

LANDSCAPING ART

All forms of art (visual, conceptual, performance) that refer to the landscape, both natural and urban, subjecting it to artistic analysis, interpretation and intervention, both in the formal and aesthetic, as well as critical sense.

Landscaping art is not only a simple representation of the landscape, it does not aim to reproduce it, but it is a kind of critical reference to it, its aspects and issues related to it, expressed in the language of art. In this sense, the subject of landscape art are both the qualities of the landscape and its aesthetics (e.g. natural, artificial, degraded, post-industrial landscape), as well as related issues (ecological, social, political and other) in which the landscape is entangled. It can take on the expression of a work or activity, entering an existing landscape and giving it new meanings, thus transforming (permanently or temporarily) its meaning. In this way, landscaping art situates itself between artistic gesture and public discourse.

Landscaping art is not a separate direction or current in art and does not create a compact artistic concept. Its manifestations can be found in various artistic areas, in particular works, activities or actions, which, by revealing landscape sensitivity, are oriented towards a broadly understood discourse: from positions that problematise the landscape or its aspects to aestheticising the landscape. Thus, it is an expression of artistic commitment, which can manifest itself in various fields of art (architecture, film, photography, installation, painting, performance, sculpture), various directions (earth art, environmental art, murals, etc.) and in individual projects.

From the perspective of art history, the first projects aspiring to the title of landscaping art can be found in the discovery by painters that landscape can be an object of artistic inspiration. The first manifestation is the crystallisation of landscape painting as a stand-alone style and the presentation of landscape as a worthy painting theme. From the Renaissance, the early landscapes of Leonardo da Vinci and Dürer, and later masters of landscape painting until the 19th century, two ways of looking at the landscape can be seen: aestheticising the landscape and aiming at creating its ideal form (e.g. Lorrain, Rosa) and perceiving the processes and space of life (e.g. Dürer, Constable) taking place in it. The difference between landscape painting idealising the landscape and landscape painting of Northern Europe aimed at rendering the processes taking place in it was revealed quite early on. In this dimension, the subject of artistic analysis is the landscape understood both as a space of visual perception, as well as an area inhabited and transformed by humans. If one assumes that there are two ways of capturing a landscape that distinguish between an aesthetic landscape and a cultural landscape, then landscape art accentuates rather the cultural dimension of the landscape and the resulting issues. Another source of thinking about landscape is garden art, especially landscape parks, which aimed at creating a landscape close to the natural by natural means.

When photography was invented in the middle of the 19th century, this new field of art quickly noticed in the landscape an interesting object of artistic analysis, joining the current

of thought developed by painting, at the same time confirming the dual track of thinking about the landscape.

Robust development of landscaping art took place in the 20th century in the area of avant-garde and neo-avant-garde art, as well as its accompanying ideology, proclaiming, among other things, the need to abandon museums and galleries in favour of an urban or natural space (environment) of art presentation, which created the possibility for a work of art (although understood as an installation, ephemeral work, sculpture, performance, mural) to inscribe itself into the landscape, but also references to it. The closest to such an understanding of landscaping art are *environmental* art and *land art*, developing since the 1970s, part of public art projects from the turn of the twentieth and twenty-first century and art criticism developing at the same time. In any case, a work of art or artistic activity requires a formal, ideological or semantic reference to the place, taking on the character of *site specific art*. For this reason, the idea of the place and the contexts associated with it significantly determines landscape art. Starting with Smithson's "Spiral Dyke", the art of the earth was a form of spatialisation of a work of art in its natural surroundings using natural material (sand, stones, rock, branches, etc.) and atmospheric conditions. Works such as "Lightning Field" by Walter de Maria or a series of lines (e.g. "A Line Made by Walking") by Richard Long belong to the canon of earth art. Earth art and environmental art have taken the environment as their main point of reference, often using vast open spaces where large-scale, monumental works have been carried out, clearly interfering with the existing landscape, transforming it permanently or temporarily and subjecting it to the action of natural factors (atmospheric, geological, etc.). This also includes the bird's eye view work of Jarosław Kozakiewicz's "Mars Project": a vast composition in the shape of a human ear, made on the site of a closed lignite mine in the German Lusatian Lakeland. Referring to the ideology of minimalism in terms of materials and means used, over time the art of the earth began to take on new, more ephemeral and less monumental forms, often reduced to an artistic gesture, striving to a large extent to integrate the work of art with its surroundings, aesthetic, formal inscribing itself into the landscape, and even blending into the landscape. Mirosław Maszlanko, who penetrates nature with his wicker works, making the environment and the work interact with each other, should be mentioned here. Another good example are works emphasising a given place with their meaning or form, both in natural and urban space.

In urban space, the projects that can be classified as landscaping art more often originate from the critical art trend, which enters public space as a sphere of discourse, causing its temporary or permanent transformation with the use of artistic means and the issue taken up by it (it is difficult to be indifferent to, for example, architecture, which had previously become the object of Wodiczko's works). Works in public spaces use new technologies (holograms) much more often or are reduced to one-off actions. They often refer to ecological and social issues (Julita Wójcik's vegetable gardens), political issues (Cecylia Malik's "Mother of the Pole on felling", a work in which women feeding their children occupied the stumps of trees that have just been cut down), updating the scope of dialogue

and care ("Tomek Kawiak's Pain" from 1970, a work in which the artist bandaged trimmed trees in the city centre).

Equally important for the understanding of landscaping art are works that are part of cultural thinking about landscape, emphasising its social and process dimension. Here the first reference is the understanding of the landscape as a space transformed, inhabited and co-created by humans. Hubert Czerepok's film "Ekosystem" is a flagship example of this type of work, stressing the social experience born in the landscape. The second point of reference is the topographical experience, possible to gain only during a wandering (however understood). Examples of this kind of thinking can be found in all fields of art: from painting (Tatarczyk), through photography (Bulhak, Rydel), to actions and performances (Robakowski).

[B. F.]

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