

Nevada Museum of Art Presents Exhibition of Andrea Zittel and High Desert Test Sites

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Body Desert: End Trails, HDTS 2011, bodycity, Coyote Dry Lake, Joshua Tree. Photo: Andrea Zittel. Courtesy the artist and High Desert Test Sites.

In 2000, artist Andrea Zittel relocated from Brooklyn, New York, to a property she purchased in the Mojave Desert near Joshua Tree National Park, where she established a home, studio, and “testing grounds” called A-Z West. In 2002, with collaborators Andy Stillpass, John Connelly, Lisa Anne Auerbach, and Shaun Caley Regen, she established High Desert Test Sites (HDTS)—a series of ephemeral, experimental site-specific projects including sculpture, performance, workshops, and intimate exchanges. HDTS became best known for its roving biennial events, with installations spread across locations that have stretched from Joshua Tree to Albuquerque. HDTS also hosts a residency program, holds film screenings, produces publications, and conducts community-based programs such as Kip’s Desert Book Club and High Desert Test Kitchen.

CA Truck Heads, HDTS 3 (2003), Sarah Vanderlip, Behind the Bail Bonds, Joshua Tree. Photo: Sarah Lyon. Courtesy the artist and High Desert Test Sites.

Recently, the Nevada Museum of Art’s Center for Art + Environment acquired the HDTS archives, which now will be made available to the public for the first time in the exhibition *Disturbances in the Field: Art in the High Desert from Andrea Zittel’s A-Z West to High Desert Test Sites*, on view at the Museum from July 3, 2021 through February 6, 2022. Guest curated by Brooke Hodge, the exhibition will look back on two decades of HDTS

activities, as seen through more than fifty items that range from posters, zines, flags, and documentary photographs to T-shirts, videos, sculptures, and painted rocks sold at auction. In addition to the co-founders, artists represented include Wade Guyton, Joel Otterson, Kate Costello, Aleksandra Mir, Raymond Pettibon, Shannon Ebner, Kristin Beinner James, Marie Lorenz, Christopher James, Jack Pierson, and Julia Scher.

The exhibition is one of five that the Museum is presenting in its 2021 Art + Environment Season, *Land Art: Past, Present, Futures*. The season also encompasses virtual discussions and talks by 23 distinguished speakers (September 23 through November 19), a

live outdoor “transformance” in Las Vegas by Rose B. Simpson, and a publication by the Museum and Monacelli of a 256-page, lavishly illustrated book, *Gianfranco Gorgoni: Land Art Photographs*. In addition, the A+E Season website will publish an “exit interview” between Brooke Hodge and Andrea Zittel, on the occasion of new leadership taking on management of the non-profit organization.

David B. Walker, CEO of the Nevada Museum of Art, said, “The artists associated with High Desert Test Sites have brought a communal spirit, a keen sense of social and environmental dynamics, and an endlessly inventive, experimental sensibility to contemporary land art. They have met their goal of ‘challenging art to take on new areas of relevance.’ We are tremendously proud to present this two-decade overview of their work in our galleries and our A + E Season virtual discussions.”



William L. Fox, the Peter E. Pool Director of the Center for Art + Environment, said, “This exhibition gives us an exciting opportunity to reveal some highlights among the fascinating materials in the HDTS archives, as a first look at their riches. They take their place in this year’s A + E Season with other major archival holdings, from the G. Robert Deiro Land Art Archive Collection to the Judy Chicago *Atmospheres* archive.



Untitled, HDTS 2 (2003), Wade Guyton, Andy’s Gamma Gulch Parcel, Pioneertown. Photo: Regen Projects.
Courtesy the artist and High Desert Test Sites

Organized under the auspices of the Nevada Museum of Art’s Center for Art + Environment, *Land Art: Past, Present, Futures* will be presented from September 23 through November 19, 2021, offering multiple new opportunities for a global community of artists, scholars, writers, designers, and art enthusiasts to look at, talk about, and reflect upon our interaction with the natural world and the built environment. In the years since its first presentation in 2008, the A + E Conference has won international recognition as the premier event in its field, held in the state whose terrain has inspired historic and contemporary Land Art interventions from the early monumental works of Michael Heizer and Walter De Maria to the recent sculptures of Ugo Rondinone. The Conference has consistently sparked new scholarship, provoked fresh thinking, and helped forge productive partnerships. For more on the season and to subscribe, visit: nevadaart.org/conference2021.