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Eco Art

University of Dayton

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Monday, September 7, 2009

Eco Art

Leah

Art can be used for many purposes besides rendering and beauty; one example of this is activism in the arts. Artists often use their work to draw attention to environmental issues and places. Some artists transform nature to draw attention to the beauty of the area; one example of this is James Turrell.

Other artists use not only their work, but also the process of approving and creating their pieces to engage the community. Christo and Jean Claude created a piece called running fence; they went to many town meetings to get the project approved. During these meetings people argued about the meaning of art, property ownership, and their landscape. Eventually they were able to erect a fence that followed the hills and valleys of the earth and was made of slightly transparent white sheets of fabric. The end result only remained for a few days but beautifully caught the light and drew people's attention to the splendor of their countryside.

Andy Goldsworthy's art is not as political as the work of Christo and Jean Claude, but beautiful nonetheless. He immerses himself in a natural setting for a period of time and creates art using only what he finds. Some artists care more about the physical effect of their art than how visually pleasing it is. Jackie Brookner's art actually helps to filter the air and water while being aesthetically pleasing.

Next week we will all be able to personally meet the "eco-artist" Betsy Damon who works specifically with water issues. In her piece living water garden, "Polluted river water moves through a natural, and artistic treatment system of ponds, filters and flowforms, making the process of cleaning water visible." Later on the Beehive Collective, a political and environmental art making organization, will also visit UD.

Take some time to look through some of the artist's work and artist's statements.

James Turrell: <http://www.pbs.org/art21/artists/turrell/clip1.html#>

Christo and Jean Claude: <http://www.christojeanneclaude.net/rf.shtml>

Andy Goldsworthy:

http://www.rwc.uc.edu/artcomm/web/w2005_2006/maria_Goldsworthy/philosophy.html

Jackie Brookner: <http://www.jackiebrookner.net/>

Betsy Damon: <http://keepersofthewaters.org/WhoAndWhat.cfm>

Beehive Collective: <http://www.beehivecollective.org/>

For more artists: http://greenmuseum.org/archive_index.php

