

## TASK 6 // ECOLOGICAL ART

I was very impressed by the range of artworks found in the presentation. Ecology and the preservation of the environment is something I'm very passionate about (it was object of my bachelor thesis), but my knowledge of projects on the subject was always more related to architecture, so it was very interesting to me to take a broader look to the subject.

Also, it was eye opening to see how ecological art can be expressed in so many different ways. Before opening the presentation, I thought the works would be data visualization/land art projects.

The five artists that most impressed me were Mary Miss, Agnes Denes, Andrea Polli, Taryn Simon and Mierle Laderman Ukeles.

In Mary Miss' *City as Living Laboratory*, what most impressed me was the idea of raising ecological issues through the experience of the city and public engagement. I believe that when people coming from different social groups can empathize together and work for a common goal, the message has successfully been sent.

In Agnes Denes' *Wheatfield* the idea of ecology is also expressed in an urban scale, but in a completely different way. In *City as Living Laboratory* the message is spread through modest projects, whereas here the message is expressed in the form of land art. This work is very radical, and if we contextualize it in its proximity to Wall Street we can understand its very strong political message. I am very impressed by how the pictures, still today, are still so impressive (and almost unbelievable) and can imprint an extremely strong message.

*Queensbridge Wind Power Project* is a very interesting project to me because it shows how design can make a strong difference. With the idea that wind turbines are "ugly", they were not placed on bridges (where they could have been very effective and functional). But working on aesthetics, the artist was able to integrate wind turbines to the bridge and create a real time visualization of the wind generated, which the public can communicate with through an app. I find this very interesting because it shows how an artistic eye can be crucial to resolve social issues.

What I found very peculiar about Taryn Simon's *Paperwork of the Will of Capital*, and her works in general, was how she manages to put a filter to reality through photography. It's more an intellectual exercise than an aesthetic one. And in this particular project I really liked how she gave space to something which is normally considered frivolous in an international agreement: the flowers placed between powerful individuals about to sign agreements. I particularly liked this point of view and I find fascinating how this can be a form of ecological art.

Another form of ecological art which impressed me was Mierle Laderman Ukeles' *Maintenance Art*. I personally think that taking care of things (in my case, plants) is a form of art and a beautiful discipline, but I wouldn't have considered it a form of ecological art. I particularly like this concept because the idea of preserving something and not necessary creating from new should be one of the bases of our society. The idea of thinking in terms of a circular economy and not a linear one. So I found this work peculiar compared to the others in terms of not trying to "create" something new, but really seeing what we have by taking care of it.