

Assignment: Formulate 4 good, sound questions that you would ask an artist during a visit. Consider that you want to learn all you can about that artist, but you also want to be mindful of their privacy. Then take these 4 questions and do an imaginary studio visit of an artist that you intend to include in your final exam exhibition. You can choose any artist that you wish, and that you want to learn more about.

Artist:

Mary Miss (born May 1944 in New York City) is a public land artist who integrates nature, engineering, and urban design into her works around the country and world. Specifically gearing towards public engagement, she brings ideas of sustainability and environmentalism to her art that can have the ability to affect people's daily lives and the way they interact with the environment.

As a public land artist, it is impossible to start and complete a work all in one space. In that way, your artist studio is not used in a traditional sense. With that in mind, in what ways does your studio or 'indoor space' play a role in your overall process?

- I like to think that place is my medium. With my work, my goal is to create languages and communicate ideas through engagement with the land. A studio is an important aspect because it's where ideas can be fledged out for the creation of works. I spend a lot of my time reading and collaborating with other designers, scientists, and architects so I feel that from the time I am discussing, planning, all the way to the act of making a work is my "studio time". A single physical space is not necessary but the space and time to create in all of the settings a work occupies is.

Working on such large scales, how long do you find it takes to bring an idea into a fully realized work?

- Well, to tell you the truth most works don't get finished. When attempting such large scaled projects things can easily get in the way, the main one being money. I spend a lot of time working with architects and engineers, creating full renderings but sometimes the work never makes it out of the studio and into the world. Some projects can take up to years to create with planning but others are commissioned for specific purposes where organizations or people want me to help with redesigning spaces for them to bring forth a certain message. Almost all my work has to do with the public and bringing communities into the discussion of the environment, so a work cannot be fully completed until that happens.

How have your earlier works influenced your path to create works geared towards public engagement?

- When finding my vocabulary as a young artist, I found sculpture was the most accessible way to express my ideas. Most of my works in school had me stripping things down to their skeletal framework using string, rope, and canvas. I started placing those works outdoors which engaged the landscape of a park or what-have-you. Land art helps the viewer read the world around them in a new way. With my later works geared towards ecology and a reconnection with nature, my goal is to give an experience that can then create that engagement for the public.
- In the 70s, I started talking about how artists could help shape the public domain and the discussion within the public domain. Expansion Field was created in the late 70s on Long Island and was an underground structure that you would walk into and then walk underneath the path where you came from. It was intended to be a visceral experience as you walked just below the crust of the Earth. Shortly after was South Cove at the tip of Manhattan. For New Yorkers, nature and life are so separate and the access to the water allowed a reconnection with nature. People couldn't help but smell the salt and feel it splash on their toes. This has all led to my work today, City as Living Laboratory, which directly introduces ways of sustainability into people's everyday lives, or at least helping them imagine how sustainability can play a role in their life.

Can you talk about the role collaboration plays in your work?

- City as Living Laboratory is entirely a collaboration; there is nothing I do (or can do) on my own. I work with artists, historians, economists, scientists, sociologists, entire communities, and so many more. The goal is to get people to understand how their lives are connected to this place Earth. I like to integrate works into the context of places, specifically calling on a sustainability issue of that certain location which hopefully is a catalyst for even greater work. Cities have so many resources of artists, designers, and engineers that can all help with their ideas and many infrastructure systems don't understand what having a sustainable design can mean. My goal is to help bring those ideas forward.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=c2iPQU461V8>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wl58wNMvi6Y>