



LESNINI FIELD

A 55 ACRE WILDERNESS AND ART RETREAT

FIELD REPORT # TWO—DECEMBER 25TH OF 2019
THROUGH JANUARY 3RD OF 2020

The rental bulldozer and the ecologist would arrive on the same day. In what way could a survey of biotopes be conducted while a 90 horsepower machine was ploughing its way through brush? It was a relief to hear there was no harm in crushing biotopes of poison hemlock or coyote brush when making a road to the river. The blade and the tracks of the beast lay bare seeds and rhizomes on which birds and wildlife fed.

As Karl finished the dozed passages connecting isolated areas, relief was followed by surprise when ecologist Jennifer Robin Berry headed straight for the concrete drainage pipes of the edge of the territory. This is the city of wildlife she explained. The rubble offers the critters ideal protection from the birds of prey and the foxes and coyotes.

Tracks and foot prints tell of a densely populated area, and what else was learned the day the ecologist and the bulldozer driver met? Fur in scat, woodpecker homes, courting red tail hawks, flowers thriving on burnt fields, orange colored boar, skunk living near the gate, and indeed numerous birds in the dozed roads feeding themselves. Bulldozing creates biodiversity.



Karl Bakke dozing the Ford connecting the Plain to the Maze



Jennifer Robin Berry said she will only continue her survey when solitude is guaranteed. This was agreed as it became clear to all involved that Jennifer's answering questions of the curious certainly provides education but is highly unproductive. The one and only method of surveying is standing still in silence. In this way she spotted eight pigs, of which one was orange and another calico. Lesnini Field is a sanctuary for solitude.



It took just two hours to acknowledge the initial concept of the project—tending the wild and adding artworks—was false. Looking over and strolling through the perfections of a plain, a wash, or a hollow, it was evident that any art or garden art would not add to perfection. It would alter the nature of the place. It was decided to leave all things dead and alive in the field alone. Once yielding, refraining, preferring-not-to were accepted, a whole new world, the actual world, opened up: a 25-year-old, post flood wilderness as a bountiful island for wildlife amid farm factories. Improving the extant wild seemed a form of destruction. Only paths to allow human access are needed.

Andre Dekker and Erik Bakke completed six collaborative paintings on the first day of the year 2020, using charcoal and burnt clay left from a recent fire. The works started as maps of the 26 areas and became flood ravaged ravines, interlocking territories, and madonnas with child. Each is 4 x 7.5 feet. They await exhibition.

Mary Duan from the Monterey County Weekly came to visit. Her article will likely appear in the third week of January. Sean Roney of the South County Newspapers conducted an interview which will be published soon. Thanks to both.



Andre Dekker working on collaborative paintings in the Wash

The survey of the field, the naming of the areas, did not give clues for needed action but further enforced the importance of not doing anything anywhere. It felt like freedom. It felt like having all sorts of time. And it felt like a natural impulse to just name the things and the space. And this was felt as the opposite of *intervention*—this ambition of artists around the world to leave a mark.

The one and only mark of Lesnini Field is a bulldozer track which rain, wind and sun will eradicate. The field is there to use as a studio, a place to work in solitude. The location of this wilderness will remain secret, but it will not be created as a *secret garden*.

LESNINI FIELD'S 26 AREAS

1. River 2. Islet 3. Bank
4. Shore 5. Launch 6. Hollow
7. Bar 8. Flat 9. Road
10. Wash 11. Pipes 12. Plain
13. Perch 14. Poplars 15. Pits
16. Head 17. Dump 18. Gate
19. Fell 20. Band 21. Ford
22. Pond 23. Tongue
24. Curve 25. Maze
26. Terra Incognito



To learn more about the Lesnini Field project, to contact the artists, or to make a proposal to participate, please email Erik at erik@erikbakke.com, or visit www.erikbakke.com and www.lesninifield.wordpress.com

Thesaurus of English words and Phrases Classified and Arranged so as to Facilitate the Expression of Ideas and Assist in Literary Composition is the precursor to *Roget's International Thesaurus*. Reading a found 3rd Edition of *Roget's* revealed the following classifications and associations as marked by an unknown hand with strips of yellow legal paper. Conveniently and surprisingly, these words introduce an approach to Lesnini Field.

630. Escape — Getaway
631. Abandonment — Yielding
632. Desire — Urge
633. Eagerness — Devotion
634. Indifference — Easygoing
635. Choice — Embrace
708. Leisure — Idle Hours
709. Rest — Breathing Space
929. Love — Fondness
986. Chastity — Delicacy
987. Unchastity — Unrestraint
989. Asceticism — Hermit
990. Temperance — Avoidance



Erik Bakke working on collaborative paintings in the Wash