

# e-flux

41 Essex street  
New York, NY 10002, USA

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## SKOR | Foundation for Art and Public Domain



Still from "Breaking Ground: Broken Circle/Spiral Hill." (1971–2011)

© The Estate of Robert Smithson/Pictoright Amsterdam.

Camera: Benito Strangio.

### **Video BREAKING GROUND: Broken Circle/Spiral Hill (1971–2011)**

Robert Smithson

Broken Circle/Spiral Hill, 1971

Emmen, The Netherlands

17 September–27 November 2011

### **SKOR | Foundation for Art and Public Domain**

Land Art Contemporary

[www.landartcontemporary.nl](http://www.landartcontemporary.nl)

Forty years after the completion of the earthwork *Broken Circle/Spiral Hill* (1971) in Emmen, the film that land art artist Robert Smithson was never able to finish due to his untimely death, is now to be completed as a video with support from Dutch partners.

*Breaking Ground: Broken Circle/Spiral Hill (1971–2011)* will be presented in the context of the *Land Art Contemporary* program, which also includes an exhibition program and an extensive publication.

In June 1971, the American artist Robert Smithson (1938–1973) completed the land art project *Broken Circle/Spiral Hill* in a sand quarry in Emmen. Smithson made the work at the invitation of the *Sonsbeek buiten de perken (Beyond the Pale)* exhibition. Forty years following its completion, and after a highly eventful history, the work in Emmen is once again in good condition, and is the regular destination for those interested in

Smithson's work from all over the world.

*Broken Circle/Spiral Hill* is the only 'earthwork' produced by Smithson still in existence outside the United States. As an integral part of these works, Smithson made films that reveal the spatial and environmental context of the work. Aerial shots in a symmetrical pattern were combined with close-ups, documentary footage of the construction of the work and views of the surrounding landscape. In this way, visitors to galleries and museums were introduced to the earthworks produced by Smithson in barely accessible, remote locations. As a result of a tragic aircraft accident during a reconnaissance flight in 1973, Smithson's life and work came to a premature end. Smithson was never able to finish the film about *Broken Circle/Spiral Hill*.

Forty years later, a video incorporating the original film footage is now to be completed on behalf of the *Land Art Contemporary* program in a collaboration between artist Nancy Holt and curator Theo Tegelaers of SKOR | Foundation for Art and Public Domain. Nancy Holt and Robert Smithson made several films together and were married for a decade until his death in 1973. Holt currently works with a Dutch team in editing the video *Breaking Ground: Broken Circle/Spiral Hill*, including the original film footage she shot in 1971, and video recently shot recently in Emmen by a Dutch crew. The video will be made guided by Smithson's film notes and drawings.

### **Land Art Contemporary**

Several Dutch institutional and private partners are joining forces in the realization of a series of initiatives being developed in honor of the 40th anniversary of the creation of *Broken Circle/Spiral Hill*. All these elements are brought together by means of co-production, support and presentation in the multiyear program *Land Art Contemporary*.

In 2011, *Land Art Contemporary* will include the following program components:

- Production and premiere of the video *Breaking Ground: Broken Circle/Spiral Hill* (1971–2011) (SKOR | Foundation for Art and Public Domain. In cooperation with Nancy Holt)
- Launch of the project *The Ultraperiferic*—a series of assignments to contemporary artists, reconsidering the meaning of land art in the spirit of Robert Smithson (SKOR | Foundation for Art and Public Domain. Curators: Nils van Beek and Theo Tegelaers)
- Exhibition 'Robert Smithson in Emmen. *Broken Circle/Spiral Hill* Revisited'. (Centrum Beeldende Kunst (CBK) Emmen (Centre for Visual Arts). Curator: Roel Arkesteijn)
- The publication *Robert Smithson. Art in Continual Movement* (Ingrid Commandeur, Trudy van Riemsdijk-Zandee (ed.) /Alauda Publications)

A full program will be published on [www.landartcontemporary.nl](http://www.landartcontemporary.nl)

### **Dates:**

17 September–27 November 2011: Exhibition program and video *Breaking Ground: Broken Circle/Spiral Hill* (1971–2011). Official opening and premiere on 17 September at CBK Emmen. Nancy Holt will be present)  
 22 September: Video screening with introduction by Nancy Holt at the Stedelijk Museum Amsterdam  
 27 November: Finissage of the exhibition and release of the publication *Robert Smithson. Art in Continual Movement* by Alauda Publications

### **Location:**

CBK Emmen, Ermerweg 88b (De Fabriek), Emmen, the Netherlands  
 And other locations, visit [www.landartcontemporary.nl](http://www.landartcontemporary.nl)

### **Opening hours:**

Wednesdays through Sundays  
 13.00–17.00 hours  
 FREE ADMISSION

*Land Art Contemporary* is an initiative of LACDA Foundation in Drenthe. The program has been made possible thanks to (content and financial) support from SKOR | Foundation for Art and Public Domain, the Province of Drenthe, European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development (LEADER), Municipality of Coevorden, Municipality of Emmen, Cultuurfonds BNG and the Sanders – ten Holte family.

Photo:

The Estate of Robert Smithson is represented by the James Cohan Gallery in New York.

Note for editors:

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