



MINISTÈRE DE L'ENSEIGNEMENT
SUPÉRIEUR ET DE LA RECHERCHE

Press release

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A new sculpture by American artist Nancy Holt on Avignon campus

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Since 2008, the University of Avignon has been involved in the promotion of contemporary art as part of its new project. 2012 will see the culmination of a first major program entitled *Staging the Land*, combining scientific and cultural approaches. The project consists of three main parts :

— The installation of the sculpture *Avignon Locators* (1972-2012) in the campus gardens, within the city walls. *Avignon Locators* is a work by the award-winning American visual artist, Nancy Holt, who has also been involved in film and photography since the late 1960s (see her current shows below). This site-specific sculpture, a naked-eye observatory, reactivates one of Nancy Holt's major works, *Missoula Ranch Locators— Vision Encompassed* (Montana, 1972), now dismantled. The Avignon installation celebrates the 40th anniversary of its creation. It is not only a work to look at, but also a work to look from. It investigates the phenomenon of sensory perception and helps the viewer reconsider the self and its relationship to its surroundings, while highlighting aspects of the campus's heritage. *Avignon Locators* will be Nancy Holt's first permanent work in France, the second in Europe—the other one being located in Finland.

Sculpture unveiling, in the presence of Nancy Holt : **Thursday, June 14, 2012, 5:30 p.m.**



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— An exhibition, *Geniuses of the Place: Land and Environmental Art*, at the University Library, organized in partnership with the Gassendi Museum of Digne-les-Bains and the Avignon School of Fine Arts. This exhibition will be a photographic history of this trend in contemporary art from the precursors such as Brancusi and Noguchi to young artists like Cyprien Gaillard, Joan

Fontcuberta, Andy Goldsworthy, including the great figures revealed in the 1960s such as Robert Smithson, Michael Heizer, Dennis Oppenheim, Walter De Maria, Robert Morris, Charles Ross, James Turrell, Christo et Jeanne-Claude, Richard Serra, Richard Long, and herman de vries. Part of this show will be devoted to a retrospective on the artist's extensive Locator series, from Missoula to Avignon, which inspired her iconic large-scale outdoor sculpture, *Sun Tunnels* (1973-76).

Exhibition opening: **Thursday, June 14, 2012, 5:30 p.m.**



— An interdisciplinary, international conference, *Staging the Land: Contemporary Site-Specific Creation and the issue of Perception*, held from June 13 to 15, 2012, featuring site-specific art specialists such as Gilles Tiberghien, Ben Tufnell, Anne-Françoise Penders and Fabien Faure. June 14 will be especially dedicated to Nancy Holt and will include the screening of *Sun Tunnels* and *Breaking Ground*, which documents *Broken Circle-Spiral Hill*, a major work by her late husband Robert Smithson. This video was made from footage shot by Holt and Smithson in 1971, additional 2011 scenes, archival newsreels, audio tapes, etc.

Nancy Holt in 2012

- Solo exhibitions:

Nancy Holt : *Sightlines*. Tufts Art Gallery, MA, January 19 – April 1

Nancy Holt : *Sightlines*. Santa Fe Institute, NM, May 5 – June 29

Nancy Holt : *Photoworks*. Haunch of Venison Gallery, London, UK, June 6 – August 25

- Group exhibitions:

Wish You Were Here : The Buffalo Avant-Garde in the 1970s, Albright-Knox Museum, Buffalo, New York, March 30 – July 8

Ends of the Earth : Land Art to 1974. Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles, CA, May 27 – September 3

More information on www.nancyholt.com and www.univ-avignon.fr

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