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## Seventh Lagoon: The Ring of Water

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## Abstract

The Seventh Lagoon is an eco-activist artwork conversation – with all of us – on the rise of the earth's oceans previously exhibited and catalogued as part of the Lagoon Cycle (1985). The entire 360-foot work is now in the National Museum of Modern Art at the Pompidou Center in Paris, France. We hope that its web publication will encourage further dialogue on these issues – Editors.

"Our work begins when we perceive an anomaly in the environment that is the result of opposing beliefs or contradictory metaphors. Moments when reality no longer appears seamless and the cost of belief has become outrageous offer the opportunity to create new spaces – first in the mind and thereafter in everyday life." – ecoartists Newton & Helen Mayer Harrison, quoted at Greenmuseum.org with the introductory statement:

"Among the leading pioneers of the eco-art movement, the collaborative team of Newton and Helen Mayer Harrison (often referred to simply as "the Harrisons") have worked for over thirty years with biologists, ecologists and urban planners to initiate collaborative dialogues to uncover ideas and solutions which support biodiversity and community development.

The Harrison's concept of art embraces a breathtaking range of disciplines. They are historians, diplomats, ecologists, investigators, emissaries and art activists. Their work involves proposing solutions and involves not only public discussion, but extensive mapping and documentation of these proposals in an art context.

Past projects have focused on watershed restoration, urban renewal, agriculture and forestry issues among others. The Harrisons visionary projects have often led to changes in governmental policy and have expanded dialogue around previously unexplored issues leading to practical implementations throughout the United States and Europe."

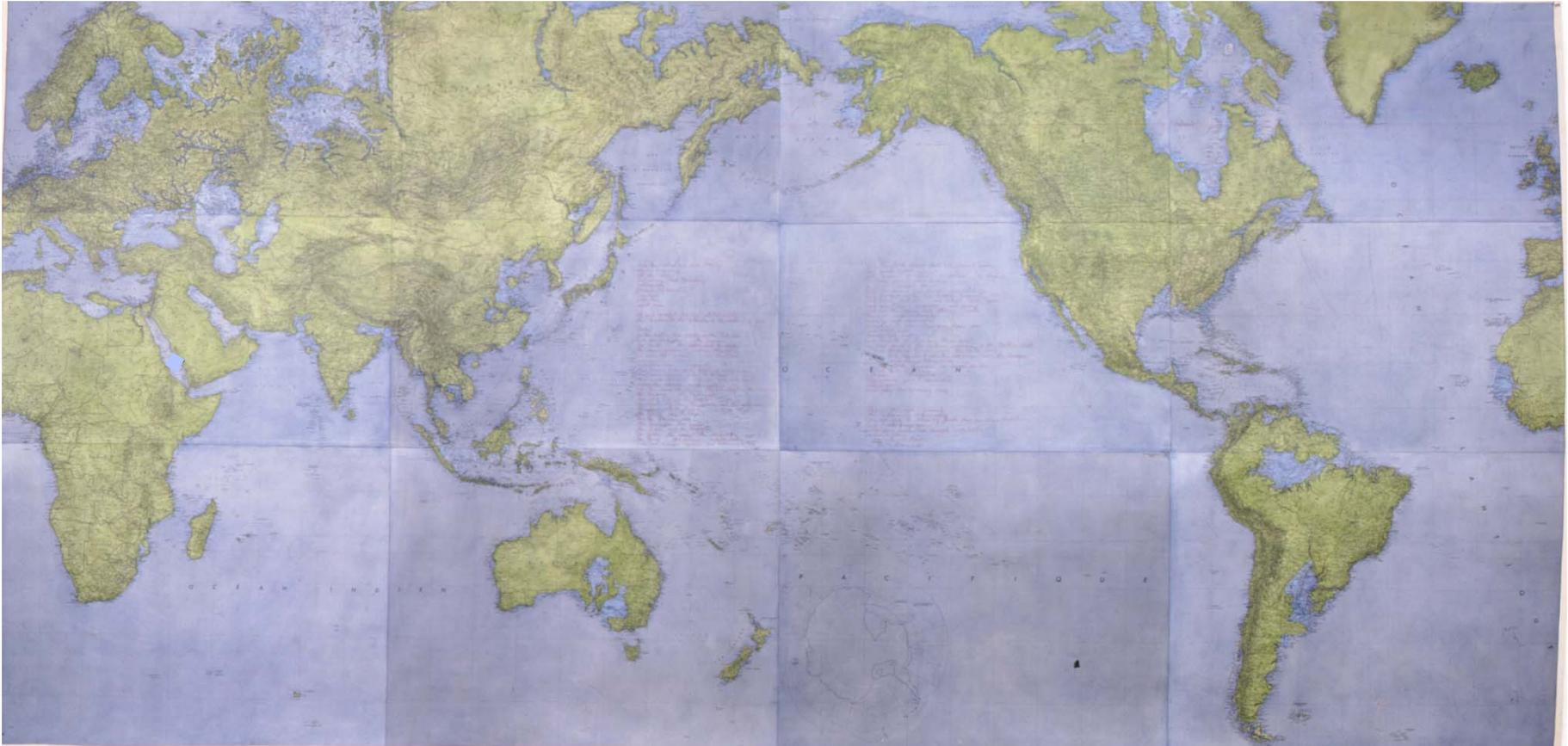
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*original mapping 6'8"x13'2" 1978*

The Seventh Lagoon from THE LAGOON CYCLE. 1974-1984.  
Helen Mayer Harrison & Newton Harrison.

*Upon hearing this  
we took a present world map and  
drew a probable world*

*It is said that if all the ice melted  
the oceans would rise about 300 feet  
So we drew line as best we could  
at the 300-foot level  
and thought about how the land would shrink  
as the oceans grew*

*One morning we heard the ocean singing  
Increase in heat decrease in ice  
Increase in water decrease in land*

*Ice into water water to ice  
Stated changes changes of state*

*Decrease in heat increase in ice  
Decrease in water increase in land*

*Melt at the South Pole rise in LA  
Ice into water not water to ice  
so  
Increase in heat decrease in ice  
Increase in water decrease in land  
After all the ocean whispered*

*I am the beneficiary of your garbage can  
as you are the beneficiary of my abundance  
and everybody knows that ice into water  
and water to ice are changes of state*

***Upon hearing this  
we took a present world map and  
drew a probable world***

***It is said that if all the ice melted  
the oceans would rise about 300 feet  
So we drew line as best we could  
at the 300-foot level  
and thought about how the land would shrink  
as the oceans grew***

*And the waters will rise slowly  
at the boundary  
at the edge*

*redrawing that boundary  
continually  
moment by moment  
all over  
altogether  
all at once  
It is a graceful drawing and redrawing  
this response to the millennia of the making of  
fire*

*As the waters rise slowly in the Red Sea  
and the Dead Sea the Caspian  
the North the Baltic and the Black  
the ocean gyres will redraw themselves  
as will the currents and the tides*

*And over time gracefully  
this rising tide will flow up every river  
that once flowed down to the sea  
and each freshwater tongue will withdraw  
before the advance of the salt  
Up the Saint Lawrence the Columbia  
the Amazon the Hudson the Mississippi  
the White Nile and the Blue  
the Volga the Don the Danube  
and the Thames*

*the Seine and the Loire  
the Rhone and the Rhine and  
the Garonne  
the Ganges the Congo  
the Tigris and the Euphrates  
the Yellow the Amur the Irrawaddy  
the Lena the Potomac and the Snake  
and all rivers named and unnamed*

*And the flood plains that are farmed upon  
and lived upon  
will become marshes or swamps or bogs  
or beds for swollen rivers  
or shallow inland seas  
and the tropics will become uninhabitable  
and the far north will become temperate  
and corn and rice and wheat and beans  
and plantain manioc and yams  
and all the grains and starchy roots  
known and unknown  
named and unnamed  
will have to grow elsewhere than now  
and most life  
known and unknown  
will have to go elsewhere than now  
as vast parts of the eastern seaboard  
of the United States,  
and parts of Europe near the North Sea  
and much of South America near the Amazon  
and China somewhere  
and Russia in some parts*

*And in this new beginning  
this continuous rebeginning  
will you feed me when my lands  
can no longer produce  
and will I house you  
when your lands are covered with water?  
so that together  
we will withdraw  
as the waters rise?*

Text from The 7<sup>th</sup> Lagoon 1978