



**July 2001**

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## 2001

July 2001 marked the inauguration of The Mount Desert Symposium in the Arts with the week-long events of Land Escapes, which aimed to explore the definition of art and landscape in the twenty-first century.

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## Mount Desert Symposium in the Arts, "Land Escape"

The goal and focus of the 2001 symposium was to explore the meaning and context of art and the landscape in the 21st Century. This applied to the visual and performing arts, as well as to the sciences, some of which exist in renowned research laboratories and educational institutions on the island. The hope was to expand and enrich these diverse communities, facilitating and creating interdisciplinary collaborations that may develop new ideas, presentations and dialogues.

This program was sponsored solely by the generousities and donations from the summer and year-round communities on Mount Desert. The program expects to become nonprofit by the year 2002, and will continue to function on these volunteered generousities, as well as future funding available to community minded nonprofit groups.

Land Escapes developed an advisory committee, steering committees and a list of sponsors, contributors and volunteers. The programs were free and open to the public. Future participants of each symposium will include emerging as well as established professionals, recommended by previous participants, as well as by a panel chosen for each specific symposium. The participants will reside on Mt. Desert Island for the week with a volunteer host and in return will share their artistic skills in workshops, lectures or discussion groups.

For more information, contact [Nancy Manter](#).

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## 2001 Events and Participants

Mount Desert Symposium in the Arts was inaugurated July 21–27, 2001 on Mount Desert Island, Maine. "Land Escapes 2001," was a vision created and supported by a group of year-round and summer residents living on the Island. "Land Escapes 2001" featured many well-known established artists as well as emerging and experimental artists. Unlike other formally structured programs that provide studios and extended residencies, the invited participants were on the Island for one week to present their work. Mount Desert Island offers many unique resources, including internationally recognized scientific laboratories, educational institutions, as well as Acadia National Park. Situated off the coast of Maine, this beautiful national park has attracted artists and writers for many generations.

Mount Desert Island enjoys a long tradition of landscape painting and "Land Escapes 2001" aimed to explore the definition of art and landscape in the twenty-first century. "Landscape" can imply a natural setting as well as a man-made space or environment, such as an architectural structure or an urban skyline. 'Landscape' can also imply a state of mind and body, or an experience generated from memories associated with a particular climate or location. "Land Escape 2001" sought to expand the concept and definition of landscape as it applied to other disciplines, including math and science.

"Land Escapes 2001" posed many questions. Is the artist an innovator or preservationist? Does a personal journey become history only when a critic or theorist transforms this process into a meaningful context? "Land Escape 2001" explored these concepts while bringing together diverse people and experiences to Mount Desert Island.

Mount Desert Symposiums in the Arts, "Land Escapes 2001" featured various presentations in different public venues. This included a lecture by a writer on his recently published biography of Fairfield Porter's life, a painter who spent many years painting on his secluded island off the coast of Maine. There was a panel discussion on contemporary art and the landscape presented by professionals from the art and science fields, which was moderated by an art critic from New York. On two different evenings there were film forums, showing experimental and documentary films. The general public was encouraged to participate in these dialogues and activities. There were also private gatherings for these guest participants, providing an opportunity to interact in more intimate settings.

## Schedule of Public Events

- July 23, 2001 "Art in the Landscape." Panel moderated by Patricia Phillipps. Panelists include Karen Davidson, Susan Gosin, Philip Heckscher, Nancy Manter and Sam Shaw. Northeast Harbor Neighborhood House
- July 24, 2001 Experimental and documentary film forum. College of the Atlantic
- July 25, 2001 Lecture by Justin Spring on his recently published biography, Fairfield Porter, A Life in Art. College of the Atlantic, McCormick Hall
- July 26, 2001 Experimental and documentary film forum. College of the Atlantic

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## "Land Escapes 2001" Symposium Participants

**Nancy Andrews**, Seal Harbor, ME. Ms. Andrews, a filmmaker and performance artist, is currently on the faculty at the College of the Atlantic. Recently, her work has been in film and live performance exemplified by early 20th century practices in "silent" films. Her work employs live sounds, effects, narration and music. Ms. Andrews has won many awards including the Ann Arbor Film Festival "Committees Choice Award," as well as support from the Jerome Foundation and the New York State Council on the Arts. The title of her film is to be announced.

**John Blesso**, New York City. Writer and editor-in-chief of Silk City Press, Mr. Blesso was previously the managing editor of the Authors Guild Bulletin. He has served as the editor and coordinator of many of the upcoming symposium events. He will also be involved with the portfolio that will be produced following the symposium. Mr. Blesso also serves on the Advisory Board.

**Nancy Bowen**, New York City. An internationally exhibited sculptor, Ms. Bowen will create a temporary outdoor sculpture, made of large colorful tiles painted with different kinds of knots. Her piece will physically link the formal geometry of the Beatrix Farrand Gardens with the casual nature of the Atlantic seashore. The piece contrasts the formal with the informal, the "made" with the natural, all the while drawing the viewer slowly towards a beautiful view of the coast. The knots refer to nautical functions as they evoke broader metaphors. The colors of the tiles were suggested by the colors of local boats and buoys. The entire format was inspired by shrines in India which combine cultural artifacts with elements from nature. Ms. Bowen is an Assistant Professor of Sculpture at SUNY-Purchase, and on the faculty of the MFA Program at Bard College.

**Laia Cabrera**, born in Barcelona and living in New York City. Ms. Cabrera is a filmmaker and performs with "Vertiginosas Islands," a theatre group. She will be showing her film "Under the Influence," the story of two sisters, and how their families affected their self-perception.

**Karen Davidson**, New York City. Ms. Davidson is a book designer and principal of Davidson Design, Inc. She has designed art, health, and science publications, and has published artists' books. Ms. Davidson will serve on the panel at the Neighborhood House, and present slides on Hans Waanders, Hamish Fulton, Robert Long, and Ian Hamilton Finlay, artists whose different expressions are based in the landscape. Ms. Davidson also serves on the Advisory Board.

**Eduardo Difarnecio**, New York City. Born in Maracaibo, Venezuela, Mr. Difarnecio, a filmmaker, graduated from Pratt Institute and attended Goldsmiths College and Richmond College, both in London. He has shown his work in Sweden, Cuba, Amsterdam, London, and in the U.S., including several exhibitions in New York City. Mr. Difarnecio will be showing his film entitled "Depart (Walking Away Until I Disappear from View)", which is currently being shown at the Stark Gallery in New York City.

**Susan Gosin**, Princeton, NJ. Founder and co-chairman of the Dieu Donne Paper Mill in New York City, Ms. Gosin is a writer, book publisher and artist. She will serve on the "Art in the Landscape" panel, presenting two artists who produce art work at the Dieu Donne Papermill: Laura Anderson, also collaborates on projects in the Venezuelan rainforests; Winifred Lutz produces outdoor installations concerned with perception, and the heightening awareness of landscape. Ms. Gosin will also be doing a collaboration with Nancy Bowen, creating vessels made with Seaweed.

**Philip Heckscher**, New York City. Mr. Heckscher also serves on the Advisory Board.

**Gillie Holme**, New York City. Born in India, Ms. Holme is a graduate of the Central School of Art in London. She works in mixed media, including sculpture, which she will be organizing for the collaborative tidal piece, "Clam-flat Blues." Most recently, Ms. Holme exhibited work at the Bronx Museum in New York. She also works as a caterer and will be creating unusual and unique table and food configurations during her visit to Mount Desert Island.

**Anthony Korner**, New York City. Mr. Korner is the publisher and executive director of Art Forum Magazine, an internationally distributed publication highly regarded for its reviews of exhibitions, as well as its feature articles on established and emerging artists. Art Forum's contributors are highly regarded in their fields, and have made major contributions to the study of art and art history. Mr. Korner is also a filmmaker, and will be showing a short film entitled "Helen, Queen of the Nautch Girls," about a female dancer from India.

**Nancy Manter**, New York City. Artist and faculty member at Princeton University in the Visual Arts Department, Ms. Manter is also the founder and Director of Mount Desert Symposiums in the Arts, and the creator of the "Scarecrow Exhibition" at Beech Hill Farms on the Island, now a yearly event. Ms. Manter will serve on the panel "Art and the Landscape," presenting slides on her work as a painter and an earth artist, exploring how they relate to the theme of "Land Escape 2001."

**Sam Shaw**, Southwest Harbor, ME. Graduate of the Rhode Island School of Design in sculpture and jewelry, Mr. Shaw is also the founder and director of Shaw's Jewelry in Northeast Harbor, ME, a gallery that exhibits unique gems and jewelry. Mr. Shaw shows contemporary Maine artists, while also representing and exhibiting several important art estates. Mr. Shaw has received numerous awards and has chaired many prestigious arts organizations. He will be presentation on gems and stones he incorporates from various landscapes into his own work. Mr. Shaw is also on the Advisory Board.

**Jody Silvio**, Silversprings, MD. Ms. Silvio is an educational administrator of 250 public schools in Montgomery County. She will be involved on the cuisine side of the program, and will serve as a public relations advisor. Ms. Silvio was also a coordinator of events for the "Scarecrow/Higher Elevations" sculpture exhibition last year at Beech Hill Farms.

**Justin Spring**, New York City. Art Historian and writer, Mr. Spring has written extensively on art, and recently published his biography Fairfield Porter: A Life in Art, which will serve as the basis for his July 25 lecture at the College of the Atlantic. Mr. Spring has recently been awarded a Guggenheim fellowship for 2001-2002.

**Martha Swetzoff**, Rhode Island. Ms. Swetzoff earned an MS Degree from MIT Media Lab, and is currently on the faculty

at the Rhode Island School of Design. She is a filmmaker and media designer for live performances, and will be presenting "Theme Murder," her award-winning documentary on the unsolved murder of her father, the Boston art dealer Hyman Swetstoff.

**Lucy Weismann**, New York City. Graduate of Georgetown University's Foreign Service School, Ms. Weismann is currently studying film at The New School. She will present "In the Red," a three-minute comedy about menstruation. She is serving as the co-chair of the film selection committee.