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Spaces of Wonder: Interactions with Nature

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Spaces of Wonder: Interactions with Nature

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Introduction

It is strange how two people can experience the same event, but because of their various contexts and backgrounds, they view that moment differently. Often times, viewers’ reactions are regarded as subjective and biased. An accumulation of their diverse interests allow societal expectations and preferences to evolve throughout the years. Because of change, few subjects seem to transcend personal bias and time, while eliciting constant responses of awe and wonder. However, that uncommon characteristic makes it even more amazing—this being the natural landscape.

Growing up in New Jersey suburbs, I spent a lot of time admiring three types of natural views: blue skies, flowers, and reflections upon water surfaces. Contrary to the hurried culture around me, throughout my day, I would stop and stare up at the vast colorful skies, or examine the delicate organic shapes of the flower petals planted in the paths I took to school. My fondness for nature further developed with annual family trips to Longwood Gardens, national parks, and hiking trails. However, I began to see a certain distinction between general attitudes towards nature in our backyards and nature in a grand environment. This made me question, why fewer people were willing to interrupt their daily routines to admire the blue skies above them, rather than waiting to do the same at a national park? It was the same sky. The only difference I noticed was that one view may include a few mountains. What made that view so much more worth it, that people were actually willing to travel far to? And how did so many people respond the same way—in amazement—to that same view? Ironically, little did I know that I would be naturally inclined to choose those three natural views for future works, which would lead me to investigate nature from a greater perspective.
It was not until my classes with Professor Andrew Mowbray that I began to dissect my interests in elements of nature. What made a particular landscape or plant exciting? At that time, I had no idea why, but because I found it interesting, I chose to pursue that question. I started with a more narrow focus in one assigned project that involved studying an aspect of nature. Thinking about the qualities of a vast sky fascinated me. Upon further thought, I narrowed down that its character to surround us attributed to its vastness. 

Inspired, I experimented to do the inverse: manipulate and downsize it so we could walk around it. The enveloping characteristic of the sky helped me to branch out from making 2D works to 3D objects, and even further, to shaping an environment. Through this project, I created an installation based off of the surrounding aspect of the sky. Using clamp lights, frosted mylar, and painted plaster, the installation presented the sky in a cylindrical format that filled a small, dark room that allowed just enough space for viewers to walk around.

![Sky](image.jpg)

Figure 1: Sky. Mixed media installation. Completed in December 2014.

Through my painting classes with Professor Bunny Harvey, I had developed an interest in plants. Professor Harvey encouraged me to paint on a larger scale, which altered
my painting style. Although the paintings were done from observation of flowers or plants in the greenhouse, I realized that I was not interested in replicating nature exactly the way it was. What were once paintings with small strokes evenly smoothed out, became large canvases plastered with textures and bold forms. The focus shifted from making a picture that looked exactly like a photo to investigating the character of the plants from my perspective. The works done on a bigger scale helped me to look closer to the details of the plants and to get lost in the painting process, which elicited a sense of enjoyment when viewers saw them. In addition, the change in scales altered the way the plant was viewed by others. A succulent the size of a eight ounce water bottle painted the on a canvas of 36" by 50" gave the impression that the succulent was much larger, perhaps five times the actual size. On the other hand, a hanging plant painted the same scale on a 72" by 30" canvas made the plant seem much smaller in comparison.

Figure 2 (left): Oil on canvas, 36" x 50". Completed Spring 2015.
Figure 3 (right): Oil on canvas, 72" x 30". Completed Spring 2015.
The theme of nature continued in my work with Professor Phyllis McGibbon in Advanced Drawing. In that class, I began by making monoprints of a sunrise sky, and eventually a mixed media print of the sea. I became interested in the immersive environment, recalling the memories of sunrises at the edge of the sea. Then, I decided to replicate the mixed media print of the sea to a larger scale. This time, shifting to a greater scale further emphasized the immersive experience, rather than altering the expectations of the actual scenery. Similar to the sky installation, this drawing was done on a hazy, slightly see-through material called copulex. When the drawing was unrolled and stretched out from one end of a 30 foot wall to the other, viewers stood from a distance, which referred to the way we tend to interact with vast landscape views. During this project, I discovered that a 2D image could have just as much impact as an object, as well as an installation. However, I questioned whether there was an overlap between those categories, and observed that the way the viewers interacted with the work affected the experience. It was ultimately, the artist’s decision to curate the viewers as well as the work, that in some way, completed the work itself.

Figure 4. Deep Waters. Mixed media on copulex. Completed December 2015.
These key works built up a culmination of these ideas into the theme of the viewer's experience of nature. The combination of these previous projects all held themes of nature and the fantastical elements of the landscape, which I decided to further investigate as a thesis project.

**Part One: Experimentation**

The project began with a series of experimentation. I started drawing and studying whatever had a link between organic lines and nature, such as tree bark or maps. Based off of these shapes, I used frosted mylar to create a series of cut organic forms that layered on top of each other to create volume. Most experimental ideas and materials were based off of anything I saw that had organic, free-flowing, or hazy qualities. These characteristics also seemed to be a theme prevalent throughout my previous work.

![Figure 5 (left) and Figure 6 (right). Organic lines experimentation.](image)

One small project I developed started with thinking about the viewer's perspective. After visiting many national parks, hiking trails, or nature sights in the west coast, I realized...
that most of the path was controlled or predetermined. Many of these sights included signs or dirt paths that directed visitors where to go throughout the landscape. The viewers were also controlled to acknowledge places with "breathtaking" views. These were indicated by larger sections of the path, with enough room for bigger groups of viewers to simultaneously stand in, as well as seating areas or benches.

The idea that visitors intentionally go through a journey to admire the natural view also intrigued me. First, they must navigate a series of trails, which may include steep climbs or narrow dirt paths. After they successfully followed their chosen trail, the pinnacle of their journey is marked by a "picture worthy" view. The experience was essentially constructed to place the viewers a far distance away from the landscape to admire that particular view, and to be deemed as awe-inspiring.

![Figure 7. Experimentation with the viewers' perspective.](image)

Following those ideas, I created three small rectangular boxes from foamcore. In the middle, towards the top of these boxes, were small brass peepholes that allowed viewers to look through. In each box was a small view of some type of nature or organic form. The
viewers looked in the first box and saw a cliché image of space. In the second one, placed next to the previous box, viewers stepped to the right and looked through to see a mini version of the frosted mylar layered organic forms, similar to the ones from my experimentations. In the third one, viewers saw a live image of themselves from the back, looking into the boxes. The live image was created by two electronic devices in the same video chat. One device was placed behind the viewers, out of their sight, to record them. The other was in the box to show the live image. These boxes insinuated a progression of building up expectations for the viewers, by taking them through a short journey of familiar images to a sudden surprise. The unexpected element caused viewers to be curious and look to their surroundings. It was interesting that the little indications of peepholes or lined up boxes could guide viewers to move in a particular way, without any written or verbal form of instruction. In addition, the overarching action directed the viewers to look at their surroundings, which could have been extended into a natural environment.

*Landscape Elements*

Although my experimentation started to guide my thinking, this project still held many questions for me. What made a landscape fascinating? How could it bridge viewers beyond their different contexts and interests?

That fall, I took a class called "Art in Environmental Imagination" with Professor Rebecca Bedell in the art history department. This class introduced me to various philosophers and theories surrounding my inquiries. Fortunately, I learned that environmental aesthetics have already been broken down in three main categories: sublime, beautiful, and picturesque. Edmond Burke, a philosopher, writes of landscapes

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classified as sublime, which induce both feelings of awe and terror simultaneously.\textsuperscript{1} Often times, these landscapes include vast storms, dark skies or glowing skies, elevated mountains, and are characterized by grandeur and majesty. The vastness or extreme conditions of these landscapes demand the attention of viewers from a distance, and overwhelm them in the what is considerably the most intense feelings for humans, such as pleasure and fear.

![Figure 8. Example of sublime landscape. Albert Bierstadt, *Among the Sierra Nevada, California*. Oil on canvas, 72" x 120". 1868.](image)

Along with that, Burke differentiates beautiful landscapes from sublime landscapes with characteristics such as smooth, gradual variation in landforms. Typically, landscapes that induce beauty will have some type of symmetry, even lighting, and controlled forms. The beautiful landscape elicits a sense of relaxation and calmness from the viewer. Many landscape painters, especially the Hudson River School, depicting these natural environments, such as Thomas Cole, use a "Claudian formula" so that the viewer will experience the landscape as beautiful. The formula includes framing elements on either
side of the painting that draw the focus to the landscape in the middle, shadowed figures in the foreground, and atmospheric perspective of fading scenery in the distance. With the even lighting and similar forms repeated throughout, the Claudian formula can successfully draw out a beautiful, relaxed response from the viewer.

![Figure 9. Example of beautiful landscape.](image)

**Figure 9. Example of beautiful landscape.**
**Thomas Cole, View of Monte Video, the seat of Daniel Wadsworth.**
Oil on canvas, 19.75” x 26”. 1828.

Another philosopher, Uvedale Price, classifies a landscape picturesque as the in between of the beautiful and sublime. The picturesque landscape can be identified by irregularity and variety within the landforms. For example, these landscapes may include asymmetrical forms such as different lengths of tree branches, or various heights of land elevation to heighten curiosity. Viewers tend to be stimulated by these landscapes, which entice viewers to look back to their view and to search for more details that reveal additional insight and enjoyment.

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Although these categories organize combinations of elements within landscapes to produce specific responses, landscapes can also be designed or portrayed in a way that would overlap in multiple categories. For my own works, I used the theories from Burke and Price to identify the different types of admiration towards landscapes. I wanted to consider these elements in the landscapes I chose to portray. However, I wondered how combining multiple aspects from the sublime, beautiful, and picturesque together would affect the viewers’ reactions.

Moreover, there was a tension between the natural and manmade that provoked me. I began to question, if it was originally the natural landscape itself that evoked a sense of awe within me, could I evoke that same feeling with manmade works? The biggest reason people marvel at nature is because it cannot be replicated by man. Although the broken down categories of environmental aesthetics referred to manmade works that portrayed nature, those were used to entice viewers to go to the nature itself. In a sense,
those artists recognized that they could only capture an essence of it, which formulated the viewers' expectations for their actual experiences.

Former philosophers debated this, recognizing that there is a notion that people tend to escape cities, which are manmade civilizations, to nature, in which there is supposedly nothing made by man. However, in our context, nature generally means national parks and hiking trails, which are actually designed by landscape architects. Thus, this complicates the notion that national parks or hiking trails are all natural without the disturbance of any human construction. These landscape architects decide what in that particular landscape to preserve, and make paths that direct the viewers to locations deemed ideal or picturesque enough to enjoy. The natural landscapes, are in fact, still shaped and curated by humans. This brings up the question, are humans a part of nature or still regarded as separate?

William Cronon, a philosopher, argued that this idea of humans being separate from the land is a human construct. In addition, the landscapes that people tend to "escape" to, are ones that society is taught to value. This is influenced by class bound thinking, and fails to recognize the presences that were there before a particular culture's history. While this is important to recognize, I digressed from this topic to focus on the interaction between physical characteristics of nature and the viewers. It seemed that there was still some universal concepts in human interaction with nature. Western culture had some esteem for nature with humans, as did eastern culture. In Chinese landscape paintings, these were not only depictions of nature, but also expression of the artist's perspective and intentions. Through multiple readings, there seemed to a universal fascination of nature in various cultures.

Soon after a few discussions in Professor Bedell’s class, I realized that it was not as important to me to prove that nature was unable to be replicated by man, because I was not trying to replicate what I saw. Nor was it about addressing the economic and political implications of portrayals of nature. Instead, I was more interested in sharing my experiences with others in a way that resulted in the same reaction as they did for me: wonder.

When I attempted to provoke particular reactions from viewers, I narrowed down the characteristics that seemed to be a common thread throughout works that provoked the experiences I was looking for. While studying landscapes were incredibly beneficial, I had to address that I would be making work that referred to those landscapes. Thus, it was appropriate to refer to works that elicited the same response.

Figure 13 (bottom). Yayoi Kusama, *Fireflies on the Water*. 2002.
Influenced by Ann Hamilton’s *Event of a Thread* and Yayoi Kusama’s *Fireflies on the Water*, I pinned down three aspects that would elicit a response combined with awe and wonder from the sublime, as well as the picturesque. The first being a large scale and surrounding environment. Both works invited viewers into a space for an experience. The second was something that invited the viewers’ interests, but in their interactions, was not completely comprehensible. Part of the wonder and awe came from not being able to fully understand how it was made. There needed to be some element of uncertainty. For example, in Kusama’s *Fireflies on the Water*, the room begins in darkness and the viewers step in unknowingly where in space they are. Because the walls are lined with mirrors, the work gives an illusion of an infinite landscape, even though before entering and after leaving, the viewers are fully aware that the space has physical limits. The third aspect was having viewers feel as if they were alone, and redirecting any attention from other viewers to the spectacle itself. In Hamilton’s *Event of a Thread*, the viewers sit on swings that cause the large white curtain to undulate. Although there is a myriad of people able to swing and experience the installation at the same time, their individual attention is directed towards their movement in correlation to the curtain, creating a feeling of being by themselves. This also feeds into the idea that experiencing something grandeur involves lack of human presence, just as national parks and nature paths intend.

*Moving Images*

This thought process lead to using the large dining hall space in Cazenove Hall to create a large scale installation, and essentially, an experience for viewers. To me, a still image had seemed too static to induce something beyond our comprehension. Thus, I
resorted to video. Still inspired by natural landscapes, I shot various videos zoomed in to
the glittering sunlight reflecting on the surface of Lake Waban. Afterwards, I covered the
windows of the dining hall to make the space dark, and then projected the videos of the
lake’s reflective surface onto the walls.

Thinking about reflective surfaces, I experimented using a two way mirror to reflect
the videos on a larger scale. The two way mirror allowed the same video image to be
projected on two surfaces simultaneously across from each other. Because the videos were
of the sunlight on the surface of the water, the images transformed into even more abstract
forms, which I found fascinating. Often times, light is expected to be in a particular form,
but when looked at closely, it does not have a form like a solid object does. The organic and
uncontainable form provided a leeway for the viewers to be drawn in at first glance,
thinking that they can identify the subject, but afterwards, when looking closely, find that it
is not always as definable.

During a studio visit with visiting artist Sarah Tortora, I discovered that using the
two way mirror can also distort a landscape image, which provided that aspect of not fully
being able to understand in the work. Further developing that idea, I began to then
experiment with videotaping landscapes. These included a typical picturesque view of Lake
Waban, with the water and land separated distinctly with a horizon line, and the sun
peeking out of the trees in the distance. Beginning with a projection of just the landscape
image against the large main wall of the dining hall, I then used the two way mirror to
distort the image and create organic, flowing forms. Tortora pointed out to me in a
conversation that these forms were captivating for some reason—most likely because she
could not fathom how those images would be made. In that, was the beauty.
Afterwards, I decided to videotape the act of distorting the landscape. The video was recorded in front of the main wall as soon as the viewers walked into the dining hall. In the beginning, the video displayed was a perfectly centered image of the Lake Waban landscape. Using the two way mirror placed behind the camera, I began a series of distorting the image of the landscape. The video ended with the landscape transformed into a thin line that faded off to the side. With a few edits, I then projected the recorded video onto the same wall, aligning the wall exactly to make it seem as if the distortion had been created at that time the viewers were experiencing it. To enhance the idea of reflections, a section of the floor in front of projection was waxed to reflect the light and emphasize the organic light forms interacting with the space.

Figures 14-20: Video stills of abstracting landscape.
From that, I had crafted the three aspects into my piece. The first aspect of a large scale and surrounding environment was incorporated by having the large dining room space. The darkness in the space deterred attention from the limitations and boundaries of the space and more towards the projection of the image. The beginning of the video, which faded into the video image of Lake Waban invited the viewers to admire and understand the image. But when the landscape transformed into the organic light forms, the viewers could question their first impressions, which matched the second aspect I narrowed down for the experience: breaking down the viewers’ understanding. The third aspect was shown through the projection on the wall. Because all of the viewers would be focused on the view in front of them, human presences would be less recognized, allowing viewers to get lost in thought in their own heads. Thus, this created an experience of being alone while physically being together with other people.

During that installation exhibit, viewers were greeted at the Cazenove building and ushered into the door, directly into the installation. When everyone had gathered into the room, the projection started immediately. The first instinct for viewers was to sit down on the floor and pay direct attention to the projection in front of them. The video had no sound, nor did the viewers make much significant noise. The room was completely silent with occasional creaks from the building. Once the installation had finished, comments from the viewers ensued. Throughout the conversation, they mentioned the three aspects I aimed for them to experience. One viewer mentioned that it was strange that she felt alone within a crowd of people. Another talked about trying to figure out what was going on. Some agreed that they understood it was a video projection being manipulated, videotaped, and then projected again. Others were unfamiliar, and had no idea. Another interesting
comment was the feeling of being immersed in a way so she felt completely out of context with this campus, and almost forgot that she was at Wellesley.

Although that installation had provoked those three aspects within my viewers, the combination of those characteristics created a response more of confusion rather than wonder, which lead me to redirect my thinking. Perhaps because people’s reactions are based off of their past backgrounds, experiences, and personalized interests, most of it is subjective. So while most people from diverse backgrounds can develop an appreciation for nature, not all will. Another element to consider is that the distortion of the landscape image changed the focus from nature. It was too abstract to make that connection to familiar forms. When the projection became unfamiliar with no way to ground the viewers in some kind of understanding, some viewers lost interest because there was no invitation from the piece to lead them in admiration. Thus, to get even closer to creating a sense of wonder and awe, I realized that I could not base my art off of thinking about the viewers’ reactions; I needed to find interest in an aspect of nature that was not based off of the subjectivity of an audience. Instead, by focusing on a more specific characteristic of nature, such as subject matter or materials, I could potentially elicit the response I was originally interested in.

**Part Two: A Shift in Scale**

Pushing my previous thoughts and works aside, I began to direct myself towards the fundamental tools of drawing and impulsively drew what caught my attention. That winter break, I headed to Arizona, where there were plentiful landscapes that drew my interests—especially the vast sky and enormous clouds that towered over the human developments.
In that landscape, it seemed as if no matter how much humans progressed, nature would still be just as, if not, more powerful. The way the sizes contrasted made me feel that sense of wonder and awe, and because of that, I focused on those images.

Simplifying my process to charcoal and paper, I decided to create large scale drawings that only emulated a glimpse of the grandiosity of those natural views. My idea was that in the first installation, I had done too much "processing" to the process. Using a material to distort imagery in a video, to then videotape it, and project it again, added more distortion with the graininess of the video quality. All of the processing to the video took away the grandeur of the subject matter, rather than adding on to it. Instead, I wanted to present the landscape as I processed it, with simple materials that made it more straightforward at first glance, and enticed viewers to spend more time investigating the details throughout. In addition, it allowed a certain tactile process with materials that I had missed during the video installation.

At that time, I also had the opportunity to see Bruce Munro’s work at the Desert Botanical Garden in Phoenix, Arizona. I began studying his work the previous semester, but viewing his work in person made a huge difference. In that show, Munro used LED lights to create forms within the space. Rather it being about the objects themselves, they enhanced the landscape and surroundings. I found that the honesty of the works were the most astounding. For example, in Munro’s Field of Light, these extended networks of LED lights were not pretending to be a part of the nature. In fact, it was obvious that it was not. However, the presence of these lights facilitated an understanding between the viewers and the large mountain the LED lights covered, that the mountain alone would not have at night. In fact, the mountain itself at night fades into a dark shadow that viewers tend to
dismiss into the background. Nevertheless, the gradual variation of colors from the LED lights that sprawled throughout the mountain amplified the steepness and intensity of the mountain’s form.

During that break, I made three large drawings that all emphasized the clouds in the air, while being grounded by a hint of land at the bottom. The contrast between the size of land and sky reinforced the vastness of the sky. I found that my instinct on drawing the sky interesting, because landscapes tend to be more of the focus when we talk about nature. A picturesque view of the landscape includes mountaintops, rows of hills, or even some type of pasture. Even in Hudson River School paintings, there are some types of recognizable plants or trees in the foreground to welcome the viewers into the landscape, which lead their focus to bodies of water surrounded by various landforms. However, none of these drawings included much of the landform, and focused mainly on the sky. This caused me to question, was I investigating aspects of the landscape, or was it mainly the sky?

That question was quickly answered after coming back to Wellesley. I paid close attention to the land. In Arizona, the land was much more open, flat, and wide, which allowed for views of the sky to have a greater scale. The land here at Wellesley is more
enclosed by a concentration of trees, and a variety of plants that draw more attention to the land itself and things nearby. The cluster of greenery around generally blocked an open view of the sky. With the different landscapes around me, I became curious in depicting open spaces within both landscapes.

As I made these large scale drawings, I shifted the views and subjects from large landscapes afar to plants up close. Playing around with the scale and size of objects altered its perspective. By making a small plant larger, I wondered if the massiveness would induce the same revelation of amazement. Throughout this process, the more I drew, the more I realized that I was scaling the environment down to make the intangible tangible, or rather, making the massiveness of the landscape digestible to human understanding. Even though these drawings were as long as my height of about five and a half feet, the images were still much smaller than the actual view itself. This began to make me think that perhaps my project was building on the interaction between the viewers and the landscape through different scales and perspectives.

During a studio visit with Katrin Sigurdardottir, she took a look at the large scale drawings I had made, which were rolled out on the ground. During this meeting, she thought it was very interesting that I had made these drawings on the ground instead of on the wall, and that perspective altered the way I drew. In addition, they were also displayed on the ground, held down by blocks of plaster. This gave a sense that they revealed enough information to tell what the drawing was of, but not enough to locate a specific place. The idea of the general and the specific location provoked themes of navigation, because even in that layout she would walk around to "navigate" those drawings. This visit helped me to consider the process to determine the presentation.
Sigurdardottir also mentioned that drawing from observation evokes beauty that only comes from passion in drawing this way. She encouraged me to continue exploring drawing from observation, because it was as if I were envisioning a world that brings places to another context. Recommending Tacita Dean, she suggested that I expand my understanding of large scale drawings even further, by breaking up the drawings into large panels or using multiple papers to create an even larger drawing.

![Figure 22: Tacita Dean. *Fatigues (F)*, chalk on blackboard. 2012.](image)

This began a continued process experimenting with using multiple parts to create an even larger piece. This was also another way to begin slightly abstracting the subject, and challenged me to think of drawing from observation not as copying, but as understanding that space and subject in that particular time. Remembering that not all parts of the drawing should be paid attention to in the same way, and attempting to vary my marks, I experimented with methods of mark making through smudging the charcoal, blowing the dust around, or rubbing darker compressed charcoal. I also decided to see
what it would look like by simplifying some aspects of the landscape or subject I was
drawing, and creating details in other places.

Studying Tacita Dean was particularly striking to me after seeing her large scale
drawings of clouds. Similar to mine, Dean drew on a large scale and focused on her subject
matter. However, her marks seemed to be a bit more photographic in a sense that the
drawing was not distinguished as a drawing, but a depiction. When she chose to let her
marks be associated with herself, it was through writing on these drawings. Because I
became more interested in using my observations as a way to funnel my perspective and
intervention between the viewers and the subjects, I chose to emphasize my own markings.

To me, being able to distinguish that the scenery was not as important as was the
associations the markings could evoke out of myself and the viewers.

Figure 23 and 24 (left to right respectively). Works in progress, charcoal on paper.
At the same time, I returned to the video installation. Draping long white cloth from the ceiling enhanced the scale in relation to the viewers. Because the cloth was much longer and taller in comparison to the viewers, that allowed the viewers to be immersed in enlarged video images. Hanging the cloth to align with the gridded floor in the middle of the room allowed viewers to interact more with the space. Each long section of fabric hung, starting from towards the center of the room to the ends, with a gridded square length in between. Viewers were able to walk around the cloth, between the sections of cloth, and see the video projections from multiple sides.
This time, instead of projecting videos of Lake Waban, I shot multiple videos of the lake’s surface again. Some varied in focusing on the reflection of the sun, but others focused on the movement of water. The more I spent time observing and recording the lake’s surface, I found that there was an in between of focusing on an element of a landscape and isolating that element to be abstract. For example, a ripple of the water is recognizable to viewers. By enlarging that particular detail and repeating that instance of time, viewers have an entry point to be drawn in to the abstraction of the ripple, instead of just identifying it as a ripple in the water. The repetition within the video and the motion creates a meditative experience.

Figure 27 and 28: Video stills of water

Because the video projections are from two ends, the viewers’ shadows can also be seen on the cloth, allowing for the viewers to directly impact the video image. This contradicted an earlier pretense I had set. With the shadows affecting the video image, viewers would now be able to see their presence along with the natural scenery. However,
this reinforced my new direction focused on scale. Using imagery, such as the surface of the water rippling, contrasted with the viewers’ shadows. As they walked around the projection, I found it interesting to see how the size of the viewers’ shadows changed as they moved around. Regardless of how big or small their shadows shifted, the enlarged imagery of the water surface still immersed the viewers.

**Presentation**

Through this process, I have come to realize that making works is one part, but how they are presented affects the way they are viewed and interpreted by others. As for the video projection in the Cazenove dining hall, viewers once again enter directly into the room. Instead, this is less performance based. There is no beginning or end to the video, but rather a series of the water’s surface in repetition. The way viewers enter and interact with the space creates a different experience in each time.

The drawings are to be exhibited in the sculpture court of Jewett. Some drawings will be hanging on the walls, but three are to be laid out onto the ground with boards underneath to give the drawings some height. The boards will be slightly smaller than the dimensions of the drawings, so that it will seem as if the drawings are floating. The drawings laying out on the floor will navigate the viewers’ interactions, referring to the way we experience nature. There are predetermined paths for us, which causes us to be careful and aware of our surroundings. Similarly, the viewers will be aware of themselves in relation to the drawings while walking around and between the works. Experiencing the drawings in this way allows for multiple perspectives to alter the way viewers understand the works. Some drawings are grounded and seen in one way, since they are hung on the
wall while some will laying out to allow alternative views and understandings from the
different perspectives. By combining both presentation methods, viewers will notice even
more the contrast between how they view the works.

Because of the way the sculpture court is formatted, viewers will also be able to see
the laid out drawings from a slightly bird’s eye point of view. Since the laid out drawings
will be on the ground of the middle of the court, the stairs that lead to an elevation around
the court let viewers experience those drawings from a distance, as are spectacles in nature
are experienced. In addition, other drawings will be hung on the wall to surround viewers
as they move on the elevated periphery.

**Conclusion**

Ultimately, my journey started off as one question that lead to another. Nature,
however formed, was not created based off of human experience. In fact, it existed for its
own functional purposes. We admire and study its amazing systems and functions. Making
work based on this idea that nature fascinates its viewers and attempting to replicate that,
does not recognize that the fascination comes from the viewers’ perspectives rather than
the function of nature itself.

This begs the ultimate question of, what do we make art for? On one hand, yes, art
can be made for exploration. Artists do not, and most should not, be obligated to make
something purely for the viewers’ pleasure. Like nature, often times, art is made for other
reasons—whether it be exploration, interest, or function. Responses from viewers tend to
be a side effect, something that happens along the way. On the other hand, somewhere
along the way, I forgot to recognize that although I may be the maker, or artist, if you will, I am also a viewer.

My ideas emerge as I observe around me, look at others’ works, and study what particularly is fascinating to me. Although the landscapes I admire were already formed before me, there is something about my viewing that makes it a completion. Someone had to decide that something is fascinating enough to make something else in response. I began to realize that making work is a chain reaction of viewing even the most mundane things, and deeming those things worthy enough to make something else as a document of our appreciation. This facilitation of work allows the human perspective to be transferred, transformed, and transparent.

So going back to the first question I had started with during this project, what about the physical, natural environment affects the viewers emotionally to a state of awe and wonder? The quick answer to that question is, that is impossible. Not one external factor will guarantee that specific, or any particular, emotional response within the viewers. In fact, there are many avenues viewers can engage and come to that response. Scale can be one of them. However, these avenues must be completed by the viewers’ decision to entertain the possibilities of that experience to be one of awe and wonder, or of something else. Perhaps by my interest as a viewer that moves me to make something out of reaction—that sheer interest could be shared with another. Although I cannot control the viewers’ decisions, I can cultivate an environment that invites the viewers into that thought process, of questioning their scale in relation to responses towards nature, and eventually, nature itself.
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