

2011 – 2012

# Desert Rooftops

Asphalt shingled rooftops, wood,  
vinyl siding, metal interpretive signs  
16 x 92 x 54 feet

Commissioned by the Art Production Fund  
for the Last Lot at Times Square, 46<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> Ave. NYC,  
November 2011–February 2012





Desert Rooftops is a 5,000-square-foot sculpture that is an undulating configuration of multiple asphalt-shingled rooftops similar to those on suburban developments, McMansions and strip malls conjoined to resemble a rolling, dune-like landscape.

The piece examines issues of the natural and built landscape by comparing the monoculture that arises from unchecked suburban and urban sprawl with that of an over-cultivated landscape—creating a work that is “picturesque, familiar and simultaneously foreboding.”

Brooks’ sculptural approach gives a nod to Robert Smithson’s earthworks and Gordon Matta-Clark’s building cuts while offering a much needed sense of humor to help digest today’s somber environmental issues.

—Excerpted from the Art Production Fund press release

















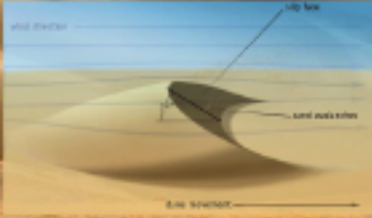




More than half the countries in the world are affected by desertification. Despoiling more than 20,000 square miles of land worldwide every year, it affects 74% of the land in North America and 73% of the land in Africa.

Over-cultivation and overgrazing results in the exhaustion of topsoil inhibiting the land's ability to regain water, sustain crops, livestock, or human activity. Winds carry dry soil across a region causing sand to inundate existing vegetation, thus spreading the effects of desertification.



**Desertification** is the degradation of fertile land into desert, caused primarily by human activities such as the over-exploitation of land, overgrazing, mechanized farming, and deforestation due to population increase.

\*The United Nations Commission on Combating Desertification

Detail: interpretive signage, correlating processes of suburban sprawl with processes of desertification.



*Stress Tests: Un-sites No. 1-2 & 3-5 (Homage to Gordon.)* 2013  
 Extracted sections of the Desert Rooftops installation, cable, hardware.  
 Dimensions variable. 2014 installation at the Tang Museum, Saratoga Springs, NY