
MERIDEL RUBENSTEIN

Visiting Associate Professor, School of Art, Design and Media, Nanyang Technological University



Meridel Rubenstein was educated at Sarah Lawrence College in New York and did special graduate studies at M.I.T. with the renowned photographer, Minor White. She received an M.A./M.F.A. from the University of New Mexico, Albuquerque, in 1974/1977.

She has maintained a studio in Santa Fe since 1975. She has created photography programs at the College of Santa Fe (1976-80), the Institute of American Indian Arts in New Mexico (1990-96) and directed the MFA Photography Program at San Francisco State University in California (1985-90). From 2000-2005 she was Harnish Visiting Artist at Smith College, in Northampton, Massachusetts. Since 2007, she has been, Visiting Associate Professor in the School of Art, Design, and Media at NTU.

Meridel Rubenstein has exhibited widely including the Louvre in Paris, the Museum of Contemporary Photography in Chicago and The List Center for the Visual Arts at MIT. Her works are in prominent collections including the National Museum of American Art in Washington. She has received fellowships from the Guggenheim Foundation and The Bunting Institute at Harvard University, grants from the National Endowment of the Arts, as well the Pollock Krasner and Rockefeller Foundations.

Her 20 year monograph, *BELONGING: Los Alamos to Vietnam*, Photoworks and Installations 1980-2000, was published by St. Ann's Press in Los Angeles in 2004, with texts by environmental writer Terry Tempest Williams, and cultural and art critics: Elaine Scarry, Lucy Lippard, and Rebecca Solnit.

Eden in Iraq: A Confluence of Nature and Culture, Design and Ecology. Helping to Rebuilding Communities in the S. Iraq Marshes

Eden in Iraq is an environmental design and water remediation project in the marshes of S. Iraq using design and wastewater to create a restorative public site for cultural heritage and environmental education. Assistant Professor Peer Sathikh and I, through a Tier 1 research grant from NTU, have gathered an outstanding international interdisciplinary team.

Drawing on Islamic and Mesopotamian traditions originating in this historically and symbolically charged region, this site will be a syncretic container for cultural and ecological restoration after the time of war.

Our engagement with the different communities in Iraq at local, regional, and state levels as well as on our team's interdisciplinary process will be addressed.

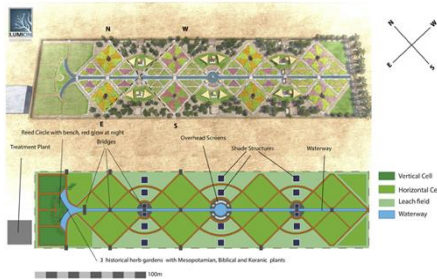
In 2010, we learned of the work of the environmental ngo Nature Iraq to restore the vast

Mesopotamian marshes. Home for over 7000 years to the Marsh Arabs, they led a sustainable unchanged life until Saddam Hussein secretly drained and burned the marshes to flush out Shia rebels hiding there (c. 1993). This area is thought to be the probable site of the historic Garden of Eden, with the Euphrates and Tigris rivers joining on the eastern edge of the marshes.

When Saddam was deposed, the Marsh Arabs returned to restore their land. Their unchanged and sustainable way of life is a model of resilience.

Meridel Rubenstein, Project Director and Artist, 2011-

Eden in Iraq Art The Waste Water Environmental Art Garden Project



Preliminary Drawings of the Al-Manar Site for the Dhi Qar Directorate, Nasariyah, S. Iraq on 5 acres between the Euphrates River and Central Marshes along the main road at Al-Manar Meridel Rubenstein and Peer Sathikh with Tay Yang Heng October 2014



Adam and Eve in the S. Iraq Marshes 2011