



Nicholas Roerich, *Kangchenjunga*, 1944, The State Museum of Oriental Art, Moscow

Art & The Environment

Part 1: The Mythic Environment

Participants examine environmental art and visual culture through a close analysis of the landscape genre, installation and intervention, and film. Students differentiate notions of space and place as they relate to particular geographical, topographical, colonial, and national constructs concerning the environment. Topics may include the role of environmental representation in filmic discourse, visual art and environmental modification, Indigenous land ownership, and the wider philosophical and cultural associations of the environment. In Part 1, we examine a wide range of mythic and cultural associations with historical landscapes, focusing on the themes of fire, water, domestic animals, astronomical phenomena, plants, and sand paintings and other ephemeral environments.

Week 1: Fire & Food: the Dangerous Hearth

Theoretical tools - Doreen Massey and Place: Gibraltar's Mousterian Neanderthal Hearths. Earliest uses of fire, representations of early human environments, *Quest for Fire* film (1981), *Voice of Fire* controversy (1967, 1989), Lord Agni, gods of the forge, Caravaggio and other candle painters, Turner's Vesuvius, the sacred flame (Parliament, Olympics), industry paintings (Soviet), Joseph Légaré's burning early Canadian cities, London on fire in 1666, anxieties of "end times" through Roman burning (Nero, Alaric, *Brennus and His Share of the Spoils*, 1893)

martyrdoms, *Guernica*, Viking ship fire burials in actuality and in memory (Roerich), cremations of Varanasi (*Baraka*, 1992), the hearth, Hestia, vestal virgins, Fellini and racialized misogyny in *Satyricon* (1969), Calcifer from *Howl's Moving Castle* (2004), Van Gogh's *The Potato-Eaters* (1885), Dean Baldwin's *restaurant the river* (August, 2015).

Week 2: Water is Life: Ships, Seas, and Survival

Deepa Mehta. Caral, Kachina dolls. Peruvian seedheads, Olokun, Brazilian Candomblé, the Mesoamerican rain gods Tlaloc & Chaac, Hittite Teshub, Zeus, Zeus-Ganymede, Poseidon Sounion, the Temple of Aphaia, canoe pictographs, Naqada, Trojan ships (Helen!), ship's eyes at Salamis, Trajan's ships, ocean monsters on medieval maps, French eighteenth century shipwreck scenes, voyageur scenes in Canada, dazzler patterns on WWI vessels, conventions of Yamato-e, *Impression: Sunrise*, Sei Shonagon viewing the Snow (fleeting/ephemeral/difficult to represent-photograph), *Secret of Kells*, Hitchcock's *The Lodger* - Fujiko Nakaya's fog sculptures, Disney: Olaf! (*Frozen* as increased anxiety about climate change and a retreat into neo-pagan fundamentalism), *Ponyo*, *Moana*, rain/sex/fertility – Raga pantings in India: storms of Krishna & Radha - *Bridgerton*, *Breakfast at Tiffany's*, *Titanic*, *Under the Tuscan Sun*, *The Notebook*. Lisa Frank '90s optimism & kitsch: the Galactic Whale.

Week 3: Herds and Agriculture: Animals in a Domestic Context

Lascaux, earliest known kangaroo painting, Indonesian warty pig cave painting from c. 42000 BCE, Eland paintings of the Khoisan, Maltese reliefs of domesticates, Catal Huyuk, the Kerma-culture bucrania, Minoans and Bull-Leaping, rhytons, Hathor, Hopi/Zuni/Huichol bucrania, the Apis oracle bull, Serapis, Virgilian landscapes, Jesus as a shepherd in the catacombs, the divine lamb in Byzantine art, the *Tres Riches Heures of the Duc de Berry*, Dutch landscape scenes (Cuypel), Titian's *Diana and Actaeon* (1559), Pre-Raphaelite images (Holman Hunt's *Our English Shores*, 1852), George Stubbs horse painting, Gericault, Mazeppa & the homoerotics of horse painting, Lakota Bison drawings, archaeological records of the Eurasian sacrificial horse (Filmic parallels: *The Nature of Things'* wildebeests – modern sacrifice of herds to crocodile/lion – Attenborough as Druid/High Priest? Death of the polar bear described in explicitly spiritual visual language).

Week 4: "The Sun, The Moon, The Stars: Keep Us Safe"

Maltese spirals, Stonehenge/Avebury/Newgrange/Playa Nabta, Akhenaten, Hathor, Ra-Horus, Viking/Celtic solar sun chariot, "magic" wizard lunar crowns of the La Tene peoples, the early Israelite Bull Moon God, Artemis and her many guises, pre-Incan Peruvian litter with clear sun/moon iconography, , The Herder & the Weaver Girl, Amaterasu-Ōmikami, statues at the peak sanctuary of Nemrut Dağı, The Apocalypse manuscripts & their unlikely Timurid connections, engravings of Gustave Doré, William Kurelek's night scenes, northern lights screensavers.

Week 5: Gardens of Paradise, Forests of Mystery: Plants, Flowers & Trees

Dumuzi & Ishtar, Adonis & Venus. Yggdrasil, the Mayan World Tree, Nayarit sculptures, Navan Fort in Ireland, Dionysos & wine, Alphonse Mucha & Beer, Peruvian uses of

hallucinogenics– the Maya maize god, the Lotus of Amida Buddha, Korean Flower-Painting, Flemish garden scenes, the Hudson River School, Gardens of Paradise, Orientalist gardens (Gerome & Rousseau), Safavid gardens in Iran (*Chahar Bagh*), Nek Chand Saini, Brazilian modernists. Case studies of flower painting: still-life origins and reception, Mary Moser, Alma Tadema's *Roses of Heliogabalus* (1888), Georgia O'Keefe, Faith Ringgold, Abelam Yam Masks of the Upper Sepik River Valley. Trees as Non-Human Persons, Tom Thomson's *Jack Pine* (1917), Emily Carr, Lawrence Paul Yuxweluptun, Christi Belcourt, Cruising Forest of Kent Monkman.

Week 6: Sand Painting & Ephemeral Art: The Fleeting Landscape

Rangoli paintings in India, Nigerian temporary clay paintings, ritual & festive architecture, sand castles, sand paintings in the American southwest (Navajo spirits), Australian Indigenous ritual and body painting - Papunya Tula, Clifford Possum Tjapaltjarri, Emily Kame Kngwarreye. Tibetan Buddhist mandala painting & Zen Garden designs, The fog sculptures of Fujiko Nakaya, Rebecca Belmore's *Ayum-ee-aawach Oomama-mowan: Speaking to Their Mother* (1981), collective protest in *O:se Kenhionhata:tie: Land Back Kitchener-Waterloo* (2021) .



Fujiko Nakaya, *Veil* (2014,) installation at the Glass House, New Canaan, 2014