

“SPACE-SPECIFIC”: DIEGO ESPOSITO’S MOST RECENT PROJECT

“Earth Art”, in the 1970s, was an alternative and less successful term for “Land Art”: but now it looks like the most appropriate definition for Diego Esposito’s developing project of the last several years. The work, in fact, is focused less on the soil, the land, or the landscape than on the whole of the planet: on the Earth.

At a series of sites across the globe, chosen at times for personal, affective, or emotional reasons, and at others in the light of historical associations, the artist has arranged to situate, or has simply appropriated, a large stone or boulder onto which he has affixed a small, circular, reflecting surface, and then determined its exact coordinates of latitude and longitude, as given by the system of GPS satellites. In Tuscany – an area supremely charged with references to art – he sited a green stone in the park of the Centro per l’Arte Contemporanea Luigi Pecci in Prato, and was very much aware that the very same kind of stone had been used as construction material for Gothic and Renaissance cathedrals; in China, the country of the future, he appropriated one of the region’s typically yellow boulders, and the recording of its spatial position in the Shanghai park called “Oriental Land” establishes its identity as part of his project. Esposito is also scheduled to perform this operation in Korea, Japan and California, and then will turn his attention to various other places of all of the earth’s five continents.

The work consists of a series of site-specific parts but can’t be grasped by the eye: it can only be grasped in thought, by way of the mental process that links these parts to one another in a series of relationships that are emotional, personal, historical, spatial, geographic, and even geological. It will never be possible to see the whole of the work at once, but only to *think* it, even though each of its elements has immediately perceptible physicality.

The planet will thus be encircled by still another network of invisible spatial coordinates: but in this case, the network of interrelationships is in no way established by economic contingencies, or by a need to monitor and regulate human activity (as with all the various forms of satellite surveillance). It’s a question, instead, of the creative freedom of the artist who maps the planet with his own emotions; with his own travels – both interior and real; with his own cultural and historical references.

It’s an invitation to freedom: to the creation of true and proper alternative networks of secret feelings, invisible but nonetheless concretely present.

Marco Meneguzzo

From “*Space-specific*”: *Diego Esposito’s most recent project*, Oriental Land Park Museum, Shanghai, 2007.