

The Wittemoor

The *Wittemoor* was *Symposium Moor 1992*'s primary project site. Located between Hude and Oldenburg near the Weser River, Germany. The *Wittemoor* is part of a larger complex of moors (bogs) that stretches across northern Germany, The Netherlands and Denmark. Other nature protected areas, such as *Teuffelsmoor* (Devil's Moor) near Hamburg as well as numerous moors already endangered or destroyed by commercial exploitation were also used as research for the project.

The concept of this month-long festival was to gather a select group (10) of European and American performance and installation artists to live on, investigate and then respond to environmental issues evoked by the delicate ecology and unusual geographical-archaeological sites on the *Wittemoor*. The result was a series of solo and collaborative works performed/executed on the site and in the local museums and arts communities of Oldenburg, Germany. Additionally, the collected results (video, audio and photo documentation) of this month-long festival became part of a traveling exhibition and a catalogue.

In the spirit of approaching the environmental issues beyond politicized solutions, the creation of *Symposium Moor 1992* presented a unique opportunity for works at a state-designated preservation site of archaeological importance. *Wittemoor* includes the location of an ancient roadway, dating from the 3rd Century BC, built in the area inhabited by the early Celtic peoples as part of their routes to the northern territories. The moors themselves offer a rare and dynamic landscape site for performance; but it is the remains of the ancient roads and the other human artifacts, male & female totems, that are the most unique and interesting. The bog has preserved the original wood roads used to cross the moor. Two distinct styles of construction were used – one a log road (Bohlenweg), a wooden trestle path, the other a road on stilts (Pfahlweg), a stilt path. Pervading the whole site is a sense of depth in history, a preservation by sinking – submerging in the medium of the moor/bog itself.

