

COMPLEMENTING NATURE'S RHYTHMS

Five environmental art sites and monumental sculpture parks express the connection between creativity and the environment

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The environmental or earth art movement in the U.S. took shape in the late 1960s when painters, sculptors and mixed-media artists demanded to breach the confines of galleries and museums. These freethinkers adopted the natural landscape as their palette, trading paint brushes and drawing pads for cranes and excavators. Some erected sculptures to be discovered through serendipity; others crafted installations designed to decompose or dissolve through the seasons.

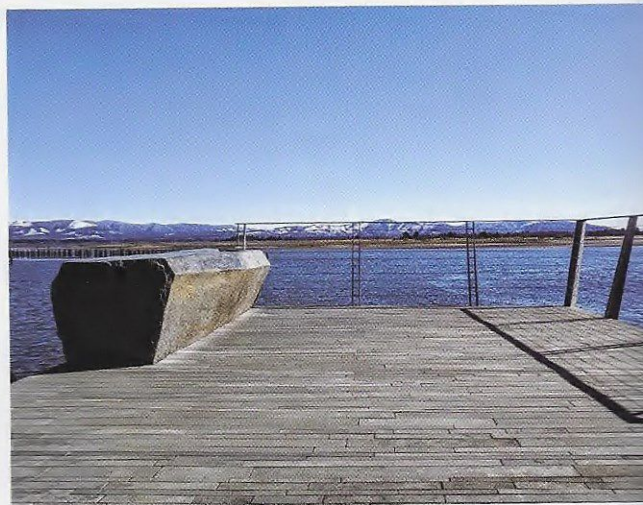
Here we highlight five environmental art sites, each worthy of a pilgrimage, places to gain a fresh perspective on art as you spark an encounter with all of your senses.

Confluence Project by Maya Lin Oregon and Washington

In 2001, the organizers behind the Confluence Project tapped artist Maya Lin (of Washington, D.C.'s Vietnam Veterans Memorial fame) to create artworks near the Columbia River and its tributaries. These pieces were to provide context in sharing stories of Northwest Native Americans and explorers Lewis and Clark. Lin agreed, provided that she could also use the opportunity to address environmental concerns. She began the monuments in 2002, and the sixth and final project, a walkway at Celilo Park, Oregon, will be completed in 2019.

The Confluence Project spans a length of 438 miles, ending at the gateway to Hells Canyon in Eastern Washington. At Cape Disappointment State Park, near Ilwaco, Washington, installations include a basalt fish cleaning table. Then at Chief Timothy Park, in Clarkston, Washington, Lin erected *Listening Circle*, an amphitheater inspired by the Nez Perce Tribe.

Sacajawea State Park in Pasco, Washington, features seven "story circles," each made of stone and etched with text from Lewis and Clark's journals and Native American stories. At Sandy River Delta in Troutdale, Oregon, an elliptical bird blind is made of wooden vertical posts inscribed with the names of 120 bird, animal and fish species. Last, the Vancouver Land Bridge, designed by architect Johnpaul



Top: *The Domo* by Ensemble Studio, Tippet Rise Art Center in Fishtail, Montana. Photo: James Florio **Above:** Maya Lin's fish cleaning station at Cape Disappointment State Park. Photo: Long Beach Peninsula Visitors Bureau



di Rosa Center for Contemporary Art, Napa Valley, California
Photo: Israel Valencia

Jones, arches over the State Route 14 highway. The pedestrian path blooms with native flowers and grasses; confluenceproject.org.

di Rosa Center for Contemporary Art Napa, California

When no one else believed in the validity of Bay Area artists, Rene di Rosa did. The collector and his wife, Veronica, spent 40 years amassing what is known as the world's largest collection of modern art by Northern California artists. In 1997, the couple decided to open their personal galleries and all 217 acres to the public. In 2000, it became a non-profit public trust.

Today, visitors can explore more than 1,500 pieces from more than 700 artists, with works stemming from the mid-20th century to early 21st century. Rene di Rosa often poked around working studios to see what creative types were up to. If something struck his fancy, he acquired it. Now that the founders have passed away, the organization is focused on

maintaining the collection and reaching out to more art lovers with traveling exhibits, off-site art programs, and hands-on activities for all ages.

Meanwhile, the wildfires in the fall of 2017 that swept wine country affected outdoor sculptures at the center but did not destroy them. In May 2018, the outdoor sculpture meadow reopened, with more than 100 pieces undergoing professional cleaning of the fire's residual toxins and contaminants. Tourists will continue to gape at the spinning angel statue, the upside down Volkswagen hanging from a tree, and the world's largest file cabinet, standing 65 feet high. Visitors can book a sculpture meadow walk and be treated to works by Viola Frey, Robert Arneson and di Rosa himself; dirosaart.org.

Spiral Jetty by Robert Smithson Great Salt Lake, Utah

In 1970, Robert Smithson laid out a giant coil pattern made of 6,000 tons of basalt lava rocks and dirt connected to the



Robert Smithson, *Spiral Jetty*, 1970. © Holt-Smithson | Foundation/Licensed by VAGA, New York. Photo: Nancy Holt. Courtesy Dia Art Foundation, New York