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Anthropocene Autoscene

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Anthropocene Autoscene

Alison Pouliot

Abstract

During the last decade in Switzerland, nature-culture connections enmeshed in landscapes constantly grab my gaze, perhaps more visibly than in my homeland, Australia. Abandoned vehicles in a winter forest - an 'Autofriedhof' - slowly subside into leaf litter - one of the most complex, little explored and biodiverse ecosystems on the planet. The enzymatic power of lichens, among the earth's first colonisers, accelerates its demise as they disassemble the complex compounds of car paints and parts. Water and salt, rot and rust, subsume human creations returning them to their elemental parts, to 'nature'.

An aesthetic beauty emerges as layers of paint, and ideologies, are eaten away; nature's decompositional etching on a vehicular canvas, as culture and nature converge.

The concept of nature, particularly of wilderness, is slowly unravelling. Virgin terrain and Edenic myths, untrodden or untouched by *Homo sapiens* are dismantled. The concept of nature as we've known it, is perhaps extinct. To erode the nature-culture dichotomy and rescind our idea of human exceptionalism, to re-situate ourselves within the biosphere, underpins the future of the planet.

Here are agents of decay in action. Wherever water or debris accumulate and provide the basic requirements for life, colonisers reclaim territory - opportunistic nature redeeming culture. But just for the moment....

Author Biography

Alison Pouliot is an ecologist and environmental photographer. She is currently undertaking a PhD at the Australian National University on perceptions of fungi in biodiversity conservation. Her work and current projects can be viewed at www.alisonpouliot.com

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