Exploring Environmental Issues Using Eco Art

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Background

- Eco Art is a relatively newer art genre and its definition is still evolving.
- Its historical precedents include environmental art, landscape painting, and landscape photography.
- Environmental art arguably began with the Paleolithic cave paintings of our ancestors.
- In recent decades the genre is moving toward a deeper relationship between social concerns and environmental systems, processes, and phenomena.
Background

• Eco Art—as a sub-genre of environmental art—is flourishing, both in terms of concept and practice. The EcoArt Network of international artists offers the following definition of Eco Art:

"... an art practice that embraces ethics of social justice in both its content and form/materials. Eco Art is created to inspire caring and respect, stimulate dialogue, and encourage the long-term flourishing of the social and natural environments in which we live. It commonly manifests as socially engaged, activist, community-based restorative or interventionist art."
Lesson Goals

• The purpose of this semester-long assignment—with a series of deliverables—is three-fold.

• Students will
  ✓ study how environmental issues or challenges have been presented through a variety of ecological/environmental art forms (Eco Art);
  ✓ create a database for the class by collecting and explaining Eco Art work samples; and
  ✓ create their own Eco Art projects on environmental topics of their choice.
Throughout the semester students will search, collect, and submit nine different pieces of Eco Art work (digital files of the art work samples).

The subject matter of art work will vary from week to week, as specified below.

Students can choose any "type" of "art" (broadly defined) that focuses on the environmental topic assigned for a given week.

The art types may include paintings, sculptures, public art (e.g., murals), photographs, architecture, music, movies, documentaries, creative writing (e.g., poetry, novella), graphic art (e.g., posters, infographics), apps, and video games.
Materials

- Eco Art example 1 (Topic: Climate change—cause, effect, resiliency, or mitigation)
- Eco Art example 2 (Topic: Sustainable development, suburban sprawl, destruction of natural resources for development, etc.)
- Eco Art example 3 (Topic: Air pollution, air quality, air-related health issues, etc.)
- Eco Art example 4 (Topic: Water pollution, water quality, water-related health issues, etc.)
- Eco Art example 5 (Topic: Natural disasters, resiliency, mitigation, etc.)
- Eco Art example 6 (Topic: Working landscapes, farmlands, land preservation, etc.)
- Eco Art example 7 (Topic: Toxic land, brownfields, vacant land, etc.)
- Eco Art example 8 (Topic: Sustainable transportation, smart transportation, automobile dependency, alternative modes of transportation, mass transportation, trails, bike lanes, mobility, etc.)
- Eco Art example 9 (Topic: Sustainable energy, renewable energy, etc.)
Materials (art samples)

“Long term parking”
Source

“Giant Footprint Tree”
Source
Materials (art samples)

“Fish Eye”
Source

“Fine Art of Toxic Waste”
Source
Materials *(art samples)*

“Ontario’s Farmland”  
*Source*

“Goby loves plastic, please feed him”  
*Source*
Materials (art samples)

“Back to the Boardwalk, After Hurricane Sandy”
Source

“Evacuspot” in New Orleans
Source
Materials (art samples)

"When the Beach Met the Bay"

Source
“After Ice,” a mobile app for iOS by Justin Brice Guariglia
Materials (art samples)

“Unmoored” by Mel Chin

Source
Materials (art samples)

“Wake”

Source
Sample Implementation (student projects)

Environmental/Sustainability Planning
Spring 2019
Instructor: Dr. Meenar
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