



the institute for
advanced studies



The Little and the Great: from a Knoll to a Village to the Tibetan Plateau Newton and Helen Mayer Harrison

Public lecture, hosted by Centre for Contemporary Art, 350 Sauchiehall Street, Glasgow G2 3JD
Wednesday 11th November 2009 6.30 - 8.00 pm

*" A culture is a cooperative adventure a complex system
of shared interrelated beliefs about the nature of reality
and causation of values codes of conduct and ethics
by which people define themselves collectively and niche
themselves individually*

*It is a fragile form not having the duration of the oceans
or lands with which it is in discourse and upon which it
depends for its survival Its constancy is reproduction
and change Its stability is always at risk...*

*But people are tough and resilient and improvise
their existence as best they can very creatively with
the materials at hand but the materials keep changing
Only the improvisation remains constant "*
First Lagoon
Excerpt from *The Lagoon Cycle*, p 37

*" An estuarial lagoon is the place where fresh and salt
waters meet and mix. It is a fragile meeting and
mixing not having the constancy of the oceans
or the rivers It is a collaborative adventure
Its existence is always at risk...*

*Life in the lagoons is tough and very rich
it breeds quickly Like all of us it must improvise its
existence very creatively with the materials at
hand but the materials keep changing Only the
improvisation remains constant*
Third Lagoon

Excerpt from
The Lagoon Cycle, p 60
Helen Mayer Harrison /Newton Harrison
Cornell University Ithaca New York 1985

Introduction

"We developed the name "the Force Majeure" to explain the accelerating transaction between aspects of the Global Warming phenomenon and their interaction with the many ecosystems that are under stress or in actual turbulence from over-demand by human activity. Our work envisions a counter to the reduction of production and consumption due to market contraction and turbulence that mirrors the shrinking productivity and wellbeing of the world ocean and many, many other overstressed planetary sub-systems. The current work is designed to make clear, albeit in a very simple way, that subcontinents and countries that inhabit these systems are not equipped conceptually, legally, or structurally to meet a future shaped by such a force." **Helen Mayer Harrison and Newton Harrison**

Biography

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 almost forty years with biologists, ecologists, architects, urban planners and other artists to initiate collaborative dialogues to uncover ideas and solutions which support biodiversity and community development. 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. "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."

Participation

Attendance is free and open for all but please book a space by email: participate@instituteforadvancedstudies.org.uk