

Modos Art Journal: Rethinking Interconnections between Art and Ecology"

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Revista Modos: Special Issue

Rethinking the Interconnection of Art and Ecology

In August 1978, art critic Pierre Restany lived for thirty-two days on a boat navigating the heart of the Amazon, together with artists Frans Krajcberg and Sepp Baendereck. While traversing the Brazilian frontier, he asserted, "The Amazon today constitutes the last reservoir on our planet, the refuge of total nature." The resulting text, "Manifesto Rio Negro do Naturalismo Integral," proposed that the forest should serve as a new intellectual model, one that would challenge the dichotomy between the urban and the natural. According to Restany, the exposure to "total nature" in the Rio Negro ecosystem enabled a fresh perception of art, one free from the power dynamics of the art market and consumerist society and that could generate both planetary awareness and alternative ways to think about interdependency and connectivity. These concepts were already present, even if in latent form, in most Amerindian and Afro-diasporic cosmologies. The ecological ideas penned by the globetrotting French critic, therefore, were deeply indebted to contemporaneous Latin American debates, in which the local intelligentsia re-examined nature, indigenous practices, and anthropological approaches to art as a means of defining and producing a distinct local art. Paradoxically, in the 1970s, for Latin American theoreticians and artists such as Mário Pedrosa and Nicolás Uriburu, ecological thought represented a way to attain both "Latin Americanness," and global connections during a period that witnessed the international triumph of Land Art and an increasing planetary ecological awareness. Restany's manifesto thus not only served as an index of local debates but also portrayed global artistic and ecological concerns in the age of the Anthropocene from a Latin American standpoint. Recently, climate change awareness, the destruction of the Amazon Forest, environmental disasters in Brazil and elsewhere, and new articulations of indigenous rights, among others, have put ecological concerns again at the center of artistic debates.

This special issue aims to reflect on the interconnectedness between nature and art from a localized Southern perspective. As Jorge Marcón explains in his 2007 lecture "Jungle Fever: The Ecology of Disillusion in Spanish American Literature," environmentalism in Latin America is intimately connected with reversing the damage caused by colonialism, including the preservation of traditional ways of life and the emphasis on beliefs repressed by modernization. This ecological perspective depends on what Marcón calls environmental awareness: a refusal of preconceived knowl-

edge that does not dialogue with the world in its diversity and otherness. We hope this issue will help improve our understanding of how artistic practices can foster this expanded conversation from a Southern standpoint, where the tropics are located. To do so, we welcome papers from several disciplinary fields to develop themes that link art and nature, including (but not limited to):

- Situated Ecologies
- Art as a Model to Reimagine Nature / Nature as a Model to Reimagine Art
- Indigenous, Afro-Amerindian, Afro-Brazilian, and Afro-Diasporic Artistic Practices that Consider the Interrelationships between Humans and Nonhumans
- The Study of Representation of Nature and Places in the Archives, Repertoires, and Traditions of the Visual Arts
- Contemporary Art Considering Sustainability and Resilience to Environmental Change
- Natural and Cultural Ecosystems
- The Impact of Art in Current Ecological Thinking

The journal guidelines are available at:

<https://periodicos.sbu.unicamp.br/ojs/index.php/mod/about/submissions>

Articles written in English, Portuguese, or Spanish sent until July 31, 2022 will be considered for publication. The special issue will be published in 2023.

Please send any queries to the editors, Vera Beatriz Siqueira (verabcsiq@gmail.com) and Camila Maroja (marojacamila@gmail.com).

Reference:

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