

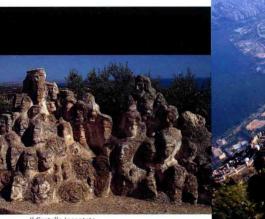


**AMY DEMPSEY** 

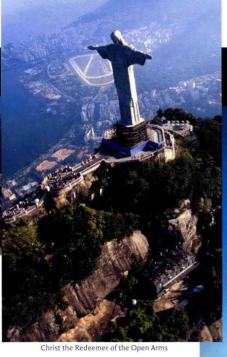
## DESTINATION ART

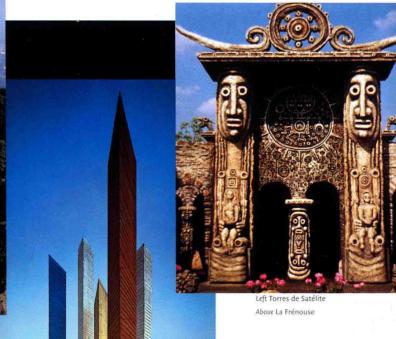






Il Castello Incantato





#### **DEDICATED TO JUSTIN SAUNDERS**

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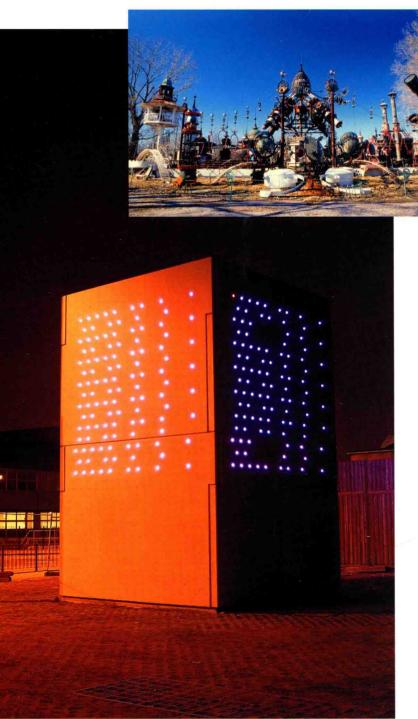
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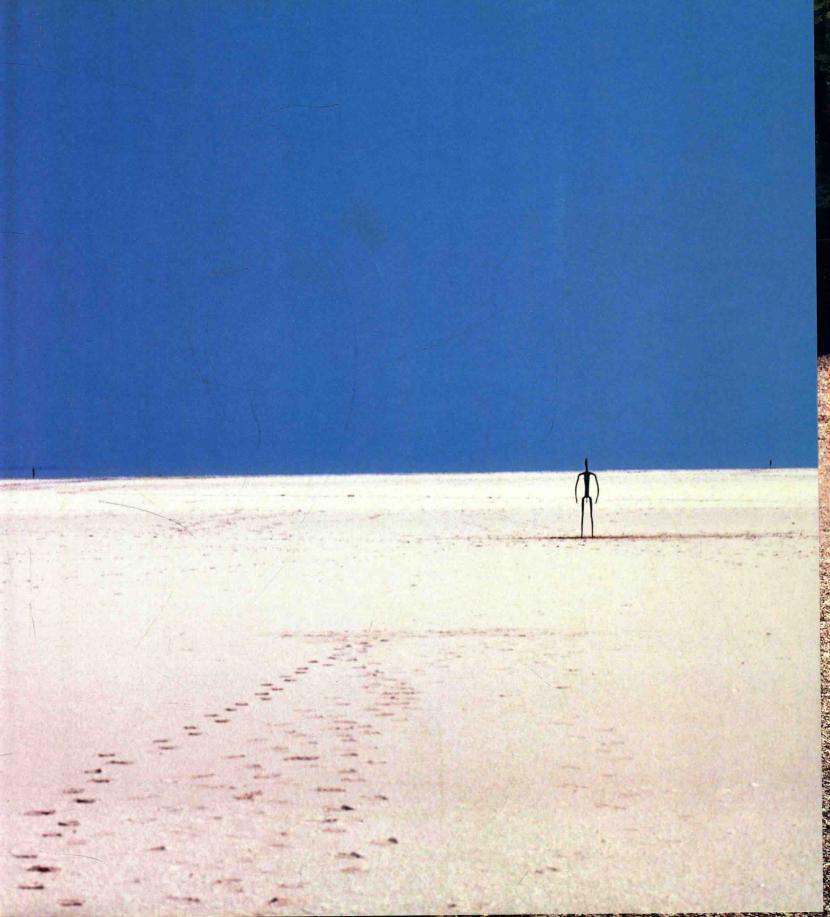
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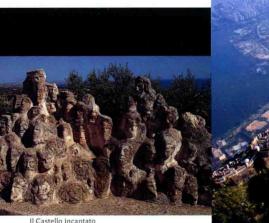
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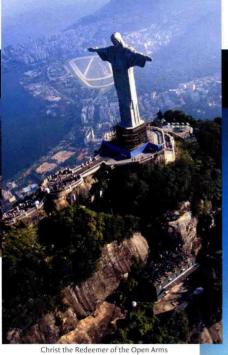
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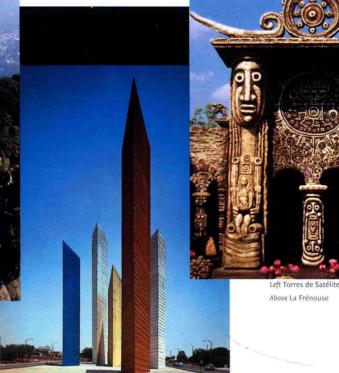












Above La Frénouse

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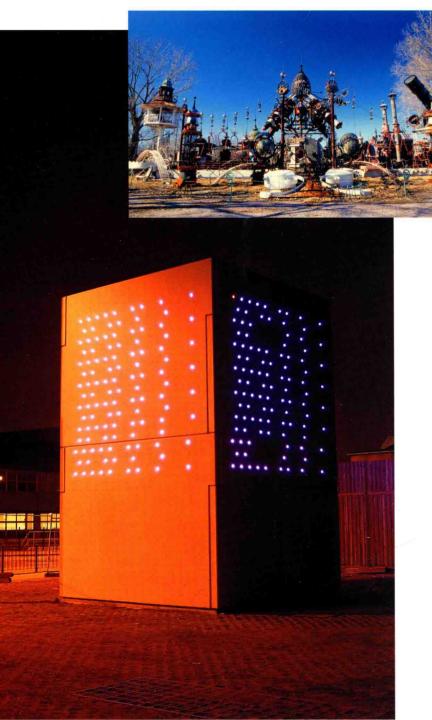
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## INTRODUCTION: ART AS DESTINATION

A powerful work of art can take you on a journey. It can take you to another dimension and provide insight into another world, time. place or way of thinking. The more than two hundred works in Destination Art transport you in a more tangible, literal sense. For these are not works that will be coming to a museum near you – they are works that you have to travel to and meet in their own space and on their own terms, for they must be seen on site, 'Destination Art' is art that must been seen in situ, and the term recognizes the impact of the art's context, that the location is an important part of experiencing and understanding the work. It also acknowledges and explores the often reciprocal dynamic that the art and its place exert on each other. Thus, it is the art in its particular setting that is your destination. Some Destination Art requires a committed pilgrimage to see it, while other works may be hidden gems in a city near you.

The sites featured in this book are predominantly from the twentieth and twenty-first centuries and from around the globe. Massive land and environmental works, extensive sculpture parks, magnificent architectural follies, site-specific installations and even whole towns turned over to the display of art are just some of the treasures featured. They are by a variety of makers – from artists to postmen, architects to preachers – and are the results of a wide range of motivations. Some are very private, introverted projects, while others are the results of public commissions and are responses to important public issues, whether political, such as conflicts and the state of the environment, or sociological, such as the role of art in public spaces and art as a tool for regeneration. Most of the works from the first half of the twentieth century were private initiatives – either personal endeavours that later received wider interest or works for individual patrons. More recent projects have tended to be more public and larger in scale and are often undertaken with either civic, corporate or charitable support.

A number of factors – artistic, social, legislative – encouraged the flourishing of Destination Art in the second half of the twentieth century. To begin with, from the 1950s, some artists sought to blur

the line between art and life by bringing art out of the museums and galleries and putting it into everyday environments. Others wanted to make art that specifically engaged with its location or that explored its physical context – be that gallery, city square or hilltop – to the extent that the site became an integral part of the work. The phrase 'site-specific' became increasingly popular in the 1060s to describe such art. Throughout that decade, there was also a growing 'community arts' movement, which gave rise to a belief that art should be available to more than just a privileged few. This democratic view led in the 1970s to many local and national governments funding public art projects. Although not all such schemes were related directly to their sites, artists' interest in location and context resulted in a shift from the idea of public art as monument towards the notion of art as transforming an anonymous or neglected 'space' into a significant 'place'. Special emphasis was put on the collaborative nature of these projects, as artists, architects, patrons and the public joined forces to realize them.

During the 1980s, numerous public art agencies were established to facilitate negotiations between artists, architects, regulating and funding bodies, and to consult users of public spaces. 'Percentage for art' legislation, which stipulated that a certain amount of funds from the budgets of new buildings or new public spaces had to be allocated to art, was increasingly enacted throughout the West. This growth in governmental patronage led to public sculpture and sitespecific works becoming common in cities in many countries.

Almost two decades earlier, a parallel development had taken place. In the late 1960s, Earth Art – also known as Land Art – emerged as one of the many artistic trends that rejected the restrictive traditions of painting and sculpture and sought to expand the boundaries of art practice in terms of materials, disciplines and places to operate. Earth artists explored the potential of landscape and environment as both material and site for their art. Rather than representing nature, they utilized it directly in work that took the form of immense sculptures in the landscape or monumental forms

Below One of the seventy-eight large sculptures in Alois Wünsche-Mitterecker's Figurenfeld (1958–75) – 'a memorial to peace and Liberty against War and Force' – installed in a valley in Germany.



made from the earth itself. Examined through the broader sensibility of the 1960s, Earth Art developed during a period of growing interest in ecology and an awareness of the dangers of pollution and the excesses of consumerism on the fate of the earth and, therefore, humankind. By drawing attention to this debate, Earth artists make an appeal to us to see the 'art' in nature, or to respect and value nature as highly as we do art. As a psychoanalyst quoted in an article on Earth Art in Art in America in 1969 noted:

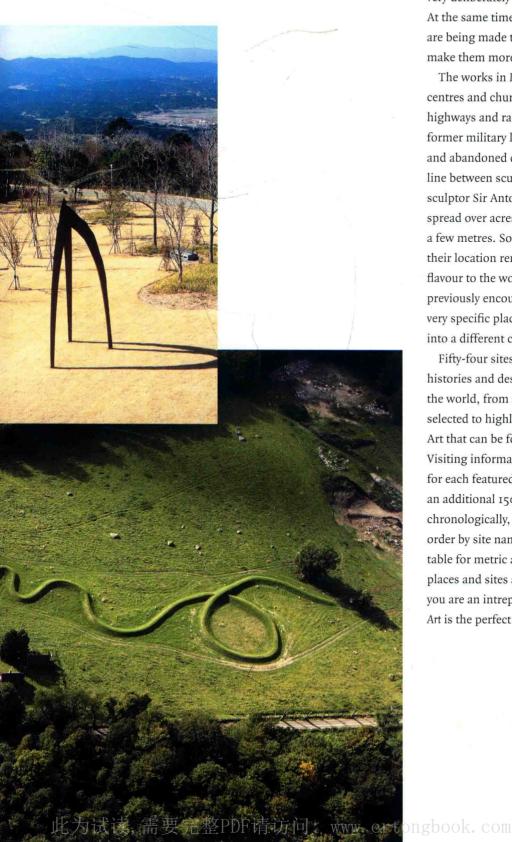
The works of these innovators are an attempt to be as big as the life we live today, the life of immensity and boundless geography. But it's also the manifestation of a desire to escape the city that is eating us alive, and perhaps a farewell to space and earth while there are still some left.

There is also a preservation impulse in much Earth Art, for if a piece of land is consecrated as art it can be saved from commercial development. There is an implied desire to protect, or salvage, not only the environment but also the human spirit; some works explicitly evoke the forms, and by association the spirituality and mystery, of such anthropological wonders as Native American burial grounds, Stonehenge and the giant chalk figures etched into the hills of England – past interventions in the landscape by unknown individuals for unknown reasons.

The remote location of much early Earth Art means that these works have, in a sense, existed only in the memories of those who participated in them or in documentation. Lack of maintenance has left others in a state of disrepair, making them equally intangible to viewers. Most art books have not helped much, for they often use the same old photographs and do not provide information as to whether the works still exist and, if they do, where they might be found. Correcting this situation is one of the motivations for this book.

Since the 1990s there have been many new initiatives that draw on and further the debates of the 1960s and 1970s. New works are often located not in the major cosmopolitan cities, but in more culturally,

Below Steven Brower, Lunar Excursion Module (LEM) (2004-05) in The Fields Sculpture Park, USA Right Kenneth Payne, First Light (2003) in Pirkkala Sculpture Park, Finland Right below Maya Lin, 11 Minute Line, (work in process) in the Wanas Foundation, Sweden Far right Kozo Nishino, It Is Breezing, (1999) in the Kirishima Open-Air Museum, Japan 10 INTRODUCTION



industrially and politically challenging areas where the art is used very deliberately as an agent for regeneration and social change. At the same time, new Earth Art pieces are being created, and efforts are being made to preserve earlier ones and to provide facilities that make them more accessible.

The works in Destination Art are located in deserts, forests, city centres and churchvards, on farmland and mountains, and alongside highways and railways. They can be found on nature reserves and former military land, and in ghost towns, gardens, artists' backyards and abandoned quarries. Many works are functional and blur the line between sculpture and architecture, becoming what British sculptor Sir Antony Caro dubbed 'sculpitecture'. Some sites are spread over acres and acres, while others measure no more than a few metres. Some are site-specific, and even when they are not, their location remains an important factor. It lends a very distinctive flavour to the work, such that even when it is by an artist you have previously encountered, you know that you are experiencing it in a very specific place, country or environment. The art is often a way into a different culture

Fifty-four sites are featured in detail, with accounts of their histories and descriptions of the works. They come from all over the world, from several cultures and traditions, and have been selected to highlight some of the many different types of Destination Art that can be found, often in the most unexpected of locations. Visiting information and resources for further research are supplied for each featured site; descriptions and essential information for an additional 150 sites are also included. The sites are presented chronologically, with the practical information listed in alphabetical order by site name at the back, where you can also find a conversion table for metric and imperial measurements. Indexes of people, places and sites are also included to help you find your way. Whether you are an intrepid art explorer or an armchair traveller, Destination Art is the perfect companion for a journey around the world of art.