

Bernhard Huwiler

Drawing Project

I'd always walked a lot almost always staring at the ground. I was hypnotized by the movement, by the flow of the landscape in miniature. From the time I was a small boy, whenever I walked and stared at the ground, I got the feeling that the motion looked like what you'd see from a plane.¹

Daniele del Giudice

Ich habe deshalb unsern Weg so ausführlich angegeben, weil ich von der Oertlichkeit aus auf den Stoff, der behandelt wurde, schliessen kann (das heisst, mich zurückerinnern).²

Ludwig Hohl

The result of a free moving point is a line. A line is a drawing. What if this moving point is not the top of the artist's pencil at all, but the artist himself who walks through the landscape, the cityscape?

The Drawing Project³ is about the nature of drawing. Drawing as a bodily movement, as mark making and memorizing, as an intellectual journey.⁴

I performed 21 drawings by walking with blue sand in my backpack leaving a trail behind me. The sand seeps onto the ground from a tube fastened to the bottom of my backpack. While I walk forward, the sand marks my trail behind me. The ground becomes an analogue for the "flatbed" picture plane, like a horizontal canvas: a surface that tabulates information.

In a second step I follow the line with a video camera suspended from a boom. I use the camera as a viewing machine to spy out the evolution of the drawing on the ground. The camera cannot capture an entire drawing at once, just as no one can see the entire drawing. Only parts are visible at one time. The journey of the camera causes a restless image on the monitor.

I consider these performances, this distinct process of mark making, as a kind of drawing tool, enabling me to create an endless variety of drawings at various sites, wherever I move throughout the United States. I produce a map as I browse the country.

The lines drawn in the open are left to change and erode under local





conditions. The drawings are ephemeral, they will fade out, be wiped away, be erased and disappear soon. What is left is an accumulation of videotaped lines drawn throughout the country. The Drawing Project is a diary of my adventurous journey in the United States, is the memory of an artistic gesture. The Drawing Project is a mapping of my personal experience in the United States and emphasizes the art history of this country, from the petroglyphs of the Native Americans to Land Art and Earthworks.⁵

Bern, 2000⁶



Sites of the drawings

- Minneapolis, MN, following a railway track (March 17, 1998)
- International airport Minneapolis - Saint Paul, MN an extension of the runway (March 24, 1998)
- Cameo, CO (April 1, 1998)
- Moab, UT, Sand Fiats (April 2, 1998)
- Castel Valley, UT (April 3, 1998)
- Des Moines, IA (May 4, 1998)
- West of Oklahoma City, OK, Highway 40 (May 5, 1998)
- Palo Duro Canyon, TX (May 6, 1998)
- White Sands Dunes, NM (May 9, 1998)
- Near Los Alamos, NM (May 15, 1998)
- Keensburg, CO, parking lot (May 16, 1998)
- Near Fort Kearney, NE (May 16, 1998)
- In Omaha, NE (May 17, 1998)
- Jeffers Petroglyphs site, MN (May 26, 1998)
- Badlands, SD (July 11, 1998)
- Black Hills, SD (July 16, 1998)
- North Dakota (August 1998)
- On a lava field in Idaho, ID (August 1998)
- Pacific ocean shore near Albion, CA [August 1998)
- Downtown San Francisco, CA (August 22, 1998)
- Manhattan - New York, NY (November 27, 1999)

¹ Daniele del Giudice, Das Abheben des Schattens vom Boden, Deutscher Taschenbuchverlag, Januar 2000, S 32

² Ludwig Hohl, Jugendtagebuch

³ Performances, Videos, 1998/99

⁴ Eszter Gyarmathy - The Drawing Project, in report Heft zeichnen

ist...2001, ISBN 3-907591-17-8; www.report.ch

⁵ Fotos: Christian Lüscher, Christiane Hamacher, Bernhard Huwiler, Susanne Stronski

⁶ © the autors