

John Hansard Gallery

University of Southampton
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Free Admission

Open Tuesday to Friday 11–5
Saturday 11–4 / T: 023 8059 2158
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www.hansardgallery.org.uk

John Hansard Gallery Central

9 Civic Centre Road
Southampton, SO14 7JF
Free Admission
Open Tuesday to Saturday 11–6

About us

John Hansard Gallery is a world-leading centre for contemporary art. Launched in 1980, the Gallery showcases innovative work by UK and international artists through exhibitions, off-site projects, research, publications, education and outreach programmes. Bringing artists and communities together, the Gallery makes a vital contribution to the cultural life of the city and region and encourages new practice by today's best artists and curators.

John Hansard Gallery is part of the **University of Southampton** and supported by **Arts Council England**.

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Press Release

Nancy Holt and Robert Smithson England and Wales 1969

10 May – 17 August 2013

John Hansard Gallery presents the work of two leading world figures within the Land Art movement, Nancy Holt and Robert Smithson, seeking to examine a short but significant moment within their working life together; a trip made to the UK in August and September 1969. Developed to coincide with a major exhibition - *Uncommon Ground: Land Art in Britain 1966-1979* - at nearby Southampton City Art Gallery from 10 May - 3 August, the John Hansard Gallery expands a story begun in the 1960s.

In August 1969, prompted by Smithson's inclusion in the seminal exhibition at the ICA, 'When Attitudes Become Form', Robert Smithson and Nancy Holt came to the UK and spent one month travelling together to various sites throughout England and Wales. From Chesil Beach, Dorset to Old Sarum, Wiltshire, Oxted chalk quarry in Surrey and Pembrokeshire, Wales, the exhibition aims to give an immersive overview of this journey, bringing together a range of the photographic and sculptural works that the artists produced during their visit.

Robert Smithson's contribution includes exhibition prints of original Slideworks, most notably his Mirror Displacement series. Here, Smithson would photograph arrangements of seven or eight elongated rectangular mirrors in various locations, the exposed mirrors capturing in their reflections fragments of nature nearby, such as rocky quarry crevices, grassy mounds and empty stone beaches. A museum replica of his non-site sculpture *Chalk Mirror Displacement* has been made with chalk mined from the same Oxted quarry where Smithson gathered the chalk for this sculpture in 1969.

Nancy Holt is well-known for her large-scale sculptural works in the environment, such as *Sun Tunnels* (1976) in the Utah desert where four concrete tunnels 18 ft. (5.5 m) long with an outer diameters of 9.2 ft. (2.8 m) form an open X configuration 86 ft. (26.2 meters) on the diagonal, the tunnels being aligned with the sunrises and sunsets on the Summer and Winter Solstices. In the top half of each tunnel are holes representing the stars in a particular constellation. The sun shines through the star holes casting spots of light in the bottom of the tunnels. Alongside her sculptures, Holt has always used photography and film, not only to document her work, but as a continuation of her interest in memory, perception, time and space. This exhibition focuses on Holt's photography, including *Trail Markers* (1969); a series of inkjet prints from original Instamatic slide transparencies made on a visit to Dartmoor. *Trail Markers* consists of twenty images and will be shown along with another two works from the trip, *Wistman's Wood* in Dartmoor, and *Old Sarum Ruins* in Salisbury, Wiltshire.

To complement the photographic works and further contextualise their work, the exhibition will include a number of films which demonstrate their collaborative working practices. Some were made by both Smithson and Holt together (*Swamp, East Coast West Coast*), while with others (*Mono Lake, Breaking Ground: Broken Circle/Spiral Hill*) Holt has overseen the final realisation of film projects she and Smithson began many years earlier. The inclusion of these films aims to reinforce the collaborative cohesion that this exhibition embodies.

Acting as a comprehensive diary of Smithson and Holt's journey to the UK in 1969, this exhibition will mark the first occasion this material will have been brought together. Also exhibited for the first time are a number of personal photographs by the artists, capturing informal moments along the course their journey.

Nancy Holt and Robert Smithson: England and Wales 1969 showcases these seminal artists' relationship with ecology, geology and natural phenomena that was so central to their work, and continued in its influence throughout their careers.

Re-visiting Land Art: Symposium

Saturday 11 May 2013, 10am – 6pm

Drawing together both John Hansard Gallery's Nancy Holt and Robert Smithson exhibition, and Southampton City Art Gallery's *Uncommon Ground: Land Art in Britain 1966-1979*, a one day symposium will be held on Saturday 11 May 2013 in Southampton including tours of both exhibitions, alongside a range of guest speakers (including curators and artists from both exhibitions) and discussion sessions.

Further information is available on the John Hansard Gallery website:

www.hansardgallery.co.uk

A John Hansard Gallery exhibition supported by The Henry Moore Foundation, organised with the assistance of the Estate of Robert Smithson, James Cohan Gallery.

**The Henry Moore
Foundation**