

Ghazal Ghazi | Session 2:

Installations & Performances: Notions of Time, Space & Place

List of Required Supplies: notepad, pen

Space/Facility Requirements: table, chair

Student Time Required: 60 minutes

Additional Links: Short videos for additional information on artists:

- Christo & Jeanne-Claude, *Floating Piers*, <https://youtu.be/h9KMY970tXk>
- Robert Smithson, *Land Art*, <https://youtu.be/FVRgwEQX3zs>
- Agnes Denes <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7hfQjkuM3t8>
- Gustav Metzger, *Auto-Destructive Art*, <https://youtu.be/9nzzLdiI9eg>
- Gustav Metzger Interview, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5ioYs20rnL8&t=125s>
- Marina Abramović & Ulay, *The Lovers*, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GY3LGAZnso8>

Step-by-step Instructions

1. Review the images and artist information on the following pages along with the included external media links.
2. Complete the writing assignment at the end of the lesson.

Installation

The installation and arrangement of objects in a space.

- The space and viewer are often an integral part of the piece.
- Often temporary

Christo & Jeanne-Claude

- Christo (1935-2020), born in Bulgaria
- Jean-Claude (1935, 2009), born in French Morocco
- Large-scale, site-specific environmental installations
- They often wrapped large landscapes or structures in fabric
- “I wanted to transform it, to turn it from an architectural object, an object of inspiration for artists, to an art object, period” - Christo.

Surrounded Islands (1983)

Miami, FL



Image by Wolfgang Volz, via Christo's [website](#)

Christo & Jeanne-Claude

Wrapped Reichstag (1995)

Berlin, Germany



Image by Wolfgang Volz, via Christo's [website](#)

Christo & Jeanne-Claude

The Floating Piers (2014-2016)

Lake Iseo, Italy

- <https://youtu.be/h9KMY970tXk>

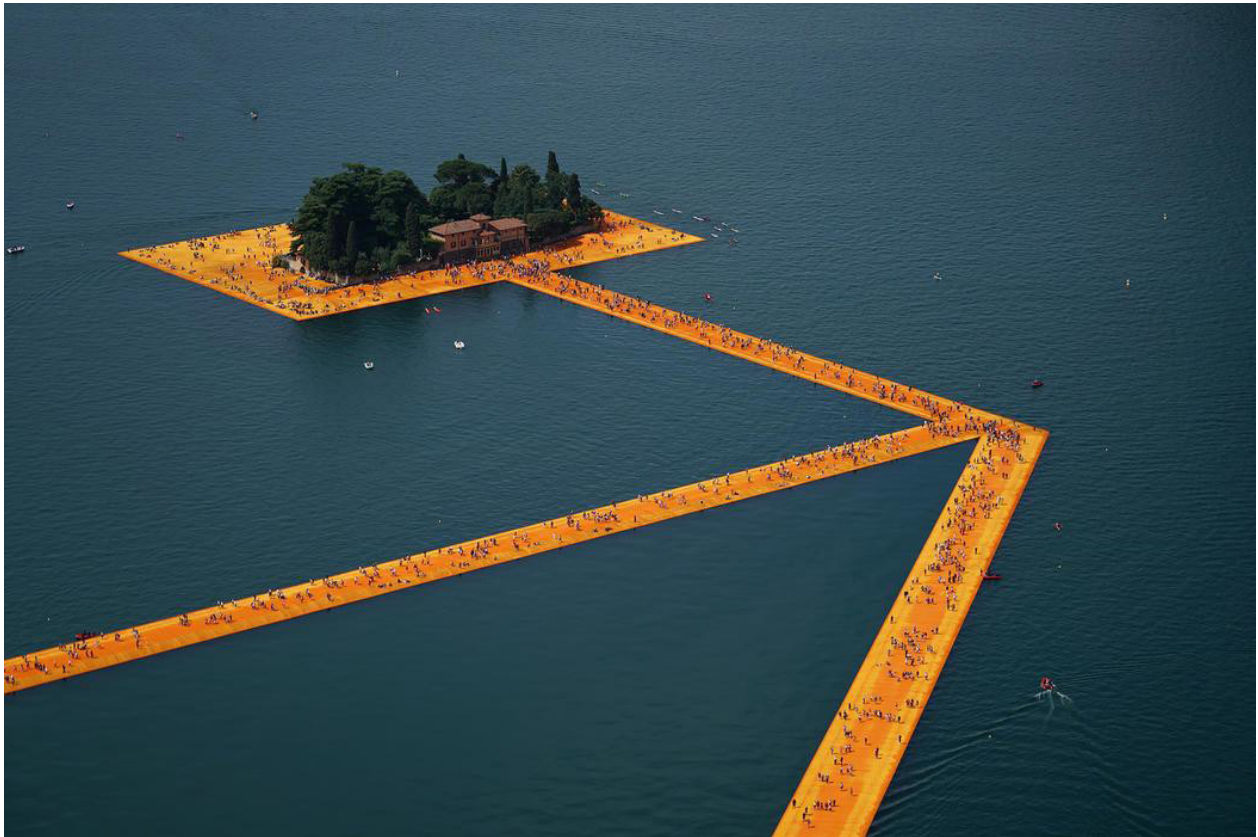
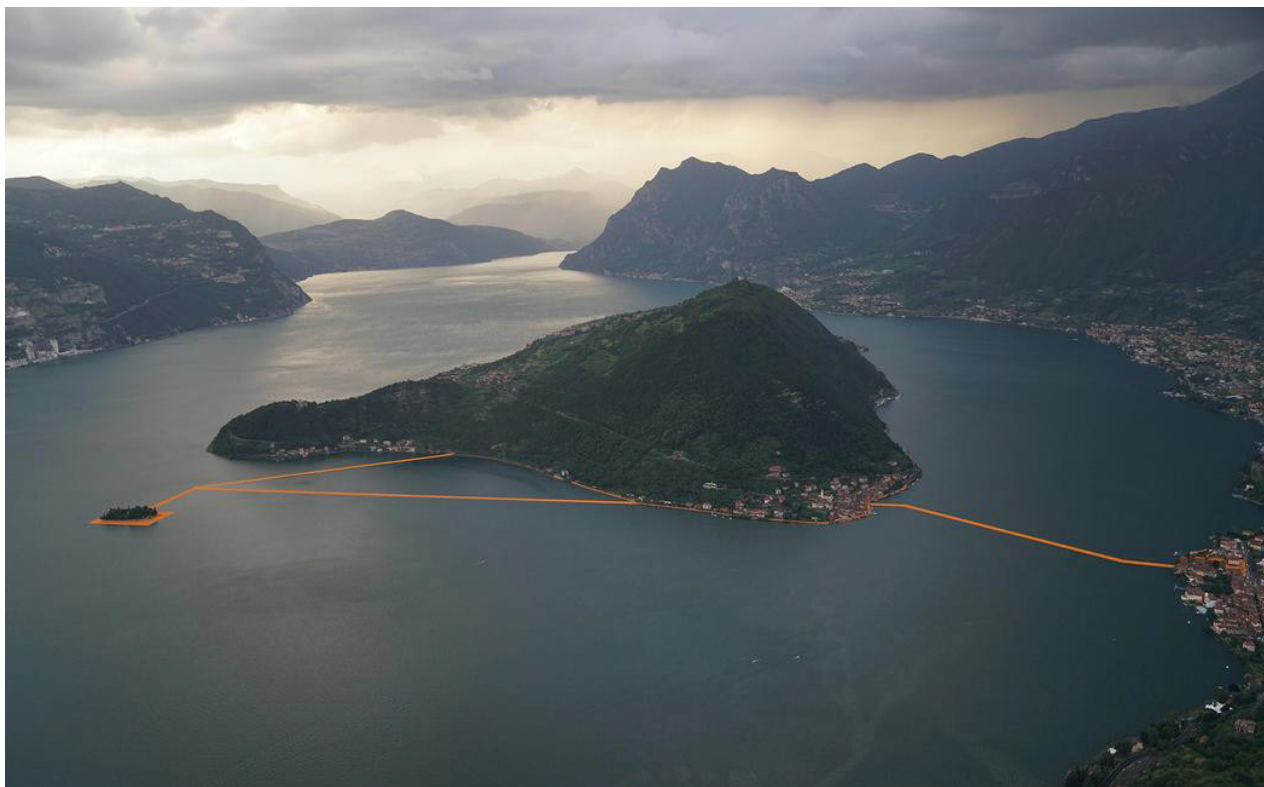


Image by Wolfgang Volz, via Christo's [website](#)



Images by Wolfgang Volz, via Christo's [website](#)



Janet Echelman (1966-Present)

- American
- Monumental floating aerial sculptures
- Themes: interconnection of earth's systems

Her Secret is Patience (2009)

Phoenix, AZ



Image via the artist's [website](#)

Environmental Art

Explores the artist's relationship with nature

- Emerged in the 1960s-1970s
- Often made of natural materials
- Sometimes, but not always, encompasses ecological concerns

Land Art/Earthworks

Art movement that emerged in the U.S. in the 1960s. Monumental structures are created directly in natural landscapes with organic materials found at the site. A form of environmental art.

- Often includes ecological/political themes
- When artists choose a site, they incorporate organic materials found at that site (vegetation, bones, soil, rocks, water)
- The sites are often in remote rural areas
- Rejects the commodification and commercialization of art, and the notion that art should be bought and sold for profit
- Critiques and rejects museums, galleries, and commercial art markets
 - Desire to create other sites of artistic practice
- Requires wide open spaces
- Place is important, as is the issue of time
 - Materials degrade over time or are altered by natural forces
 - Ephemerality, mortality, transformation

Robert Smithson

- For his works he often picked damaged sites
- Themes: rebirth, transformation, renewal
- <https://youtu.be/FVRgwEQX3zs>

Spiral Jetty (1970)

Great Salt Lake, Utah

Mud, precipitated salt crystals, rocks, water



Image via the [Holt Smith Foundation](#)

Agnes Denes (1931-Present)

- American-Hungarian artist
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7hfQjkuM3t8>

Wheatfield, a Confrontation (1982)

Battery Park Landfill,
Downtown Manhattan

- Planted a 2-acre wheat field in a landfill just blocks from Wall Street



Image from the artist's [website](#)

Nils Udo (1937-Present)

- German artist
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7hfQjkuM3t8>

The Nest (1978)

Germany

Earth, rocks, birches, grass



Image via the artist's [website](#)

Performance

An artwork that is created using the body, presence, and actions of the artist or participants.

- Can be performed live or recorded.
- Can be planned and scripted, or performed spontaneously.
- Questions how people engage with social reality
- Ephemerality, temporality
 - The art itself is not an object that can be stored – though it can be documented and recorded

Gustav Metzger (1926-2017)

- Developed the concept of “auto-destructive art”
 - Art that destroys itself, either naturally or artificially
 - The art itself is a destructive act
 - Critique of capitalist values, the commodification of art, the Cold War, nuclear arms race, and nuclear annihilation
- Participated in many political protests and movements
- Born to Polish Jewish parents in Germany
 - He escaped to Britain as a child refugee
 - His parents were later murdered by the Nazis
- His work concentrates on the, “formulation of what destruction is and what it might be in relation to art.”
- *Auto-Destructive Art*: <https://youtu.be/9nzzLdil9eg>
- Gustav Metzger Interview: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5ioYs20rnL8&t=125s>

Acid Action Painting (1961)

Demonstration at the South Bank, London

- He wore a gas mask as he sprayed three nylon sheets with hydrochloric acid



“The important thing about burning a hole in that sheet was that it opened up a new view across the Thames of St Paul’s cathedral. Auto-destructive art was never merely destructive. Destroy a canvas and you create shapes.”

Marina Abramović (1946-Present)

- Serbian performance artist

The Lovers: The Great Wall Walk (1988)

- With Ulay, fellow performance artist and ex-partner
- They had been together for 12 years and had originally planned the trip to marry in the center of the wall, but by the time their documents were approved and funds were raised, their relationship had ended.
- So they spent 90 days walking the length of the wall, each one starting at an opposite side until they met in the middle to hug and officially end their relationship.
 - Themes: intimacy, geography, separation, pilgrimage, the transformation of relationships, distance, love, and time.
- <https://youtu.be/GY3LGAZnso8>



Image via [The Guardian](#)

Bread & Puppet Theater (1960s-Present)

- Founded in New York in 1960s by Peter Schumann
- Political puppet theater
 - Larger than life protest puppets
 - Puppets were taken to protests
 - Frequently attended anti-war protests of the 1960s and 1970s to protest the Vietnam War, and have continued to attend antiwar, environmental, and anti-racists protests throughout the years
- Called Bread & Puppet because they would serve their own freshly-baked bread at their performances to inspire a sense of community
 - Believe that art is as important to life as bread



Image via [NPR](#)



© Copyright Fred W. McDarrah, Courtesy Steven Kasher Gallery, New York

Image by Fred W. McDarrah via [Daily Mail](#)



Image via [NPR](#)

Ana Mendieta (1948-1985)

- Cuban-American artist
- Created the tradition of “Earth-body” artwork
 - Ritual and body-based performance
- Created interdisciplinary works that were a mix of performance art and land art

Siluetas (1973-1980)

- Themes: memory of identity, homeland, gender, artist’s relationship to history, sacrifice, diaspora

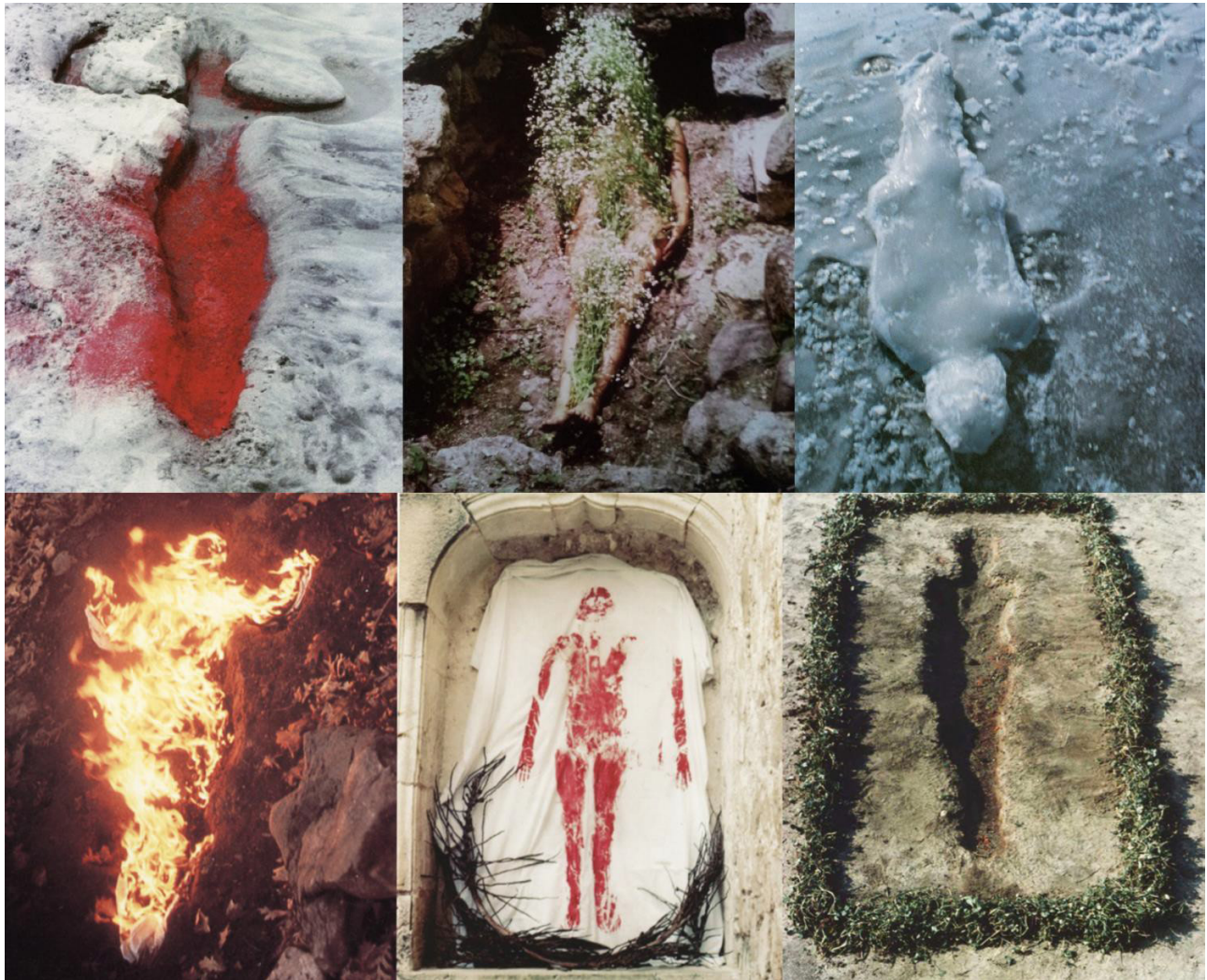


Image via [Sleek Magazine](#)

Khaled Jarrar (1976-Present)

- Contemporary Palestinian performance artist, installation artist, and filmmaker

Installation: *No Man's Land/Khaled's Ladder* (2016)

- The artist constructed a ladder out of a piece of the U.S.-Mexico border wall
- Installed the ladder between the border and a playground in Juarez, Mexico
- Themes: border wall, immigration, transnational struggles against colonialism



Images via [CultuRunners](#)

Performance: *Blood for Sale* (2018)

- The artist sold 50 vials of his own blood on Wall Street. The first 8 vials were sold for \$19.48 each (the cost of Smith & Wesson stock, and a parallel to the 1948 Palestinian Nakba), and the following were priced according to the stock rates of America's top 15 defense contractors.
- Proceeds were sent to hospitals in Gaza and Yemen.
- Themes: military industrial complex, Palestinian Nakba, capitalism, war



Images via [HyperAllergic](#)

Writing Assignment Homework #2

Choose a work of art that was covered in the lesson and do some additional research on the work or artist if needed (check out the included video links for your artist of choice, or do independent research). In a short essay of at least 1,000 words, answer the following questions:

1. Describe the artwork: the name of the artist, the title of the artwork, and the year it was produced. What type of art is it? Describe its physical characteristics (size, materials, imagery, colors, shapes/form, etc).
2. What are the themes that are explored in the work? What social, cultural, environmental, political, or historical concerns is the artist responding to in this work?
3. Where is the artwork located? How does the artwork embody site-specificity? What added meaning does the location contribute to the meaning of the artwork? Would the meaning change if it was in the private space of a museum or gallery? If so, how?
4. What role does the element of time play in the artwork? Is it temporary or permanent? Who is the intended audience and how does the audience access the work?
5. How do you feel about the artwork? Do you like it or dislike it, and why? What thoughts, emotions, and questions does it bring up for you?