed in my work."

8

Richard Long: A stone line before a blizzard
(Courtesy Lisson Gallery)

Long did a string of odd jobs, including working in a paper mill, applied to various art schools and won a place at St Martin's School of Art, one of London's most prestigious – and progressive – art schools. Here, the sculpture course was led by the innovative sculptor and teacher Frank Martin. He recruited top sculptors like Anthony Caro and Eduardo Paolozzi as teachers. Above all, he trusted his pupils to follow their instincts and find their own way through. "He had a fantastic nose for oddball students." It was here that Long met Hamish Fulton, a fellow pupil who became a good friend and collaborator, sharing his passion for making art out of walking.

Long got his first big break while he was still at art school when his groundbreaking artwork, "A Line Made by Walking", was bought by the Tate. The concept was extremely simple. Hitchhiking between London and his home in Bristol, Long stopped off in a nondescript field and walked back and forth in a straight line until his footsteps produced a path of flattened grass amid the upright grass around it. He took a photo of it and departed.

This field was nothing special. There was no reason to visit it, and even if you wanted to you'd be hard-pushed to find it. The line in the grass was nothing special, and by the time anyone saw the photo it would have long since vanished. "The fact that it then disappeared was neither here nor there."

Long's photo of the field was fairly perfunctory, yet this rudimentary image was revolutionary, creating an entirely new concept of what makes an artwork, the first page of a new chapter in the history of modern art. "I knew what I was doing was important. That was the time when people just made art for the glory, or for the love ideas. It was a time when we could reinvent the art world in completely new ways - making art in new ways. That's what we were interested in – not selling it or making money."

Displays from the Drinking the Rivers of Dartmoor exhibition
(Courtesy Lisson Gallery)

Long soon attracted the attention of leading gallerists, in Britain and abroad. His first exhibition was at Konrad Fischer's influential gallery in Düsseldorf. "I went over on the boat," he recalls, "and I came back with two hundred quid in my back pocket." What a great feeling, to know that other people, strangers in another country, actually got it! "I knew it was a good work I'd made, a good exhibition, but it was a revelation to me that if you're in the right place at the right time, then you'd meet people who'd also understand what I was doing and would buy it." He used the money to go to Tanzania and climb Kilimanjaro, leaving a sculpture at the summit.

During a career of nearly 60 years, he's trekked all across the planet, from Alaska to Lapland, from the Andes to the Himalayas. "Every walk is about a different idea." In Iberia, he made a walk called from Crescent to Cross, walking across Spain and Portugal from the Great Mosque of Cordoba to the Cathedral at Santiago de Compostela, connecting two histories and two religions, a trek that took him 18 days. In South Africa, where the bones of the earliest humanoids were discovered, he made a series of walks called Making Footprints in the Cradle of Humankind, echoing mankind's migration out of Africa. As the filmmaker Werner Herzog said, "The world reveals itself to those who walk."

A lot of great artists have produced great art from a position of great unhappiness. Richard Long seems to me to be that rare and precious thing – a great artist who's discovered how to live a happy life. Is that accurate, I ask him? Well, up to a point, he says. "I'm happy making my work, but sometimes I've had unhappiness in my private life," he tells me. "Real life, or personal life, is very different from the life of making art." He's been married and divorced. He has grown-up children. "I'm just a normal regular guy."

Yet I still can't shake the thought of him striding alone across those empty landscapes. Unlike most of us, Richard Long found a way to live the life he wanted to live and make the art he wanted to make, and to me that seems heroic. "It's the only thing I can do, and it gives me pleasure," he says, modestly. "I like the idea of being original – doing things that other people haven't done before."

Richard Long: Drinking the Rivers of Dartmoor is at Lisson Gallery, London NW1 (www.lissongallery.com) until 23 January 2023

ARTnews
28 May 2020

ARTnews

With His Exhibitions on Pause, Richard Long Is Still Taking Walks as Artworks During Lockdown

BY PHYLLIS TUCHMAN May 28, 2020 12:04pm

Richard Long installing *A slate line bisecting a large grass field* (2017).
©RICHARD LONG/COURTESY LISSON GALLERY

During coronavirus lockdown in cities around the world, the act of taking a walk outside has taken on new meaning. In some countries, like Spain, walking outside was banned altogether during the worst of the coronavirus. In other places, like New York, walking has become freighted with anxiety. Bristol, a city in southwestern England, has had its own share of social distancing and shutdowns. Nevertheless, the artist **Richard Long**, who has lived there his entire life, has continued taking the long walks that are part of how he makes his art.

When the coronavirus lockdown hit New York in late March, Long had not one but two gallery exhibitions shuttered shortly after they opened, one at Lisson in Chelsea and one downtown at **Sperone Westwater**. This after much time and expense was expended installing wall works (executed in situ), multi-part floor sculptures, text works, and photographs. Although he is “sad and disappointed,” Long wrote by email from Bristol, his shows are in “the same boat as many other venues, theatres, sports, etc.” Sperone Westwater has posted a 3-D tour of “Muddy Heaven” on their website. And Lisson, where “From a Rolling Stone to Now” debuted, has put online a short video in which the artist is seen placing a row of overlapping grey slate panels on the floor as well as applying tidal mud from England directly to a wall to create a bold horizontal work replete with drips.

Long, who turns 75 next month, has always been more open to improvisation than his Conceptualist contemporaries with whom he was grouped in the early- and mid-70s. Take his sculpture at Lisson, *Virginia Line*, which stretches the length of the commodious space, or the spectacular flint work resembling a riverbed that meanders along Sperone Westwater's third floor. Despite both having, as Long puts it, "certain parameters of placement," the works also embody, he says, "variation and spontaneity."

Installation view of "Richard Long: From a Rolling Stone to Now," 2020, at **Lisson Gallery**, New York.
©RICHARD LONG/COURTESY LISSON GALLERY

"Every time [*Virginia Line* at Lisson] is made," he recently explained, "each slate will be in a different place, yet it is the 'same' work each time."

Then there are his wall works to consider. According to Long, "even though they could be made in the 'same' way, they are all cosmically different, one from another, both in the macro and micro scale. Like live music, they are unrepeatable." While aspects can be replicated, the initial outings are subject to the specifications of the spaces in which they are first realized.

A continuity of themes runs throughout the body of work Long has executed during a career that spans more than five decades. Various tweaks he's made along the way have allowed him to mature from attracting the limelight while still a student enrolled at St. Martins to his stature today as a major figure in the international art community. If he ever seemed like a Johnny Appleseed–like character, he now is closer in spirit to an Auguste Rodin, albeit he's more engaged with time and space than with writhing men and women or fragments of bodies. Anyone who doubts his bearing and achievement has only to walk into Sir Norman Foster's Hearst Tower in New York and look up at *Riverlands*, a wall work made with mud in 2006 that's 70-feet-high and 40-feet-wide. It's a stunner.

Sir Richard Julian Long—he was knighted two years ago—was born in Bristol on June 2, 1945. World War II had ended a few weeks earlier, and England would never again be the same. And it's against a backdrop of myriad upheavals—computers that fit in your back pocket, cameras that don't need film, newly synthesized oil and acrylic paints, space modules that fly to the moon—that his art should be viewed. After all, many aspects of his art are rooted in solitary walks he's taken through all sorts of landscapes, near and far.

Sometimes, he'll make a sculpture on site with stones and twigs placed in basic geometric shapes such as circles and crosses; other times, he'll take a photograph that becomes a shared memory. With mud, he'll cover walls of museums and galleries around the globe. And, in the country that gave us William Shakespeare, he will string nouns together with different fonts and color that evoke places to which he's travelled.

Richard Long, *Meandering Flint Line*, 2020.
COURTESY SPERONE WESTWATER

By relying on sticks and stones, much less mud, to execute different categories of his body of work, Long could not be using more elemental materials. Since he hasn't gone digital, even his camera is old fashioned. And, his photographs clearly establish his credentials as a landscape artist, historically a rarity for sculptors. His work is influenced by the weather, the seasons of the year, all kinds of terrain, the condition of roads on which he bicycles, geography, and even geology.

Asked if the nature of his walks has changed much over the years, Long indicated that was a "big question, yes and no." "The walking," he said, "could stay the 'same,' but the ideas change and the places and locations will change. And by now, there's more of them, so that changes things…more experience, more of my own history, more opportunities for richness or complexity, more freedom of form, etc."

The highly regarded curator Rudi Fuchs once suggested that Long allows all of us to share "a contemplation of nature." The artist himself has referred to "the music of stones, paths of shared footmarks, sleeping by the river's roar." Or, as Shakespeare put it in *As You Like It*, "And this, our life, exempt from public haunt, finds tongues in trees, books in the running brook, sermons in stones, and good in everything."

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Since we’ve all been in lockdown, Long has taken a walk near his home that revisits one of his earliest, most lauded works. Instead of forming a large cross in a field of flowers by removing lots of petals as he did in 1968, he executed in Bristol only a few weeks ago, *Daydreaming Line*, an extended path of topless blooms that wends its way through yet another field of flowers. X no longer marks the spot. And Long just made a new text work called *Daydreaming*. Appended to each letter of the evocative word is an additional noun or participle: Drifting, Argentina, Yangtze, Doubt, Roads, Erotica, Aimless, Mowing, Illusions, Nonsense, Grandpa. Pithily, Sir Richard has summed up, at this historic moment, a life he’s led.

LISSON GALLERY

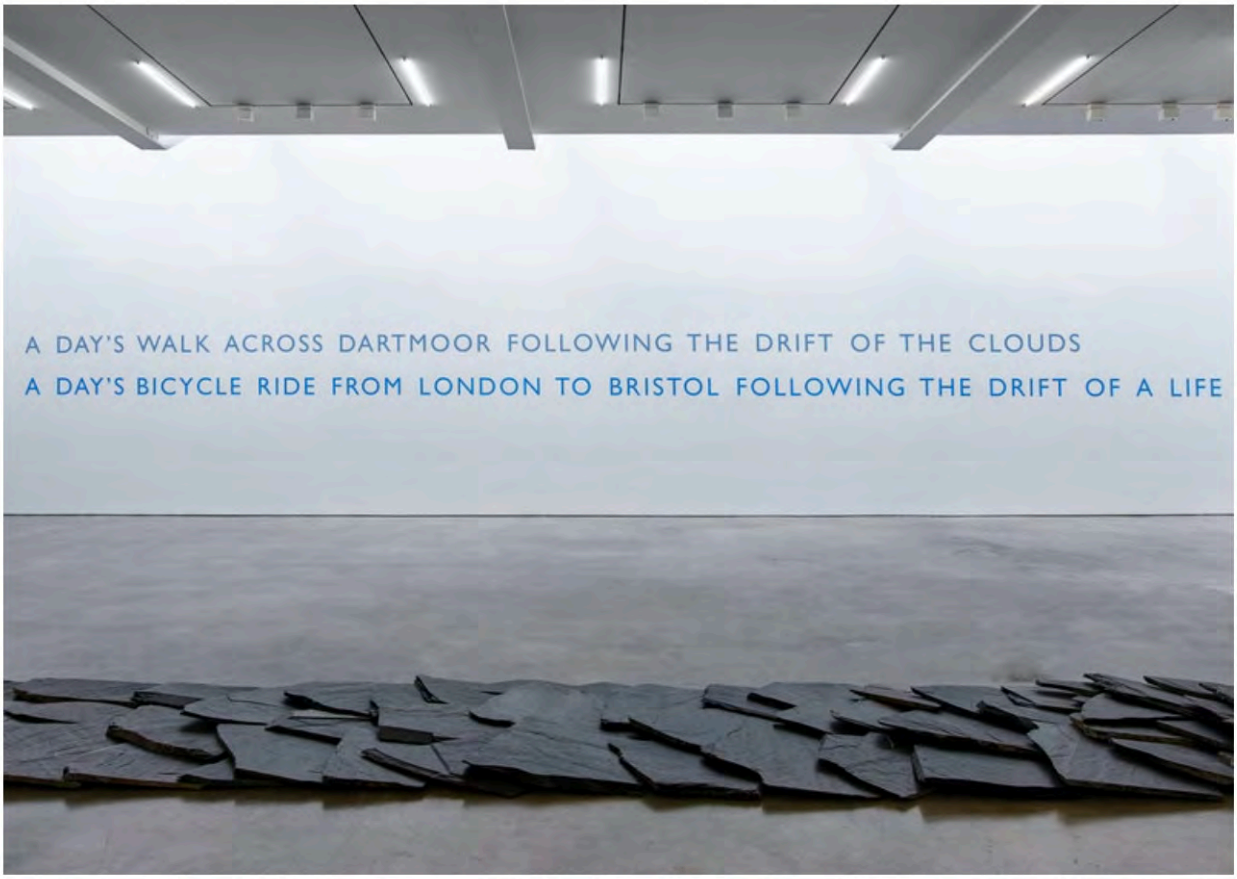
The Brooklyn Rail
28 April 2020

THE BROOKLYN RAIL

Art | In Conversation

RICHARD LONG with Robert C. Morgan

"Every walk is a different idea, a different experience, and a different memory"



Installation view: *Richard Long: FROM* A ROLLING STONE *TO NOW*, Lisson Gallery, New York, 2020. © Richard Long. Courtesy Lisson Gallery.

The proposal to do some form of interview with Richard Long came into being during an afternoon visit at the Lisson Gallery on March 10th. I was there to see the other half of Long's two-gallery undertaking, which included the two most prominent galleries to show the artist's work from the beginning: Sperone Westwater and Lisson Gallery. Mud, rocks, stones, wall texts, wood, and photographs were discretely present throughout the exhibition. Each material revealed its own structural idea that ultimately related to the artist's ongoing walks in wilderness areas removed from urban congestion. By the time I saw the Lisson installation, Long had already returned to the UK.

Through the unobtrusive guidance of Benjamin Clarke, contact was made with the artist who suggested I send him a list of questions to which he would respond. The results of this negotiation can be found in the text below.

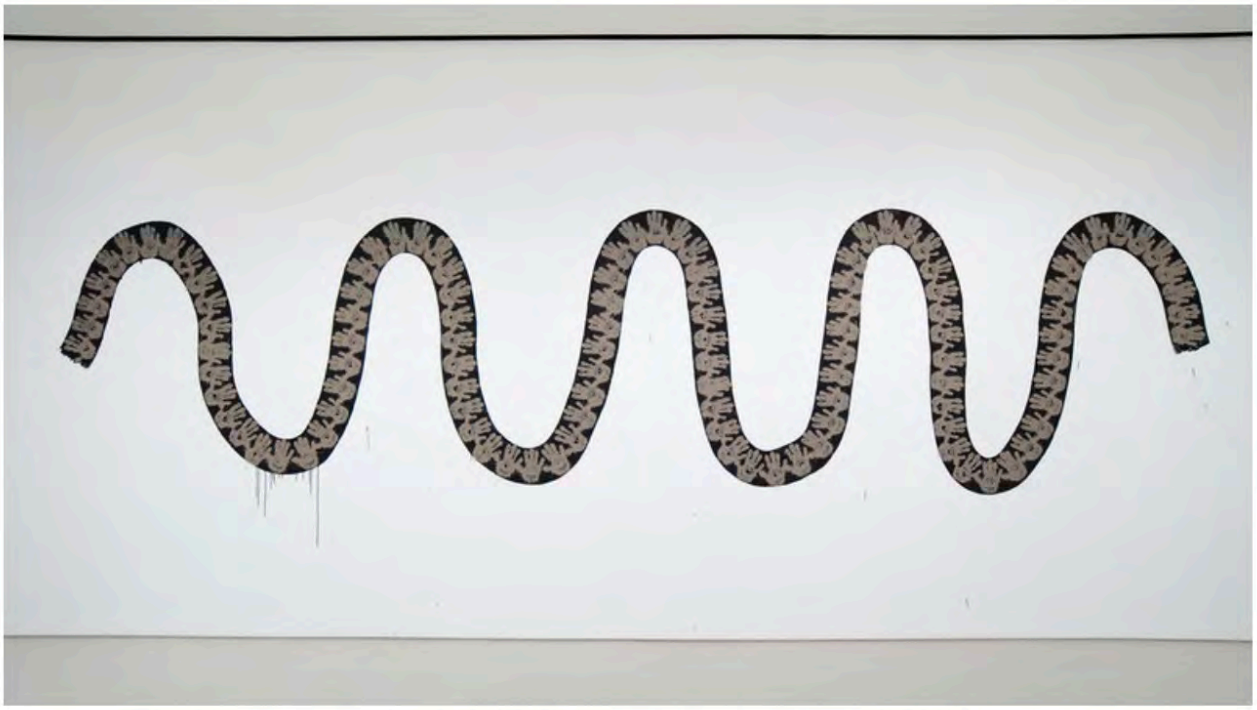
Robert C. Morgan (Rail): How do you define yourself as an artist? Does your work always involve an idea? If so, do you use natural materials as a means to clarify the idea?

Richard Long: I was born an artist. As a very young child, I made mud pies and, in each school growing up, I was always the "school artist." So now, I'm an artist because it's my language. My work, in all its forms, is always stimulating and a pleasure to make. And also, it is the only thing I am good at.

It's always about an idea, which is realised by making it, in one way or another. It is logical and most practical to use the natural materials of each place to make a sculpture. As I have previously said, I like stones because "they are what the world is made of," which means I can find them almost anywhere, which gives me the freedom to potentially make art anywhere I am.

Rail: What is the philosophical origin of the straight line in your work?

Long: There is no philosophical origin. Like the circle, the first time I made a straight line, it seemed like a good idea at the time." I recognized its simplicity and power as metaphor: a timeline, a life-line. Also, like a circle, it is universal, not something invented or belonging to me. A line is also the easiest thing to make in the landscape, by aligning one thing to another.



Installation view: *Richard Long: MUDDY HEAVEN*, Sperone Westwater, New York, 2020. Courtesy Sperone Westwater, New York. Photo: Robert Vinas, Jr.

Rail: You have referred to time and space in your text pieces. Do you recognize these entities as being symbolically represented when you construct straight lines and circles at various wilderness sites?

Long: The text works are mostly narratives of my walks. When walking became a medium to make art, time became the fourth dimension and space became distance. I was interested in greatly expanding the scale of a work of art. However, there is no symbolism in my lines and circles.

Rail: When did you first decide to move your straight lines and circles into architecture in contrast to making them directly on site? Do you feel any difference between the works you construct on site with those laced in interior spaces of major institutions?

Long: I have always made work inside as well as outside, like my first gallery exhibitions. I am the same artist, working in different and complementary ways. It is not either-or. I like the freedom I have won to make art in either remote places or in a city museum. It's just different ways to put my work in the world—one solitary for the imagination, one public for the senses.

Rail: How do you feel when you are walking through the Sahara as compared with climbing in the Himalayas or Mt. Fuji?

Long: I love both and I savor the difference between mountains and deserts. I am amazed I have been able to use the experiences of both in my work.

Rail: What is the difference between walking in Dartmoor (UK) in comparison with climbing the Adirondacks in the northeast USA?

Long: Dartmoor was my local, prototype landscape—treeless moorland, very practical for my first formal walks. Then, I expanded into other, much bigger landscapes in the world, like East Africa or Alaska. However, some things are universal: a stony footpath is a stony footpath. And, I remember in the Adirondacks there were no European brambles or stinging nettles and I met a black bear.

Rail: Why are photographs important in your work? Do you see them primarily as documents or do they represent other concerns as well?

Long: Photographs are important because they are the means to bring the images of my remote sculptures into the public domain. I want to show you what I have done. Often a work could disappear, or not be seen by anyone else. So, the photo records and also becomes art in a different, independent way.

Installation view: *Richard Long: MUDDY HEAVEN*, Sperone Westwater, New York, 2020. Courtesy Sperone Westwater, New York. Photo: Robert Vinas, Jr.

Rail: In *Muddy Heaven*, (Sperone Westwater, March 2020) did you conceive of this entirely from the hexagrams in the *I Ching*? How do you feel about the gestural imprint of your fingers? The trace seems important for you.

Long: Yes. The *I Ching* hexagrams are powerful, abstract images floating between art, meaning, and symbols, but they are not language. The gestural marks of my hand are important because my energy and speed make the splashes and watery "run-downs." I make one part of the work and nature (gravity) makes the other part. Both parts have cosmic, unrepeatable variety in the micro-scale.

Rail: Do you consider your mud works on the wall a form of painting? Calligraphy? A form of writing script?

Long: No, they are wall works, not painting. (I consider painting to be done with a brush).

Rail: Some believe that your interest in Eastern thought came by way of your interest in the work of the avant-garde composer, John Cage. Is this true, or partially the case?

Long: John Cage was very influential to me as a young art student in London. He was a man of ideas. I also had a young tutor in Bristol before I went to Saint Martins—John Epstein, who was running a course about "Nothing."

Installation view: *Richard Long: MUDDY HEAVEN*, Sperone Westwater, New York, 2020. Courtesy Sperone Westwater, New York. Photo: Robert Vinas, Jr.

Rail: How long did it take you to gather the slate you used in the Virginia slate piece in the current Lisson exhibition in New York? Why is this material important for you?

Long: The slate was ordered according to my instructions. It had to be similar to the slate I have been using from my local quarry in Cornwall for the last 50 years. It is just standard paving but it looks good, and it is practical, as it can be picked up and placed by hand, and it has good coverage.

Rail: You have often returned to sites where you have walked previously. Is it always the same direction or does this vary? Can you give an interesting example?

Long: I could say the whole of the Dartmoor plateau is now the site of many walks of the past 52 years, criss-crossing and overlapping in time and space. Every walk is a different idea, a different experience, and a different memory.

Installation view: *Richard Long: FROM* A ROLLING STONE *TO NOW*, Lisson Gallery, New York, 2020. © Richard Long. Courtesy Lisson Gallery.

LISSON GALLERY

The Brooklyn Rail
7 April 2020

THE BROOKLYN RAIL

ArtSeen

Richard Long

By Robert C. Morgan

Installation view: *Richard Long: MUDDY HEAVEN*, Sperone Westwater, New York, 2020. Courtesy Sperone Westwater, New York. Photo: Robert Vinas, Jr.

For many, Richard Long stands as one of the truly visionary artists of the late 20th and early 21st centuries. In this case, I use "visionary" to refer to an artist who reads the present by way of a semi-conscious ability to combine the past together with the future—this comfort in liminal spaces is characteristic of Long's practice. Much of the praise given to his work comes from European critics, such as Rudi Fuchs, Clarrie Wallis, and Teresa Gleadowe, who understand the artist's achievements as compatible with other major figures, such as John Cage and Robert Smithson. Long's activities range from stone installations and calligraphies in mud to photographs of wilderness landscapes accompanied by poetic, numerical inscriptions, both derived from

his walks in the Sahara, the Adirondacks, or elsewhere. To recall—indeed, to *experience*—these works is to comprehend an artist with vast mental and physical resources that perpetually equivocate on the razor's edge separating the systemic from the intuitive. This precarious combination is sometimes identified with Eastern thought, yet it applies just as readily to Long, known over the years as "the walking artist."

The varied responses to his 1986 Guggenheim retrospective confirmed Long as a uniquely unpredictable presence, an artist who operated outside the conventional spaces of the art world, irrevocably focused on walking to, from, and within deeply intense rural and wilderness environments. Unlike the Europeans, American critics (Ann-Sargent Wooster, Roberta Smith) were more likely to position Long's work between nature and "conceptual" art—despite the fact that the artist himself has tended to disagree. In a more up-to-date essay, authored by Long in 2014, he countered such claims with the following: "I am not a conceptual artist, meaning I use real stones. I walk my walks, and they are made in real time. Nevertheless, ideas are very important, especially in the landscape works."

Installation view: *Richard Long: MUDDY HEAVEN*, Sperone Westwater, New York, 2020. Courtesy Sperone Westwater, New York. Photo: Robert Vinas, Jr.

A great deal of time has passed since the Guggenheim exhibition nearly 35 years ago, and Long has consistently developed the lexicon of ideas he explores. It is insightfully ironic that his two concurrent, large-scale, and extraordinary installations at Sperone Westwater and Lisson Gallery have been made inaccessible to the public at the time of this writing due to the unfortunate pandemic that has reshaped our living reality. As events have unfolded since I saw the installations, it has occurred to me that Richard Long is an artist whose relationship to nature is largely about healing, which involves opening the mind in relation to the body. From a Taoist or Zen Buddhist perspective, the mind and body are essentially one: a mind-body, each inextricably bound to the other. Long found these ideas, largely conveyed through the work of Cage, a significant influence in his early career, and they have stayed with him over the years.

There are five basic mediums in which the artist works, all of which are either physically present or directly referenced in the Lisson and Sperone Westwater installations. Long's fundamental medium is walking, associated with being in wilderness territories where he walks for several consecutive days on end. He walks in many divergent locations, such as the Dartmoor uplands in Devon, England and the vast mountainous spectrum of the Himalayas in Asia. Secondly, the artist's photographs are related to both the landscapes where he has chosen to walk and the linear and circular forms he constructs there. These forms, representations of time and space, are built from natural materials found on the site that may include grass, sand, snow, sticks, and stones. Thirdly, Long's popular mud works were done initially on rocks before finding their way onto interior walls in multiple variations. Fourth, his deftly organized stone works, again both lines and circles, are often read as sculpture, both in indoor and exterior environments. And fifth, the artist's text works range from poetic accounts related to walks either performed or conceived, or to numerals he has organized so that they take on their own formal, non-objective meaning.

In placing these various medium combinations at Sperone Westwater and the Lisson Gallery, Long examined each space in terms of its architectural construction. The former gallery—for which his 16th exhibition opened on March 5th—emphasizes its verticality with a series of stacked spaces that visitors can move through, from one floor to the next, mostly by elevator. Long's large-scale mud work, titled *Heaven* (2020), takes advantage of this vertical structure: it could be seen both from the ground floor and from the mezzanine. Based on the Chinese ideogram for "heaven" taken from the *I Ching*, the piece begins at the level of the floor and moves upward in six parallel bands until a total height of 29 feet is reached. According to Long, it took three hours to complete the piece, applying mud from the River Avon.

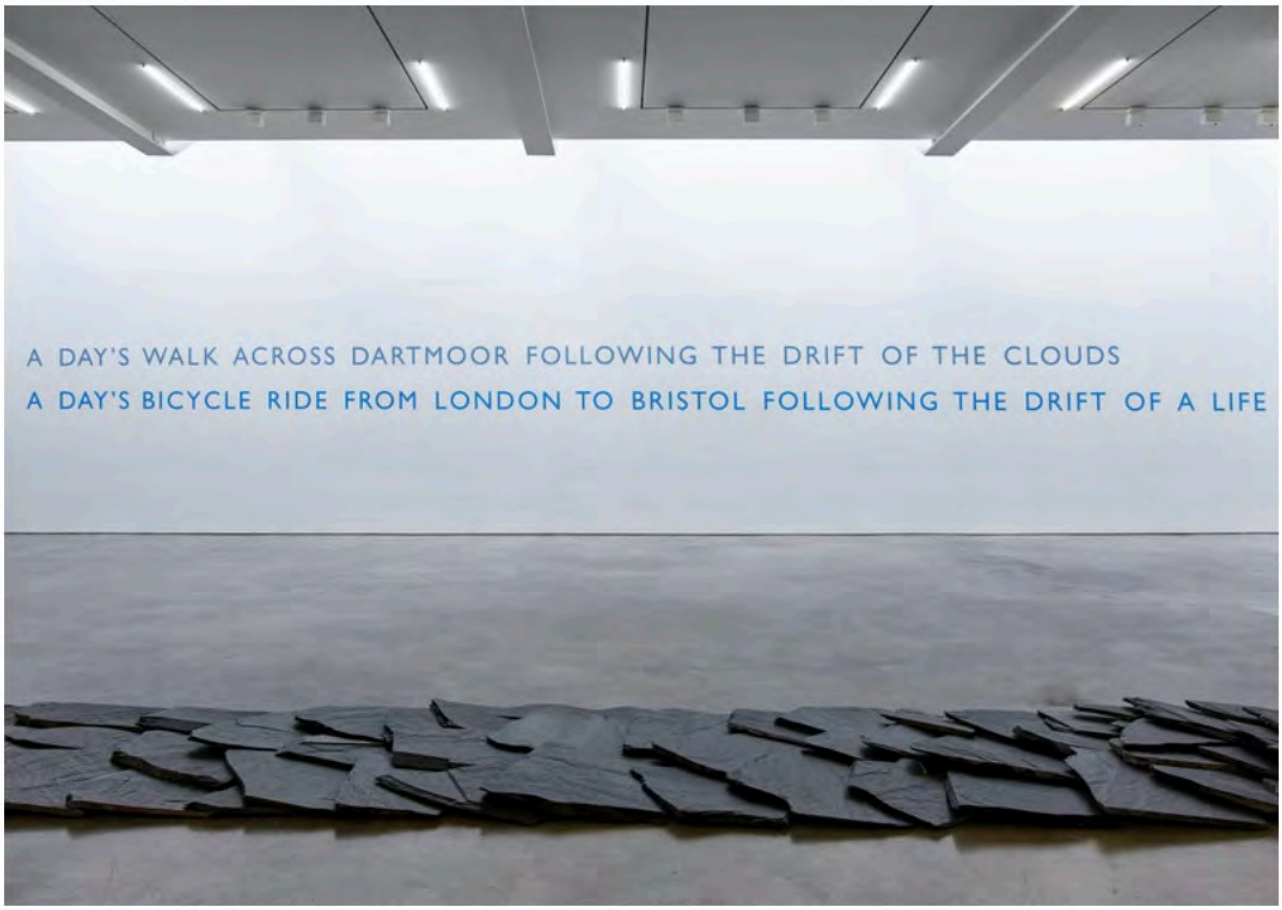
Some calligraphers might find this speed extraordinary, particularly if one observes the finger gestures that negotiate with one another throughout the work.

Installation view: *Richard Long: FROM* A ROLLING STONE *TO NOW*, Lisson Gallery, New York, 2020. © Richard Long. Courtesy Lisson Gallery.

In contrast to the verticality of *Muddy Heaven* at Sperone Westwater, the large open exhibition space at the Lisson Gallery offered a more horizontal perspective whereby three large-scale works are seen together, each in conversation with the other two. These include a large, horizontal mud work, approximately 862" long, titled *River Avon Mud Line* (2020), a slate sculpture, *Virginia Line* (2020), that runs down the middle of the floor, and a horizontally extended text work on the west wall, titled *A Day's Walk Across Dartmoor* (2000/2015). The fourth work included here is an earlier photograph and text, *A Rolling Stone, Oregon* (2001), that was conceived in Oregon, and provides the title for the Lisson installation: FROM *A ROLLING STONE* TO NOW.

Richard Long's choice to bring the outside inside through, in particular, each of his mud works, does not only match the architectural dimensions of each given space. Long also constructs what some might understand as a paradoxical synergy, in which nature itself brings focus to the deliberations of architectural necessity. Put another way, Richard Long's visionary role is keenly suited to bringing the constitutive operations of nature into accord

with the role of architecture. Rather than pulling against one another, each is given a purposeful relationship that allows for correspondence. In Long's ambulatory practice, ideas are never entirely lost or buried within a technical process. Instead, they go forth with their own agency, illuminating the interaction of time and space and confirming art as a phenomenon that moves in the presence of stillness. The Mandarin phrase *wu wei* refers directly to this concept—motion and stillness share the same moment. Here, then, is the essential ingredient for the walking artist: the place where a formless form can come into its own, finally removed from the weight or necessity of any exterior intention.



Installation view: *Richard Long: FROM* A ROLLING STONE *TO NOW*, Lisson Gallery, New York, 2020. © Richard Long. Courtesy Lisson Gallery.

Contributor

Robert C. Morgan

Robert C. Morgan is a non-objective painter who lectures on art and writes art criticism. In 2017, he was given an overview of his career as an artist at Proyectos Monclova in Mexico City. Known primarily for his writing and curatorial projects, Morgan has published numerous books and catalogues internationally, now translated into 20 languages. His anthologies of criticism on Gary Hill and Bruce Nauman were published in 2000 and 2002 respectively through Johns Hopkins Press.

Artnet
24 March 2020

artnet news

Art World

Artist Richard Long Finds Inspiration in Solitary Walks Through Remote Landscapes. Watch Him Make His Monumental Works Here

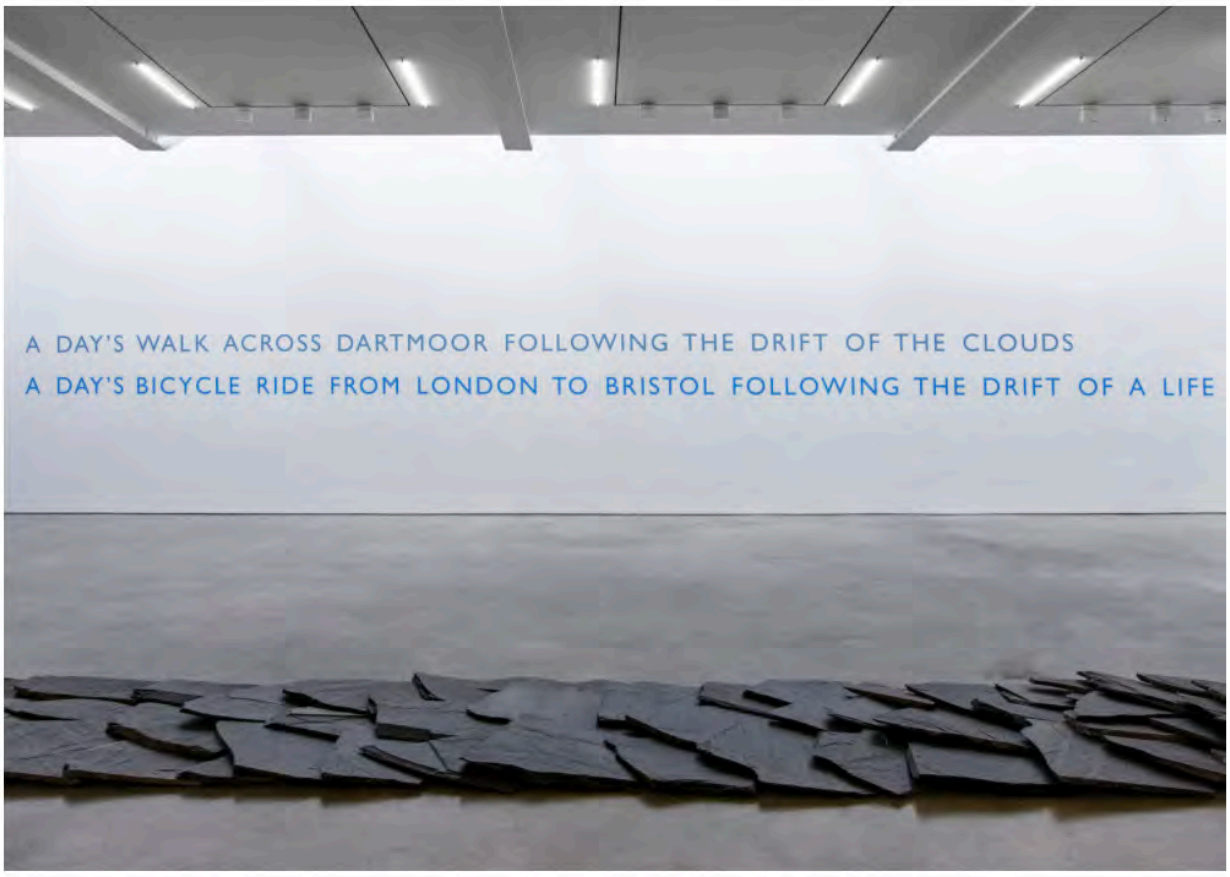
Take a virtual tour through the artist's Lisson Gallery exhibition.

Katie White, March 24, 2020

Artist Richard Long at work. Courtesy of Lisson Gallery.

In our current era of social distancing, Richard Long's work feels oddly prescient. For over half a century, the British conceptual artist has created art based on his solitary experiences journeying through remote landscapes from the West of England to Antarctica and Mongolia.

Back in 1967, while he was still an art student in England, Long took a black-and-white photograph of a path he left behind him in a field of grass, and titled it *A Line Made by Walking*. The simple gesture and its image established that art could be a journey composed of time, space, distance, and movement.



Installation view "Richard Long: FROM *A ROLLING STONE* TO NOW", 2020. Courtesy of Lisson Gallery.

Since then, the artist has brought together these same conceptual elements with remnants of the earth itself in works such as stone sculptures arranged in concentric paths, and paintings made of mud smeared against walls by the artist's bare hands.

"FROM *A ROLLING STONE* TO NOW," Long's first exhibition with Lisson Gallery in New York, opened earlier this month, and is filled with sculptures, photographs, and a site-specific mud painting. The title for the exhibition comes from *A Rolling Stone* (2001), a photograph that depicts the marks made by a boulder as it rolled down a snow slope covered in volcanic ash. Long took the photo while on a 15-day walk in the Three Sisters Wilderness area of Oregon.

Running the length of the gallery is a sculpture made of gray slate slabs sourced from quarries in Virginia. The work acts as both a beginning and an end, and represents the kind of work that is "one of the easiest things to make along a wilderness walk," as the artist has said.

Installation view “Richard Long: FROM *A ROLLING STONE* TO NOW,” 2020. Courtesy of Lisson Gallery.

“My inside and outside sculptures are made in the same spirit,” Long has said. “The urban and rural worlds are mutually dependent, and they have equal significance in my work.”

To see the exhibition and Long at work, watch the video below.

artnet News
17 February 2020

artnet news

Exhibitions

Kidnappings, Train Crashes, and Vanishing Art: Peripatetic Land Sculptor Richard Long on the Joys of an Artistic Life on the Road

The veteran British artist on his return to Mexico, losing his Venice Biennale sculpture, and why Donald Judd was a "teddy bear."

Javier Pes, February 17, 2020

Richard Long. Photo by Jack Hems. Copyright, Richard Long; Courtesy Lisson Gallery.

Architecture purists might want to look away. Mexican architect Luis Barragán's brightly colored Modernist masterpiece, Cuadra San Cristóbal, has an unexpected visitor: the peripatetic Land Art pioneer Richard Long.

The veteran British sculptor, whose extraordinary interventions into the natural and built environment take him to all points of the globe, has materialized in in the suburbs of Mexico City to create four massive works at Barragán's oft-Instagrammed stable yard and home. Long has taken the commission in his rangy stride, unfazed by the pressure or baggage that intervening in such a famous spot might present. In fact, Long had never heard of the architect—a legendary figure in architectural circles—or seen images of the famous building before accepting the gig.

"I'm an opportunist," the artist said. "They told me that he's an amazing architect and it's a beautiful location." The opportunity in question was a solo exhibition at the space, organized by Lisson gallery, and timed to coincide with the flood of visitors heading to Mexico City to the week of art fairs and openings earlier this month.

Richard Long, "Orizaba to Urique River Deep Mountain High," Cuadra San Cristóbal, designed by Luis Barragán, Mexico City. Copyright Richard Long; Courtesy Lisson Gallery. Photo by Sebastiano Pellion Di Persano.

The artist (now technically known as Sir Richard Long, following a 2018 knighthood) is no stranger to working in unique locations around the globe. The Turner-Prize-winning Royal Academician has undertaken epic journeys to make sculpture in the landscape, from Alaska to Mongolia. There have been some hairy moments along the way. “I’ve been slightly kidnapped,” he casually mentioned. It happened in Anatolia. He was put in the back of a Turkish farmer’s truck and held captive in village for two days before being released unharmed. On another daunting walk, this time across Sicily, he was stalked one night by a young gangster, he recalled. It was just outside the village of Corleone, of *The Godfather* fame.

Mexico Revisited

The last time he was in Mexico, Long and his fellow artist and travel partner Hamish Fulton were involved in a train crash: “No one was hurt, but the carriages were concertinaed.” They put on their backpacks and walked to the nearest town. “[It] had a small airport. I used my American Express card for the first time, and the same day we were back in Mexico City,” Long said.

There were no such dramatic mishaps on his return to Mexico for “Orizaba to Uríque River Deep Mountain High,” the show at the Barragan property, and his first exhibition in the country. Road trips to quarries near Mexico City and Puebla went without mishap. Using the volcanic stone and slate he gathered, Long has created four signature works: a large circle, half circle, line, and cross, all composed of stone. They are classic forms given a new twist by being in such an unexpected and colorful setting. The dramatic lines of volcanic rock, hewn by hand by quarry workers and then placed by Long with the help of only one assistant, work especially well against Barragán’s Minimalist backdrop, with its black, wooden horse rails juxtaposed against hot pink walls.

“A lot of my work comes from really nice, dynamic, visual experiences,” Long explained. “It is not about working in the studio. It is about engaging with all this crazy stuff in real life.”

San Cristóbal is still owned by the Egerstrom family, which commissioned Barragán to create the property in 1968. Long first saw it in January when it looked very different from the tranquil, pristine images seen in architecture books, magazines, and social-media feeds. The stables were being used as a backdrop to a fashion shoot that day. To the owner’s dismay, there was a bit of a blow-up between an Italian model and the photographer. Far from being put out by the clutter and drama, Long was amused; the fashion shoot could be filed under the category of “crazy stuff in real life” that keeps his practice interesting.

Richard Long at Cuadra San Cristobal. Copyright the artist. Photograph by Joanna Thornberry, Courtesy Lisson Gallery.

“My Work Is About Freedom”

Long’s sculptures and mud murals, which he creates by hand, aren’t like Land Art in the mode of Robert Smithson’s *Spiral Jetty* or Michael Heizer’s *Double Negative*. No bulldozers or rock-blasting is required. “My work is deliberately not monumental,” Long explained.

Often the sculptures are never intended to last, be they made of stone, wood, mud, a campfire, or simply a splash of water against a river bank. Most exist only as photographs. As he leafed through an artist’s book documenting a 1979 trip to Mexico, I wondered if Long ever feels like revisiting those sites to see if any trace of the work he made back then remains. (At 74, the keen walker and cyclist certainly looks fit enough to make the trek.) Long looked at me askance. “That’s not the point,” he said. “They are sculptures made as stopping places along the journey. They will probably disappear.”

The stone circle he made above the clouds on the volcanic Pico de Orizaba in 1979 probably only took him an hour to make, he revealed. Splashing water on the walls of the gorge of Uríque took less time. “Essentially my work is about freedom,” Long said.

The late German art dealer Konrad Fischer was one of the first to recognize the significance of Long’s light-touch interventions into the landscape. Fischer gave Long a solo show in his Düsseldorf gallery in 1968, the year the artist graduated in London. He was only 23. “With one bound I was free of the crazy London art world of Anthony Caro and all that welded metal stuff,” Long recalled.

Richard Long, “Orizaba to Urique River Deep Mountain High,” Cuadra San Cristóbal, Designed by Luis Barragán, Mexico City. Copyright Richard Long; Courtesy Lisson Gallery. Photo by Sebastiano Pellion Di Persano.

Recognition in the US soon followed his European success. The artist and critic Donald Judd was one of Long’s biggest cheerleaders. Writing in 1986, Judd declared Long to be “Europe’s best artist.” Long downplays the high praise. “Judd seemed to like my work,” he recalled. “Don’t ask me why. He was always very friendly to me, although he made lots of enemies. If he liked you as an artist then he was like a teddy bear.”

Long and Judd exhibited together in a small gallery in Reykjavik, Iceland in 1988; the British sculptor’s work *Sea Lava Circles* is now permanently on view at Chinati in Marfa, the extraordinary art museum Judd created on the site of a former US army base. It seems odd that Long’s work is sited on what was the officer’s tennis court, rather than out in the natural environment of the West Texan prairie. “I had nothing to do with that,” Long explained. “[Judd] put it there.” It is a good example of how an artist cannot control the display of their work by a collector, curator, or fellow artist. “Years later it could be in a different context. Sometimes it’s good and sometimes it’s bad,” Long said, stoical.

Richard Long, "Orizaba to Urique River Deep Mountain High," Cuadra San Cristóbal, Designed by Luis Barragán, Mexico City. Copyright Richard Long; Courtesy Lisson Gallery. Photo by Sebastiano Pellion Di Persano.

He sounds just as unflappable when asked how he would feel if an unauthorized or fake Long sculpture cropped up somewhere one day. "I often say, there are hundreds of circles in the world. Most of them aren't mine. In other words, I only have to do a few circles," he said.

It may be surprising to learn that the original version of Long's 1976 Venice Biennale sculpture has long since vanished. Called *A Line of 682 Stones*, it was a square spiral that snaked through the British pavilion. Judd's nemesis —the Italian collector Giuseppe Panza, who went on to sell his collection to the Guggenheim and MOCA LA—is to blame. He borrowed Long's work for a show and never returned it. "[Panza] didn't steal it, he just lost it," Long clarified. His attitude is the opposite of Judd's, who raged against the collector for making unauthorized versions of his work on the cheap. Long seems less preoccupied with all of that: with legacy, with ownership, with fame.

"There are plenty of other stones in the world," Long said. "If I really wanted to make that work again, I could make the same work by just getting some more stones."

Richard Long "Orizaba to Urique River Deep Mountain High," February 7 through March 7, Cuadra San Cristóbal, Mexico City.

LISSON GALLERY

Architectural Digest
07 February, 2020

AD
ARCHITECTURAL DIGEST

AGENDA
MARIELA MARTÍNEZ
07 | 02 | 2020

→ galería

"Orizaba a Urique River Deep Mountain High" de Richard Long en México

En el marco del 20 aniversario de AD México y en colaboración con Lisson Gallery, presentamos una exposición del artista conceptual británico.

RELACIONADOS

→ Los espacios de Luis Barragán en el centro de México

→ Luis Barragán y su idea residencial alrededor de Ciudad Satélite

Celebrando nuestro **aniversario 20** y en alianza con **Lisson Gallery**, **Architectural Digest México** presenta la exposición ***Orizaba to Urique River Deep Mountain High*** del escultor británico **Richard Long**.

Con la icónica **Cuadra San Cristóbal de Luis Barragán** como telón de fondo, ***Orizaba to Urique River Deep Mountain High*** se conforma por cuatro instalaciones nombradas ***Puebla Circle***, ***Popocatépetl Line***, ***Barragán Cross*** y ***Half Sun***. Estas piezas encuentran su inspiración en la obra de Barragán y en la historia agricultural y arquitectónica de México.

Oscar Humphries, María Alcocer y Richard Long

FOTO: *Israel Esparza*

Las instalaciones se elaboraron con **piedra volcánica negra y roja así como piedras de río** extraídas de las canteras del **Valle de México y de Puebla**. El cuerpo de la exposición fue creado en conjunto con la familia Egerström -quienes son los propietarios y residentes de Cuadra San Cristóbal- y proyecta nueva luz sobre el reconocido monumento del arquitecto tapatío.

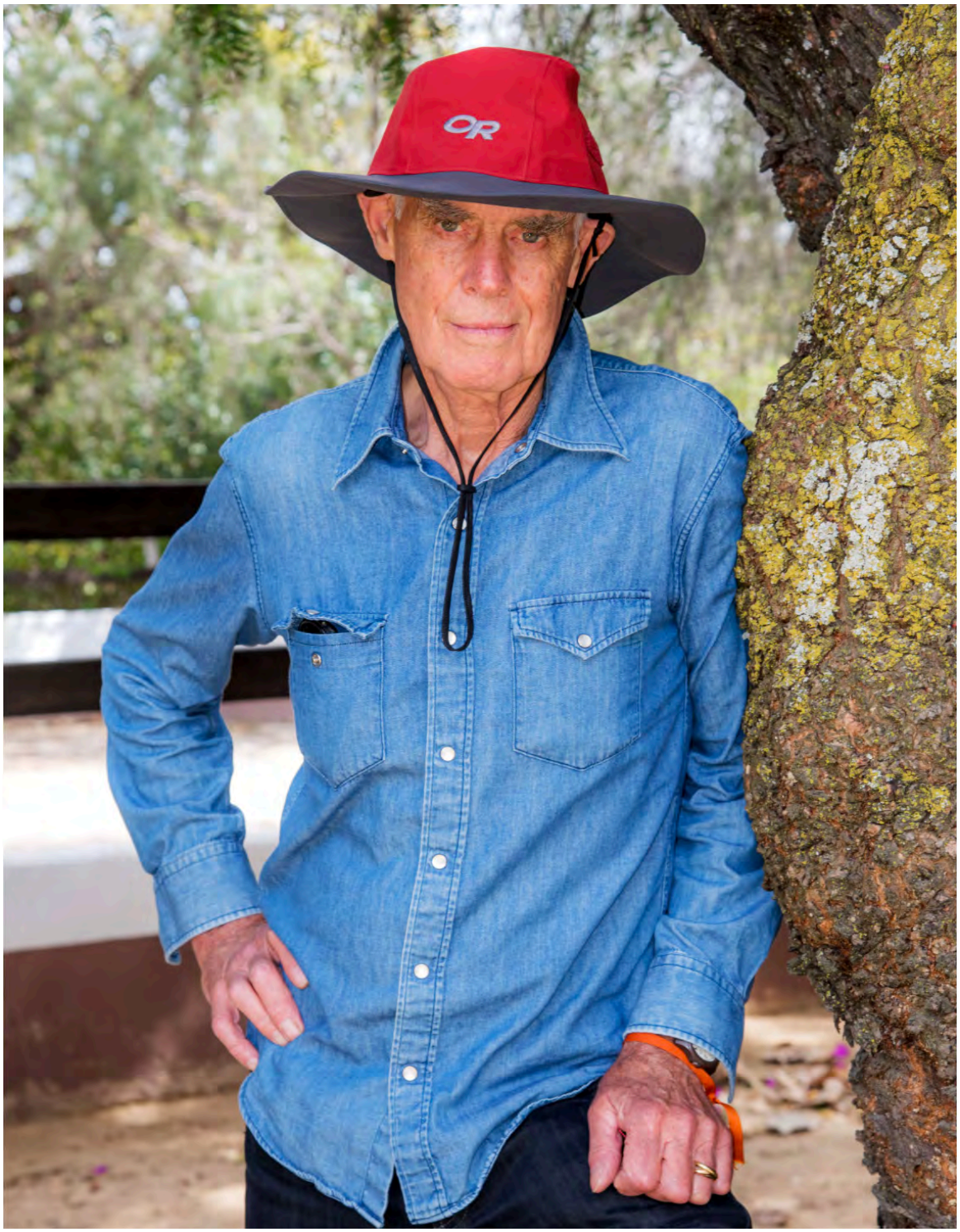
Orizaba to Urique River Deep Mountain High representa la primera vez en que Long crea una obra en la Ciudad de México. Sin embargo, no es la primera ocasión en que el artista conceptual se adentra en las raíces de nuestro país.

Desde su primer viaje a tierras mexicanas en 1979, Long ha explorado la naturaleza de Puebla. En aquella primera visita escaló la montaña más alta de México, el **Pico de Orizaba** así como también visitó el cañón más profundo en **Urique, Chihuahua**.

María Alcocer, directora editorial de AD México y **Oscar Humphries**, curador de arte a nivel internacional, le dieron la bienvenida a los visitantes quienes pudieron disfrutar de un brunch en compañía de Richard Long, sus esculturas y la impresionante **Cuadra San Cristóbal de Luis Barragán** en el Estado de México.

La exposición forma parte de las celebraciones por el **20 aniversario de Architectural Digest México** y se presentará hasta el **07 de marzo de 2020**. La exhibición está abierta al público mediante cita previa.

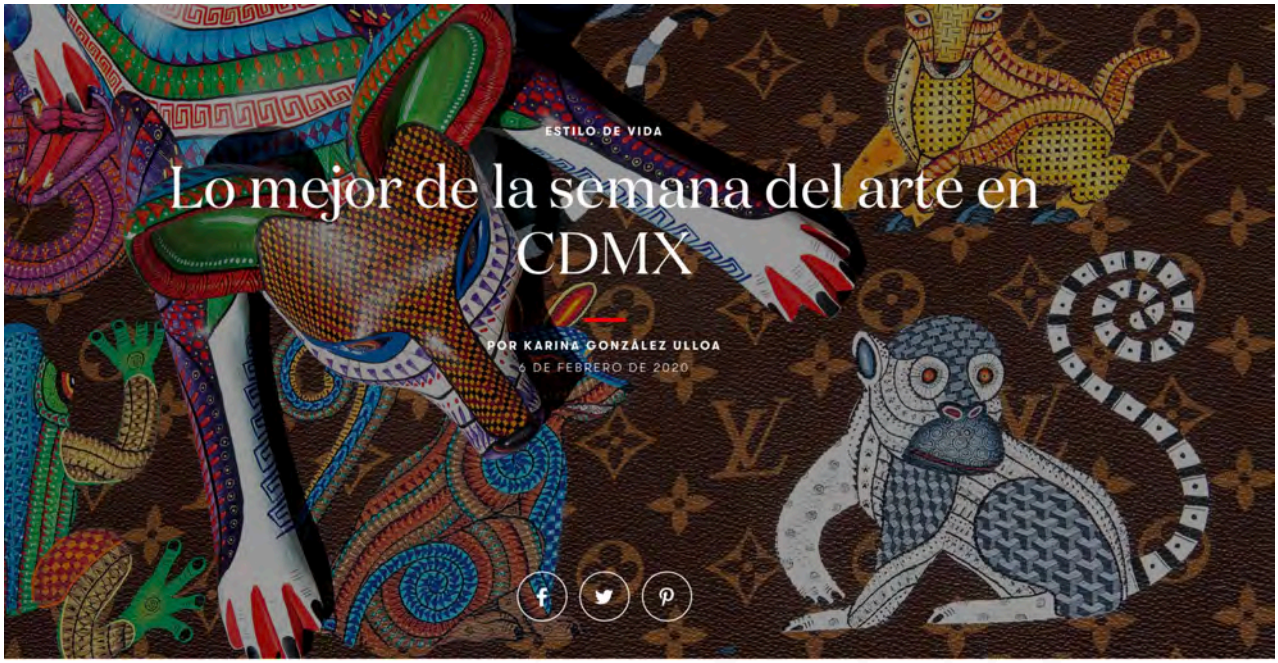
Para agendar tu cita deberás enviar un mail indicando nombre, fecha y hora deseadas para la visita a **richardlong.sancristobal@gmail.com**



LISSON GALLERY

Vogue Mexico
6 February, 2020

VOGUE



Sí, la semana que le rinde homenaje al arte, las reflexiones sociales, en donde convergen artistas contemporáneos y maestros.

La semana del arte en un imperdible de la Ciudad de México. Esta capital llena de energía, se convierte en el lugar en el que se dan cita artistas de todo el mundo, así como escultores, galeristas, poetas y amantes de todas las cosas que poseen un valor trascendental.

La inauguración oficial es el 5 de febrero, continuando con eventos y fiestas de todo tipo hasta el domingo 9 de febrero. Este es un espacio destinado a la exhibición, difusión y venta de exclusivas obras, artes decorativas, antigüedades, singular mobiliario y distintos objetos de diseño. Entre las piezas que algunos verán en este lugar, se encuentran objetos producidos antes de 1960.

El arte contemporáneo se ha apoderado de la escena en México durante los últimos años, por lo que en cada edición, la semana del arte crece en cuanto a número de eventos, galeristas, expositores y artistas que buscan ser el eco de un pensamiento, una reflexión... tal vez un manifiesto.

4 / 18

La obra de Richard Long se presenta en el marco de la Semana del Arte en CDMX

La obra de Richard Long se presenta en Cuadra San Cristóbal como marco de la **Semana del Arte en la CDMX**

5 / 18

Lo mejor de la Semana del Arte en la CDMX

La obra de **Robert Long** en Cuadra San Cristóbal es uno de los *hot spots* imperdibles para el fin de semana

Attitude Interior Design
January 2020

ATTITUDE
INTERIOR DESIGN MAGAZINE

ART

Richard Long e/*and* Konrad Fischer, 1988. Courtesy of Dorothee Fischer.

Paisagem, Poesia ou Terra? § *Landscape, Poetry or Earth?*

Numa altura em que uma das principais preocupações da humanidade se prende com questões ambientais e de preservação do planeta Terra, a Land Art ou Earth Art como foi conhecido este movimento dos anos 1960 e 1970 – entenda-se arte que é feita directamente na paisagem, esculpindo a própria terra ou fazendo estruturas na paisagem usando materiais naturais, como pedras ou galhos –, torna-se, novamente, num assunto extremamente actual. Estas denominações de movimentos deixaram de ter expressão, mas as preocupações continuam presentes no trabalho de muitos artistas contemporâneos.

No contexto histórico, devemos entender que esta preocupação surge numa altura de grande convulsão, com a guerra do Vietname, Maio 68, as primeiras preocupações ecológicas, mas também numa altura em que as instituições tradicionais tinham "má fama"; estávamos perante a revolução sexual da geração jovem pós-guerra. Talvez estes momentos passados de ansiedade nos façam pensar nos momentos actuais: com os migrantes económicos e os refugiados, as guerras no Médio Oriente, a revolução de género e uma nova consciência ecológica a que assistimos, será que tudo isto nos fará, novamente, voltar à terra?

Falemos então de Terra ou Land Art, intervenção artística indissociável do lugar onde se realiza e na qual grande parte do seu sentido é a compreensão das características próprias da paisagem na qual se insere.

At a time when one of humanity's greatest preoccupations is concerned with environmental questions and the preservation of planet Earth, Land Art or Earth Art as this movement from the 60s and 70s came to be known – that is, art made directly from the landscape, sculpting the earth itself or building structures on the landscape using natural materials, such as stones or branches, has once again become a very pertinent subject. The denominations of such movements have since lost their expressiveness, yet the concerns continue to be the subject of many contemporary artists.

Within a historical context, these preoccupations emerged at a time of great social unrest, with the Vietnam war, May 68, the first environmental concerns, but also at a time when traditional institutions had earned 'a bad name' for themselves; and we were confronted by the sexual revolution of the post-war generation. Perhaps these past moments of anxiety might remind us of the present time: the economic migrations and refugees, the war in the Middle East, the gender revolution and a new ecological awareness. Will all these things make us, once again, turn to Earth?

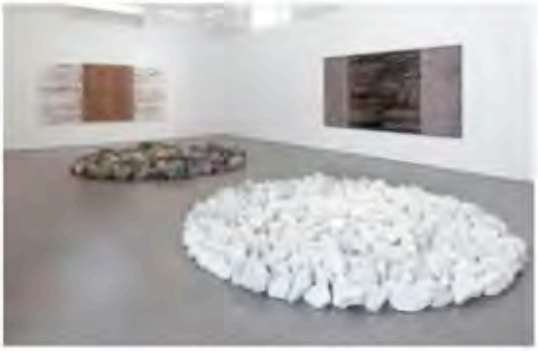
And so, let's speak again of Earth or Land Art, an artistic intervention that is inseparable from the place where it is carried out and in which most of its meaning implies an understanding of the unique characteristics of the landscape it is found in.

Para Robert Smithson (New Jersey, 1938-73), pioneiro deste movimento nos EUA, a paisagem era um modo de organizar visualmente o mundo, sendo a sua obra mais icónica o *Spiral Jetty*, em Salt Lake City (1970). Smithson mudou as noções de arte contemporânea retirando-a da galeria e entrando na paisagem não cultivada que, mais tarde, Richard Long trouxe de volta à galeria. Embora alguns artistas, como Smithson, usassem equipamentos mecânicos de terraplanagem para fazer suas obras de arte, outros fizeram intervenções mínimas e temporárias na paisagem, como Richard Long (Bristol, 1945), onde o acto de caminhar, na solidão, servia para criar as suas obras de arte. Numa entrevista em 1995, Long afirma: "Mas eu não pretendia pintar a relva, queria pisá-la." Este carácter temporário da sua obra iria mudar a forma como olhamos para a paisagem, que se torna suporte e matéria de trabalho do artista.

A paisagem já não é só retratada como o foi ao longo da história, mas ela própria se torna obra de arte. ▲

For Robert Smithson (New Jersey, 1938-73), a pioneer in this movement in the USA, the landscape was a way of visually organising the world, with his most iconic work being *Spiral Jetty*, in Salt Lake City (1970). Smithson changed the notions of contemporary art, removing it from the galleries and locating it in uncultivated landscapes, which Richard Long would later bring back to the art gallery. Although some artists, such as Smithson, might have used mechanical earth-moving equipment to make their works of art, others carried out minimal and temporary interventions on the landscape, such as Richard Long (Bristol, 1945), where the act of walking, in solitude, enabled the creation of his works of art. In a 1995 interview, Long states "But I didn't want to paint the grass, I wanted to walk on it." The temporary nature of his artwork would change the way we look at the landscape, which becomes the support and material for the artist's work.

The landscape is no longer simply portrayed in the way it has been throughout history, but has itself become a work of art. ▲



Richard Long, Vista da Instalação / *Installation view*, 2019. Courtesy Galleria Lorcan O'Neill.

Robert Smithson, Vista de / *View of* "Spiral Jetty". Courtesy Vasco Araújo

Richard Long, "Granite Crossing and Spring", 2019. Courtesy Konrad Fischer Galerie.

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LISSON GALLERY

The Art Newspaper Chinese

16 September 2019

THE ART NEWSPAPER
艺术新闻

9月上海影像月要到了，收好这份划过重点的全城艺术活动指南

Sep 18, 2019 TANC

SHARE

9月初始，第六届影像上海艺术博览会将回归上海，由此带来本月上海摄影艺术展览的聚集。上海当代艺术博物馆、上海现代艺术基地、龙美术馆和上海摄影艺术中心等均有新摄影艺术展览推出。除此之外，本月上海展览既有古代珍藏书画、十五世纪中期景德镇瓷器等传统艺术类别，又有与VR、代码结合的新媒体艺术，跨越文学、科学、音乐和时尚的艺术跨界展览。本期展览推荐，我们全面梳理了9月上海展览资讯。

影像上海

D里查德·朗个展

里森画廊

2019.9.20 –2019.10.26

展览将展出观念艺术家理查德·朗个展，包括了艺术家从1987年至2018年的作品，其中泥画、文字作品和四件摄影作品记载着理查德·朗遍及世界各地的远征旅途，从家乡英格兰乡村到南美洲与墨西哥，同时还有艺术家于中国云南和四川的记忆。

LISSON GALLERY

Now UK (WeChat)

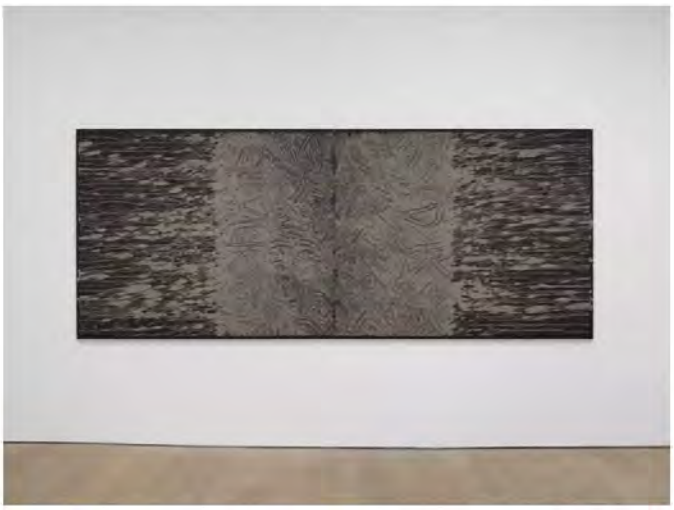
16 September 2019

艺述推荐丨理查德·朗个展将于里森上海举办

Lisson画廊画廊 艺述英国 4 days ago

Richard Long, *River Yangtze Stone Line*, China, 2010
photograph and handwritten text
84.5 x 117.5 x 3.8 cm.
© Richard Long, courtesy Lisson Gallery

里森上海荣幸宣布即将推出国际知名观念艺术家理查德·朗 (Richard Long, 大英官佐勋章获得者) 个展。展览将于9月20日开幕，含括了艺术家从1987年至2018年的作品，其中泥画、文字作品和四件摄影作品记载着理查德·朗遍及世界各地的远征旅途，从家乡英格兰乡村到南美洲与墨西哥历史遗迹皆留下了他的足迹。展览还将呈现艺术家于中国云南和四川的记忆，如行为艺术作品《扔进长江的1000块石头》与同时所创作的《长江石线，中国》(2010)。



Richard Long, *Untitled*, 2010
river avon mud on linen on wood
150 x 270.5 x 2.7 cm.
© Richard Long, courtesy Lisson Gallery

理查德·朗因归于自然的旅途行走而闻名，在行走的同时记录着轨迹，转化为纯粹优美、神秘莫测的大地艺术作品。自创作了他的标志性作品《走出的线》(1967)，继而跻身于观念艺术先锋之列，而当时的他还是一名圣马丁艺术学院的学生。理查德·朗通过把一段旅程转变、或是干预为具有自身特质的对象，颠覆了领会艺术的方式。自1967年起，他从未停下脚步，从大山到沙漠、海边到草地、江河到雪原；从英国边远乡村到加拿大平原、撒古与玻利维亚。探寻思索与地点相关的感知，通过摄影、地图和文字记录体验，时间和距离、地名和场景亦蕴含着强有力的创造性与叙事性。

此次展览呈现两件大型作品：泥画以及文字作品。艺术家将英国西南地区一条河里的泥巴带入作品《无题》(2018)中，那是理查德·朗的家乡布里斯托附近的河流。以活跃有力的方式直抵浴抹，如同行为艺术表演一般，满洒的泥点构成了错综复杂、蜿蜒曲折的迷人创作。而文字作品《行走雅芳河，英国》(2003)则记录了理查德·朗在2002年的长途跋涉——"源头至河口"，艺术家在8天中行走了266英里，从位于达特姆尔荒地的源头走到了蒂克斯伯里附近的河口。

作品之间的三幅摄影作品，艺术家在下方写下文字，表达有关远途的叙述。《水线之路》(1987)映现的是白雪皑皑的冬日景色，是1987年艺术家在穿越墨西哥塔拉乌马拉山脉的13天徒步行程中拍摄的；《熟悉的地方，瑞士》(2010)则带来了另一番北国风光，呈现理查德·朗用14天穿越连绵山峦。《长江石线，中国》(2010)记录着2010年理查德·朗的中国长江之旅，他沿着长江用附近捡到的石头摆成了一条线。河流一直以来在理查德·朗的创作中占据着特殊的位置，墨西哥格兰得河、澳大利亚马兰比吉河还有家乡的雅芳河都留下了他的印迹。从诺如纽约哈德逊河等河流收集原始材料，在墙面、画板、纸张上任意挥洒河泥。在创作《长江石线，中国》的同时，理查德·朗还带来了著名行为艺术作品《扔进长江的1000块石头》。

Richard Long, Footpath Waterline: A Thirteen Day Walk in the Sierra Tarahumara, Mexico, 1997
photograph and handwritten text
89 x 114 cm © Richard Long
Courtesy Lisson Gallery; photography George Darrell

相邻着的是《沉浸于沿河行走，苏格兰》(1998)，这幅摄影作品记载着艺术家在苏格兰西高地的一次为期9天的徒步旅行。如同其他摄影作品一样，尽管艺术家自己没有出现在画面里，却深深烙印其中。这些作品亦表达了理查德·朗艺术实践的核心：人体的力量和耐力，以及自然界的纯粹之美。

艺术家简介 | 理查德·朗

Richard Long © Richard Long
courtesy Lisson Gallery
photographer James Wakeman

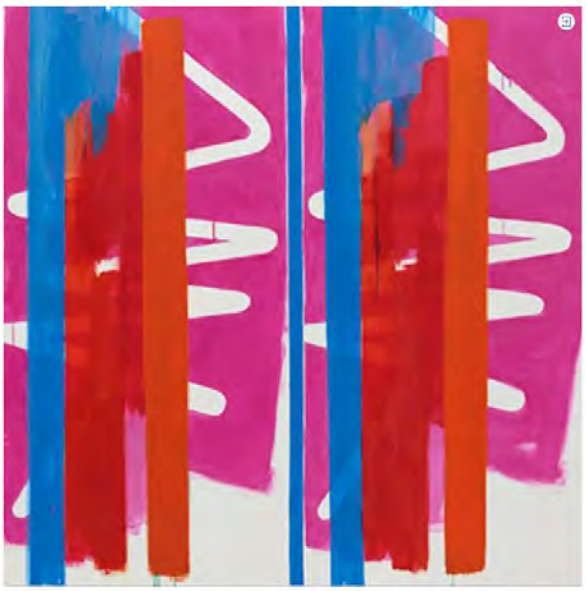
理查德·朗1945年生于英国布里斯托，现居于伦敦与布里斯托两地。1962年至1965年就读于布里斯托西英格兰艺术学院，随后于1966年至1968年就读于伦敦中央圣马丁艺术学院。重要个展包括：德勇特博物馆，瑞尔堡，荷兰(2019)；CAB基金会，布鲁塞尔，比利时(2018)；霍顿庄园，诺福克，英国(2017)；阿尔诺北尼当代艺术中心，布里斯托，英国(2015)；汉堡火车站美术馆，柏林，德国(2010)；泰特美术馆，伦敦，英国(2009)；苏格兰国立现代美术馆，爱丁堡，英国(2007)；旧金山现代艺术博物馆，美国(2006)；国立现代美术馆，京都，日本(1996)；费城艺术博物馆，美国(1994)以及纽约古根海姆美术馆，美国(1986)。他曾于第37届威尼斯双年展(1976)中代表英国参展，并于1989年荣获特纳奖。理查德·朗于1990年获得法国艺术与文学骑士勋章，并于2001年被英国皇家美院推选，2009年获得日本皇家世界文化奖雕塑奖，2013年荣获大英官佐勋章以及2018年荣获骑士爵位。

里森画廊个球展讯

里森上海
理查德·朗 个展
9月20日至10月26日

上海市黄浦区虎丘路 77 号 201 室
(0086) 021-63339296
周二至周六
11:00-18:00
其他时间接受预约观展
预约地址：shanghai@lissongallery.cn

里森纽约
伯纳德·皮法雷蒂 个展
9月13日至10月18日



里森伦敦
余像：当代艺术
7月3日至9月7日

关于里森画廊

里森画廊 (Lisson Gallery) 于1967年由尼古拉斯·劳格斯戴尔先生建立，是世界上最有影响力和历史最悠久的国际当代艺术画廊其中之一。

里森画廊目前在伦敦、纽约各有两处艺术空间，并于今年3月在上海新落成一处艺术空间。画廊支持和开发的国际艺术家共60多位，其中包括玛丽娜·阿布拉莫维奇、阿洛拉&卡尔萨迪利亚、艾未未、娜塔莉·杜尔伯格&汉斯·谭格、瑞安·甘德、帕龙·米尔礼、刘小东、喜岛达男、普什德·普娜、佩德罗·雷耶斯和艾地亚哥·西耶拉等。

LISSON GALLERY

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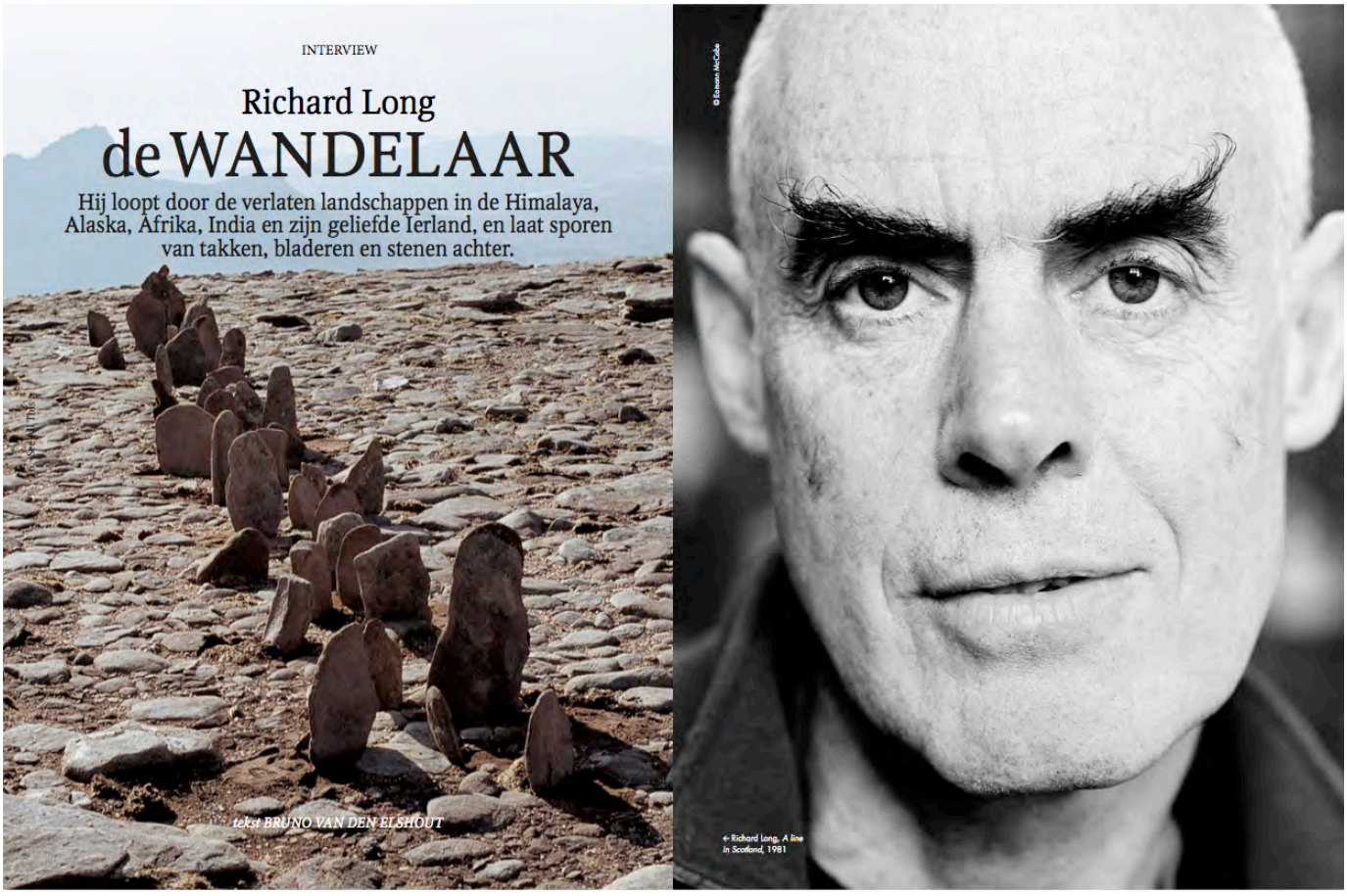
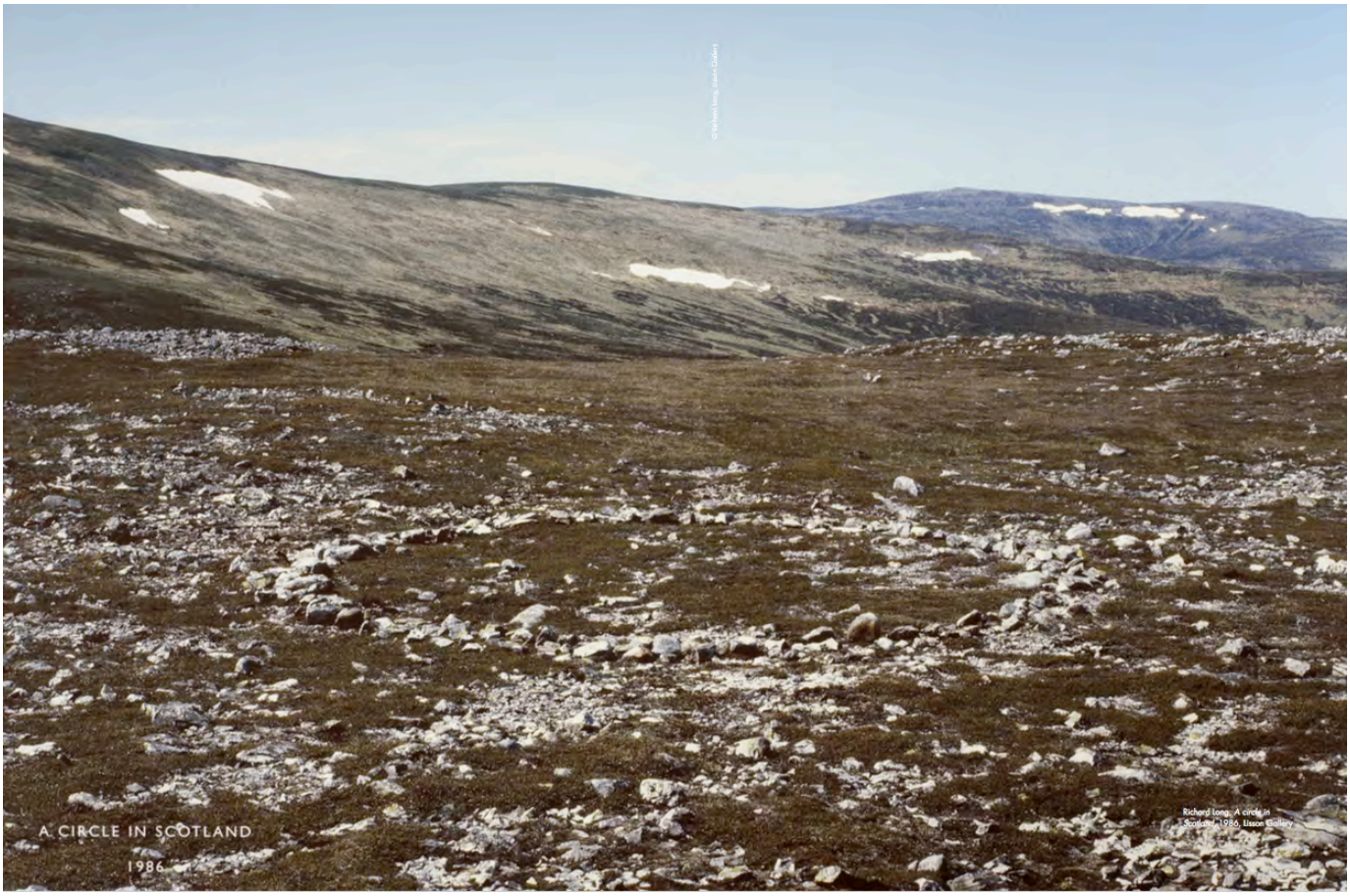
Spring 2019

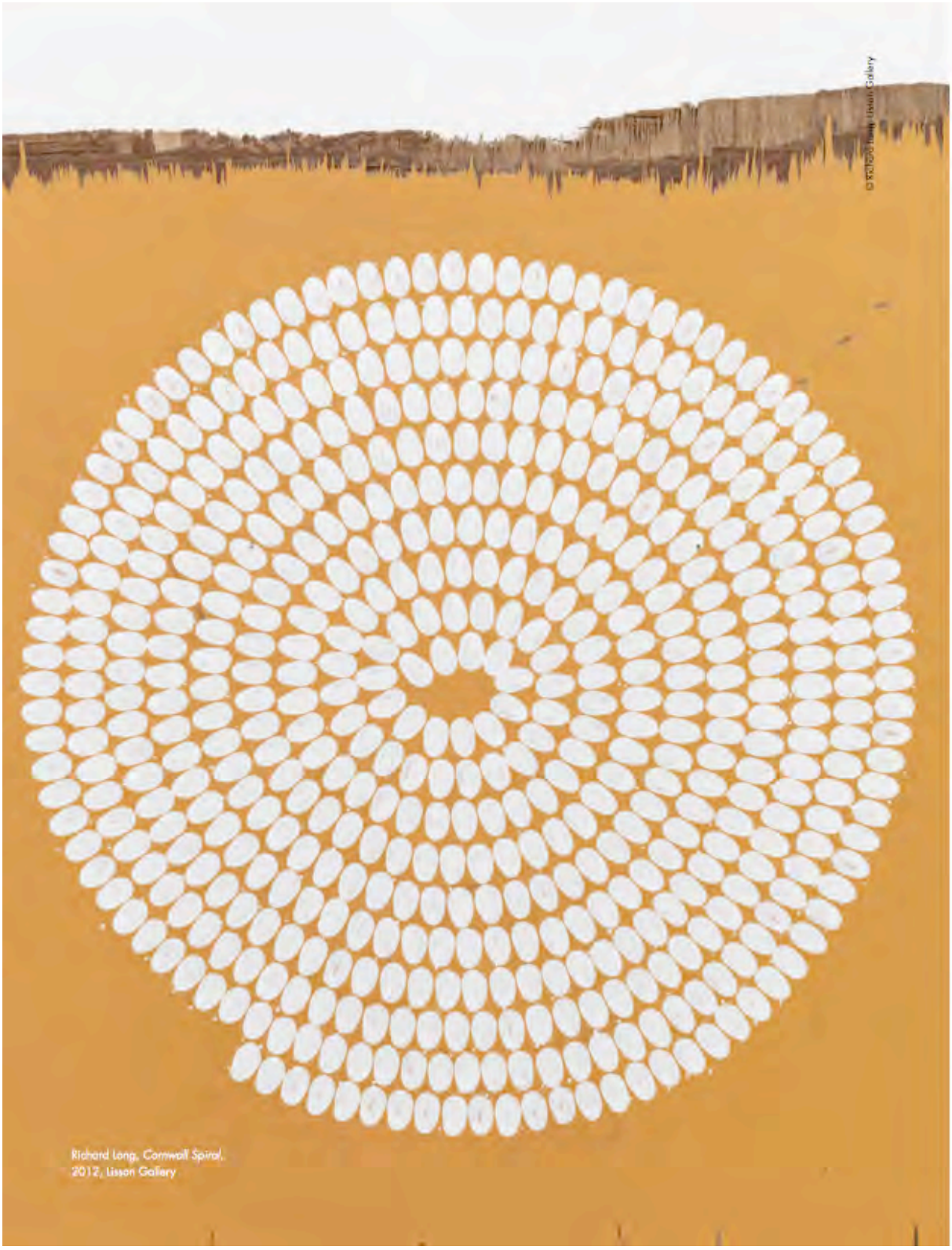
SeeAllThis





Richard Long, *A circle in Scotland*, 1986, Ussher Gallery

Richard Long, *River Avon mud circles*, 1984 (detail), Kröller-Müller Museum, Otterlo



Richard Long, *Cornwall Spiral*, 2012, Lisson Gallery

Samen wandelen we de galerie binnen. Ze werken al samen sinds 1970. Dat jaar bezocht hij de galerie met de mededeling: 'Ik ben Richard Long en het is een goed idee als jullie mijn werk tentoonstellen.' Hij is er in goed gezelschap. Vanuit twee locaties in Londen en twee in New York vertegenwoordigt Lisson Gallery internationaal gerenommeerde kunstenaars zoals Marina Abramović, Ai Weiwei en Anish Kapoor.

Nadat we plaatsnemen in een van de zalen van de galerie, begint ons gesprek met stilte. Ik heb de indruk dat Long zich afvraagt wat onze ontmoeting toevoegt aan de lange lijst publicaties – boeken, documentaires, films – die er in de loop van zijn indrukwekkende vijftigjarige loopbaan over hem zijn gemaakt. 'Ik houd er niet zo van om geïnterviewd te worden', is het eerste dat hij me toevertrouwt. 'Ik wil het liefst dat mijn werk voor zichzelf spreekt, maar je had van tevoren een paar goede vragen toegestuurd, dus steek van wal.'

We nemen een diepe duik in zijn werk en komen te spreken over de waarde van onverdeelde aandacht. 'Die is zeldzaam in het moderne leven. Voorbehouden aan bijzondere momenten. Wanneer je de liefde bedrijft, naar fantastische muziek luistert of er een cricketbal op je wordt afgevuurd. De combinatie van inspanning en ontspanning die je in een soort opperste staat van concentratie brengt. Dat al het andere er even niet meer toe doet en de tijd stilstaat. Waar het even eeuwig nu lijkt en al het denken verstilt. Daar brengen mijn wandelingen me en daar geniet ik van. Het is liefde, het vieren van schoonheid, me daarin onderdompelen en delen wat dat door mij voortbrengt. De fysieke inspanning van het wandelen, het dragen van mijn rugzak, waar mijn reizen me brengen... Ik ben blij dat dat mijn werk is. Veel anders kan ik ook niet, maar dit gelukkig wel.'

Kaal lopen

Het werk van Richard Long (Bristol, 1945) heeft verschillende verschijningsvormen. Die zijn allemaal te herleiden tot de wandelingen die hij als basis voor zijn kunst beschouwt. Deze wandelingen maakt hij bijna altijd alleen en met minimale uitrusting, het liefst in verlaten landschappen over de hele wereld. Met hetzelfde gemak in de Himalaya als in Alaska, Afrika, India, Japan en Zuid-Amerika. In zijn geliefde Ierland of nog dichter bij huis, in Dartmoor National Park of rondom zijn woon- en geboorteplaats Bristol.

Op plekken in het landschap die hem daartoe uitnodigen, maakt hij sculpturen van natuurlijke materialen. Van bladeren, stenen, takken of water. Of met zijn eigen voetstappen, door een figuur in het landschap kaal te lopen. In tegenstelling tot andere landschapskunstenaars laat hij meestal in het midden waar hij zijn werken maakt.

De sculptuur die Long creëert, geeft hij weer terug aan het landschap en aan de anonimiteit. Wanneer hij sporen, takken en bladeren gebruikt, hebben die een maximale levensduur van een paar dagen. Werken van stenen hebben een langere houdbaarheidsdatum, maar raken overgroeid of zijn zodanig onderdeel van het landschap dat je ze als passant gemakkelijk over het hoofd ziet. Wat blijft en de wereld overgaat, is een foto die Long van zijn werkt maakt en de titel die hij dat beeld geeft.

Maar niet altijd is fotografisch beeld de meest geëigende vorm om zijn belevenissen te delen. Bijvoorbeeld als een werk geen fysieke sculptuur is, maar een handeling die hij op een specifieke plek verricht. Het gooien van een aantal stenen. Of een andere actie of een reeks acties. Zoals waar hij tijdens een wandeling geplast heeft, *Urinating Places Line* (1993). Of als hij het ritme van het geluid van regen wil vastleggen. Bij dergelijke werken kiest hij voor tekst als uitingsvorm. Gedichtachtige combinaties van woorden of steekwoorden, steevast gedrukt in zijn lievelingslettertype, de hoofdletters van Gill Sans. In kleine oplages gereproduceerd en te koop aangeboden. Net als de topografische kaarten waarop zijn wandelroutes zijn ingetekend – ook daarvoor tellen verzamelaars aanzienlijke bedragen neer.

Naast het zorgvuldig gecomponeerde drukwerk dat Long op deze manier publiceert, is hij vooral bekend door de cirkel-

'Onverdeelde aandacht is zeldzaam en voorbehouden aan momenten waarop je de liefde bedrijft of naar muziek luistert'

‘Ik wilde trouwen aan weerszijden van de evenaar en werk maken op de top van de Kilimanjaro’

en lijnvormige composities die hij in musea en galeries tentoonstelt. Met uiterste precisie gerangschikte stenen of takken op de vloer, zoals tijdens zijn wandelingen buiten. Of moddersculpturen op de muur, zoals het kunstwerk *From the river* (1984) dat deel uitmaakt van de permanente collectie van het Kröller-Müller Museum. Het werk is dit jaar te zien tijdens de tentoonstelling die het museum aan Longs werk wijdt.

Kosmische passages

Veel van zijn wandelingen zijn zorgvuldig voorbereid rondom een aantal vaststaande gegevens. Dat kan de wandelroute of een bepaalde afstand zijn. Dagenlang of juist kort en alles daartussenin. Veel wandelingen verbinden rivieren of bergtoppen met elkaar, al dan niet door materiaal van de ene plek naar de andere te verplaatsen. Meestal stenen, vaak ook modder en soms zelfs water. Getallen en afstanden dienen ook als basis voor het ontstaan van een wandelwerk. Of kosmische passages zoals maanstanden, zonnestanden, seizoenswisselingen en getijden.

Maar ondanks alles wat Long van tevoren bedenkt, speelt het toeval in zijn werk een grote rol. Veel wandelingen worden ingegeven door een combinatie van wens en praktische gelegenheid. ‘Mijn eerste wandeling in Afrika kwam er doordat ik mijn zus wilde bezoeken die daar toen woonde. En ik wilde trouwen aan weerszijden van de evenaar en een kunstwerk maken op de top van de Kilimanjaro.’

Door het weer laat Long zich graag verrassen: ‘Of het nu goed weer is, slecht weer of zelfs verschrikkelijk. Het voegt altijd iets toe.’ Hij is zelden bang op zijn reizen. Zelfs niet toen hij nog niet zo lang geleden op een wandeling in Afrika onbedoeld een troep leeuwen doorkruiste. De schrik die hij van mijn gezicht afleest lijkt hem te amuseren. Daarna gaat hij rustig verder waar hij gebleven was: ‘Ik houd van de vrije ruimte die ontstaat door steeds een paar dimensies van mijn wandeling van tevoren juist wél vast te leggen en al het andere te laten gebeuren zoals het gebeurt. Dan wordt me vanzelf duidelijk waar en wanneer ik een werk wil maken, hoe dat eruitziet en waar het van gemaakt is. Steeds komt het aan op de vraag: is dit de juiste handeling op het juiste moment, op de juiste plek. Alleen dan valt alles samen op de manier die ik zo graag ervaar. Dan maakt een werk zichzelf, door mij.’

Zeggingskracht

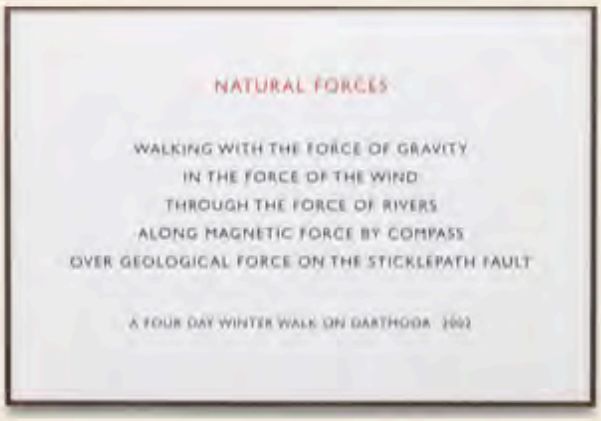
Maar wanneer wordt wandelen kunst? Daar is Long duidelijk over en dat was hij al op jonge leeftijd. ‘Toen ik in 1968 *Walking a Straight 10-Mile Line* maakte, was ik de eerste die op het idee kwam om doelbewust een rechte lijn in een landschap te gaan lopen. En met de bedoeling dat als kunstwerk te doen. Mijn werk is kunst omdat ik kunstenaar ben en het maken van kunst is het vertrekpunt van mijn werk. Ik vind dat de vraag of iets kunst is in de eerste plaats door de maker beantwoord kan en moet worden. Daarna zullen de tijd en de ontvangst van het werk uitwijzen in hoeverre dat terecht is. Hoe origineel is een idee? Kloppen de uitvoering en de uiteindelijke vorm daarmee? De uiteindelijk vorm kan een tastbaar object zijn, maar ook bestaan in de ervaring die een beschouwer van het werk opdoet. De impact en permanente duur van die ervaring.’ Maar over hoe hij wil dat zijn werk bekeken wordt, is hij minder mededeelzaam. ‘Er is geen boodschap of bedoeling. Geen instructie of uitnodiging. Alleen de zeggingskracht en kwaliteit van het werk zelf.’

Die kwaliteit wordt al vroeg in zijn carrière herkend. Tijdens zijn studie aan de kunstacademie heeft Long nog wel wat baantjes – bij een papierfabriek, als bouwvakker en als manusje van alles in een theater – maar na zijn afstuderen wijdt hij zich volledig aan zijn wandelkunst. Al gauw wordt hij omringd door supporters die hem helpen zijn wandelingen mogelijk te maken. In eerste instantie zijn dat zijn medestudenten, die inzien hoe nieuw en anders Longs werk is.

Dat vinden ook de prominente internationale kunstenaars die hij leert kennen tijdens zijn eerste deelname aan een internationale tentoonstelling in Düsseldorf (Konrad Fischer, 1968). ‘Ik liet foto’s van mijn werk zien aan Joseph Beuys en Carl Andre en zij waren meteen gecharmeerd van mijn werk. Al snel kwamen er van over de hele wereld uitnodigingen om ook aan andere tentoonstellingen deel te nemen en die komen tot op de dag van vandaag. Ze brengen me op plekken waar ik anders niet op zou komen. Zo ook De Pont. Het was bijzonder om daar deel uit te maken van de openingstentoonstelling van directeur Hendrik Driessen. Ik vind het mooi dat De Pont de overzichtstentoonstelling van mijn werk in Driessens afscheidsjaar heeft geprogrammeerd.’

Onvoorwaardelijk

Lang voor zijn tijd aan de kunstacademie was Long geïntrigeerd door natuurfenomenen. Zijn ouders waren fanatieke wandelaars. Zijn vader was leraar en nam de stadskinderen uit zijn klas mee op verkenningen rondom de rivier Avon, buiten Bristol. Long wandelde met ze mee en ook in de zomers trok hij met zijn ouders de natuur in. In zijn lagere schooltijd



Richard Long, Natural Forces Dartmoor, England, 2002, Lisson Gallery

probeerde hij natuurfenomenen na te bootsen, bijvoorbeeld door met gips een rivierbedding na te maken in een cakeblik, met verschillende inlaten voor water zodat hij de getijden van de rivier kon imiteren.

De wereld is veel veranderd sinds Longs schooltijd in de jaren vijftig en zestig, maar zijn liefde voor de natuur is altijd gebleven. Ook zijn werk is betrekkelijk onveranderlijk. Critici nemen hem dat wel eens kwalijk. Zelf zegt hij daarover: 'Als je iets herhaalt wat goed is, wordt het vanzelf beter. En bovendien, elk moment is zo anders, dat eenzelfde handeling op een ander moment of op een andere plek een heel nieuwe ervaring oplevert.' Hij zegt het met een vanzelfsprekendheid die terugkomt in alles wat hij zegt, doet en maakt. Waardoor zijn werk niet alleen bestaat uit wandelingen in alle vormen die hij deelt, maar ook uit een onvoorwaardelijke overgave aan het leven. Het onverstoorbaar banen van je eigen pad. Zonder strijd, gedoe, contrast, drama of zelfs emotie, thema's waar veel kunstenaars juist graag inspiratie uit putten.

Nokia

Long houdt zijn werk en leven het liefst eenvoudig. Een mobiele telefoon heeft hij wel, een oude Nokia waar je alleen maar mee kunt bellen, maar die gebruikt hij amper. Waar hij wandelt, heeft hij meestal toch geen bereik. 'Mijn trouwste instrumenten zijn nog altijd mijn kompas en landkaarten, mijn eigen handen en voeten.'

Met politiek, maatschappelijke vraagstukken en de toekomst van de wereld houdt hij zich niet bezig. Ondanks de steeds verder oprukkende steden ziet hij zijn werkgebied niet in gevaar komen. Bovendien is hij zich er ook van bewust wat de stad hem brengt. 'Bristol is mijn thuis. Ik kan er anoniem over straat. Ook in Londen kom ik graag. Ik heb de stad nodig en ik heb daar vrede mee. Het kunstleven speelt zich grotendeels af in steden. De stad is mijn poort naar de wereld. Het mag er dan op lijken dat de wereld steeds verder verstedelijkt: verreweg het meeste landoppervlak is leeg. Zelfs hier in Engeland is volop ruimte en van alles te beleven en ontdekken.'

Ondanks zijn leeftijd is Long niet van plan om minder te gaan wandelen, al is veel van zijn tijd de laatste jaren opgegaan aan het tentoonstellen van zijn werk. 'Ook de tentoonstellingen zijn nadrukkelijk onderdeel van mijn werk. Ik ben het aan mijn werk verplicht om het met de wereld te delen. En met mensen die het willen zien. Maar met pensioen ga ik nooit. Ik kan niet ophouden met werken want ik ben er nooit echt mee begonnen. Dit is mijn leven.'

Het klinkt heerlijk, vooral de onwaarschijnlijke vanzelfsprekendheid waarmee Richard Long over zijn werk vertelt. Als iemand anders hetzelfde vertelde, zou ik me in de maling genomen voelen. Maar in de belevingswereld van Long wil ik gewoon geloven. En door dat te doen, wordt zijn werk vanzelf... nog vanzelfsprekender.

Richard Long
t/m 16 juni, De Pont museum, Tilburg

Richard Long: From the River
t/m 19 mei, Kröller-Müller Museum, Otterlo

Trouw
29 February 2019

Trouw.nl

De natuur als atelier

LOPEN Richard Long heeft een speciale band met wandelen in de natuur. Zijn kunst gaat over lopen: hij trekt strepen in het gras, ordent stenen en neemt de toeschouwer mee op zijn zwerftochten.

tekst **Joke de Wolf**

Zet de ene voet voor de andere en herhaal dat. Liefst met zo weinig mogelijk spullen op je rug. Liefst ook in een omgeving zonder asfalt en bebouwing. Kunstenaar Richard Long (Bristol, 1945) wandelt en maakt daarmee zijn kunst. De natuur is zijn atelier. Hoe zweverig dat ook mag klinken, Long houdt zijn voeten stevig op de grond. Wat dat oplevert, is nu te zien in museum De Pont in Tilburg.

Hij begon nog tijdens de kunstacademie met het maken van een lijn op het grasveld. 'A line made by walking' noemde hij het, in 1967: platgelopen gras in een rechte lijn, vastgelegd op een foto. Museumdirecteur Rudi Fuchs noemde het werk even belangrijk als het zwarte vierkant van Malevich: een kantelpunt in de kunstgeschiedenis.

Voor Long is wandelen zijn medium. Soms loopt hij een vooraf op de kaart getekende route, soms loopt hij door een land van oost naar west. Tijdens het wandelen denkt hij na, ordent hij zijn gedachten en vaak ook zijn omgeving. Met kleine, haast onzichtbare ingrepen: hij legt een aantal stenen op een rij of in een cirkel, alleen wie scherp oplet, kan het zien.

Anders dan het werk van de meeste kunstenaars is de kunst van Long vluchtig. De Amerikaanse Landart-kunstenaars, mensen als Robert Smithson en Robert Morris, deden vanaf eind jaren zestig ingrepen in het Amerikaanse en soms ook het Nederlandse landschap die nog steeds te zien zijn.

Richard Long maakt geen monumenten. De lijn die hij maakte in 1967 is allang verdwenen, het enige dat ervan over is, is een foto. En de betekenis ervan is voor Long even eenvoudig als het maken van het kunstwerk: het gaat over het lopen.

In 1991, nog voordat museum De Pont in Tilburg open was, kocht directeur Hendrik Driessen een werk van Long: Planet Circle. Brokken witte Franse kalksteen, die de kunstenaar persoonlijk in een cirkel met een diameter van negen meter op de grond heeft gelegd. Deze stenen werken maakte Long om de museumbezoeker mee te kunnen nemen op zijn wandelingen. Het werk heeft er lang gelegen. Nu, voor de solotentoonstelling die Long in het museum heeft, liggen er zeven andere werken in steen uitgestald, opnieuw persoonlijk door de kunstenaar neergelegd.

Steengroeve

Nee, verzekert Driessen voorafgaand aan de opening, Long neemt die stenen niet mee van zijn wandelingen en ze zijn ook niet stuk voor stuk genummerd. Long bestelt zijn materiaal heel eenvoudig bij een Engelse steengroeve. Aan de plaatsing van de stenen stelt hij niet veel eisen. Het museum krijgt een diagram waarop staat hoe de stenen ongeveer moeten liggen.

De vloer van de grote zaal van museum De Pont is bezaaid met de stenen kunstwerken. Omdat Long in de buurt was, heeft hij ze de afgelopen week allemaal zelf neergelegd. Dat hoort bij zijn werk, vindt hij. Een van de werken ligt in de vorm van een kruis. Heeft Long er een religieuze bedoeling mee? "Ach welnee", zegt de kunstenaar. "Een kruis is een universeel teken, net als de cirkel. Mensen maken die vormen al zolang ze er zijn, ook in de natuur komen die vormen terug. Dat is de enige boodschap die ik ermee wil vertellen."

Aan de wanden en in de kleine kabinetjes hangen foto's van de steenformaties die Long maakt tijdens zijn wandelingen en de teksten die hij opschrijft tijdens of na zijn wandeling. Kleine poëtische overpeinzingen, in het Engels op de muur gezet. Een Nederlandse vertaling was prettig geweest, Long gebruikt graag weinig alledaagse woorden als *cairn* (een prehistorisch steengraf), *bog* (moeras) en *tor* (heuvel). Een wandeling dwars door Frankrijk, van west naar oost, in het voorjaar van 2005, is goed te volgen, samengevat in zestien woorden: woorden als *lightning*, *deer*, *fog* en Rhône. Je loopt al bijna naast hem.

Twee categorieën kunstwerken uit het oeuvre van Long ontbreken in Tilburg. De kaartwerken, landkaarten waarop de kunstenaar zijn looproute van tevoren in vaak strakke rechte lijnen dwars door het land heeft uitgetekend, zonder rekening te houden met wegen of andere obstakels. En dan zijn er nog de modderwerken, schilderijen die Long maakt met de klei uit rivieren die hij tegenkomt.

kan vanaf volgende week naar het Kröller-Müllermuseum. Daar tekende Long in 1984 drie cirkels op de muur met modder uit de rivier de Avon, de rivier bij zijn geboorteplaats Bristol, die worden tijdelijk weer tevoorschijn gehaald. Ook is er het werk dat hij maakt met drijfhout uit diezelfde rivier. Geordend in een cirkel, vluchtig en kwetsbaar, maar met grote zeggingskracht. Zo eenvoudig kan het zijn en zo beeldend: menselijke ordening van die onmetelijke natuur.

★★★★☆

Richard Long, tot 16 juni in Museum de Pont, Tilburg.

'Richard Long: from the river', 23 februari tot 19 mei, Kröller-Müller, Otterlo.

'With Us in the Nature' van Gilbert & George, tot 5 mei, Kröller-Müller, Otterlo.

IN NET PAK TEGENOVER DE WILDE NATUUR

Een heel andere houding tegenover de natuur hebben Longs generatiegenoten Gilbert & George (1943 en 1942), het Engelse kunstenaarsduo dat steevast in pak verschijnt. Ze zijn wel de laatsten om wekenlang te wandelen met alleen een eenspersoonstentje en een slaapzak. Ze zijn bekend van hun fotocollages, maar in 1971 maakten ze, pas afgestudeerd, één schilderijenserie. Die heet 'The Paintings (with Us in the Nature)' en is zo groot dat ze maar zelden te zien is: zes drieluiken van 2,30 meter hoog.
Het Kröller-Müller Museum kocht

de serie in 2010 en toont die de komende maanden.
Gilbert & George in de natuur zien eruit zoals je zou verwachten: onwennig om zich heen kijkend. De kleine mens tegenover de wilde, meeslepende natuur zou ook onze eigen grote gevoelens versterken. In de schilderijen knalt het groen op je af, de twee jongemannen in pak staan, lopen of zitten in de hun weinig vertrouwde omgeving. Zo sluiten ze aan bij de lange traditie van Britse landschapsschilderkunst, met traditionele figuratieve schilderkunst die in 1971 bepaald niet populair was.

'Een kruis is een universeel teken, net als de cirkel; die maken we al zolang we er zijn'

Voor Richard Long is wandelen zijn medium

Links: 'Red Slate Line'
FOTO G.J. VAN ROOIJ
Hiernaast: Richard Long aan het werk.
FOTO J. VAN DER HORST
Boven: Gilbert & George, 'The Paintings'
FOTO KRÖLLER-MÜLLER MUSEUM

Het Parool
27 February 2019

Het Parool

Landart De Pont toont wandelingen Richard Long

Een rijtje stenen in de Andes

De Britse kunstenaar Richard Long heeft het wandelen tot kunst verheven. Heen en weer lopen over een grasveldje of een tocht naar Cern in Genève. Hoe stel je dat tentoon?

Sophia Zürcher
TILBURG

Neem plaats op het bankje in museum De Pont in Tilburg en kijk naar de muur waar in kapitalen de volgende tekst staat: BEING AT MIDDAY / ON THE VERNAL EQUINOX / ON THE PRIME MERIDIAN / IN THE MIDDLE OF A WALK

Stel je voor hoe iemand een negendaagse voettocht aflegt van Biarritz naar Toulouse, en dan precies halverwege die wandeling, op het middaguur, op 20 maart tijdens de equinox (als dus dag en nacht precies even lang zijn), zich ter hoogte van de nulmeridiaan bevindt.

Al die lijnen – van tijd, van afstand – hebben we benoemd om orde aan te brengen in de chaos van de wereld. Je kunt die lijnen niet zien, maar wel heel goed in je hoofd trekken (misschien met behulp van Google Maps, als je even niet weet waar de nulmeridiaan loopt) en je een kruispunt voorstellen waar al die middelpunten van de lijnen samenkomen. Daar ben jij nu in je hoofd. Daar was Richard Long fysiek in 2010.

Waar andere kunstenaars penselen of camera's als belangrijkste medium gebruiken, heeft de Britse kunstenaar Richard Long het wandelen tot kunst verheven. Long, geboren in 1945 in Bristol, begon er al mee in zijn studententijd, toen hij in een grasveld bij Wiltshire net zo lang heen en weer bleef lopen tot zijn kaarsrechte olifantenpaadje een zichtbare lijn vormde: *A line made by walking* (1967). Hij maakte er een foto van en liep weer verder.

In De Pont zie je nu de resultaten van zijn wandelkunst en de kleine ingrepen die hij de laatste decennia deed in de natuur. Hij legde stenen in een cirkel in Schotland in 1986 of in een lijn in de Andes in 1981. Hij liep in 2012 tien dagen in het Ellsworthgebergte in Antarctica waar hij op een gegeven moment kleine gletsjerstenen rechtop in een rijtje in de sneeuw stak.

Tweedehands kunst

Het zijn die kleine gebaren, kleine ordeninkjes van de natuur, die bewijzen dat Long er was. Bij zijn tekstwerken volstaat zelfs louter de fantasie dat hij die weg heeft afgelegd, die hoef je niet te zien. In die bescheidenheid schuilt de poëzie.

Dan is het trouwens wel even slikken als je een foto ziet van zijn tentje, opgezet tijdens zijn zesdaagse kajaktocht van Washington naar Oregon, omdat het dan opeens over een specifieke reiziger gaat in plaats van de mens die het landschap doorkruist.

Het hart van Longs oeuvre bestaat uit de wandelingen, maar die zijn per definitie afwezig in het museum. Dan blijven dus de foto- en tekstwerken over die een deel van de wandeling documenteren. Long noemt die werken 'tweedehands'.

De derde component van zijn oeuvre bestaat uit sculpturen die hij voor binnenruimtes maakt, waarbij hij de natuur in het museum drapeert. Hij stelt bijvoorbeeld leistenen of brokken basalt naast elkaar of overlappend tentoon, in een kruis- of ellipsvorm.

Dit zijn de meest fysieke werken. En dat is niet alleen omdat de 73-jarige kunstenaar persoonlijk met leistenen heeft lopen slepen, die hij bijvoorbeeld zo positioneerde dat ze een rechthoek vormen. Als een rode loper legt die rechthoek bijna de helft van de lengte van het museum af. Loop je erlangs, dan word je je bewust van je voetstappen, van je miniwandeling in het museum.

→ **Links: *Red Slate Line* (1986), boven: *A Line in the Andes, South America* (1981).**
FOTO LINKS: G.J. VAN ROOIJ, BOVEN: KEN ADLARD

De wandelingen zelf zijn per definitie afwezig in het museum; dat toont foto's en beschrijvingen

Longs werk wordt geschaard onder de stroming van de landart of landschapskunst. Deze kunstenaars verlieten vanaf de jaren zestig hun atelier en maakten welhaast onverkoopbare kunst door met of in het landschap kunst te maken.

Graafmachines

Let wel, de kleine ingrepen van de Brit zijn van een heel andere aard dan de werken die de bekende Amerikaanse landartkunstenaars in de jaren zeventig maakten. Robert Smithson legde een spiraalvormige pier aan in Utah (*Spiral Jetty*), en Michael Heizer was helemaal megalomaan bezig toen hij een gigantische greppel van 15 meter diep en 457 meter lang in de aarde van Nevada groef (*Double Negative*). Hoe ingetogen lijkt een lijn van platgetrapt gras dan. Geen graafmachines nodig, alleen een paar wandelschoenen.

En toch. Sommige werken van Long zijn in de verbeelding juist grootser. Een van de omschrijvingen van zijn wandelingen luidt: '*Megalithic to subatomic*'. In de herfst van 2008 liep Long van de prehistorische megalieten in Carnac naar de ultramoderne deeltjesversneller van Cern in Genève liep. In die wandeling van 19 dagen overbrugde hij meer dan 6000 jaar.

Richard Long: t/m 16 juni in museum De Pont in Tilburg.

NRC Handelsblad
21 February 2019

NRC HANDELSBLAD

Van **kunst** **wandelen** maken

INTERVIEW
RICHARD LONG

Al ruim een halve eeuw wandelt de Britse kunstenaar Richard Long de wereld over. Onderweg laat hij sculpturen achter, van steen of hout of zand. Museum De Pont toont nu een overzicht van zijn werk.

Door onze redacteur
Sandra Smallenburg

Het geluid van steen op steen echoot door de voormalige fabriekshal van museum De Pont. Met doffe klappen stapelt de Britse kunstenaar Richard Long stukken rode leisteen op elkaar. Af en toe neemt hij even afstand en kijkt hij peinzend naar de meterslange lijn die zich op de museumvloer vormt - als een schilder die zijn compositie evalueert. „Hij moet nog iets langer worden", zegt hij dan. En dus begint hij weer te zeulen en schuiven met de brokstukken, net zo lang tot ze een mooie, regelmatige rechthoek vormen.

Vijf steenwerken liggen er al op de betonnen vloer van De Pont: twee kruizen, twee cirkels en een lange lijn. En al die stukken basalt, graniet en leisteen heeft Long de afgelopen dagen door zijn handen laten gaan. „Ik ben een beeldhouwer, dit is wat ik doe", zegt hij, alsof het de gewoonste zaak van de wereld is dat je als 73-jarige kunstenaar, die inmiddels in alle grote musea ter wereld geëxposeerd heeft, dit zware werk nog zelf doet. Afzien, bikkelen, je grenzen opzoeken en eroverheen gaan, dat is wat Long al meer dan een halve eeuw doet.

Richard Long (Bristol, 1945) was eind jaren zestig samen met zijn studiegenoot Hamish Fulton de eerste kunstenaar die van wandelen kunst maakte. Dat begon in 1967 met het inmiddels iconische kunstwerk *A Line Made by Walking*, waarvoor de destijds 22-jarige kunststudent vanuit Londen de trein richting het te een onbestemd stukje grasland en begon heen en weer te lopen, tot er na een minuut of twintig een kaarsrecht paadje van platgetrapt gras was ontstaan. Long maakte er wat foto's van, nam vervolgens de eerstvolgende trein terug, en liet het rolletje bij een lokale drogist ontwikkelen.

Het was het startpunt van een eindeloze reeks wandelingen, die hem van de Zuidpool tot Alaska en van de Himalaya tot Australië bracht. Tijdens die tochten maakt hij soms ter plekke kunst in het landschap, door stenen in een cirkel te rollen, of takken tot een rechte lijn te schuiven en die vast te leggen op een foto. Soms is het resultaat van een wandeling louter de sobere omschrijving ervan, in een paar woorden aangebracht op de museummuur. 'Megalithic to subatomic', staat er nu bijvoorbeeld in zwarte kapitalen in De Pont geschreven. Die drie woorden omvatten een wandeling van 603 mijl (970 km) die Long in 2008 maakte gedurende negentien dagen, van de prehistorische menhirs in het Franse Carnac naar de hypermoderne deeltjesversneller in het Zwitserse Cern.

Hij wandelt nog steeds zoveel als hij kan, zegt Long, al heeft hij inmiddels wel wat last van een stijve rug en versleten knieën. „Er zitten aardig wat kilometers in deze benen", lacht hij. Toch maakt hij met zijn lange, tanige lijf nog een zeer fitte indruk. Gekleed in afritsbroek, bergschoenen, rood T-shirt en een witte bandana is het alsof hij zojuist naar Tilburg is komen lopen.

Het atelier uit

„De belangrijkste stap die ik heb gemaakt", zegt Long, terugkijkend op zijn carrière, „is dat ik mij al snel realiseerde dat de wereld buiten het atelier veel interessanter was dan erbinnen. Toen ik nog thuis woonde, bij mijn ouders in Bristol, maakte ik al mijn eerste kunstwerken door in de tuin rechthoeken of cirkels van turf uit de grond te steken. Later, op de St. Martin's School of Art in Londen, bouwde ik met water en zand sculpturen op het dak van de academie. Met *A Line Made by Walking* bracht ik het idee van afstand in een kunstwerk. En tijd, dat ik als de vierde dimensie beschouw."

Er hing veel in de lucht, in die roerige jaren zestig, vertelt Long. In Europa begonnen de kunstenaars van Arte Povera beelden te maken van gevonden materialen. In Amerika trokken land-artkunstenaars als Robert Smithson en Michael Heizer de woestijn in om kunst te maken. Minimalisten als Robert Morris en Carl Andre bouwde hun geometrische sculpturen zonder sokkel, direct op de museumvloer. Long

in een hokje te stoppen. Zijn werk leende elementen van performancekunst en conceptuele kunst, maar was speelser en poëtischer. Terwijl de Amerikanen met bulldozers geulen groeven in het landschap, plukte Long madeliefjes in een rechte lijn in het gras. „Ik denk dat *A Line Made by Walking* het ultieme Arte Povera-werk is", zegt Long nu. „Omdat het gaat over iets maken uit niets. Het is heel minimalistisch."

In Londen studeerde Long samen met onder meer de Nederlandse kunstenaar Jan Dibbets en het Britse duo Gilbert & George. „Zij waren de eersten aan wie ik mijn foto's liet zien. Als jonge kunstenaar maak je in de eerste plaats werk voor je medestudenten. Dus zij vormden mijn 'peer group'. Dibbets was heel belangrijk voor me, omdat hij snapte wat ik aan het doen was. Hij was iets ouder, dus hij kende de kunstwereld goed. En hij was al getrouwd, wat hem in onze ogen nogal exotisch maakte."

Wat er rond dezelfde tijd in Amerika gebeurde, hield Long niet zo bezig. „Sommige van mijn medestudenten spelden het tijdschrift *Artforum*, maar ik was daar niet in geïnteresseerd." Ook nu nog voelt hij zich niet prettig bij het label van 'land art' dat vaak op zijn werk geplakt wordt. „Land art is echt een Amerikaans fenomeen. Die kunstwerken zijn gemaakt met machines. Je hebt veel geld nodig om al dat land te kunnen kopen. Ik ben een Britse kunstenaar die in de vrije natuur werkt. Dat betekent overigens niet dat mijn werk niet over schaal gaat. Mijn wandelingen kunnen duizend mijl groot zijn - veel groter dus dan die Amerikaanse kunstwerken."

Het grote verschil, zegt Long, is dat hij geen sculpturen maakt voor de eeuwigheid. De plekken waar hij zijn kunst heeft gemaakt, houdt hij voor zichzelf. „Ik ben niet geïnteresseerd in het maken van monumenten. Fotografie geeft mij de vrijheid om kunst te maken in complete eenzaamheid, op de top van een berg of middenin de Sahara."

Steencirkels en muurtjes

Als kind al werd Long vaak door zijn ouders mee uit wandelen genomen. Zijn grootouders woonden aan de rand van het natuurpark Dartmoor, een gebied vol steencirkels en megalieten. Het kale, rotsige landschap, waar het vee omheind wordt door muurtjes van gestapelde stenen, heeft hem diep beïnvloed.

„Die muurtjes zijn deel van mijn cultuur, het Engelse landschap is mijn thuislandschap. Ik keer vaak terug naar landschappen die daarop lijken, zoals de Schotse hooglanden of de stenige kust in het westen van Ierland. Je zult op mijn foto's niet veel bomen aantreffen. Een paar jaar geleden ben ik voor het eerst naar de Amazone gereisd om daar een cirkel van bladeren te maken. Tot dan toe was ik nog nooit in de jungle geweest."

Nog altijd is de omgeving van Bristol zijn voornaamste werkterrein. Long wijst op de tekst aan de muur achter hem, die twee wandelingen uit 1996 omschrijft: 'A walk of 24 hours: 82 miles' en 'A walk of 24 miles in 82 hours'. „Beide heb ik dichtbij huis gemaakt, over Engelse 'country lanes'. Het idee van tijd was in dit werk het uitgangspunt. Bij de eerste wandeling moest ik bijna non-stop lopen, en kon ik alleen stoppen om te eten en te plassen. De andere was juist een heel rustige wandeling."

Herinnert hij zich het afzien en de blaren, nu hij die woorden terugleest? „Natuurlijk, ik draag een stukje van al die wandelingen in me mee. Maar mijn werk draait niet om de herinnering. Ik ben geen toerist of schrijver. Mijn werk is nooit anekdotisch. Het onderwerp van mijn kunst is dat wat je ziet: een lijn van stenen in de Himalaya bijvoorbeeld. Als toeschouwer moet je de ervaringen er zelf maar bij bedenken: dat ik echt die berg op ben geklommen, totdat ik de juiste gletsjer had gevonden."

Kompas en kaart

Hij is nog steeds een 'oldskool' wandelaar, vertelt Long. Aan Google maps of moderne satellietapparatuur heeft hij geen boodschap. Hij wandelt nog gewoon met een kompas en kaarten van papier. Hij heeft geen oordopjes in met muziek, want dat leidt alleen maar af. „Ik houd ervan om in het hier en nu te zijn." Ook zijn 35mm-spiegelreflexcamera is nog analoog. „De vraag is hoe lang ik dat nog kan volhouden. De rolletjes zijn steeds moeilijker te krijgen, en het afdrukken op fotopapier wordt ook steeds lastiger."

Na een halve eeuw wandelen weet Long hoe het is om in de natuur te overleven. „Ik kan voor mezelf zorgen ja", lacht hij. „Het is een geweldig genot dat ik dat op mijn leeftijd nog steeds kan doen. Ik houd van de wildernis, van drinken uit de rivier en slapen onder de sterren. Om iedere avond op een andere plek te overnachten en nooit te weten waar je die dag zal eindigen. Mijn werk komt echt voort uit mijn liefde voor wandelen en kamperen. Daar wilde ik kunst van maken."

Hij wilde iets origineels doen, zegt Long: „Ideeën in de wereld brengen waar niemand eerder aan gedacht had. Zoals wandelen van de ene regenbui naar de andere. Of Dartmoor doorkruisen in een rechte lijn, dwars door beken en over muurtjes heen. Ik vind het nog steeds een opwindend idee, dat ik waarschijnlijk de eerste en de enige in de wereld ben die dat ooit heeft gedaan."

Richard Long. T/m 16 juni in De Pont, Tilburg. Inl: depont.nl.
Van 23 febr. t/m 19 mei toont Museum Kröller-Müller in Otterlo werk van Richard Long uit de eigen collectie. Inl: krollermuller.nl

Kunstenaar **Richard Long** tijdens het opbouwen van zijn tentoonstelling in De Pont.
FOTO ANDREAS TERLAAK

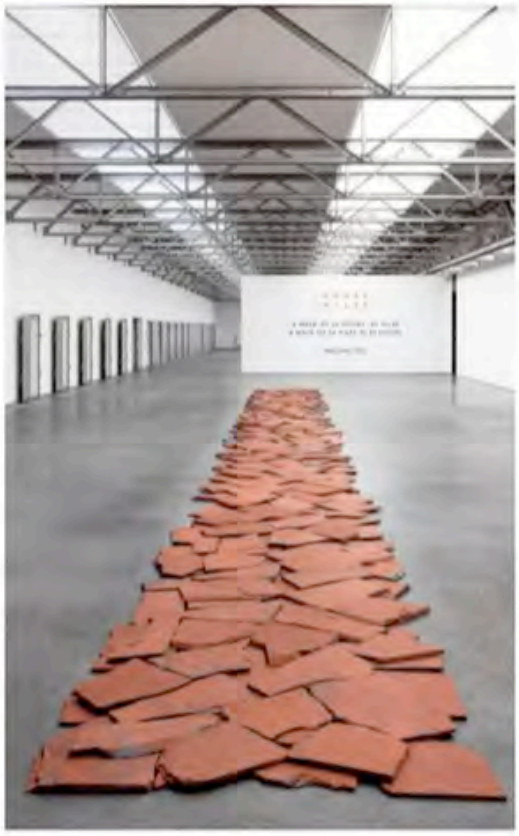


Foto boven
Zaaloverzicht met werk van Richard Long in De Pont.
Foto onder
Richard Long: Red Slate Line (1986)

COURTESY RICHARD LONG/ LISSON GALLERY. FOTO'S GERT-JAN VAN ROOIJ

NRC Netherlands
20 February 2019

NRC HANDELSBLAD

Foto Andreas Terlaak

Richard Long wist van wandelen kunst te maken

Richard Long Al ruim een halve eeuw wandelt de Britse kunstenaar Richard Long de wereld over. Onderweg laat hij sculpturen achter, van steen of hout of zand. Museum De Pont toont nu een overzicht van zijn werk.

Sandra Smallenburg 20 februari 2019 Leestijd 5 minuten

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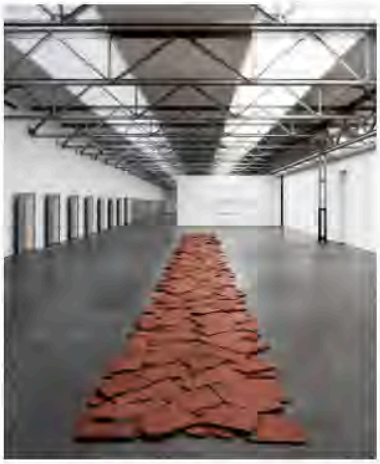
Richard Long (Bristol, 1945) was eind jaren zestig samen met zijn studiegenoot Hamish Fulton de eerste kunstenaar die van wandelen kunst maakte. Dat begon in 1967 met het inmiddels iconische kunstwerk *A Line Made by Walking*, waarvoor de destijds 22-jarige kunststudent vanuit Londen de trein richting het platteland van Surrey nam. Hij stapte uit, spotte een onbestemd stukje grasland en begon heen en weer te lopen, tot er na een minuut of twintig een kaarsrecht paadje van platgetrapt gras was ontstaan. Long maakte er wat foto's van, nam vervolgens de eerstvolgende trein terug, en liet het rolletje bij een lokale drogist ontwikkelen.

Het was het startpunt van een eindeloze reeks wandelingen, die hem van de Zuidpool tot Alaska en van de Himalaya tot Australië bracht. Tijdens die tochten maakt hij soms ter plekke kunst in het landschap, door stenen in een cirkel te rollen, of takken tot een rechte lijn te schuiven en die vast te leggen op een foto. Soms is het resultaat van een wandeling louter de sobere omschrijving ervan, in een paar woorden aangebracht op de museummuur. 'Megalithic to subatomic', staat er nu bijvoorbeeld in zwarte kapitalen in De Pont geschreven. Die drie woorden omvatten een wandeling van 603 mijl (970 km) die Long in 2008 maakte gedurende negentien dagen, van de prehistorische menhirs in het Franse Carnac naar de hypermoderne deeltjesversneller in het Zwitserse Cern.



Richard Long: Red Slate Line (1986).
Foto Andreas Terlaak

Hij wandelt nog steeds zoveel als hij kan, zegt Long, al heeft hij inmiddels wel wat last van een stijve rug en versleten knieën. „Er zitten aardig wat kilometers in deze benen", lacht hij. Toch maakt hij met zijn lange, tanige lijf nog een zeer fitte indruk. Gekleed in afritsbroek, bergschoenen, rood T-shirt en een witte bandana is het alsof hij zojuist naar Tilburg is komen lopen.

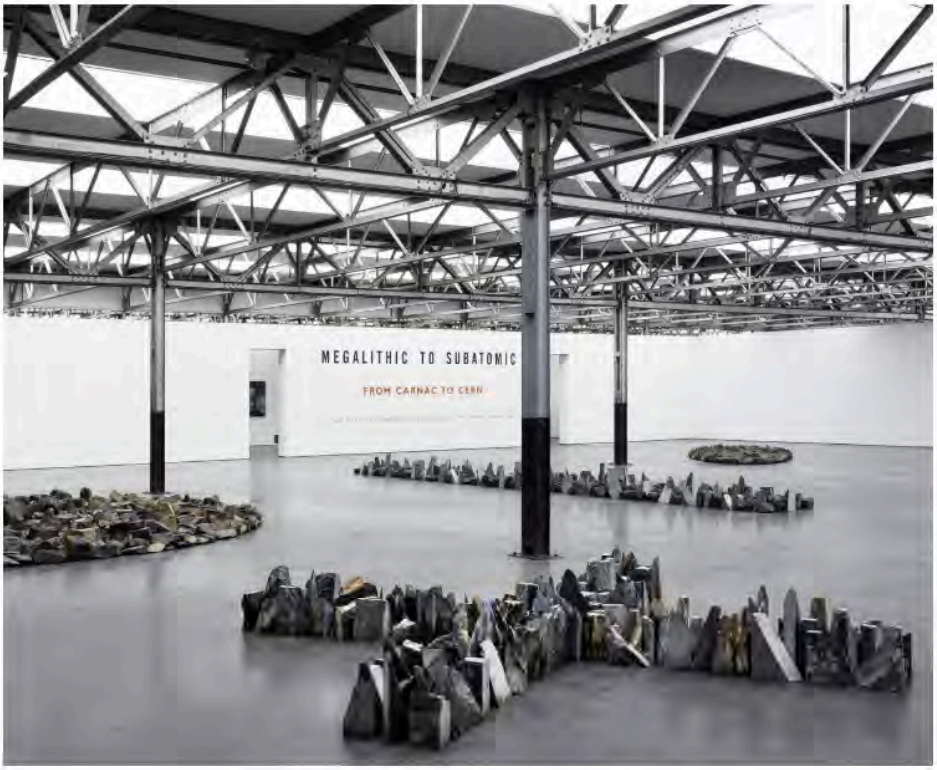
Het atelier uit

„De belangrijkste stap die ik heb gemaakt", zegt Long, terugkijkend op zijn carrière, „is dat ik mij al snel realiseerde dat de wereld buiten het atelier veel interessanter was dan erbinnen. Toen ik nog thuis woonde, bij mijn ouders in Bristol, maakte ik al mijn eerste kunstwerken door in de tuin rechthoeken of cirkels van turf uit de grond te steken. Later, op de St. Martin's School of Art in Londen, bouwde ik met water en zand sculpturen op het dak van de academie. Met *A Line Made by Walking* bracht ik het idee van afstand in een kunstwerk. En tijd, dat ik als de vierde dimensie beschouw."

Er hing veel in de lucht, in die roerige jaren zestig, vertelt Long. In Europa begonnen de kunstenaars van Arte Povera beelden te maken van gevonden materialen. In Amerika trokken land-artkunstenaars als Robert Smithson en Michael Heizer de woestijn in om kunst te maken. Minimalisten als Robert Morris en Carl Andre bouwden hun geometrische sculpturen zonder sokkel, direct op de museumvloer. Long snoof dat allemaal op, maar was nooit helemaal in een hokje te stoppen. Zijn werk leende elementen van performancekunst en conceptuele kunst, maar was speelser en poëtischer. Terwijl de Amerikanen met bulldozers geulen groeven in het landschap, plukte Long madeliefjes in een rechte lijn in het

gras. „Ik denk dat *A Line Made by Walking* het ultieme Arte Povera-werk is", zegt Long nu. „Omdat het gaat over iets maken uit niets. Het is heel minimalistisch."

In Londen studeerde Long samen met onder meer de Nederlandse kunstenaar Jan Dibbets en het Britse duo Gilbert & George. „Zij waren de eersten aan wie ik mijn foto's liet zien. Als jonge kunstenaar maak je in de eerste plaats werk voor je medestudenten. Dus zij vormden mijn 'peer group'. Dibbets was heel belangrijk voor me, omdat hij snapte wat ik aan het doen was. Hij was iets ouder, dus hij kende de kunstwereld goed. En hij was al getrouwd, wat hem in onze ogen nogal exotisch maakte."



Zaaloverzicht met werk van Richard Long in De Pont.
Courtesy Richard Long/ Lisson Gallery. Foto Gert-Jan van Rooij

Wat er rond dezelfde tijd in Amerika gebeurde, hield Long niet zo bezig. „Sommige van mijn medestudenten spelden het tijdschrift *Artforum*, maar ik was daar niet in geïnteresseerd." Ook nu nog voelt hij zich niet prettig bij het label van 'land art' dat vaak op zijn werk geplakt wordt. „Land art is echt een Amerikaans fenomeen. Die kunstwerken zijn gemaakt met machines. Je hebt veel geld nodig om al dat land te kunnen kopen. Ik ben een Britse kunstenaar die in de vrije natuur werkt. Dat betekent overigens niet dat mijn werk niet over schaal gaat. Mijn wandelingen kunnen duizend mijl groot zijn - veel groter dus dan die Amerikaanse kunstwerken."

Het grote verschil, zegt Long, is dat hij geen sculpturen maakt voor de eeuwigheid. De plekken waar hij zijn kunst heeft gemaakt, houdt hij voor zichzelf. „Ik ben niet geïnteresseerd in het maken van monumenten. Fotografie geeft mij de vrijheid om kunst te maken in complete eenzaamheid, op de top van een berg of middenin de Sahara."

Steencirkels en muurtjes

Als kind al werd Long vaak door zijn ouders mee uit wandelen genomen. Zijn grootouders woonden aan de rand van het natuurpark Dartmoor, een gebied vol steencirkels en megalieten. Het kale, rotsige landschap, waar het vee omheind wordt door muurtjes van gestapelde stenen, heeft hem diep beïnvloed.

„Die muurtjes zijn deel van mijn cultuur, het Engelse landschap is mijn thuislandschap. Ik keer vaak terug naar landschappen die daarop lijken, zoals de Schotse hooglanden of de stenige kust in het westen van Ierland. Je zult op mijn foto's niet veel bomen aantreffen. Een paar jaar geleden ben ik voor het eerst naar de Amazone gereisd om daar een cirkel van bladeren te maken. Tot dan toe was ik nog nooit in de jungle geweest."

Nog altijd is de omgeving van Bristol zijn voornaamste werkterrein. Long wijst op de tekst aan de muur achter hem, die twee wandelingen uit 1996 omschrijft: 'A walk of 24 hours: 82 miles' en 'A walk of 24 miles in 82 hours'. „Beide heb ik dichtbij huis gemaakt, over Engelse 'country lanes'. Het idee van tijd was in dit werk het uitgangspunt. Bij de eerste wandeling moest ik bijna non-stop lopen, en kon ik alleen stoppen om te eten en te plassen. De andere was juist een heel rustige wandeling."

Herinnert hij zich het afzien en de blaren, nu hij die woorden terugleest? „Natuurlijk, ik draag een stukje van al die wandelingen in me mee. Maar mijn werk draait niet om de herinnering. Ik ben geen toerist of schrijver. Mijn werk is nooit anekdotisch. Het onderwerp van mijn kunst is dat wat je ziet: een lijn van stenen in de Himalaya bijvoorbeeld. Als toeschouwer moet je de ervaringen er zelf maar bij bedenken: dat ik echt die berg op ben geklommen, totdat ik de juiste gletsjer had gevonden."

Kompas en kaart

Hij is nog steeds een 'oldskool' wandelaar, vertelt Long. Aan Google maps of moderne satellietapparatuur heeft hij geen boodschap. Hij wandelt nog gewoon met een kompas en kaarten van papier. Hij heeft geen oordopjes in met muziek, want dat leidt alleen maar af. „Ik houd ervan om in het hier en nu te zijn." Ook zijn 35mm-spiegelreflexcamera is nog analoog. „De vraag is hoe lang ik dat nog kan volhouden. De rolletjes zijn steeds moeilijker te krijgen, en het afdrukken op fotopapier wordt ook steeds lastiger."

Na een halve eeuw wandelen weet Long hoe het is om in de natuur te overleven. „Ik kan voor mezelf zorgen ja”, lacht hij. „Het is een geweldig genot dat ik dat op mijn leeftijd nog steeds kan doen. Ik houd van de wildernis, van drinken uit de rivier en slapen onder de sterren. Om iedere avond op een andere plek te overnachten en nooit te weten waar je die dag zal eindigen. Mijn werk komt echt voort uit mijn liefde voor wandelen en kamperen. Daar wilde ik kunst van maken.”

Hij wilde iets origineels doen, zegt Long: „Ideeën in de wereld brengen waar niemand eerder aan gedacht had. Zoals wandelen van de ene regenbui naar de andere. Of Dartmoor doorkruisen in een rechte lijn, dwars door beken en over muurtjes heen. Ik vind het nog steeds een opwindend idee, dat ik waarschijnlijk de eerste en de enige in de wereld ben die dat ooit heeft gedaan.”

Judith Benhamou Huet
11 February 2019

Judith Benhamou-Huet reports

Richard Long. The contemporary art legend answers six questions at one minute each. Walking in nature perceived as art.

Environmentalism

There was a time when **environmentalism** wasn't really talked about, except in relation to a few dishevelled and clearsighted hippies sporting yellow badges with the slogan "**Nuclear Power? No Thanks**".

Richard Long

There was a time when housewives didn't worry about the **oceans**, unless it involved what bikini to wear to the beach, whilst dreaming of a nice vacuum cleaner and a bigger fridge.

Accumulations

There was a time when artists, from **Warhol to Arman**, worked with **accumulations of consumer items** to tell the story of a **flourishing economy**.

Richard Long, Bordeaux

Embracing nature

This was the late 1960s, and meanwhile **a slim man with deep blue eyes** and bushy eyebrows was thinking purely about **walking and contemplating**, we could even say embracing nature. Like a sort of modern-day **Jean-Jacques Rousseau**, this man, **Richard Long**, transforms his **peregrinations into works of art**.

Walking as art

Richard Long, Bordeaux

In 2000 he would say: "My intention was **to make a new art** which was also a new way of walking: **walking as art**. Each walk followed the itinerary I had determined, which was precise, unique, and for a specific reason, different from other categories of walking like travel, for example. **Each walk**, although by definition non-conceptual, i**mplemented a particular idea**."

Natural elements

Richard Long , Jaipur

On his walks, **Richard Long** might **gather natural elements** that he transforms into a **trace-work of art**.

No Land Art

Richard Long, Jaipur

Likewise when he reaches his destination. **Don't** say that he practices **Land Art**; he sees **Land Art** as an **American phenomenon** linked to **monumentality**.

There is a **natural power** within his work which resembles **total harmony** or a kind of **spirituality.**

You have to experience it to understand it. The German fashion photographer **Peter Lindbergh** recently said that he would never look at a wall in the same way after seeing **Richard Long's wall** made from earth and clay.

In France, his monument (not sure if he'd like us to use that word) can be viewed as a permanent fixture on the top floor of the **CAPC in Bordeaux.**

Richard Long, Jaipur

Richard Long, Jaipur

Sculpture Park

I met him at **Cochin** in India while he was on his way back from **Jaipur,** where he'd created an installation as part of the **Madhavendra Palace Sculpture Park**, curated by **Peter Nagy**.

Richard Long is **not** an **easy** man to approach.

He is someone who **likes to say no**.

I met him, we then saw each other again and spent a long time admiring a fabulous video installation by **William Kentridge** (see the report on the Kochi Biennale).

6 answers in 1minute

Afterwards the artist, who likes to take his time, played the game of six questions at one minute each.
Richard Long, free spirit.

You have just finished a project in Jaipur. Could you tell us about it?

You were talking about green art before everybody else. Now all artists are talking about nature. What do you think of that?

theguardian.com
11 May 2018

The Guardian

Richard Long

Richard Long review – modern primitive sees the cosmos reflected in mud

★★★★☆

Lisson Gallery, London

The wandering artist's perennial walks have led him to contemplate sun, moon and stars with the devoted awe of mankind's early ancestors

Jonathan Jones

Fri 11 May 2018 03.00 EDT

▲ Miraculous ... Gravity Crescent, 2018, painted in Avon mud, on show at Richard Long's exhibition Circle to Circle. Photograph: © Richard Long; Courtesy Lisson Gallery

Mud is not a promising medium to draw with. It is dull, thick, unpromising stuff. A muddy drawing sounds like a vague and boring one. Miraculously, however – or maybe just because he's spent 50 years making art in and of the land – Richard Long's huge new mud drawing Gravity Crescent is hypnotic, full of complex 3D curves that snare the eye.

It looks as if eels are nesting in the wall. They writhe and wriggle, each tubular body created by a swerve of Long's mud-stick. The raw wet earth with which he created this towering work, on a pristine white wall in London's Lisson Gallery, comes from the river Avon, so perhaps the material is haunted by the river's flashing, silver-scaled creatures. His muddy swirls mass in an engrossing swarm. The flow and life of the river seems caught in this whirlpool of mud.

▲ Untitled, 2018, clay painted on linen. Photograph: Richard Long, courtesy Lisson Gallery

Gravity Crescent forms part of a vast unfinished circle. Below one section, muddy drips plummet like raindrops. The filled-in segment is crescent-shaped. Is it a croissant? Is it a piece of cake? No, it is the waxing moon. And beneath it, a stone circle fills the floor. It is a perfect disc, made simply by arranging radiating lines of rocks.

Once again, Long's feeling for nature lets him do something artistically magical. The stones are all flints. Their glistening white surfaces shine brightly, set off by flecks of black, to create a dazzling circle of light. It is the sun. Long's installation is a cosmic picture of the two great discs in the sky. It is as if the megalithic builders of the stone age have set up shop at one of London's top commercial galleries.

Simple as it is, this astronomical installation sums up Long's life in art. In 1967, when the consumer society was happily pumping out plastic and napalming nature, this young artist made a line across a field in England's West Country by repeatedly walking backwards and forwards. It survives only as a photograph. It was no more intrusive in the landscape than the tracks badgers make.

Ever since, Long has been walking the world, making and photographing ephemeral images. A photo here shows a circle he created in 2016 on a walk by the Amazon. All he did was press down the leaves of a plant to shape a circle on the ground. The rubbery leaves would have bounced back by the time he got his picture printed.

▲ Richard Long's A Circle in the Amazon, Brazil, 2016. Photograph: Jack Hems/Richard Long, courtesy Lisson Gallery

What we see in this concentrated exhibition is the fruit of all those decades of meditative walks through great natural spaces. Long has clearly been musing on the lights in the sky. Like an early human, who has no idea that the sun is a star orbited by the Earth or that the moon is our satellite, he marvels at the magic discs that illuminate his journeys. Two wall texts summarise walks he made by the light of moon and sun. In one, he measures his paces from moonset to sunrise, from sunrise to moonset.

This modern primitive creates art in the same spirit that inspired our ancestors to lug bluestones from Wales to build Stonehenge which, like the works here, has the sun and moon in its sights - and, like Long's circles, is precise in its geometry.

Yet Long would not dream of creating anything as intrusively permanent as Stonehenge. He treads lightly in the landscape. As we watch the seasons getting confused, the Earth's rhythms lost, the seas warming, he has a vision of rebalancing humanity and nature. Half an hour with his work in the middle of a riotous city is like lying in a meadow staring at the sky. Time slips and slows. The sound of a river patters nearby. Birds sing. The old stones warm in the sun.

Richard Long not only shows you nature, he makes you feel part of it again. It is worth taking a walk with him.

Richard Long: Circle to Circle is at Lisson Gallery, London, until 23 June.

bbc.co.uk
10 May 2018

BBC ARTS

I walk the line: How Richard Long turns epic journeys into art

10 May 2018

Land artist Richard Long is famous for his walks which challenge conventional notions of what art ought to be. Ahead of his Circle to Circle exhibition WIILLIAM COOK meets the artist who once walked 240 miles in eight days looking for places for sculptures.

Full Moon Circle land sculpture by Richard Long | Great Estates / Alamy Stock Photo

In London's Lisson Gallery, Richard Long is installing his latest show, Circle to Circle. Gaunt and sinuous, with the wild eyes and weather-beaten face of an Old Testament prophet, he looks more like an explorer than an artist – a yachtsman or a mountaineer. This is no surprise, for Long is unlike any other artist. His timeless artworks are byproducts of his epic journeys – journeys which challenge conventional notions of what art ought to be.

Circles have always been central to Long's elemental work. "I can make a circle of words, I can make a circle of stones, I can make a circle of mud with my hands on a wall, I can walk in a circle for one hundred miles," he said, thirty years ago.

> "I can walk in a circle for one hundred miles."
>
> *Richard Long*

It's not a bad summary of his career. He's making a stone circle here, and a mud circle, but his seminal artworks are his mammoth walks, which often leave no record save for a **line of text** on a gallery wall. "From circle to circle, from space to earth, a continuous walk of 39 miles from a full moonrise to the sunrise," reads the writing on this wall.

Richard Long Installation image: Circle to Circle, Lisson Gallery (11 May-23 June) | © Richard Long, courtesy of Lisson Gallery

Painting with mud

Richard Long prepares for his exhibition Circle to Circle at Lisson Gallery
The English artist creates a crescent mud work directly onto the gallery wall.

Richard Long was born in 1945, in Bristol. He was artistic from an early age ("I was always painting and drawing") but his early wanderings were just as formative – up on the Downs, above the city, and along the River Avon.

> "That was the biggest break I had in my whole life, getting thrown out of Bristol."
>
> *Richard Long*

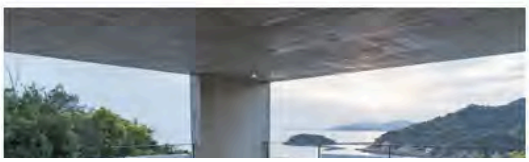
"That was my childhood playground," he says. "It was a great place to grow up." He loved making mud pies as a toddler. He still works with mud today. He still lives in Bristol. The Downs and the Avon are still pivotal.

He's been to Alaska and Antarctica, to the Andes and the Himalayas, but his adventures can just as easily begin outside his front door. "My work operates on all different scales, from a fingerprint to a thousand miles."

Richard Long | Christopher Jones / Alamy Stock Photo

Long went to art school in Bristol but, incredibly, he was kicked out.

"I loved art school – in the second year I got the painting prize and in the third year they threw me out," he says, cheerfully. "I was very shocked that I was thrown out, because it came out of the blue. I was very precocious – maybe I was being too precocious."



Yet it turned out to be the making of him. "That was the biggest break I had in my whole life, getting thrown out of Bristol, because it meant I went to London," he says.

He went to St Martin's School of Art, where he enrolled on the groundbreaking sculpture course led by the innovative art teacher Frank Martin.

"He had an amazing nose for art." Students were free to do whatever they wanted. It was the perfect place for Long to thrive. On his first day, he met George Passmore, soon to become one half of Gilbert & George. "It was like going to school with Oscar Wilde," he recalls.

A work he made at art school, **A Line Made by Walking**, sums up his attitude to art, and nature. It's exactly as it sounds. He found a meadow and walked up and down, in a straight line, and took a photograph of the faint line he'd left behind.

It was a good photo but it wasn't a great photo. The photo wasn't the artwork. Nor was the line he'd made, which wouldn't last. The artwork was the walking. This was a landmark in conceptual art.

> "The photo wasn't the artwork. Nor was the line he'd made, which wouldn't last. The artwork was the walking.

"I'm not there just to take photographs," he explains. "I like to move stones around, carry stones in my pocket, make circles, make lines..."

Within a year of leaving college, Long had solo shows in Paris, Milan, New York and Düsseldorf ("I had to leave England to find the art world that was interested in my work"). Since then he's had one man shows in the world's greatest galleries (the Pompidou, the Guggenheim, MoMA, The Tate…) but his work is so pure and simple, neither money nor fame can spoil it.

He's been doing the same thing for fifty years – making lines by walking, leaving a few traces along the way. He speaks to the child in all of us, collecting shells and pebbles, building sandcastles on the beach.

His art doesn't try to dominate the landscape. It's not weighed down by pride or vanity. "There's lots of works that you don't know about because I haven't chosen to show you," he laughs. "In all my work you're just seeing the tip of the iceberg."

Some of his sculptures are in such remote places that nobody will ever see them. A lot of his other sculptures will simply fade away. "If I'm on a walk that's taken me near an old work I might go and check it out. Quite often, they've completely disappeared."

In Circle in the Amazon, Brazil (2016) Long arranged palm leaves into a circular mound. Richard Long installation image: Circle to Circle | Richard Long, courtesy of Lisson Gallery

And after all these years, his passion for walking remains. "It takes me into beautiful

Full Moon Stone Circle by Richard Long at Benesse Museum, Japan | Education Images / UIG via Getty

Richard Long's sculpture A Line in Norfolk at Houghton Hall | Stuart Aylmer / Alamy Stock Photo

Richard Long's sculpture MacDuff's Circle covered by snow | Andy Catlin / Alamy Stock Photo

More on Richard Long

And after all these years, his passion for walking remains. "It takes me into beautiful landscapes, it takes me into fantastic wildernesses, it gives me freedom, independence." A few years ago he walked 240 miles in eight days, from Cornwall to Oxfordshire (pretty good going for an OAP) but it's not an endurance test – it's about finding places to make sculpture in. "Whatever the place, the place comes first, and it tells me what I should do."

What if he went to these places by helicopter? "It wouldn't be the same. It's important that I find the places I make my sculptures in by walking. I'm embedded in the landscape by walking through it. They're stopping places on the journey, and the journey is by walking. I don't foresee the places where I'm going to make sculptures. I come across them by chance."

His work seems avant-garde, but it has far more in common with the atavistic art of so-called primitive societies – the religious monuments of nomads and hunter-gatherers. There's a powerful element of ritual and pilgrimage in his art.

"Walking is embedded in the whole of human history – people walked out of Africa on foot to colonise the world," he says. "I'm just putting something new on all the other traditions of walking that have happened before."

Circle to Circle is at the Lisson Gallery, London from 11 May to 23 June 2018.

More on Richard Long

Sculpture at Houghton Hall

The artist's journeys on foot around the world served as inspiration for the abstract sculptures.

A Line Made by Walking

Richard Long discusses his original piece of land art, made in a meadow outside London.

Richard Long on Omnibus

Richard Baker introduces a short film celebrating Richard Long, showing him at work on Dartmoor.

Financial Times Weekend
5 May 2018

FINANCIAL TIMES

Critics' choice

Life&Arts

Visual arts Jackie Wullschlager

Richard Long: Circle to Circle
Lisson Gallery, London

"If the idea is good, the beauty looks after itself". Richard Long's entire career demonstrates the truth of his dictum, never more so than with his use of the circle as form, image, concept. In 1966 Long made "Turf Circle", sections of soil removed from his Bristol neighbour's garden, then replaced as a circular bed. He has since adapted the circular motif worldwide, from "Paddy-Field Chaff Circle", a pattern of radial lines created on Warli tribal land in the Maharashtra district, India, to the stunning flint/slate piece "North South East West" installed at Houghton Hall last year.

Centrepiece of Lisson's show celebrating Long's circles in different media is the new floor sculpture "Flint Wheel", constructed from split Norfolk flint as a starburst of radiating stones, alternating between chalky white exteriors and the flint's darker core. On the wall above is his only tondo mud work, "360° Crescent", a round form bisected by broad gestural marks tracing Long's movements applying viscous, splashy, dripping mud.

The photographs "Circle in the Amazon, Brazil" record Long's arrangement of palm leaves in a mound, an installation leaving the lightest imprint in the jungle, while the text piece "From Circle to Circle From Space to Earth" commemorates a 39-mile night walk from full moonrise to sunrise.

Detail from 'A Circle in the Amazon, Brazil' (2016) by Richard Long

Referencing the circle as symbol, belief, architectural structure (Stonehenge, the Colosseum), Long plays throughout on passages from materialisation to dematerialisation: shaping, placing, walking, remembering. "I can make a circle of words, I can make a circle of stones, I can make a circle of mud with my hands on a wall, I can walk in a circle for one hundred miles", he says. "It is a completely adaptable image and form and system."

lissongallery.com, May 11-June 23

Modern Painters
May 2018

BLOUIN modernpainters
ART / ARCHITECTURE / DESIGN / PERFORMANCE / FILM
MAY 2018

Richard Long's "North South East West," 2017. Exhibited as part of 'Earth sky' at Houghton Hall, Norfolk, 30 April – 26 October 2017

LONDON

Richard Long's 'Circle to Circle' at Lisson

Richard Long's latest exhibition in London is loosely themed around different uses of the circular motif in his work. In 1988, the artist praised the form: "I can make a circle of words, I can make a circle of stones, I can make a circle of mud with my hands on a wall, I can walk in a circle for one hundred miles. It is a completely adaptable image and form and system."

The focus of this show, on view at Lisson's London gallery through June 23, is a large new floor-based stone circle "Flint Wheel," 2018. It has been constructed from knapped or split Norfolk flint. The stones radiate out from a central nexus like spokes on a wheel each alternating in tone from chalky white exterior to each flint's darker core. Says the gallery: "Just as Long's work obliquely references ancient symbols, beliefs and superstitions surrounding sacred sites and stone circles, it also reflects the occurrence of shapes and forms in nature, at both the macro- and the microscopic level. In a recent photographic work, "Circle in the Amazon, Brazil," 2016, Long arranged palm leaves into a circular mound, leaving only a gentle imprint in the chaotic fabric of the jungle."

More information: https://www.lissongallery.com/

The Telegraph, Luxury
22 April 2017

The Telegraph

Luxury Art

Earthly delights: Richard Long unveils a series of art installations at Houghton Hall

Richard Long in the Stone Hall at Houghton Hall CREDIT: MARK C O'FLAHERTY

The red hula hoop resting in a corner of the capacious entrance to Houghton Hall is more than a little incongruous. The grandest space at one of the grandest homes in the country, the Stone Hall has a swirling 18th-century stucco ceiling and a black-and-white tiled floor that conjures images of sweeping petticoats.

This profoundly stately home in Norfolk was built as the chief residence of Sir Robert Walpole – the de facto first prime minister of Great Britain – and is periodically open to the public, but it is also a family home for David Rocksavage, the 7th Marquess of Cholmondeley (pronounced 'Chumley'), his wife, Rose, a former model, and their children (seven-year-old twins Alexander and Oliver, and baby Iris, who counts Kate Moss as a godmother).

The Marquess of Cholmondeley CREDIT: MARK C O'FLAHERTY

Rocksavage, 56, inherited an estimated fortune of £118 million, and Houghton Hall, at the age of 29 and was dubbed "the greatest catch in England". Before he married Rose (23 years his junior) at Chelsea Old Town Hall in 2009, he dated a string of beautiful women including the French actress Isabelle Adjani and heiress Sabrina Guinness. Now a family man, he lets his boys roam through the great house that it has become his responsibility to maintain and keep vital.

"I used to come here during my grandmother's time when I was my children's age, and she was very strict," Rocksavage recalls. "Our children get to run around here. There isn't much that's fragile."

The house was built for Britain's first prime minister, Sir Robert Walpole, between 1722 and 1735. CREDIT: MARK C O'FLAHERTY

The sturdy splendour of the Stone Hall currently has even more to draw the eye. Richard Long, the British land artist, has installed a work beneath the chandelier as part of his summer show at Houghton, Earth Sky. This particular piece stops you in your tracks more than the others – it's a black, white and grey circle of rocks, formatted as compass coordinates. It brings the wild irregularity of nature inside, but ordered perfectly, as if by magic. "I will certainly miss this piece when it's gone," says Rocksavage. "It's an incredible architectural intervention."

It's also strangely and beautifully pagan. Long, 71, who usually loathes discussion of his work, appreciates the description. "Yes!" he enthuses. "Pagan. That's a good word to use. It is... primitive, and all to do with energy. I feel very close to the energy of rock and roll, for example. There's a huge amount of pagan energy in certain music – sexual energy also. It's all the same thing."

Richard Long's work, A Line in Norfolk, 2016, in the grounds of Houghton Hall CREDIT: MARK C O'FLAHERTY

Long has created a similarly remarkable series of stone and slate pieces – spirals, crosses and lines – in the grounds of the house. Much of the work is informed by his obsession with walking; for Long, a walk can be the greatest and most immersive "art" of all, and he often ritualistically places a stone by the roadside at the same spot during his daily walks, blurring the edges between nature and what is man-made.

The relationship between Rocksavage and Long is fascinating to observe. There are obvious parallels with the historical aristocratic patronage of the arts, and Rocksavage is as much a curator as a family man at Houghton. The house has always had a phenomenal art collection, and one of his first missions as owner was to initiate an exhibition of the Old Masters that had been in the Walpole family collection before their sale to Catherine the Great of Russia in 1779. After several years of negotiations, 70 of the 204 canvases made the journey home in 2013.

The White Drawing Room walls are covered in woven silk. Much of the original furniture and fabrics are still in place. CREDIT: MARK C FLAHERTY

"We had six times our usual visitor numbers for that show," he recalls. "It was very touching for me, as I know the house so well, and had always imagined what it would be like with the paintings back in place."

Rocksavage's personal tastes in art are decidedly contemporary; hence the James Turrell show in 2015 – all coloured lights and sensation – and the Rachel Whiteread concrete ghost shed that lurks in a clearing in the grounds. "We have an arts trust now," he says, "so what we do will be protected in the future. These projects are long-term."

The visual arts in general are a serious business to Rocksavage. He has directed films (an adaptation of Truman Capote's Other Voices, Other Rooms is among his accomplishments) and counts Johnny Depp and Mick Jagger as friends.

Long's Full Moon Circle, 2003 CREDIT: MARK C O'FLAHERTY

While most of the Richard Long pieces will disappear at the end of October, the artist's 2003 work Full Moon Circle will stay. It is part of a growing number of permanent commissions and purchases that started with Turrell's Seldom Seen in 2002 – one of his Skyspace structures that isolate your view of the sky to make it appear an unusual colour.

Some may see these sculptures, including Phillip King's brightly coloured Dunstable Reel (which the twins love to clamber across and play around) as being at odds with a classic Palladian mansion, but they are a conceptual fit. "The idea of a folly is very much in the 18th-century tradition," explains Rocksavage. "We found maps from 1720 that documented certain architectural follies around the grounds, which have disappeared. So really, this is about bringing them back."

The Marquess and Marchioness of Cholmondeley greet the Duck and Duchess of Cambridge at a gala dinner, held at Houghton in aid of the charity East Anglia's Children's Hospices, in June 2016 CREDIT: STEPHEN POND / GETTY IMAGES

The twins took great delight in helping Long create some of the new work. "They really like him," says Rocksavage. "We all got to help him on the pieces on the lawn, because he couldn't lay every stone himself on a 60-metre line. It was fun. The boys loved being involved. And then they wanted to do their own versions. 'Look, we've made our own little Richard Longs,' they said, which amused Richard immensely. It's also been great watching him work. He's sort of ageless, the way he bends and moves the stones."

For Rocksavage and his family, Houghton Hall is very much home. But, he says, his children are well aware that this isn't how most people live, even in their social circle (the Duke and Duchess of Cambridge's Norfolk home is four miles away). "And we have private areas and public areas," he explains, as he walks me through a long dark entrance hall littered with scooters, children's toys and walking boots, which is one of the former.

It leads to an Aga-warmed kitchen, full of books and games and newspapers, that feels very much the heart of the private home. "We don't really use the rooms upstairs if the house is closed, except to show friends," Rocksavage explains. "Although we use the Stone Hall sometimes, for concerts." Concerts and, just maybe, a little hula-hooping.

Earth Sky runs from 30 April to 26 October; Houghtonhall.com

The Guardian
16 April 2017

theguardian

Richard Long

Richard Long: 'I'm proud of being the first person to cross Dartmoor in a straight line'

He has walked the Earth, recording his traces and turning them into mysterious works of land art. Now 71, with a new show in Norfolk, art's great hiker talks about cloud-chasing in France, sculpting on Kilimanjaro – and the paths that lie ahead

Patrick Barkham
@patrick_barkham

Sunday 16 April 2017 15.00 BST

Long ... still able to hoof a tent 30 miles and camp wild. Photograph: Si Barber for the Guardian

Sixteen enormous tree stumps, their roots turned towards the sky, stand in a circle in a country park. The mist and deer gather around. This magical-looking sculpture is placed where the Norfolk hamlet of Houghton once stood, until Sir Robert Walpole, Britain's first prime minister, moved the vista-spoiling villagers further from his lavish new Palladian mansion.

Houghton Hall is a venerable stately home these days, but White Deer Circle, as this work is called, is new – created by Richard Long for an exhibition that, unusually for this visionary land artist, is being held outdoors. His stump circle is an uncanny echo of a Seahenge, an ancient wooden circle discovered on a beach 12 miles away. Amazingly, Long, who this year marks 50 years of showing his walking-inspired work, has never heard of the bronze age relic. Perhaps Long is listening to the landscape more closely than most, though, for he is unsurprised by such serendipity.

A hamlet once stood here ... White Deer Circle, 2016. Photograph: Pete Huggins

"All these coincidences are part of the natural way of things, aren't they?" says the artist, whose minimal, modernist landscape works first disrupted pop art in 1967, when he was still a student at St Martin's in London. He took a train from Waterloo, found an ordinary country field and walked up and down it, then took a photograph of his traces and exhibited it under the title A Line Made by Walking.

"When I made my straight line, I didn't know about the other straight lines – the famous Nazca Lines in Peru, or Alfred Watkins, who wrote The Old Straight Track." It was Watkins who coined the term ley lines. "We as humans come to the same visual coincidences through different cultures and eras and histories. That's all interesting."

We meet in a grand room at Houghton Hall, where Long is putting the finishing touches to his show, Earth Sky. Despite trekking to the four corners of the globe, recording his journeys and the traces he leaves behind, he's found the time to put on 70 exhibitions this century alone.

Does he do more than he should? "Probably." What's driving him? "I would like to do fewer shows but more work. I'd like to do more walks. That's my real love. So I get a bit frustrated if too much of my time is taken up with admin. But I'm not complaining. I've had a very lucky life. In some ways, I've had a very poetic life – in charge of my own destiny, doing what I want, and being paid for it, and people appreciating it."

Houghton Cross, 2016. Photograph: Pete Huggins

Long is feted for his heroic treks as well as the ideas that spring from them. Tall and lean, he's now 71 and keeps fit by cycling. He can still walk 30 miles in a day, tent on back, camping wild. "Often the ideas come after I've started a walk," he says. "I once set out to walk across France from the mouth of the Loire to the Swiss border. It started out completely cloudless and, day after day, was cloudless - and then I thought it was a much better idea to finish the walk when I saw the first cloud. So sometimes circumstances can present a better idea. I like being open to that kind of serendipity and chance. That's at the heart of my work really.'

As a young artist, Long was determined to make his mark. When he sold his first show, he spent the £250 raised on climbing Kilimanjaro, on which he erected a kind of prayer flag. He wrote to the Guardian, but never heard back. "I was very proud of the fact I had probably made the highest sculpture in the world." Was that a young man seeking a challenge? "It was a young man trying to make a work of art that hadn't been done before."

Since then, his work - from photographing the outline made by his sleeping body in the rain to more enduring circles or lines in stone - has shunned the monumental, though it is not completely ephemeral either. "I'm not interested in making monuments, but the other point of view is to leave absolutely no mark - take only photographs and leave only footprints. There's quite interesting territory between those two positions - like moving stones around, making works which disappear, or making water marks - many ways of being artists in a landscape."

'There are many ways of being an artist in a landscape' ... A Line in Norfolk, 2016. Photograph: Pete Huggins

I wonder if he considers his legacy at this stage in his career. "I happen to know that my circle near the Burren in Ireland is still more or less as it was when I made it in 1975, but that's not to say I want people to know where it is. It's never my intention to make a famous site for people to visit. My work is much more about the spirit of making marks of passage."

Besides, a good idea endures. "Ideas can last for ever," he says. "I'm one of the artists who realised a journey - from a straight path in the grass to a 1,000-mile walk - could be a work of art." But he does not seek to influence others. "I have no desire to leave my mark in that way because what I do is only what interests me. I followed my nature and instincts and desires when I was a young artist - and I think young artists should do the same."

While an outdoor exhibition is not quite new for Long, it is a departure from his more familiar terrain and materials: it has not begun with a walk, and nor is he using his favourite River Avon mud. There's some Cornish slate (which he loves) but it's mixed with Norfolk flint, while another piece is made from gorgeous local ginger-coloured carrstone. Then there are his "mud paintings" in a kind of limewash, reflecting the chalkiness of this landscape.

Despite being so well-travelled, Long has based himself in Bristol his whole life. Does he find flatter, drier and bleaker East Anglia rather alien? "Alien is a bit strong. Bigger skies, colder wind - it's another type of English landscape and I'm moved by it, of course I am, but Dartmoor and the Somerset Levels, the Quantocks, the Cotswolds - that's my heart landscape."

He's walked every piece of Dartmoor, but avoids pilgrim routes and old ways. "I made a conscious decision that there's so many ways to walk in new ways or original ways. I was quite proud of the fact that no one has walked across Dartmoor in a straight line before."

Long's work appears highly pertinent in an era of ecological crisis, but it isn't overtly political. "Green politics wasn't really invented when I started. My work comes out of wanting to make art in new ways. The world outside the studio represented a fantastically colossal opportunity to engage with the physical world. It was my interest in making new art that took me into the landscape. I'm not a political animal. I'm an artist animal. But obviously my work does celebrate nature and the wonderful landscapes that cover most of the planet."

Full Moon Circle, 2003. Photograph: Si Barber for the Guardian

Long really comes alive when we step outside, walking briskly over to his new creations. "It's a bit incredible really, isn't it, to get away with it?" he laughs as we look upon his Cornish slate exploding out of Houghton Hall's croquet lawn. He placed all the slates himself. "I don't have a factory where people fabricate it for me. That's not a value judgment, it's just my preference. One reason to be an artist is the pleasure of making."

Similarly, walking gives him enormous pleasure. Outside, in the open air, he seems to uncoil his tall frame - and any tension. Does he ever struggle on a walk? He talks about getting stranded in the snow. What about mentally? "No, most of the mental hard times in my life have been in domestic [situations] or cities. I have a sense of wellbeing by being out in the wilderness. It's a kind of therapy. It's healing."

Earth Sky: Richard Long is at Houghton Hall, Norfolk, 30 April to 26 October.

The Times
14 March 2015

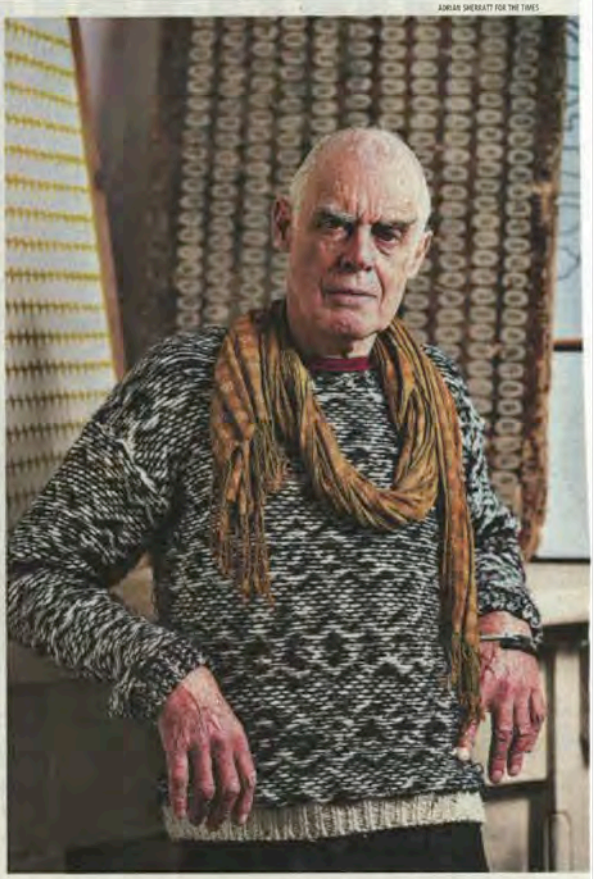
THE TIMES

exhibition

A brilliant career built from mud,

Richard Long's sculptures in wild places have won huge acclaim but Nancy Durrant meets an artist diffident about his success

COURTESY OF RICHARD LONG



ADRIAN SHERRATT FOR THE TIMES

GROUNDED Richard Long at home in Bristol; above, his works Pirana-Andes and Pampas Dreaming on show in Buenos Aires last year

It's hard to think of many artists other than Richard Long who have so consistently refused to chase acclaim, and so consistently had it lavished on them anyway. He represented Britain at the Venice Biennale in 1976 at the age of 31, has exhibited prolifically and internationally, including a big retrospective at Tate Modern in 2009 — the same year that he was awarded the Praemium Imperiale prize for sculpture in Japan — and of course he won the Turner Prize as far back as 1989. Not that he's bothered: "I'm not one of these artists whose whole career was transformed by winning the prize, like has happened to some artists," he says.

Long doesn't much like doing interviews; he doesn't think he's good at them. That's not really his job, I say, and in any case he isn't tricky, exactly, more gently taciturn, peering warily at me from beneath his famously luxuriant eyebrows. We are meeting because he is preparing for a new show to be held in the summer at the Arnolfini gallery in Bristol — a homecoming for the artist, who has always been based in the West Country — and because next week he'll accept another award, as the Whitechapel Gallery's Art Icon, an honour about which he is typically cool. Prizes, he says, are nice to get of course, but, "I've been lucky, I've been successful, people have understood my work and I've had great support ever since I was a very young artist."

You know Long, of course, by his art made by walking. The walks are the work. There are two kinds: the road walk, where distance or the beginning and end are important, such as *A Five Day Walk* or *A 294-Mile Walk from Land's End to Bristol*, and the wilderness walk, such as *Heaven and Earth*, a 15-day walk in the Three Sisters wilderness, Oregon, in 2001. ("I take a heavier tent," he says, when I ask about the difference.) He constructs his sculptures — cairns, stone circles — along the way and then documents them either by photography or descriptive, yet lyrical, text works. These, as well as sculptures and mud fingerprint drawings on driftwood, will be represented in the Arnolfini show, alongside a new wall piece Long is creating especially for the exhibition using mud from the River Avon.

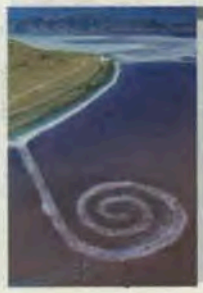
Long's works are instantly recognisable, despite being deliberately constructed with only the most basic elements — stones, sticks, mud — and natural shapes — a line, a circle, a crescent — to eliminate any "artistry" that might distract from their universal appeal. Interventions in the landscape, they may not survive (the elements, or animal activity will eventually do for many). We know them only through the documentation, but their existence, in some far-off place of rugged and special beauty, fires the imagination.

'I'm lucky. People have understood my work and I've had great support'

Born in Bristol in 1945, Long studied at St Martin's in the late 1960s, having "had the good fortune to be thrown out of Bristol", where he was attending the college of art. One of the strengths of his work is its continuity — he had already started making stepping-stone sculptures. "Even when I was still at Bristol, I realised that the world outside the studio was more interesting than what was going on inside the studio." The late British sculptor Anthony Caro was teaching at St Martin's at the time and much has been made of the connection, but, says Long, "It's a myth that I was taught by Caro — I barely had four words with him in the whole time. No one really knew what I was doing. I was up on the roof making ponds and sangars."

It was when Long travelled to Düsseldorf in 1968 to exhibit at the gallery of dealer Konrad Fischer that his art world

Five more land artists



Robert Smithson (1938-73)
Smithson's aim was to place work in the land, rather than on it, and he was interested in natural history, entropy, language, mapping and anthropology. His seminal work, *Spiral Jetty* (left), in Utah, was inspired by the Great Serpent Mound, a pre-Columbian monument in Ohio. He was married to Nancy Holt.

Nancy Holt (1938-2014)
Holt's work deals with the way we perceive time and space. Probably best known for her 1974 *Sun Tunnels* (right) — four tunnels on a 40-acre site in Nevada (purchased specifically for the work) that are aligned with the angles of the rising and setting sun on the days of the solstices.

Andy Goldsworthy (1956-)
Based in Scotland, Goldsworthy (right) grew up in the rolling landscape of West Yorkshire and worked on farms from a young age.

sticks and stones

OSKAR SIRAK, COURTESY OF THE ARTIST, LISSON GALLERY

really opened up. "I met artists who weren't [doing] that Anthony Caro-welded metal-Clement Greenberg house style of St Martin's. It sounds a bit mean but when I went there in '66 it was like a school of mannerism. Caro was trying to encourage one particular way of making sculpture. I think we were the first generation just to ignore all of that and go our own way. They knew that we were serious art students, but what we were up to they didn't quite know — as long as you signed the book every morning and wrote down where you were. Occasionally, I would say 'cycling'." Actually he was on the roof, doing something that was probably really bad for the building. "Yeah. I had almost a ton of water dammed over [the head of sculpture] Frank Martin's office."

The late Sixties was a fertile time to be an artist, he says. "We had a clean slate. Pop art was dead, abstract expressionism was over. It's like music in the Fifties: after Frank Sinatra, then you had rock'n'roll." It's a different matter now, he thinks. "It's much more difficult for young artists to be original in the same way. You can't repeat. Also, it was very easy to go in and out of jobs for a couple of months or so and get enough money to keep doing my own work. Unemployment wasn't a factor then. It's terrible to be an art student now, you have to be in debt to thousands of pounds … You're hooked up to an incredible treadmill. We were just free."

He is, though, gently scathing about the expectations of the new entrants. "Slightly because of the YBAs, young artists see it as a profession, as a way to be rich and famous. In the late Sixties it was like an underground pursuit. Even Gilbert & George — some of their best works were very subversive. So at the time, during the rise of pop culture, walking across Dartmoor in a straight line seemed like a really interesting thing to do."

'In some ways the world is in a terrible state but in another way it's still completely fantastic'

Above, A Circle in Antarctica, 2012; top, Four Ways, 2014

Though his work doesn't really date, the cultural ideals from which it arose have pretty much disappeared, I say. "Yes — I belong to that very idealistic generation that didn't care about money. I was just in love with art or new ideas. I never had that ambition to be an 'artist'. The fact that I came back on the boat from my first show in Düsseldorf with 250 quid in my back pocket was amazing, because I didn't expect it — I was just showing lines of sticks on the floor."

Long has always resisted wading into the environmental debate (though the Arnolfini show is part of the Bristol Green Capital 2015 programme, he doesn't mention this). He only learnt to drive a car five years ago — but that's because he prefers cycling, not through green concerns. "When I started, green politics and environmental activism almost hadn't been invented. It's necessary now to be more aware of it. My view though is that in some ways the world is in a terrible state but in another way it's still completely fantastic and beautiful, so it's a very ambiguous situation."

He has also resisted the idea that he's a romantic, though it's hard to square that with the way that he speaks about the world. Describing a 1969 trip to Kenya to make a sculpture on Kilimanjaro, he says: "I went with my girlfriend with the intention of getting married there on the equator. The plains of east Africa seemed what the world must have been like before it was populated by humans. You could stand on the hilltop and see swamps going into savannah going into mountains. You could see animals; giraffes and warthogs. It was just beautiful, like a garden of Eden."

With his deep relationship to the land, I wonder what he wants to happen to his body after he dies. "I'd like to be buried in an ordinary grave. I quite like the idea of going back into the earth, it seems more natural than going up in smoke." Perhaps a cairn instead of a gravestone? "That's a good idea." What about an eco-coffin? "Oh no, don't worry about that, just chuck me in a hole." He muses that the best way to go would be "to be killed by a wild animal. I'm sure you won't feel any pain if you're eaten by a tiger."

"I don't go to jungles but I had a hairy moment stupidly doing a walking safari in Africa," he says. "We were surrounded by lions, all running towards us and I thought, 'F***, this is it.' We were rooted to the spot. But luckily they were lionesses. We'd just disturbed them, and they just ran around us, but for one, heart-stopping moment, I thought that was it."

It was during one of his trips to Africa, that first trip to Kenya, that *Apollo 11* landed men on the Moon for the first time. "That was an amazing experience," he says. "When you're sleeping in the bush, with the moonlight so bright that you can almost read a newspaper, to know that there are two blokes up there, two humans on this other world, was really a big, strong idea. Imaginatively, historically, culturally, everything." Long has used lunar time in his work, and measured walks by going from one tide to another. "I like the Moon." So if he had the chance to do a walk on the moon, would he take it?

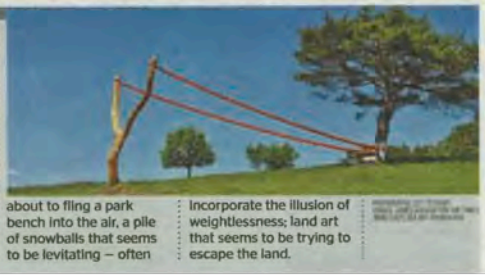
"Probably not. I like the Earth too much."

The Whitechapel Gallery Art Icon gala is on March 19, sponsored by Swarovski. Tickets: 020 7539 3314. Richard Long: The Spike Island Tapes is at Alan Cristea, London WC1, to April 2; *Time and Space* will be at the Arnolfini, Bristol, July 31 to Nov 15

He has said: "A lot of my work is like picking potatoes; you have to get into the rhythm of it." His remit is, he says, to work with nature as a whole, using whatever materials come to hand.

Walter De Maria (1935-2013)
A contemporary of Smithson and Holt, De Maria's most famous work is *The Lightning Field* (left). Made in 1977, this field of 400 stainless steel rods is installed in a grid (1 mile by 1 km) in a remote spot in New Mexico. Refurbished at a cost of $400,000, it is open for visits via the Dia foundation.

Cornelia Konrads (1957-)
Her witty and surprising works — a huge catapult (above right) apparently about to fling a park bench into the air, a pile of snowballs that seems to be levitating — often incorporate the illusion of weightlessness; land art that seems to be trying to escape the land.



Apollo Magazine
March 2015

APOLLO

FEATURE
RICHARD LONG

The Last Amateur

Nearly 50 years ago, Richard Long transformed a simple walk into a radical act. The artist talks to Apollo about mud and mark-making, his new series of prints, and why he can't stop walking

WRITER JON DAY
PORTRAIT JOONEY WOODWARD

Almost 50 years ago, while he was still a student at Central Saint Martin's School of Art, the artist Richard Long (b. 1945) set off to hitchhike home to Bristol. Somewhere in the middle of the Wiltshire countryside he stopped, found a field, and walked up and down in the damp grass. He took a photograph of the resulting track, which he called *A Line Made by Walking* (1967; Fig. 5), and with this simple act broke free from the confines of the gallery, and from the constraints of traditional sculpture.

He has been walking ever since – on moors, up mountains, over deserts and across the frozen glaciers of Antarctica – and you can tell. At 69, Long is lithe and energetic, a looming presence with the slightly weathered air of a country vet. We meet in the basement of the Alan Cristea gallery in London, a far cry from the open spaces in which Long usually makes his work. He's wearing a baggy jumper and a pair of sturdy walking boots, and his watch dangles from his wrist on a makeshift strap made from a piece of string.

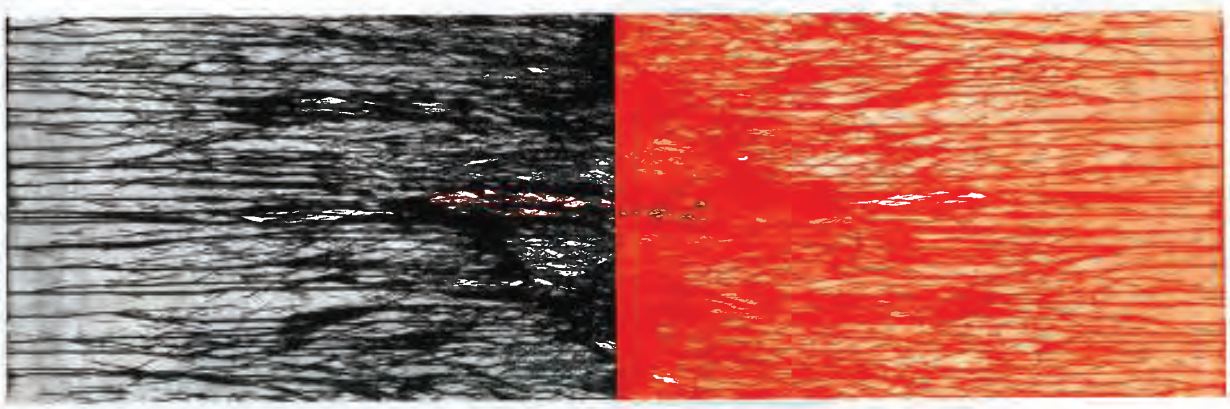
For the gallery he has produced a new series of carborundum relief prints, something of a departure from his usual practice. Like much of his other work they are records of what Long calls the 'cosmic variety' of splashes and flow; records of the forces – time, gravity, gesture – which formed them. Some (*Speed of the Sound of Loneliness; Love Minus Zero/No Limit* [2014; Fig. 2]) have a fractal beauty, the miniscule variations between individual streaks and splashes evoking images of neurons, or aerial photographs of river deltas. Others record the traces of Long's body more directly. *Guitars, Cadillacs* (2014; Fig. 3), a circle of marks, is reminiscent of the mandalas of muddy handprints that Long makes on gallery walls. In *Fingers on Fire* and *Simple Twist of Fate* (both 2014) angular, labyrinthine shapes are laid over finger marks, the fretwork of the hand contrasted with the bold simplicity of one of Long's walking lines.

For most of his career Long has used natural materials to make his works: stones arranged on the floors of galleries or mud applied directly to the walls. In the 1970s he began making sculptures using River Avon mud – still his favoured material – and he's since become something of 'a mud expert'. It's a material he goes into raptures over. 'I did a show recently in Buenos Aires,' he recalls, 'and I got some mud from the delta of the Paraná River and that was absolutely

1 Richard Long (b. 1945) photographed in Bristol, January 2015
Photo: Jooney Woodward

2 *Love Minus Zero/No Limit* 2014
Richard Long
Two-panel carborundum relief, left panel printed in a black/ultramarine blue ink mix, right panel in a vermilion/ruby madder/primrose ink on paper
Overall 121.5×388cm
Courtesy Richard Long and Alan Cristea Gallery London
© Richard Long

3 *Guitars, Cadillacs*, 2014
Richard Long
Two-panel carborundum relief printed in yellow ochre/zinc white/primrose vermilion ink mix on paper
Overall 232×209cm
Courtesy Richard Long and Alan Cristea Gallery London
© Richard Long



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gorgeous. It was really thick, chocolatey, even when it dried it was darker than River Avon mud. I liked that.'

The Cristea prints form a collection Long has called *The Spike Island Tapes*, and they're bigger in scale and more colourful than much of his previous work. Was the colour a way of drawing attention to the fact that these are prints rather than mud works? 'Exactly, yes,' he says. 'Making these has given me the opportunity to use colour which I wouldn't find in natural materials.' The names of the pieces too are significant. They're titled – somewhat whimsically, he suggests – after some of his favourite pieces of music: blues melodies, country and western songs, folk tunes. Music has always played a part in his work (Johnny Cash, Bob Dylan and John Cage have been presiding influences), but for these works, produced at Spike Island, a studio and exhibition space in Bristol, he thought of himself as working like a session musician, in one short, inspired burst. 'It did feel a bit like when musicians hire a studio and lay down some tracks in a few days' he says, 'and the whole album gets recorded in one intense period of time. I think I made them all in two days – but I have to work fast anyway, especially where the splashes are formed by the speed of my hand, the fast gestures.'

The *Spike Island* prints are different from the subtler interventions of his walking works, for which he might arrange stones by the side of the road, or carry water from the end of a river to its source, or walk from one rainstorm to the next and record the journey on a map. 'Leaving a mark. That's central to my work', he says. 'It's just a human mark. With my body, or with my gestures.'

3

'Leaving a mark, that's central to my work'

As well as getting him out of the gallery, one of the attractions of the walking sculptures was that they liberated him from the need to produce objects, leading to a minimalist simplicity that he sees as a product of his time. 'I think that was a characteristic of that generation,' he says. 'Conceptual art did come about, partly, through asking: why fill the world with more junk?'

Much of his work has occupied that fertile territory between an idea and its actualisation, between the act and its record. Often he documents his walking sculptures as maps, prints and photographs, narrating the story of them rather than reproducing the journeys themselves. Many of his walks are recorded only as text works, haiku-like prose poems, and talking to Long is a bit like encountering one of these enigmatic pieces. He doesn't think of the text works as literature but as works of art. 'I always like to steer clear of the word poetry,' he says, 'I just think they're works of art made of words, like a sculpture is an object made of stone. But obviously they are words and sometimes they do tell a story.'

Stories do seem central to his practice – the story of his own body moving through

4 *Turf Circle*, 1966
Richard Long
Photograph and graphite on board, 37.5×32.4cm
Tate Collection
© Richard Long

5 *A Line Made By Walking*, 1966
Richard Long
Gelatin silver print on paper with graphite on board
27×30.5cm
Artists Rooms: National Galleries of Scotland and Tate
Photo: National Galleries of Scotland and Tate
© Richard Long

space and time, the story of the marks he makes as he goes – but he resists over-investing in the idea of art as a form of narrative. 'Well you can read that into it. It's not for me to say,' he smiles. 'I don't have any great grand theories of walking, or of making art into a journey, they just seemed like good ideas at the time.' Nevertheless it is tempting to see all his work as part of a single journey, a continuation of that first line made in the Wiltshire countryside. Was *A Line Made by Walking* the originator of everything that's come since? 'Yes, but it's easy to say that in hindsight,' he says. 'The metaphor is like the stone in the pond: it ripples out. The first sculpture I made was *Turf Circle* [1966; Fig. 4], in my neighbour's garden, so it literally did start on my doorstep and then spread out. One thing leads to another. That's the way it goes, right up until now really.'

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Long was born in 1945 in Bristol. His parents met at a rambling club, and at school he was captain of the cross-country running team. He studied for a time at the West of England College of Art before being thrown out ('too precocious', he says). One thing he did enjoy during this period was the day a week he spent learning etching. At Saint Martin's, where he was a contemporary of Gilbert and George, he was given free reign to do what he liked, as long as he accounted for his time, signing in and out in a ledger by the door. And so he organised walks out of London, went on bicycle rides and made sculptures on the roof of Saint Martin's.

For years he didn't offer interpretations of his work ('until people started misinterpreting it'). Because of its subtlety, his work acts to re-enchant the world, making you read it in a new way. After encountering a work by Long you never quite know if that stone by the side of the road has been left deliberately or is there only by chance. In a sense it doesn't really matter. 'I love that,' he says. 'I love the idea that people might see a work of mine in the landscape, and that they might recognise it as a human mark, but not necessarily as a work of art, let alone a work made by me. So often people find a circle of stones and think it might be a Richard Long. Other people can make my work for me.'

This conceptual purity was born in the 1960s and manifested itself in a rejection of the grandstanding interventions of the American land artists and the overblown fussiness of the postmodernists. 'I suppose I'm drawn to simple, classical, modernist work,' Long says, 'as opposed to wacky, comic, figurative, messy stuff. I am a product of that '60s aesthetic – simple ideas. It was so easy to be original for my generation. It was like a blank canvas we had to work on for a time.' For Long, an idea can be just as beautiful as its realisation, but he doesn't consider himself to be a conceptual artist. 'I love to make my work, whether it's walking 1,000 miles or walking in the Cairngorms, or whether it's making these prints. It's all me, all made by my energy. I love making all the big sculptures, I like hefting all the great lumps of slate around. It's the doing.'

Long was overlooked at home for years. No one quite understood the subtlety of his early work. Back then 'the London art scene was dominated by Anthony Caro, welded

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6 Richard Long's *White Water Line* (1989) installed in the Duveen Galleries at Tate Britain in 2007 © Richard Long

metal, new generation sculpture', he says, 'and they didn't really have eyes to see it.' It was in Europe that he first found recognition, with early shows in Düsseldorf and Turin, and support from artists such as Carl Andre and Lawrence Weiner. Though he still sees himself as an English artist, he's now firmly ensconced as one of our most important and internationally appreciated sculptors. His work has been nominated four times for the Turner Prize, which he won in 1989, for a body of work including *White Water Line* (Fig. 6). In 2009 the Tate staged a a survey exhibition of his work, and this year Bristol's Arnolfini Gallery is putting on a big show containing recreations of seminal early work as well as several large new sculptures. In March he'll be anointed as the inaugural 'Whitechapel Gallery Icon' at the gallery in which he had his first major UK show. Does he feel like a national treasure? He laughs. 'I've been called that', he says. 'It's not for me to say.' He's not particularly interested in the past. 'I'm not at all interested in doing a big retrospective. It would be impossible anyway, because many of the big sculptures are out there in the world. So it's not appropriate. People get on to me to do a *catalogue raisonné*, which fills me with dread. Everything I've ever done collected into one great dictionary. An encyclopaedia of my life.' He shudders.

Long is always moving forward, always seeking out the next idea or the next walk to be made. He talks excitedly about a walk he's just completed, from the Mosque of Córdoba in Andalusia to the Cathedral of Santiago de Compostela in Galicia, a distance of some 500 miles ('not a pilgrimage', he says, 'a Richard Long walk'). He's called it *From Crescent to Cross*. But the Arnolfini show in particular is a homecoming of sorts. Much of his early work began in Bristol, a place that is the source both of the raw materials of many of his mud works and the starting point for many of his walks.

Other things haven't changed. He still works alone. 'I'm the last of the amateurs. I don't have a secretary, I don't have a PA, I do everything myself. But that's also because that's my choice. I'd have no interest in other people making my work. It wouldn't be my work.' Despite this, he was invited to a symposium on mountaineering recently and was surprised to discover 'much to my astonishment, that there's a whole generation of artists who call themselves walking artists. I've got a lot to answer for.'

Long's work has certainly contributed to a new perception of walking, not as Romantic reverie or politicised tramp, but as artistic act. In the work of authors like Iain Sinclair and Robert Macfarlane, walking has continued to shake off its associations with anorak-bedecked ramblers. Another context is that of mountaineering, now often infused with a whiff of machismo and increasingly undertaken not by the working-class climbers of the 1950s who Long admires – people like Don Whillans and Chris Bonington – but by wealthy hedge-fund managers looking to scale the peaks as a way of asserting their own self-worth. What does Long make of these Rambo-like ramblers? 'Well, obviously you still have to admire people who have done it because it's a stupendous thing,' he says, reflecting on those who climb Everest, 'but now people are going up in crocodiles. It's a way of conquering nature. There's a Carl Andre quote: "A man climbs a mountain because it is there, a man makes a work of art because it is not there." I think some of the mystery of art is to do something in the world that hasn't been done before, that wasn't there before. To walk in a new way, or to make an object that has never been made before.' Ⓐ

Jon Day's essay about cycling and landscapes, Cyclogeography, will be published by Notting Hill Editions later this year.

'Richard Long: The Spike Island Tapes' is at the Alan Cristea Gallery, London until 2 April (www.alancristea.com).

FT.com
16 January 2015

FINANCIAL TIMES

January 16, 2015 4:47 pm

Richard Long's winning steps

Rachel Spence

As the British sculptor wins the second Whitechapel Gallery Art Icon, how do art prizes benefit galleries and sponsors?

'Grey Slate Spiral' (1981) by land artist Richard Long

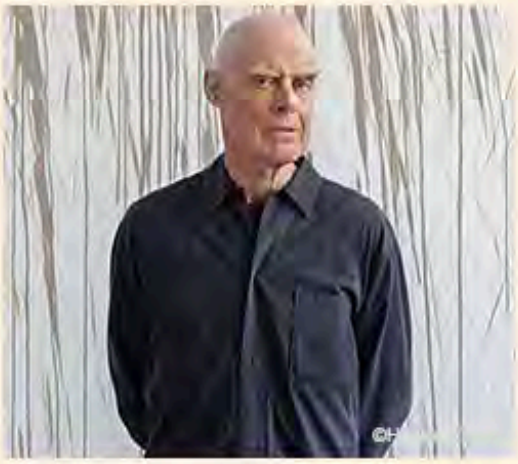
Hardly a week passes without my email inbox pinging with news of another art prize. Ostensibly, they serve to give an artist a boost. The recognition cheers the spirit; while the gift — sometimes of time in the form of an all-expenses paid residency, sometimes of money, sometimes both — can prove an invaluable aid to production.

Such beneficence is particularly helpful to emerging artists who have not yet conquered the heights of their *métier*. There are, however, a small number of prizes for artists who have already reached their peak. One is the Golden Lion lifetime achievement award presented at the Venice Biennale: in 2013 it went to Austrian painter Maria Lassnig and Marisa Merz, a member of Italy's Arte Povera movement.

The Whitechapel Gallery Art Icon seems to be part of this nucleus: it is not for young pretenders. Its inaugural edition, held last year, was won by the high mandarin of British abstractionists Howard Hodgkin. This year, the winner is an equally illustrious titan, the land artist Richard Long.

Yet according to the gallery's director Iwona Blazwick, the Icon prize is "not a lifetime achievement award". Instead, she says, it is about saying, "this work merits attention right now".

Long fits this criterion perfectly. Now in his 70th year, the Bristol-born artist is beautifully captured by words from one of his own poems as a "location hunter/gentle plotter/mapping master" for a body of work that encompasses land art, performance, text and photography. His journey began, quite literally, in 1967 when he took a short walk in the English countryside and then photographed the track left by his footprints and entitled the image "A Line Made by Walking".



Nearly 40 years later, he has walked the world. Remote parts of Japan, the Himalayas, Antarctica, Canada and Bolivia are some of the landscapes that have hosted Long as he makes his epic treks before marking his trail with a sculptural creation, perhaps a circle, line or spiral in stone, slate or driftwood. Back in the urban jungle, he evokes these distant monuments with lush, imagistic poems and cool documentary photographs. When he makes site-specific works in natural materials in galleries and museums, they resonate because his viewers are aware of their invisible peers in the wilderness.

Arguably Britain's most important living sculptor (since the death of Anthony Caro last year), Long is no stranger to accolades. He represented Britain in the Venice Biennale in 1976 and was nominated three times for the Turner Prize before winning in 1989.

For Blazwick, Long is exciting "on so many levels". He was at the forefront of installation art, performance art — "his work was simply made by walking" — and immersive art. Part of a pioneering generation of land artists such as Hamish Fulton and Walter de Maria, Long's influence on younger artists is second to none. "He inaugurated a whole succession of works that finds its ultimate [realisation] in Olafur Eliasson's Turbine Hall," Blazwick enthuses, referring to the remarkable solar theatre unveiled by the Scandinavian artist within Tate Modern's vast hall in 2004.

Long's work has taken on new relevance in an age where concern for the environment has become acute. "There's a tremendous awareness now about the fragility of the wilderness — these places that were once known as the wastelands or badlands," says Blazwick. "Long is documenting something that could disappear. [It gives his work] this feeling of urgency."

The politics of awards are potentially troublesome. This year the Turner Prize jury, for example, came under fire for its failure to look much beyond the alumni of the Glasgow School of Art for its shortlist. Blazwick believes her jury is heterogenous enough to avoid charges of bias. Alongside her, it comprised Art Fund director Stephen Deuchar; Ann Gallagher, head of collections for British art at Tate; and Jackie Wullschlager, chief art critic for the Financial Times.

"I come from the contemporary perspective: 'What are kids looking at now?' 'What are students looking at?'," says Blazwick. "Ann Gallagher has her finger on the pulse of what is happening globally. Stephen has this sense of what resonates publicly. He also has a wide historical stage, from Titian onwards, in which to place an artist. Jackie, as a critic, has more dispassionate views."

> "'Not a lifetime achievement award', the Icon prize is about saying 'this work merits attention right now'"
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As there is no official shortlist, the jury is not obliged to reveal who else was being considered. Deuchar recalls an "in-depth, sustained conversation" about four artists. "We were surrounded by catalogues!" Blazwick remembers "passionate debates. A lot of names were pulled about and discussed." She says that a connection to the Whitechapel Gallery is not essential but admits "we are a little biased". Deuchar says Long's "strong Whitechapel connection" definitely made a difference.

Long's first major British retrospective took place in the east London space. Consisting of a single cross made of pine cones on one floor, and a spiral of chalky footprints on the upper storey, the exhibition was, in Blazwick's words, "a radical proposition back then". In 1977, he was the subject of a second Whitechapel exhibition *The North Woods*, when the gallery was run by Nicholas Serota.

What is certain is that prizes benefit institutions as much as artists. As Blazwick puts it: "For institutions they're a pause in the rhythm of programming to step back and take a retrospective view."

Awards are also a powerful mechanism for raising an institution's profile — and its balance sheet. Art Icon is sponsored by the Swarovski Foundation, and will be presented at a gala dinner whose ticket sales will go towards the gallery's education programme. For Swarovski, which already sponsors a curator at the gallery, its philanthropic reputation will enjoy a fillip. In such cash-strapped times, it's probable that while not all artists shall win, more and more institutions will have prizes.

whitechapelgallery.org

Richard Long's 'Time and Space' is at the Arnolfini, Bristol, July 31 to November 15.
arnolfini.org.uk

Photographs: Richard Long/ Lisson Gallery; Howard Sooley

LISSON GALLERY

Financial Times
26 – 27 April 2014

FINANCIAL TIMES

Tracks in the wild

With new exhibitions celebrating 40 years of his work, sculptor and landscape artist Richard Long talks to *Liz Jobey* about solitude, mud, and a sense of the sublime

One of the fallacies of the Young British Artist era is that before that time, British artists were never young. But there are plenty of artists whom we recognised before their 20th birthdays, sold to museums and collectors abroad, and were supported by gallery owners with their long-term interests at heart.

David Hockney and Peter Blake are the obvious examples from the early 1960s but, by the end of the decade, the scene had shifted to St Martin's School of Art in London, where the "A" class in the sculpture department had been selected for their radical ideas: they wanted to move art out of the studio into wider social and political exchange with the world. They included Gilbert & George, Barry Flanagan, Bruce Maclean, Hamish Fulton and Richard Long.

Before St Martin's, Long had been a student at West of England College of Art in Bristol, where he had grown up. In 1964, at 16, he was self-confessedly precocious. That winter he went out and rolled a snowball across the grass. As it picked up snow, it grew larger and heavier, leaving behind a meandering track. Long took a photograph of it and went home. It was his first intervention in the landscape and it set the path, literally, for what he has been doing ever since.

Fifty years later, Long is about to open an exhibition at the New Art Gallery, Walsall. It covers 40 years of his work as a printmaker, with additional stone floor pieces and a huge new mud work – a massive drawing in liquid mud, which he applies by hand – across one of the gallery's 26-metre walls. (These mud works are made *in situ*; if a collector wants to buy one, Long makes a new one.)

"Waterfall Line", which he made for the opening of Tate Modern in 2000, is still there but concealed behind a false wall. Next month, an exhibition of Long's latest work will open at the Lisson Gallery in London. He first joined the Lisson in 1971 and now, after two decades with the d'Offay Gallery, which closed in 2003, and a decade at the Haunch of Venison gallery, he has returned.

At 66, Long is a physical metaphor for his work: tall, lean, rangy and tightly sprung. On this chaotic pre-opening afternoon, he is full of nervous impatience at the public requirements – the interview, the photograph, the public talk, the private view.

He has been an international artist from the beginning. His first solo show, in 1968, was at the Konrad Fischer gallery in Düsseldorf, which was Gerhard Richter's gallery and where American artists such as Carl Andre, Sol LeWitt and Bruce Nauman had their first European solo shows.

Long and Andre became friends. When I ask what will be in his Lisson show, he says, "I have a plan for a new walk but I don't want to talk about it until I've done it. As Carl Andre once said, you climb a mountain because it's there, but you make a work of art because it's not there. So no work of art exists until it's made. Including a walk."

Yet there is a paradox here. Long's walks depend on the existence of the natural landscape – are indeed a celebration of it – and his own interventions are minimal. The walk is as much part of the work as his single-handed alterations: moving stones into a line or a circle or a spiral; transplanting stones from one location to another; creating a path where one didn't exist before; piling stones into a cairn or upending them like Neolithic figures to face the horizon. He considers himself a sculptor, and a radical one, but he also sees himself and his art as part of a long tradition.

"People have left circles of stones for thousands of years in different cultures all over the world. My work takes its place among many other man-made marks and cairns and footpaths and stone markings. Most artists, like the YBAs, are city artists. Being a landscape artist is still a minority art but it doesn't bother me at all."

Nor does it bother him that the actual works are rarely witnessed. "All artists – what you see in their work is their choice. My interest is walking in the wilderness and making sculptures in lonely solitary places that most people would probably never see. I'm not that interested in people even seeing the sculptures. Which is appropriate to the whole spirit of the way I work."

What he offers the viewer is an imaginative experience: the means to share that sensation of being alone in the landscape, to be transported into a different mental space, to consider the world from a different perspective. He makes a single visual record from each walk. It might be a photograph or a sequence of words, or both.

'My interest is walking in the wilderness and making sculptures . . . that most people would probably never see'

The photographs, usually in black and white – but also in colour – are straightforward shots of the landscape and the work. The texts can just be the location, date and sometimes the length of the walk, or they can be more complex assemblies of words: lists and phrases that describe the route, or the experience — sights, weather, sounds, terrain.

This is where the tension of the work is held: all the energy of the undertaking contained in a single frame. Unlike haikus, to which the text pieces are sometimes compared, there is no overt attempt at emotion. Yet in their economy, they can offer the viewer more than a photograph.

Long has made works in many distant locations: the Himalayas, the Andes, Mongolia, Japan, Mexico, Scandinavia, Nepal, as well as much closer to home. "All those sculptures are works of passage," he says. "They are stopping places along a journey. I am never consciously trying to choose somewhere new, because I always return to places that are very well-loved and familiar to me. So all my work is a balance between making walks in places that I don't have any clue of what I'll find, to going back to Dartmoor many times in the past 30 years."

Each walk is based on an idea. He sets off with a plan but chance plays a big role. "Even though I'm not a conceptual artist, ideas are very important in my work. But they're always ideas as they're realised by me doing the walks or carrying the stones or throwing them over a cliff or whatever."

His work has nothing do with Romanticism, he says – but I wonder if he admits the idea of the sublime.

"Yes. Absolutely. There is something sublime about a fingerprint."

Should the viewer get a sense of the sublime from your work?

"Oh yes, I think so."

Does religion have any part to play?

"Ah." He sits back. "The big questions. No, I'm not by nature a religious person, any more than I'm a political person. I'm first and foremost an artist."

But they're not mutually exclusive.

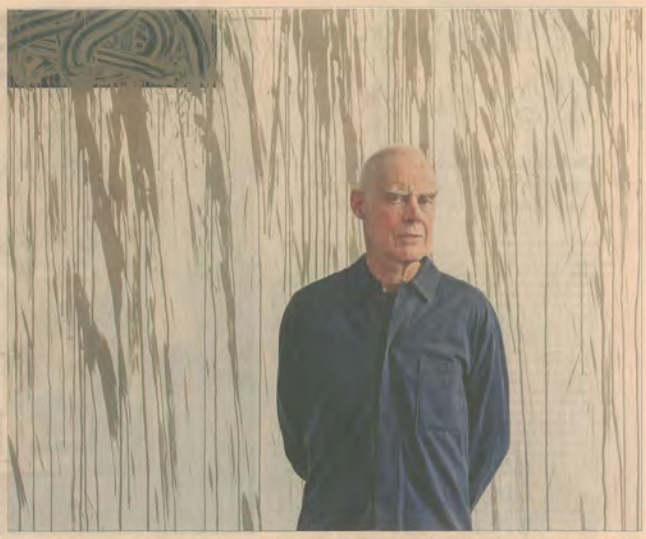
"Exactly." Long's speech picks up speed. "I think art can be spiritual and emotional and enlightening and uplifting and sublime," he says. "When I am in such a place, with my energy, in a beautiful place that has beautiful stones and I can make a circle and it's beautiful and I can take the photograph home to show other people. I have celebrated me being in that wonderful place. So it's a coming together of many different things, all very positive. But I have to put myself in these places. With all the artistic baggage from my whole life of being an artist, in my head, in that place."

He looks at my tape recorder. "I like the idea of making something of nothing – which a lot of my work is, almost. Don't you think that's a good way to end?"

It's not from nothing, though, is it?

"No, of course not. Nothing is from nothing. It's a Zen idea."

'Richard Long', Lisson Gallery, London, May 23-July 12. lissongallery.com
'Prints 1970-2013', until June 22, and 'Spring Circle' until July 8, New Art Gallery, Walsall thenewartgallerywalsall.org.uk



From top: Richard Long, photographed for the FT at the New Art Gallery, Walsall, in front of a wall work made with River Avon mud; 'Spring Circle' (1992); 'White Onyx Line' (1990)

Howard Sooley

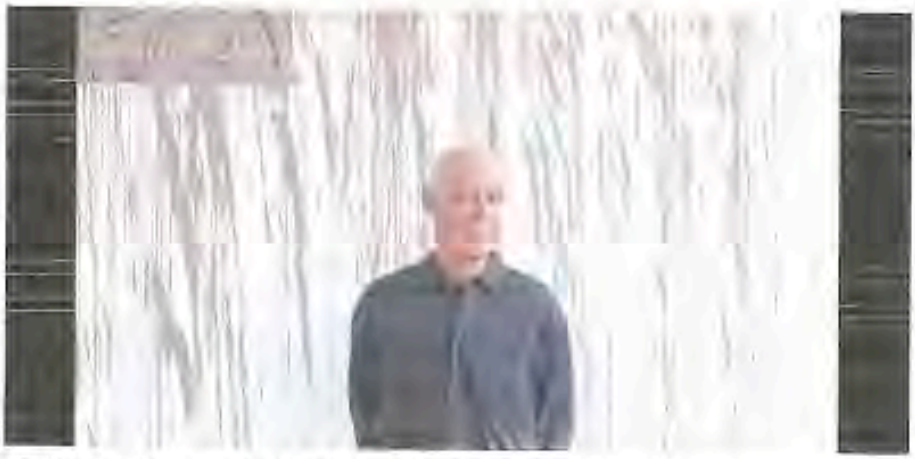
Finacial Times, online
25th April 2014

FINANCIAL TIMES

April 25, 2014 8:37 pm

Richard Long at Lisson Gallery, London and New Art Gallery, Walsall

By Liz Jobey



Richard Long, photographed for the FT at the New Art Gallery, Walsall, in front of a wall work made with River Avon mud

©Howard Sooley

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The Guardian, online
15th June 2012

Culture › Art and design › Richard Long

Richard Long: 'It was the swinging 60s. To be walking lines in fields was a bit different'

The land artist gives a rare interview, describing his early work, his roots in Bristol and how his legs once let him down

Thrown out of his first art school for being 'too precocious', Richard Long has a new exhibition at the Hepworth Wakefield. Photograph: Sarah Lee for the Guardian

Richard Long could have been named for his height: at 6ft 4in, he is craggily mountainous, with a giant stride and a pair of eyebrows that resemble bushes clinging to a rocky eminence. It is a physique suited to, and formed by, his art. As a student in 1967 he made a work called A Line Made By Walking – a photo of a narrow stripe of grass, flattened by the tread of his feet, through a meadow near his home in Bristol.

It was quietly revolutionary, for it claimed the act of walking as art. The very tread of his feet was the work: this was different from the Romantics' interaction with the landscape, in which the art was, to quote Wordsworth, "emotion recollected in tranquillity." According to Long, giving a rare interview in a book-lined room in his London gallery, Haunch of Venison: "The significance of walking in my work is that it brings time and space into my art; space meaning distance. A work of art can be a journey."

Long, a vigorous 67 years old, has been walking ever since that youthful work, his steps mapping territories from Dartmoor to the Andes. On his journeys, he has arranged stones by roads, made circles from boulders, aligned pebbles in riverbeds, traced furrows in sand. From 23 June, a survey of his footfall – which he records through photographs or textual descriptions – will be on show at the Hepworth Wakefield. "My footsteps make the mark. My legs carry me across the country. It's like a way of measuring the world. I love that connection to my own body. It's me to the world," he says.

Long, who won the Turner prize in 1989, seems to stand apart from much of the mainstream sculpture made in Britain today. His work can invoke the spectacular, but by way of its location rather than its monumentality. If Antony Gormley's Angel of the North or Anish Kapoor's ArcelorMittal Orbit tower are inescapable, you may have walked past a dozen Longs and never noticed them. Or they may have been there once, and disappeared into the tide or the shale.

"There is a point of view," he says, "that if you go into the landscape you should only leave footprints and take photographs. The other extreme is making monuments. I have no interest in making monuments. But I think there is a fascinating territory between those two positions. I can move things from place to place. I can manipulate the world by leaving stones on the road. And they don't disappear because the stone is still in the world – but completely anonymously."

Which is not to say that Long eschews the large-scale. Some of his walks cover hundreds of miles. A 1998 work was a line of 33 stones, one placed each day "along a walk of 1,030 miles in 33 days from the southernmost point to the northernmost point of mainland Britain". (It is a measure of his physical vigour that the walk works out at 31 miles a day.) "The idea that no one sees it is part of the work," he says. "I can make it in a very remote place, almost secretly or in an isolated way. Maybe no one sees it, or a local person sees it and they don't recognise it as art."

Long's walks are often feats of endurance, though he does not recognise them as such. He tells me about breaking his leg in the Cairngorms. Was he afraid? Long laughs. "No, it was just irritating. I just struggled out. It took me about four days to get out. I didn't realise I'd broken it, and it was beautiful weather, and I pitched my tent and stuck my leg into an ice-cold stream for about two days. I realised I had to get out when the weather changed. I made a work out of it called Lull Before a Storm, Pride Before a Fall."

There is an immense simplicity to Long's work. When making work in the landscape he uses only the objects he encounters. The works he makes specially for art galleries are slightly different in that he brings in materials, but they are invariably natural ones: mud and water, sticks and stone. For a gallery he might make a circle of Cornish slate on a floor, for example, or draw a line in wet mud on the wall and let "nature do the rest" as the liquid dribbles down. (He will make a new wall piece from damp china clay for the Wakefield exhibition.) He employs the two most basic and central gestures in human life: the line and the circle.

Long was born in Bristol in June 1945. "I am one of the few artists who makes work where they were born," he says. He is also unusual in that his work is about the rural, the wilderness. He often walks through built-up areas, but, unlike the writer Iain Sinclair, for instance, he has no interest in recording them. "I am realist," he says. "The landscapes that I have chosen to work in are the landscapes that still cover most of this earth; the world is still basically an empty place."

He talks about the mud of the Avon forming him. "I was born with my feet in that material. That is in my DNA, that mud." He is a self-confessed connoisseur of mud. Tidal mud, like that of the Avon as it cuts through Bristol, is best for his art, for it is "viscous", whereas "mud in a field is not real mud". He remembers the primal pleasure of making mud pies as a small child: making a circle of the soft, sticky stuff, then pouring water into the centre.

As a student he was thrown out of the West of England College of Art for being "too precocious", he says. He calls it his "lucky break", as the next stop was Saint Martins School of Art in London, where he was mostly left to his own devices.

He admired, and admires, his contemporaries Gilbert and George, but it was later, when he went to Europe, he says, that he found artists making work in tune with his: people such as Carl Andre and Joseph Beuys. When he made that first formative work, Line Made By Walking, "I knew I was doing something interesting. It was quite pleasurable to be doing something that was a little bit underground. It was the swinging 60s. To be walking lines in fields was a bit different."

His story is different from that of the Young British Artists, who, he says, have their roots in pop art; they are postmodern in sensibility where he is modernist. "It was easy to be original when I was young. Pop art was dying on its feet. Abstract expressionism was dead. Henry Moore was just Henry Moore. My generation rewrote everything: land art, conceptual art, minimal art. It's far more complicated to be original now. I was innocent."

He smiles: "I was part of the generation that did things because they seemed like a good idea at the time – which they were."

Frieze Magazine
October 2009

Richard Long

TATE BRITAIN, LONDON, UK

In Richard Long's retrospective exhibition, 'Heaven and Earth', we caught sight of the artist only twice. After passing between two dramatic wall drawings depicting, in vigorously spattered River Avon mud, the I Ching symbols for heaven and earth – the first glimpse of Long was something of a disappointment. Hill Figure England/Climbing Mt. Kilimanjaro (1969) shows the young artist, hands on hips, photographed with the volcano in the distance. The 'hill figure', with which this small image is partnered, is an aerial photograph of an ancient geoglyph, cut into a chalky hillside, of a human form framed within a rectangle. It is no accident that Long's rucksack provides a visual rhyme with this shape: the contemporary artist, conquering a mountain, and early man, inscribing his image on the earth, are implicitly one and the same.

Hill Figure England… is revealing about the contradictions at the heart of Long's practice, which he has sustained and enriched (but only moderately extended) since he first made A Line Made by Walking in 1967, which was shown in the same gallery. The latter work, which this broadly chronological exhibition took as its starting point, owes its success to simplicity: a black and white photograph of a line trodden through grass, mounted above the caption, printed in sans serif font, 'A Line Made by Walking, England, 1967'. The economy of the work – not just its frugality, but its sealed system of effort and effect, time invested and contained, information withheld and revealed – brings it close to a kind of holistic perfection. It appeals to our contemporary concern for ecological sustainability (however symbolic), and is, in its quiet way, rather humourous about what an art work might consist of.

On the face of it, A Line Made by Walking is an extremely humble art work. However, despite Long's assertion that he was 'keen that people didn't know what [he] looked like, and that the work had to speak for itself', the artist is ever present. (The exhibition's explanatory wall texts, for instance, were written in the first person, as if Long was giving a personal tour of his show.) Unlike much Conceptual, process-based art, Long's hand (or foot) reveals itself either explicitly or implicitly as an expressive tool; the trodden grass or dusty pathways that he wears down through repetitive walking and the splashes of mud around his wall drawings (such as this year's From Beginning to End, wet Vallauris clay applied directly to a wall with his fingers) both speak evocatively of the artist's toil. Pencil marks on the floor indicating the boundary of a stone circle are reminders of the effort that put them there. In the work Light Snow Sleeping Place (1983), Long records the patch he left on the grass after sleeping outdoors on a snowy night. There is more than a sneaking sense of martyrdom in all this. While his work fudges an idea of hybrid Western and Eastern spirituality, it is distinctly Christian proclivities – Protestant modesty combined with a Catholic taste for penance – that emanate most strongly from Long's work. From a more pop-cultural perspective, could the references to brooding, lone-wolf country and western musicians such as Johnny Cash and Gram Parsons (as in 2004's text work Walking Music, or Walking the Line, his 2005 monograph) also suggest something about Long's self-image?

Ordnance Survey maps showing walking routes marked in coloured pencil and titles inscribed carefully, but imperfectly, beneath, to huge vinyl text pieces that fill whole walls and photographs that, in Long's recent move into colour, are no longer documents so much as evocations. They are none the better for it. The strength of Long's early work is that it acknowledges the limitations of the landscape genre: an image's ineffectiveness in reproducing a sense of place; the arbitrariness of its pictorial conventions; the inconsistent sentimentality with which we approach the natural world. As time goes by Long seems to have succumbed to these tropes himself. What he has described as a 'realist' approach curdles into an aesthetic that is nostalgic and sentimental. In his terse, haiku-like records of his journeys, it is more interesting to consider what he omits than what he includes. Human interventions such as car parks, mountain bikes or aeroplanes are largely absent; while he might appear to reporting from untouched wilderness, Long is in fact intervening in the world by editing his representations of it.

'Heaven and Earth' allowed two surprising moments of clarity, however. The first was a vast, light-filled gallery containing four circles of gathered stones, a line of slates and an ellipse of basalt chunks arranged across the floor. These works were perhaps the least 'natural' things in the show: although washed, sorted into size and laid out in tidy geometric shapes, they came without captions or contextual information, which allowed them to establish their own sense of place in the gallery. The second moment was something of a footnote to the retrospective, and the only other occasion featuring Long in front of the camera lens: a room containing artist's books, posters and invitation cards for his previous shows. Here 'Heaven and Earth' acknowledged the real landscape that Long walks through – that of the contemporary art world – and how an artist's persona is developed, propagated and disseminated.

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