

ART, SPACE, POLITICS

Edited by EMILY ELIZA SCOTT and KIRSTEN SWENSON

# CRITICAL LANDSCAPES

*Art, Space, Politics*

EDITED BY

Emily Eliza Scott and Kirsten Swenson



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# 3

SARAH KANOUSE

## Critical Day Trips: Tourism and Land-Based Practice

The critic Lucy Lippard opined in her groundbreaking 1999 book *On the Beaten Track*, “Since teaching people how to see is the artist’s business, it seems odd that tourism as an activity (rather than as an image or a symbol) has piqued so few progressive artists’ imaginations.”<sup>1</sup> In the ensuing fifteen years, we have witnessed an explosion of artist-initiated tours, guidebooks, excursions, and routes. While they actually function as tours, these projects refuse to collapse into the financial and attention economies of tourism. Providing unusual content, existing in the margins of the marketplace, and often displaying a self-reflexivity about being “touristic,” artists’ tours have emerged as an accessible and effective way to bring audiences into critically inflected encounters with landscape.

The Los Angeles Urban Rangers’ “L.A. River Ramble” asked visitors to complete one of three self-guided walks through downtown from the Museum of Contemporary Art’s Geffen Contemporary to view the channelized, concrete-banked Los Angeles River, culminating in a brief talk delivered by a uniformed Ranger (figure 9).<sup>2</sup> The tone was informative, if slightly tongue in cheek. The Rangers performed sincerely as trustworthy individuals in familiar brown hats. The eight hundred people who attended the evening’s tours were more than spectators, however. Tour guides need tourists, and the Rangers’ performance depended on the willingness of the audience to play that uncast role. Viewers agreed to lay aside conventions of individual spectatorship and aesthetic contemplation to “act” as tourists, obliquely acknowledging how artistic spectatorship itself is often touristic in nature. While artist and audience usually fulfill distinct roles within participatory projects such as the River Ramble, the space traditionally maintained between art



9. Los Angeles Urban Rangers, "L.A. River Ramble," August 4, 2011. Program from the series *Public Access 101: Downtown L.A.* for "Engagement Party" at the Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles. Photo by Harvey Oppenorth.

object and art viewer is collapsed. By depending on the participation of the audience to activate the experience, artists' tours can be seen as part of the "social turn" in contemporary art, in which the terms of spectatorship and meaning-making are renegotiated to accommodate some degree of improvisation and collaboration with the viewers.<sup>3</sup>

In addition to using participatory methods channeled through the forms of tourism, the L.A. Urban Rangers can be located within a cohort of contemporary research-based artists whose work ventures far from the art world—in terms of subject matter, methods, and audience—before circling back to it. The critic Brian Holmes describes these projects as "extradisciplinary investigations," a kind of engaged art practice rooted in the tradition of institutional critique yet exceeding it in scope and political ambition.

The extradisciplinary ambition is to carry out rigorous investigation on terrains as far away from art as finance, biotech, geography, urbanism, psychiatry, the electromagnetic spectrum, etc., to bring forth on these terrains the "free play of the faculties" and the intersubjective experimentation that are characteristic of modern art, but also to try to identify, inside those same domains, the spectacular or instrumental uses so often made of the subversive liberty of aesthetic play.<sup>4</sup>

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Holmes explains the relation of art as a discipline to work whose content exceeds the formalist limits traditionally assigned it under Modernism. By identifying what these practices share with aesthetic traditions—Kant’s notion of the “free play of the faculties” and experimental approaches that channel the twentieth-century avant-garde—Holmes locates “extradisciplinary,” research-based practice firmly in an art historical narrative while applauding it as a critical intervention within that very disciplinary tradition.

For the L.A. Urban Rangers, the tropes of twentieth-century National Parks-style family tourism are placed in the service of examining how nature and public space are perceived and managed in the city. While their early events drew primarily from art and urban studies audiences, their following today is far broader. Sponsored by MoCA, the Ramble event drew a mixture of art aficionados, conservationists, architects, historic preservationists, families attending MoCA’s Free Thursday Night, and people curious about the city. In this case, the Rangers’ relationship with the museum was tactical—a source of institutional support and audience—but their projects function quite well (and perhaps even better) when audiences don’t perceive them as “merely” art. Holmes describes this approach as “occupying a field with a potential for shaking up society and then radiating outward from that specialized domain, with the explicitly formulated aim of effecting change in the discipline of art, in the discipline of cultural critique, and even the ‘discipline’ . . . of leftist activism.”<sup>5</sup>

That the economic juggernaut of mass tourism could be one of those fields “with a potential for shaking up society” might be surprising. Taking into account gross receipts for leisure travel, lodging, dining, and sightseeing, tourism is often described as the world’s largest industry. Tourism’s economic dominance has only increased over the last three decades, as neoliberal globalization has shifted industrial operations to less-developed countries and stagnated wages. In the absence of meaningful alternatives, every slightly picturesque or exotic locale feels the pressure to reinvent itself as a destination for others’ leisure, a situation that is ripe for abuse, corruption, and resentment. Described in less-than-flattering terms, the tourist is one of Zygmunt Bauman’s four signal figures of postmodernity. Bauman writes:

The tourist is a conscious and systematic seeker of experience, of a new and different experience . . . as the joys of the familiar wear off and cease to allure. The tourists want to immerse themselves in a strange and bizarre element . . . on condition, though, that it will not stick to the skin. . . . In the tourist’s world the strange is tame, domesticated, and no longer frightens; shock comes in a package deal with safety.<sup>6</sup>

Bauman describes quite evocatively the insulated and privileged features that all too often prevent tourist experiences from resulting in a more nuanced awareness of geographical and political conditions or, at a minimum, a heightened sense of empathy. Yet if the tourist is indeed one of the “identity models” of late capitalism, as he claims,

it would seem essential to recuperate the tourist for progressive ends. Bauman's indictment feels totalizing and disabling: It is unclear how to move *through* rather than away from the problematics of tourism. Yet he offers an oblique (and probably unintentional) toehold. "The tourist's world is fully and exclusively structured by *aesthetic* criteria," he continues. "Tough and harsh realities resistant to aesthetic sculpting do not interfere here."<sup>7</sup> If touristic subjectivity is relentlessly aesthetic, could it not represent a site for artistic intervention? Aesthetic sculpting need not necessarily obscure "harsh realities" but could make them easier to grasp. Furthermore, politically engaged art practices of the past thirty years have staked out their own stances on the aesthetic, from the anti-aesthetic posture of much 1980s deconstructive art to positions that allow for the tactical deployment of beauty or perceive an inescapable "politics of aesthetics."<sup>8</sup> That tourism is aesthetic is not reason to dismiss it out of hand but rather to ask: Which (or whose) aesthetic? What does this aesthetic include and leave out? And, crucially, what does it do, how, and for whom?

At a moment where nearly every cultural form has been appropriated for artistic *détournement*, it is no surprise that the already highly performative domain of tourism has become both subject and form for contemporary art. Much of this activity may merely enlarge the scope of art as a discipline, much as capitalism continually expands to include areas of human activity that once existed outside it. But tourism has tremendous critical potential to operate in a transverse, "extradisciplinary" critical and creative space in which just as much is at stake outside the domain of art as within it. In what follows, I consider some of the aesthetic and political concerns evident in many critical artists' tours produced in the last fifteen years in the United States and Canada. Think of them as signposts offering directions, perhaps contradictory directions, to this terrain. May they provide points of departure for your own journey.

#### MATERIALIZING METHODS

Though artists' tours are clearly about something "out there" in the field, they are developed by people whose training in the arts has encouraged self-reflexivity in relation to form and content. Contemporary art prizes the conceptual alignment of method and product: Form is not a neutral carrier of content, and the method of production is a constitutive feature of the product. Because artists employ an almost infinite range of forms and strategies in their work, the choice to produce a tour is made neither automatically nor lightly. This intentionality and self-reflexivity is one of the basic features distinguishing artists' tours from conventional tourism.

Nevertheless, artists' tours are full of content and often explicitly claim to provide an alternative point of view to mainstream tourism, making it easy to overlook their position in relation to form and method. Artists who present tour experiences for an audience do so after a period of site-based inquiry that moves fluidly and frequently between experiences "in the field" and textual/archival research. Information is checked against the land-

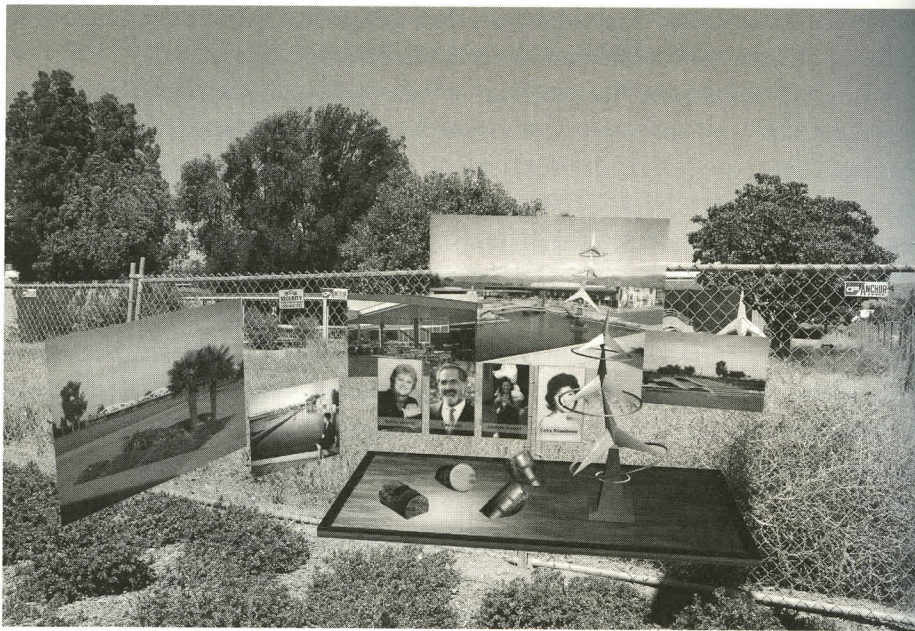
scape, while the landscape is reread in a research process that may not end before presentation to an audience but continues as mutual discovery on the tour.

Many artists' tours reflect the processes of their own creation while acknowledging that they remain open and incomplete, subject to audience experience, inflection, and reinterpretation. For example, Rozalinda Borcilă offers group tours as part of her ongoing research into the geography of the Foreign Trade Zone (FTZ). Established during the New Deal as areas within U.S. ports that are, for tariff purposes, considered legally outside national borders, the FTZ program has expanded into an elaborate set of networks and corridors for the shipping, warehousing, and refining of products outside the juridical purview of the United States but atop its physical territory. In addition to sharing her research, Borcilă opened the daylong event to participants, who collectively negotiated the day's route according to their own interests as they intersected with the FTZ.<sup>9</sup> During the tour, participants—ranging from university arts faculty to political organizers without college degrees—developed “spotting skills” to identify the physical markers of this abstract legal entity and asked questions Borcilă had never considered.<sup>10</sup> In this way, the event was as much a group seminar as a tour, designed to mutually grow an understanding of how global economic processes shape geographies underfoot.

Borcilă's work on Foreign Trade Zones points to the central feature of landscape long theorized by scholars: that the visual dimension of a site often conceals the “production of space” by historical and contemporary economic, social, and ecological agents, and is often designed to do so.<sup>11</sup> If artists increasingly have been drawn to the field of geography for its dialectical understanding of space and culture—that humans shape the Earth and are in turn shaped by it—artistic self-reflexivity and the more politicized forms of participatory practice offer creative methods that account for these dialectical processes.<sup>12</sup> Mobile technologies such as smartphones, tablet computers, and other location-aware devices enable artists to create media-rich tours that allow participants to access archival material in the field and overlay imagery on a live view of the site in ways that denaturalizes its physical appearance and makes explicit the forces that produced it. Elliot Anderson's “Silicon Monuments,” for example, is an augmented reality app for the iPhone that allows users to explore twenty-nine sites in Silicon Valley heavily polluted by the computer industry, annotating their mundane present-day appearances with archival images, 3D animations, and interviews with workers and community members affected by the area's toxic legacy (figure 10). While new-media tours afford the most explicit layering of visual and textual material, even simple guided tours can bring together the representational, discursive, and material strategies required to unpack space and make landscape more legible.

## SEEING TOURISM

A corollary effect of the critical tour's methodological self-reflexivity is that the audience is often reminded, in various ways, of their own act of touring. This stands in marked



10. Elliot Anderson, "Silicon Monuments: The Reflecting Pool Monument" (screenshot) 2012. Augmented reality app for the iPhone/iPad at the former IBM Administration Building. © Elliot Anderson, 2012.

contrast with conventional tourism's admonitions to blend in with the locals, have an insider experience, or, at the very least, be inconspicuous enough to avoid pickpockets. Artists' tours often exhibit strategies that disrupt this desire for disappearance, intentionally tinkering with the conventions of the tour in ways that allow the contrivance and authority of the form to be better grasped and redirected.

The Center for Land Use Interpretation (CLUI), which has been organizing bus tours of "unusual and exemplary" sites for more than fifteen years, is the best-known arts group using the tour form to bring audiences into direct encounters with landscape. CLUI tours are tightly programmed affairs up to two days long, with long drives and nearly nonstop commentary and explanatory media. Staff and visiting experts provide interpretation of sites ranging from gravel pits to bombing ranges. These events use wry humor to crack the conventions of tourism and narration to prompt an examination of how views of landscape are socially and institutionally conditioned.<sup>13</sup>

Other artists who offer live tours dispense with the CLUI's formality or undercut their own authority as guides in gestures that both expose their authorship and provoke responses from their spectators. Jordan Dalton, a young artist who organizes tours of toxic sites in upstate New York, sometimes brings maps and documents that he hasn't fully read or doesn't completely understand and asks the people on his tour to help decipher the jargon of the Environmental Protection Agency.<sup>14</sup> CLUI collaborator Steve



Rowell builds downtime and silent walking into his independently organized tours to provide opportunities for reflection.<sup>15</sup> These artists recognize and encourage their audiences to negotiate many complex readings in the context of a tour.

Finally, the politics and economics of tourism can be important subjects of the self-reflexive artist tour. These projects often adopt a more lighthearted, interventionist approach and make short-term, quick-read incursions into the landscape. For example, the Critical Art Ensemble, working with local collaborators, initiated "Halifax Begs Your Pardon," an annotation of the city's tourism infrastructure—kiosks, parks, monuments, and ferries—with alternative information and points of view. Emphasizing the tendency of cities economically dependent on tourism to promote a selective and relentlessly upbeat public image, the group prepared alternative informational brochures and installed public apologies—in the form of "sorry bricks," "sorry flags," and apologetic LED screens—at sites where local knowledge contradicts the city's sunny narrative.<sup>16</sup> Examples include both the lighthearted and the deadly serious, for instance regret for the phallic shape of downtown kiosks mixed with an acknowledgment of the present-day discharge of raw sewage into the harbor, or an apology for the city founders' policy of scalping the indigenous Mi'kmaq people in the eighteenth century.

#### SENSORY DENSITY

If seeing tourism is an important characteristic of critical tours, it nonetheless risks reproducing a central feature of touristic experience that has come under sharp criticism: the tourist gaze. As influentially theorized by John Urry, the tourist gaze collects visible signifiers of difference in the form of vistas and photographs that are conditioned by existing cultural tropes that flatten and stereotype the places visited and viewed. These tropes are often conditioned by advertising and imaginatively consumed by tourists before their actual encounter with a place. The tourist gaze then becomes a means to confirm "certain pre-established notions or signs derived from various discourses of tourism and travel."<sup>17</sup> Drawing on the Foucauldian link between vision and power in the Western tradition and mindful of photography's tendency to appropriate and claim its subject, Urry cautions that the tourist gaze risks producing a sense of mastery over a place without ever really "seeing" it.

Sensitive to this danger, artists employing the tour as a form often enlarge the gaze to consider how one's view has been framed. For example, "Siting Expositions," an audio tour of Vancouver's False Creek by Ryan Griffis, Lize Mogel, and Sarah Ross released by Griffis's Temporary Travel Office, opens with a track instructing the audience to view the city from a particular vantage point and to consider how their view is conditioned by conventions of mapping and pictorial representations of urban development (figure 11).<sup>18</sup> The tour immediately historicizes touristic spectatorship in the same way it historicizes the landscape, suggesting that they are ongoing, linked processes. Similarly, the L.A. Urban Rangers' downloadable "Field Guide to the American Road Trip" includes a cutout of a windshield to allow any view to be mediated by the automobilized gaze.<sup>19</sup>



11. Ryan Griffis, Lize Mogel, and Sarah Ross, "Siting Expositions" audio tour, 2010. Photo by Lize Mogel.

As valuable as self-reflexive spectatorship might be, it may not be enough to fundamentally change the distanced relationship established by the tourist gaze. For the ironically disposed, "seeing tourism" may paradoxically produce an even more distanced position than more earnest forms of sightseeing. Some scholars have argued that the problem is not with vision itself but with a particular model of sight that forgets that it is fundamentally an embodied, physical process intimately entangled with the other senses. Donna Haraway in particular recognized the "embodied nature of all vision" and sought to "reclaim the sensory system that has been used to signify a leap out of the marked body and into the conquering gaze from nowhere."<sup>20</sup> Writing about activist "toxic tours," Phaedra C. Pezzullo discusses how sight produces very unreliable information; what is most notable about a place is often unlikely to be visually apparent. Noting that "there are some experiences, some memories, some knowledges that are not limited to sight," Pezzullo goes on to describe, in visceral terms, feeling overpowered by such sensations as odor and scale on one toxic tour.<sup>21</sup> Far from disembodied eyeballs, tourists experience and process a range of sense impressions—sound, odor, temperature, touch—in the course of a visit, which all become elements in the composition of the experience.

The sense of hearing in particular has a strong association with tourism, with the narrated audio guide one of its most enduring forms. While most audio tours annotate

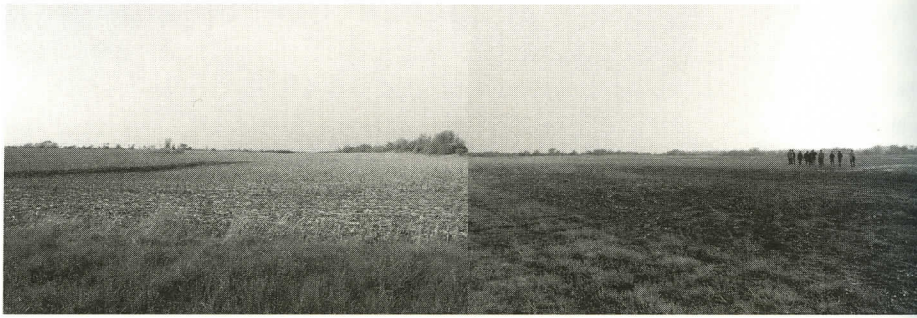
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or explain a landscape first encountered visually, they often employ musical and field sounds as well as the grain of the human voice to convey affective information not reducible to sight alone. Composed audio elements layer unpredictably but often effectively with the sights, smells, and sounds of the location. When the artists Amy Balkin and Kim Stringfellow composed “Invisible 5,” a tour of environmental justice sites along California’s Interstate 5 corridor, they designed the tracks to be heard at particular moments in the landscape.<sup>22</sup> Although the decision to distribute accessibly by CD and mp3 meant that synchronization is loose (in comparison to the precision of a GPS-triggered tour), the visual landscape still corresponds surprisingly well with the soundtrack. Emily Eliza Scott, coeditor of this volume, recounts of her experience with “Invisible 5”: “At one point, a track opened with unidentified clanking sounds. I looked out the car window to discover a small flock of bobbing oil derricks aside the freeway. . . . Later, while Teresa De Anda, a local resident, described the problem of pesticide drift in her community, a small plane buzzed low over the ground to spray crops.”<sup>23</sup> The loose sync of real-time events in the landscape with the pre-produced material suggests the scope and scale of polluting infrastructures in the Valley. The appearance of the crop duster becomes no longer merely an isolated event but one instance in a set of repeated practices that make up industrial agriculture.

In addition to audio tour projects, some artists engage with the live, ambient soundscape to explore hidden characteristics and structural features of a landscape. Andrea Polli’s guided soundwalks help audiences tune into the “acoustic ecology” of a place. Ranging from forty-five to sixty minutes, these experiences emphasize the transition from one kind of landscape to another—highway to parkland, for instance, or urban street to bank interior—that can generate *situated* discussions about the movement of people, goods, and waste in cities under late capitalism that otherwise might remain abstract or entirely theoretical.<sup>24</sup> Other senses similarly combat the urge to abstract or remain distant from the subject. Noting that tourism “becomes really problematic . . . when you just look—when you can see the pain but you don’t have to get your hands dirty,” the artist Lize Mogel has begun exploring scent as a means of more directly involving her audience.<sup>25</sup> In her current body of work, “Sludge Economy,” which addresses New York’s racially unjust sanitation geographies, Mogel plans to bring her audience to sites where the stench of the waste infrastructures will physically embed them in a system that most keep out of sight, nose, and mind.

#### OPEN NARRATIVES, ANCHORED SITES

Artists’ embrace of the tour as a form developed simultaneously with a critical reassessment of site-specificity in twentieth-century art. Miwon Kwon, for instance, has influentially argued that the notion of site became “unhinged” from the physical attributes of a specific place “to a discursive vector—ungrounded, fluid, virtual.”<sup>26</sup> While noting that this movement corrects a tendency to romanticize and monumentalize a site, Kwon strikes



12. Rozalinda Borcilă, “Wanna Go Offshore?” tour, May 5, 2012. The tour included two sites in Crete, Illinois, separated by about one mile. On the left is a proposed future Foreign Trade Zone under sale contract with Centerpoint Properties; on the right a proposed immigrant detention center. Photos by Chelsea Goodwin Cossu and Stefano Cossu.

a note of caution regarding nomadic or fully discursive site-specific practice, questioning whether this deterritorialization merely recapitulates the logic of late capitalism. While she never mentions landscape-oriented artist tours in her 2002 book, Kwon ends with a metaphor that nonetheless evokes their potential to inhabit “a terrain between mobilization and specificity—to be *out of place* with punctuality and precision.”<sup>27</sup>

Critical tours are explorations of the discursivity of site performed in situ. They are simultaneously “in the landscape” while exploring knowledge that may appear “out of place” in the sense of complicating and denaturalizing the site. Connections between concepts, images, histories, and places are produced through bodily movement; the insight metaphorically invoked as a “change in perspective” is, on the tour, both physical and perceptual. For the artist Ryan Griffis, the significance of this doubled spatial and narrative dimension cannot be overlooked: “Tours are a narrative form that is structured by a spatial experience. It’s a way to have a narrative-based conversation, even if it is not conventional, that unfolds along with a movement through space, or some change in perspective based on a change in location.”<sup>28</sup>

Artists’ tours often draw attention to the *unfolding* of space while considering its discursive, dialectical composition. Rozalinda Borcilă’s tour of Chicago’s Foreign Trade Zones, for example, measured the physical distance between bureaucratically contiguous places, as a single FTZ can encompass sites separated by many miles, rendering them legally identical (figure 12). She invited immigrant organizers to help consider potential relationships between immigration detention facilities and Foreign Trade Zones as distinct border regimes that share infrastructural needs, rhetorical appeals, and administrative rationality. This conceptual montage, performed with bodily movement through space, allows the participant to experience what Miwon Kwon calls “the uneven condition of adjacencies and distances *between* one thing, one person, one place, one thought, one fragment *next* to another.”<sup>29</sup>

Borciła's emphasis on the passages between spaces and provocative proposal of connections among seemingly disparate phenomena is emblematic of critical tourism's refusal of tidy narrative closure. If conventional tourism tends to encapsulate places through closed narratives, the critical tour emphasizes the site, in all its messy specificity, in relation to much larger ecological, infrastructural, and political systems as well as other places, times, and forces. Even though we eventually still go home, "home" may not be what it once was. Many artists' tours include activities that explicitly implicate participants in the tour's subject. For example, one iteration of Lize Mogel's "Sludge Economy" involved a picnic atop a New York wastewater treatment plant that had been buried, landscaped, and turned into a public park. Mogel shared a map of the sewage system printed in icing on a sheet cake. Participants were asked to identify where their wastewater went and announce it to other "tourists" via nametags. Following Mogel's presentation, everyone happily dug into the cake. The gesture created a connection between invisible waste infrastructures and the homes and bodies of her audience that could resonate long after the day's events concluded.<sup>30</sup>

#### TOURISM AS COLLECTIVE TIME

If one criticism of tourism is that it is too brief and distracted to permit a meaningful experience, the tourist's experience may feel very different. Vacations are described as times to "slow down" and, like an old-fashioned clock, "unwind." Removed from our daily routines, our perception of time shifts and dilates. In the context of a hyper-accelerated, post-Fordist economy of just-in-time production and around-the-clock connectivity, taking the time to tour is both a luxury for the privileged and a measure of commitment. It represents a decision to be present in a particular place for a stretch of time. Tourism is often collective as well as time-based: For many people, the guided tour is a rare instance of thinking and perceiving in public with others. Even when the experience is private, as it often is when following an audio tour, there remains a cultural connection to others who have experienced this site before or will in the future. Some of the oft-derided rituals of mass tourism may more charitably be interpreted as way of sharing a culturally meaningful experience—one not less but rather more meaningful for the sake of repetition and mediation.

Along these lines, we can imagine how critical tourism might constitute and mobilize a public. Drawing on Henry Giroux's idea of "public time," Phaedra Pezzullo argues that toxic tours represent collective commitments to self-education, self-governance, and the passionate pursuit of social transformation. While many artists' tours do not aspire to the same concrete efficacy as those organized by environmental justice groups, they are dedicated to the embodied and social exploration of a world understood as ineluctably material, discursive, and political. Some demand a great deal of their participants in terms of time and the shaping of experience. Futurefarmers' "Free Soil Bus Tour," for instance, brought together twenty people for an overnight excursion inspired by the

histories and geographies of Silicon Valley's counterculture. Many "tourists" were also co-leaders who offered workshops on salt marsh ecology, demonstrated DIY technologies such as human waste composting and cooking with surplus engine heat, and led discussions. Overnight tours such as "Free Soil" and the longer CLUI excursions immerse participants in their worlds, crafting temporary micro-communities. Other tours explicitly ask participants to follow up on what they have experienced, extending the event into a longer duration and opening it to a larger public. Jordan Dalton has emphasized bringing other artists to contaminated sites with the explicit mission of creating a public, photographic record of sites for which most visual representations are maps, diagrams, and aerial imagery, rather than the view from the ground. A curated selection of these photographs will appear in a zine and website, along with maps and information about the sites' histories and the nature of the contamination.<sup>31</sup>

The collective witnessing and reporting of what was seen and perceived during a tour is central to Gregory Ulmer's definition of critical tourism. Noting that the English word "theorist" derives from the Greek *theoros*, whose original meaning meant one who toured the world and saw the sights, Ulmer and the collaborative Florida Research Ensemble propose the ancient Greek traveler Solon as the model of "an improved tourism" based on the notion of bearing witness. For Ulmer, this requires that the experience be collectivized through retelling and social transmission. Once shared and allowed to circulate in the public discourse, the observations, fragments of experience, and images gathered on tour contribute to a bottom-up *theoria*, a project of geographical and historical self-knowledge. Ulmer asks, rhetorically, "What might be the effect of this gaze, or of the circulation of this testimony preserved in home videos, snapshots, and anecdotes? A post-Columbian America cannot forget that adventurers are responsible for its existence, for better and for worse."<sup>32</sup> As tourists and tour guides who aspire to be critical, we should expect nothing less of ourselves.

#### NOTES

1. Lucy R. Lippard, *On the Beaten Track: Tourism, Art, and Place* (New York: The New Press, 1999), 4.

2. Los Angeles Urban Rangers, "L.A. River Ramble," August 3, 2011, <http://laurbanrangers.org/site/downtownla>. See documentation and media coverage at <http://www.moca.org/party/rangers>.

3. The "social turn" in contemporary art is currently a hotly debated topic, with much disagreement about basic terminology and the appropriate criteria for evaluation. The phrase "the social turn" is borrowed from Claire Bishop's highly critical essay "The Social Turn: Collaboration and Its Discontents." At the risk of opening a can of worms, I mention these debates to acknowledge that artists' tours are not a distinct genre but exist in the context of what in the United States is currently called "social practice"—a field of creative activity emphasizing direct experience and the negotiation of meaning with audiences. See also Tom Finkelpearl, ed., *What We Made: Conversations on Art and Social Cooperation* (Durham, North Carolina: Duke University Press, 2013); Claire Bishop, *Artificial Hells: Participatory Art and the Politics*

of *Spectatorship* (London: Verso, 2012); Grant H. Kester, *The One and the Many: Contemporary Collaborative Art in a Global Context* (Durham, North Carolina: Duke University Press, 2011); Blake Stimson and Gregory Sholette, eds., *Collectivism After Modernism: The Art of Social Imagination After 1945* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2007); Claire Bishop, "The Social Turn: Collaboration and Its Discontents," *Artforum* (February 2006): 178–83; and Grant H. Kester, *Conversation Pieces: Community and Communication in Modern Art* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 2004).

4. Brian Holmes, "Extradisciplinary Investigations: Towards a New Critique of Institutions," *Transversal* no. 1 (2006), <http://eipcp.net/transversal/0106/holmes/en>.

5. Ibid.

6. Zygmunt Bauman, "From Pilgrim to Tourist," in *Questions of Cultural Identity*, eds. Stuart Hall and Paul du Gay (London: Sage Publications, 1996), 29–30.

7. Ibid., 30.

8. While rehearsing the decades-long debate on the politics of aesthetics is beyond the scope of this essay, readers may wish to consult Hal Foster, ed., *The Anti-Aesthetic: Essays on Postmodern Culture* (New York: New Press, 2002); Elaine Scarry, *On Beauty and Being Just* (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 2001); Jacques Rancière, *The Politics of Aesthetics: The Distribution of the Sensible*, trans. Gabriel Rockhill (New York: Continuum International Publishing Group, 2006); and a number of essays in a themed issue of *Art Journal* edited by James Meyer and Toni Ross, "Aesthetic/Anti-Aesthetic," *Art Journal* 63, no. 2 (July 1, 2004).

9. Rozalinda Borcilă, *Wanna Go Offshore?*, May 5, 2012.

10. Rozalinda Borcilă, interview by Sarah Kanouse, November 4, 2012.

11. I'm borrowing the now-familiar term from Henri Lefebvre, *The Production of Space* (Malden, Massachusetts: Wiley-Blackwell, 1991).

12. "Geography frees us from the textualist or representationalist approach towards cultural production and encourages us to think about materiality itself as an active historical agent." Trevor Paglen's talk at the Creative Time Summit, October 10, 2010, <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XvkCIQ2ZEEk>.

13. As if to emphasize self-reflexive viewing, CLUI's first book opens with a preamble featuring several full-bleed photographs of people looking at framed views and interpretive signage. Matthew Coolidge and Sarah Simons, eds., *Overlook: Exploring the Internal Fringes of America with the Center for Land Use Interpretation* (New York: Metropolis Books, 2006).

14. Jordan Dalton, interview by Sarah Kanouse, December 28, 2011.

15. Steve Rowell, interview by Sarah Kanouse, October 4, 2012.

16. Critical Art Ensemble, "Halifax Begs Your Pardon," 2002, <http://critical-art.net/Original/halifax/Nova.swf>.

17. John Urry, *The Tourist Gaze* (London: Sage, 2002), 13.

18. Ryan Griffis, Lize Mogel, and Sarah Ross, "Siting Expositions," released in the collection *Stories in Reserve*, ed. Temporary Travel Office, 2010, <http://temporarytraveloffice.net/stories/VancouverEvents.html>. The author's own audio tour, *America Ponds*, was included in the same collection.

19. Los Angeles Urban Rangers, "Field Guide to the American Road Trip," 2006, <http://laurbanrangers.org/site/tools/interstate-road-trip-specialist-field-kit>.

20. Donna Haraway, "The Persistence of Vision," in *The Visual Culture Reader*, ed. Nicholas Mirzoeff (London: Routledge, 1998), 677.
21. Phaedra C. Pezzullo, *Toxic Tourism: Rhetorics of Pollution, Travel, and Environmental Justice* (Tuscaloosa, Alabama: University of Alabama Press, 2007), 29, 157.
22. Amy Balkin, Kim Stringfellow, and Tim Halbur, "Invisible-5" audio tour, 2006, <http://www.invisible5.org/>.
23. Emily Eliza Scott, "Field Effects: *Invisible-5's* Illumination of Peripheral Geographies," *Art Journal* 69, no. 4 (winter 2010): 39.
24. Andrea Polli, interview by Sarah Kanouse, October 2, 2012.
25. Lize Mogel, interview by Sarah Kanouse, December 28, 2011.
26. Miwon Kwon, *One Place After Another: Site-Specific Art and Locational Identity* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: MIT Press, 2002), 29–30.
27. *Ibid.*, 166.
28. Ryan Griffis, interview by Sarah Kanouse, December 28, 2011.
29. Miwon Kwon, *One Place After Another*, 166.
30. Lize Mogel, interview. See also Lize Mogel, "This Picnic Stinks!" picnic and talk, 2010, <http://whitney.org/Events/ThisPicnicStinks>.
31. Jordan Dalton, interview.
32. Gregory L. Ulmer, "Metaphoric Rocks: A Psychogeography of Tourism and Monumentality (Hypermedia)," *Postmodern Culture* 4, no. 3 (1994), [http://muse.jhu.edu.proxy.lib.uiowa.edu/journals/postmodern\\_culture/v004/4.3ulmer.html](http://muse.jhu.edu.proxy.lib.uiowa.edu/journals/postmodern_culture/v004/4.3ulmer.html).

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