

# ECOLOGICAL SYSTEMS THINKING IN THE WORK OF LINDA STEIN

By Christine Filippone

Limbless, classicizing, thick-waisted female forms comprise Linda Stein's Knight Series. These tactile figures embedded with urban detritus including metal laundry tickets, spoons, chains, calligraphic plates and fragments of newsprint are currently touring the country under the title "The Fluidity of Gender." The title references the ambiguity of these figures, which possess small breasts, wide hips and stand rigidly erect with left leg thrust slightly forward in the manner of Ancient Greek kouros statues. The works are emblematic of the spectrum of gender identities, and thus subversive of stark masculine and feminine binaries in which hierarchal power relations are inevitably inscribed. Stein, an out lesbian who engages viewers in performances with her wearable sculpture and in public discourse centered on the effects of sexism and homophobia, sees her work in concert with her activism, as a tool to reveal the connections between societal stereotypes and individual lives. Her work is rooted in her deeply held feminist beliefs. Many of her sculptures function as wearable suits of armor, referencing female symbols of protection and physical and moral strength. These include the comic book heroine Wonder Woman fighting for truth and justice, the anime Princess Mononoke defending the environment against industrialization, and the Asian goddess of mercy and compassion the Bodhisattva Kannon, all portrayed in *Heroic Lineup 599* (2007; Pl. 8 and Fig. 1).<sup>1</sup> Scholars have appropriately described her works in the context of gender performativity and embodied subjectivity, informed by the sumptuousness of her materials, which invite a haptic or touch-centered response.<sup>2</sup>

Stein's current series, provisionally titled *I Am the Environment: My Gender, My Nature*, expands the concept of fluidity beyond gender to encompass environmental systems. In this series, she abandons urban detritus in favor of natural materials, which, she explains, address the relationships between gender, the environment, and her own identity.<sup>3</sup> Truncated at mid-thigh and encrusted with abandoned mollusk shells, driftwood, and small stones, these works such as *Shell Homes 723* (2011; Fig. 2) extend her concern with gender and power to the social realm and to her nonhuman surroundings. At first this work may seem in productive communication with ecofeminism, which according to ecofeminist scholar Karen Warren is "the position that there are important connections between how one treats women,



Fig. 1. Linda Stein, *Heroic Lineup 599* (2007), 3-D collage with archival inks on paper, 42" x 21" x 3". Photo: Stein Studios.



Fig. 2. Linda Stein, *Shell Homes 723* (2011), shells, mixed media, 37" x 21" x 12". Photo: D. James Dee.

people of color, and the underclass on one hand and how one treats the nonhuman natural environment on the other."<sup>4</sup> But there are conceptual and even spiritual aspects to these works that are not easily contained within this frame. To encompass the performative nature of her wearable sculpture used as a component of her political activism and her developing concept of the interrelationship between individual, society, and environment, often expressed in spiritual terms, I propose a reading through the lens of systems theory, particularly the concept of open systems. Associated with life, growth, and change, open systems took on political and social resonance for artists like Stein maturing in the late 1960s and early 1970s.<sup>5</sup> Historically coincident with the American women's movement, the theorization of open systems in relation to

society, biology, and the environment was deployed by women artists in the early 1970s as an alternative means of conceiving social and environmental relationships.<sup>6</sup> In 1972, anthropologist and cyberneticist Gregory Bateson argued that individuals, societies, and ecosystems must be conceived integrally, as a complex, interrelated system.<sup>7</sup> The notion of a self-sufficient, independent self is a fallacy in this model. Art historian William Kaizen has explained that "[Bateson] redefined the self as an expanded mental field in which the subject and its objects are no longer separable."<sup>8</sup> Mind itself expands to become "immanent in the larger system [of] man plus environment."<sup>9</sup> In his book *Ecology of Mind*, Bateson asserted, "The total self-corrective unit which processes information, or as I say, 'thinks' and 'acts' and 'decides,' is a

system whose boundaries do not at all coincide with the boundaries either of the body or of what is popularly called the 'self' or 'consciousness.'... The network is not bounded by the skin."<sup>10</sup>

Bateson's denial of a self or a skin suggests the interconnectedness of the individual body with the social world and the environment, all of which together constitute a network or system. Intrinsic to this notion of network is a concept of self counter to the mind-body dualisms of Western thought.<sup>11</sup> The very word ecology is defined as the science of the relationships between organisms and their environments. Bateson warned that the potential collapse of this system would be the result of a Western epistemology ruled by cause-and-effect scientific rationalism, which tends to focus on elements separately in order to exert control. Man changes the environment to suit him and in so doing, upsets the balance of controlled competition and mutual dependency among the elements, leading to breakdown. Thus, in Bateson's notion of ecology, which had a formative influence on modern ecology and ecofeminism by extension, dominance and control are antithetical to a well-functioning interdependent system.

For *Shell Homes 723*, Stein collected sand-smoothed stones, drift-wood fragments and mollusk shells from the beach and applied them—horror vacui—to her cast paper figure molds. Richly tactile, these varied natural objects conform to the female figure, suggesting an integration of subject with environment. In concept, they recall the early photographs of environmental artist Alan Sonfist, including *Myself as a Tree*, *Myself as a Leaf* (1969), in which natural objects—branches and leaves—are montaged with the artist's face, suggesting an erasure of self in favor of a physical union with nature. This union with nature is also evident in his photo/performance *Myself Becoming one with the Tree* (also 1969), made the year before the first Earth Day, in which he is pictured wrapping his hands around the trunk of a tree. The environmental concerns that both artists share manifest an effacement of an independent self in favor of an integration of self with environment.

To help her think through this series, Stein made a preliminary video of ocean waves gently rolling to shore, overlaid with her musings upon her personal relationship to the sea and its yield.

I run as close as I dare without touching the foam lace boarder of sea advancing, with its retreat exposing a pockmarked skin of sand left vulnerable but rich with shells, stones, feathers and branches. I breathe in the ocean's power and physically invite it into my body, my androgynous body, my androgynous body, representing all of humanity. With my outstretched fingers I internalize the water's force into my being and cry out at the instant of the crashing waves' orgasmic explosion. I have succeeded at this intersection of sky meeting water, meeting sand in capturing and internalizing the ocean. I am the ocean .... Each spotted, speckled, stippled piece that I lift up and adopt, I imagine already a part of the torso I've yet to create.<sup>12</sup>

Here Stein conceptualizes a conjoining of natural systems, "sky meeting water, meeting sand." She also discusses the integration of the ocean with her own body, suggestive of a systemic fusion of self with ecosystem. This fusion is also inherent in her reference to her own androgynous body that "represents all of humanity." According to the feminist scholar Carolyn Heilbrun, "Androgyny, above all, allows individuals comfort in their own sex, while refusing to recognize the constraints dictated by gender."<sup>13</sup> Further, literary scholar Marisa Pereyra asserts that androgyny is one of the strategies used to annul the destructive effects of the binary opposition: I – Other, in which the other is always represented by the feminine gender/sex.<sup>14</sup> According to the (often criticized) Bem Sex Role Inventory, the androgynous person has a high degree of both feminine and masculine traits. I suggest that for Stein androgyny encompasses all variants of gender identity.

The elimination of the concept of self in favor of integration with the environment is also a hallmark of Buddhist philosophy, which Stein references in works from the Knight series such as *Heroic Lineup 599* (Fig. 1), which incorporates images of Kannon, circumscribed by a halo at the center of the torso, a compassionate and ambiguously gendered Bodhisattva who forestalls her own passage to enlightenment in order to help others. Stein explained that her phrase "I am the ocean" was influenced by a passage in the novel *Siddhartha* by Herman Hesse, in which the protagonist undertakes a path to fulfillment that resembles the nirvana of Buddhism. After deep practice of self-denial and meditation, he describes slipping out of his self, his soul, to become one with a passing heron: "A heron flew over the bamboo forest—and Siddhartha accepted the heron into his soul, flew over forest and mountains, was a heron, ate fish, felt the pangs of a heron's hunger, spoke the heron's croak, died a heron's death."<sup>15</sup> The restless son of a Brahmin, Siddhartha is described at the onset of the novel as "one who already knew to feel Atman [the primordial soul or self] in the depths of his being, indestructible, one with the universe."<sup>16</sup> Buddhist philosophy discards the notion of an independent self which can dominate or be dominated, and instead seeks an enlightened existence in which dualities are replaced by the universal energy of all sentient beings.

Concern for the environment and identification with it is also a central theme of the anime film *Princess Mononoke* (2007) whose titular character is among Stein's pantheon of protectors and a subject in *Heroic Lineup 599*, where she appears in multiple across the abdomen, confrontationally wielding a spear, and again on the left thigh, mouth smeared with blood, knife in hand. Directed by Hayao Miyazaki, the film examines the unbalanced relationship between humanity and the environment. It is set in the Muromachi Period (ca. 1336–1573), wherein firearms were first introduced into Japan, ostensibly tipping the balance of power in favor of humankind. The Great Forest, entirely animated by *kami* or nature spirits referencing the threatened indigenous Shinto beliefs of Japan, is being ravaged to fuel an ironworks run by Lady Eboshi. Eboshi is a pragmatic businesswoman but also a sympathetic character who employs prostitutes to run the



Fig. 3. Linda Stein, *Violin Arc 198* (1991), wood, metal, stone, 37" x 32" x 7". Stelboun/Stephens Collection. Photo: Stein Studios.



Fig. 5. Linda Stein, *Intrigue 175* (1988), wood, metal, stone. 67" x 27" x 23". Photo: Stein Studios.



Fig. 4. Linda Stein, *Blades Wall Rope 186* (1990), wood, metal, leather, 74" x 21" x 56". Photo: Stein Studios.

ironworks and lepers to make guns to defend it. Princess Mononoke is a spirit-possessed human child raised by the female wolf god, Moro, who, together with her wolf clan, aggressively fights to protect the forest from industrial exploitation. Princess Mononoke is imbued with spiritual power and is clearly associated with nature, though hers is a feral one. Japanese and anime scholar Susan Napier has noted the subtlety with which Miyazaki has described these primary

characters, "Overall, the female characters possess a gender-neutral, or at least deeply ambiguous, characterization compared to traditional female stereotypes, and they remain completely outside the misogynistic patriarchal collectivity that rapidly became the foundation of premodern Japan."<sup>17</sup> Ultimately, the message of Miyazaki's film, which reflects his own beliefs, is that nature and man (and industry) must find a way to coexist in seeming systemic mutual dependency. This concept is manifest in Stein's sculptures in which natural objects, perhaps still imbued with *kami*, find new form in symbiosis with the body,

like clumps of marine mussels affixed to natural rock.

Stein's figures are inevitably objects and as such differ from works historically informed by systems theory, which calls into question the commodifiable art object, "the thingification of art," and privileges function over form.<sup>18</sup> For example in *Rhine Water Purification Plant* (1972), artist Hans Haacke created a filtration system in which the industrial waste from the nearby Rhine River was extracted and the clean water channeled into a tank filled with healthy, swimming fish. In this process-based work, Haacke exposed a larger social problem (an industrial economy in which clean water is negligible) while incrementally improving the environment. The work gains meaning through its function. Rather than a saleable art object, it is an ecological intervention—to use Sue Spaid's term, an "ecovention"—in which the artist acts as conduit, connecting the social body to the ecological problem it has wrought.<sup>19</sup> Still, the conceptual framework that informs Stein's object-based sculptures, her concern for the environment specifically and for protecting the vulnerable more broadly, are enacted in performative sculptures intended to connect the individual body of the wearer to the ideology of the society that shapes it.

As early as the 1980s and 1990s Stein made performative sculptures meant to be wielded, objects she imagined as relics of a past age. These ominous, sometimes weapon-like, implements reflected the dominance and violence of existing social structures; but the elaborate origin stories she invented for them conjured alternative uses derived from societies devoted to peace and equality. For example her *Blades* series of the 1990s, named for objects containing multiple, curved metal machetes, elaborate hilts akin to scimitars, and often trailing whip-like coils of rope from the handle (1991; Fig. 3 and 1990; Fig. 4), were conceived as defensive weapons meant to fortify the user.<sup>20</sup> Gender is implicit in the type of blades used; the word machete derives from the Spanish word "macho," referring at once to the gender of the presumed user of this ancient device and to its



Fig. 6. Linda Stein, *Security Knight 646* (2009), paper, archival inks, wood, metal, foam, Lucite metal extensions, 58" x 19" x 5". Photo: D. James Dee.

destructive capacity, while other materials such as looped metal cable and bits of urban detritus create a parallel between the violence of this past culture and our own. The jewels and fragments of musical instruments that also adorn these sculptures serve to subvert the deleterious function of the blades, in favor of peaceful ceremonial ones.

The Blades were preceded in the 1980s by her Ceremonial Scepters, made with wood, bone, and metal and also designed to be held in relation to the body. The artist imagined the scepters as ritual instruments, akin to mythological objects carried by gods or used by tribes in initiation rites. Severely twisted like the root of a tree, *Intrigue 175* (1988; Fig. 5), is encrusted with metal fragments and wrapped at the handle, with twine to aid gripping. Wispy feathers affixed to one end and rows of beading to the other further testify to its cultural import. Her choice of the scepter, an object that by definition



Fig. 7. Linda Stein, *Vestment 628* (2008). wood, metal, also 12" Lucite extensions resting on shoulders, 52" x 18" x 6". Photo: D. James Dee.

confers power and authority to the user, suggests that these objects, as well as those comprising her Blades and Knights series, represent the artist's inevitable assimilation of social dominance, even as she seeks alternative, relational ecologies. This yearning for a more integrated social system is evident in the stories she wrote to accompany these excavated objects. Exhibited together with the instruments, her texts described the evolution of the long-lost tribes that crafted and used them. She wrote in 1989, "Over the generations they turned from a war-like existence to a peaceful agrarian way of life in which



Fig. 8. Stein wearing *Vestment 628*. Photo: D. James Dee.

all members of the community were valued equals, and the natural elements were treasured as parts of a sacred whole." In this transformed, enlightened community of equals that included the natural world, her objects were used only for ceremonial purposes, "in ritualistic dance during communal fetes."<sup>21</sup> The text describing *Intrigue 175* suggests that the object is imbued with a spiritual essence: "Heavy and portentous, this piece embodied the animism so central to the beliefs of this culture. The scepters, when held, seemed to come alive in the arms of the bearer."<sup>22</sup> Thus, long before *Princess Mononoke*, Stein had utopically evoked an animistic society in which there is no separation between the natural, human, and spiritual worlds. She imagined one world in which animals, plants, rocks and geographic features possess souls or spirits in common with human beings.

Stein further exposed the relationships between the individual and social systems in wearable works that have been likened to protective suits of armor made in response to the artist's feelings of vulnerability in the wake of 9/11, a significant event in her life and work.<sup>23</sup> She refers to the process of donning these garments as "body swapping," intending for the work to facilitate a transformation of identity.<sup>24</sup> Works like *Security Knight 646* (2009; Fig. 6) are equipped with Velcro straps so they may be affixed at the shoulder and waist. The legs imitate scale armor, in which segmented plates overlap to suggest protection and facilitate flexible movement (Pl. 9). *Vestment 628* (2008; Fig. 7 and Pl. 10) is equipped with twelve-inch Lucite extensions that project vertically from the back of the figure and rest on the shoulders of the wearer/participant (Fig. 8). Physical aspects of the sculpture, whether the heaviness of welded metal, broadness of the hips, subtle bulge of the abdomen, or adornments, become markers of identity conveyed to the wearer. This process is evident in videos made by the artist in which participants respond

to the garments they wear, for example, from a male participant, "There is a celebratory feeling in the sense that I could be dancing with myself, and simultaneously there is this feeling that this is a tough road to hoe, being female"; "I feel like a pregnant woman... like a birth mother"; "You can feel the strength in the belly. You can feel the strength in the legs"; "Strong, powerful, beautiful."<sup>25</sup> The curious medallions, emblems and cast-off calligraphic plates welded to the suits also impart identity. The triangular plate of brass in *Vestment 628* (Fig. 9) descending from a silver-encircled tri-color (red, white and blue) medallion, affixed to the center of the breast, is reminiscent of the symbolic, alphanumeric adornments in Marsden Hartley's 1914 *Portrait of a German Officer* (Fig. 10), in which the artist simultaneously reveals and conceals his male lover's identity through enigmatic symbols like the Iron Cross contained within a gray and yellow triangle on the breast and the initials "K. v. F" (Karl von Freyburg) that may mark the man with whom he was in love but whose face we cannot see.<sup>26</sup> Like Hartley, Stein utilizes signifying markers of identity, but hers are not indices of a stable, fixed identity.

Inherent in Stein's work is the concept of gender complexity, which undermines the notion of rigidly inflexible, hierarchical gender relationships in favor of a spectrum of possible gender identities that remain always in flux.

Stein organizes collaborative performances and discussions in conjunction with her exhibitions as part of an activist impulse to encourage participants to confront their beliefs about gender, race, and homosexuality which may serve to perpetuate inequality. For example at Muhlenberg College in 2011, Stein organized what she termed a Gender Improvisational Gathering (GIG) for which she asked students from multiple disciplines to create a performance centering on masculinity or femininity while wearing her sculptures. "The goal," she explained, was "to explore sex-role stereotypes through dance or voice (skit, poem, song), to create new identities and storylines using gender-swapping verbal and body language."<sup>27</sup> Consistent with the systems imperative that the dispassionate observer (artist, scientist, viewer) is a myth, Stein is deeply involved in these activities through her work and life. She is art editor of *On the Issues Magazine*, a quarterly of progressive, feminist thinking, and she serves on the board (which also includes Gloria Steinem) of Veteran Feminists of America, a "source of information about the Second Wave women's movement for journalists, historians and other writers."<sup>28</sup> An avowed pacifist, Stein founded her own non-profit organization centered on gender justice called Have Art Will Travel!, Inc., "an arts organization encouraging constructive male/female gender roles leading to peace and equality."<sup>29</sup> The connections between feminism and queer identity for Stein are clearly rooted in inequalities manifested in many areas of social life, for example bullying in schools. She explained in a recent interview, "Gay boys and girls are harassed—harassed out of town, harassed into suicide." Events planned under the aegis



Fig. 9. Linda Stein, *Vestment 628* (detail). Photo: D. James Dee.

of her organization are usually held in conjunction with her exhibitions. One recent event featured a dance performance by third-year Juilliard student Lindsay Harwell, who had been gender variant as a child (he preferred to wear dresses) and now identifies as gay. Following the performance, Stein invited Harwell and his mother to discuss their experiences of coming to terms with his gender and to respond to questions from the audience. Stein revealed the impetus behind her organization:

There are so many variations I see as I travel, this fluidity between masculine and feminine, and whether someone has surgery or doesn't have surgery, but the point I feel is to let people be whoever their authentic self is. That's what my goal is. I'm using art to get them to talk about the issue. I think I can't separate my art from my politics from my life. It all blends together.

Raised Jewish in the Bronx, Stein's concern with gender is rooted in her personal experience as an accomplished athlete who was compelled to subvert her own ego, to show deference to male competitors. "I feel that more than being a lesbian, more than being a Jew, I feel gender held me back ... I felt I couldn't fulfill my potential." She explained, "I was an excellent athlete. I was always captain of my team. In college I was the captain of the girls tennis team, so I could play ball better than almost all the boys I went with, but I would always hit the ball in the net so the boy could win." Finally, about fifteen years ago, she resisted the compulsion to lose during a tennis game with artist Roy Lichtenstein. She realized after the initial volleys that he was the weaker player and, once again, she considered capitulating to him. She shared her thoughts of that moment, "Am I going to fake it again and hit the ball into the net and just keep it even as we play the game? At that point, I decided I have to be done with that." Beating Lichtenstein 6–Love marked the beginning of a new stage in her life in which she felt empowered to live up to her potential.

Although Stein's work is object-based, much of it is also performative, and when considered in conjunction with her



Fig. 10. Marsden Hartley, *Portrait of a German Officer* (1914), oil on canvas, 68 1/4" x 41 3/8". Metropolitan Museum of Art.

activism, it is steeped in a systems aesthetic, privileging function over form. Drawing on American superheroes, anime princesses, Bodhisattvas and mollusk-human symbiants, her figures function as totems of protection for the more vulnerable, whether women in a masculine culture, bullied queer teens or the environment. The artist also identifies with these ambiguously gendered protectors, which she uses as tools to integrate self, social world, and environment. Her sculptures are integral to her activism, which seeks to subvert dualistic power hierarchies in favor of a fluid interdependence between self and other, concepts implicit in both ecological art and Buddhist philosophy and at the core of Bateson's systems theory. •

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#### NOTES

1. Art historian Margo Hobbs Thompson has noted the importance of these figures in Stein's works. Margo Hobbs Thompson, "Body-Swapping, Empowerment and Empathy: Linda Stein's Recent Sculpture" *Body-Swapping Armor: New Works by Linda Stein* (New York: Flomenhoft Gallery, 2009).

2. Joan Marter, "Regarding Stein's Knights and Glyphs," *The Power to Protect: Sculpture of Linda Stein* (New York: Flomenhoft Gallery, 2006); "Power and Protection: Japanese/ American Crossroads and the Impact of 9/11 on the Sculpture of Linda Stein: A Conversation with Linda Stein by Helen Hardacre," *The Power to Protect: Sculpture of Linda Stein* (New York: Flomenhoft Gallery, 2006); Ann Vollmann Bible, "Ruptures of Vulnerability: Linda Stein's Knight Series," *Journal of Lesbian Studies* vol. 14 (2010): 154-73; Margo Hobbs Thompson, "Body-Swapping, Empowerment and Empathy: Linda Stein's Recent Sculpture" *Body-Swapping Armor: New Works by Linda Stein*; Jann Matlock, Vestiges of New Battles: Linda Stein's Sculpture After 9/11," *Feminist Studies*, 33:3 (Fall 2007): 569-90; Christina M. Penn-Groetsch, "Gladiators, Amazons, and Superheroes: Gender and the Recent Work of Linda Stein," *The Fluidity of Gender: Sculpture by Linda Stein* (Mt. Vernon, Iowa: Luce Gallery, Cornell College, 2010).
3. Interview with Linda Stein, April 23, 2012, in New York City. All quotes from the artist not otherwise cited are from this interview.
4. *Ecofeminism: Women, Culture, Nature*, ed. Karen J. Warren. (Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana Univ. Press, 1997), xi. Ann Vollmann Bible briefly noted the applicability of ecofeminism to Stein's work as it acknowledges the physical body. Bible, "Ruptures of Vulnerability: Linda Stein's Knight Series," 171. Ecofeminism has long been out of favor due to its rather limited interpretation as essentialist. Ecofeminist theorist Greta Gaard recently addressed this concern and proposed instead a "new ecofeminism" which "examines the socially constructed association among women (sex), femininity (gender) and nature, the domination of each of which, as Carolyn Merchant has pointed out, has "shared roots in the logic and science of capitalism." See Greta Gaard, "Ecofeminism Revisited: Rejecting Essentialism and Re-Placing Species in a Material Feminist Environmentalism," *Feminist Formations*, 23:2 (Summer 2011): 26-53; and Carolyn Merchant, *The Death of Nature: Women, Ecology and the Scientific Revolution* (New York: Harper, 1990). Gaard's support of a materialist feminist environmentalism in concert with social constructionist accounts, per the article's title, is meant to undo the nature/ culture divide that is inadvertently reaffirmed in strict social constructionism. But the reaffirmation of the material, biological body appears to leave little room for the spiritual concerns in Stein's work. See also *Material Feminisms*, ed. Stacy Alaimo and Susan Hekman (Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana Univ. Press, 2008).
5. For a discussion of systems theory as scientific validation for social and institutional critique in the works of artists, see Donna M. De Salvo, Johanna Burton, Mark Godfrey, Boris Groys, *Open Systems: Rethinking Art c. 1970* (London: Tate Modern, 2005); William Kaizen, "Steps to an Ecology of Communication: Radical Software, Dan Graham, and the Legacy of Gregory Bateson," *Art Journal* (Fall 2008): 87-107; Luke Skrebowski, "All Systems Go: Recovering Jack Burnham's 'Systems Aesthetics'" *Tate Papers: Tate's Online Research Journal*, (2006); Edward Shanken, "Art in the Information Age: Technology and Conceptual Art" *Leonardo*, 35:4 (2002): 433-38; Jack Burnham, "Steps in the Formulation of Real-Time Political Art," in Hans Haacke, *Framing and Being Framed: 7 Works, 1970-75* (New York: New York Univ. Press, 1975), 135. Importantly, artists like Agnes Denes and Hans Haacke created ecological art works informed by systems theory.
6. For discussion of the ways in which the concept of open systems became a tool for social critique for artists in the context of the social revolution and women's movement in the late 1960s and early 1970s, see Christine Filippone, "Science, Technology and Utopias in the Work of Contemporary Women Artists," (Ph.D. diss., Rutgers University, 2009).
7. Stein is not personally familiar with Bateson's systems-based ecology, but it was deeply influential to modern ecology, and to environmentalism by extension. Nancy Slack, *G. Evelyn Hutchinson and the Invention of Modern Ecology*, (New Haven and London: Yale Univ. Press, 2010), 235
8. Kaizen, "Steps to an Ecology of Communication: Radical Software, Dan Graham, and the Legacy of Gregory Bateson," 87
9. *Ibid.*, 93. Bateson often likens the all-encompassing concept of "Mind" to God, albeit a non-denominational one. "This larger Mind is comparable to God and is perhaps what some people mean by "God," but it is still immanent in the total interconnected social system and planetary ecology." Gregory Bateson, *Steps to an Ecology of Mind: Collected Essays in Anthropology, Psychiatry, Evolution and Epistemology*, (Northvale, NJ and London: Jason Aronson, Inc.), 326
10. Bateson, *Steps to an Ecology of Mind*, 319.
11. Kaizen, "Steps to an Ecology of Communication," 93
12. Linda Stein, *Beach*, 2:03 min. video, 2012.
13. Carolyn G. Heilbrun, *The Last Gift of Time: Life Beyond Sixty* (New York: Random House, 1997): 136. See also Heilbrun, *Toward a Recognition of Androgyny* (New York: Alfred A Knopf, Inc., 1973).
14. Marisa Pereyra, "La alteridad y sus múltiples representaciones: el modo utópico como dinámica del deseo en La nave de los locos de Cristina Peri Rossi"( The other and its multiple representations: the utopian mode as dynamic of desire in *The Ship of the Fools* by Cristina Peri Rossi), *Latin American Essays. MACLAS Vol. XVII* (2004): 63-72. See also Kari Weil, *Androgyny and the Denial of Difference* (Charlottesville: Univ. of Virginia Press, 1992).
15. Herman Hesse, *Siddhartha* (Frankfurt: Suhrkamp Verlag, 1962): 20. *Siddhartha* was first published in German in 1922 and in English in 1951.
16. *Ibid.*
17. Susan J. Napier, *Anime: from Akira to Princess Mononoke* (New York: Palgrave): 182.
18. Burnham, "Steps in the Formulation of Real-Time Political Art" in Haacke, *Framing and Being Framed*, 135.
19. Sue Spaid, *Ecovention: Current Art to Transform Ecologies* (green museum.org; Contemporary Arts Center; ecoartspace, 2002), 1.
20. The artist refers to them as machete blades. Hardacre, *The Power to Protect: Sculpture of Linda Stein*, 20.
21. *Ibid.*, 46.
22. *Ibid.*
23. Marter, "Regarding Stein's Knights and Glyphs," 5. Margo Hobbs Thompson, "Body-Swapping, Empowerment and Empathy: Linda Stein's Recent Sculpture," offers an insightful discussion of the wearable nature of Stein's works.
24. Christina M. Penn-Goetsch noted the performative nature of Stein's work, referencing Judith Butler, "There is no gender identity beyond the expression of gender: this identity is performatively constituted by the very 'expressions' that are said to be the results." Quoted in Penn-Goetsch, "Gladiators, Amazons, and Superheroes: Gender and the Recent Work of Linda Stein," 6. See Judith Butler, *Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity* (New York: Routledge, 1999).
25. Linda Stein, *Body-Swapping* (Preview 684), 4 minutes 25 seconds.
26. Jonathan D. Katz and David C. Ward, *Hide/Seek: Difference and Desire in American Portraiture* (Washington, DC: Smithsonian Books, 2010), 26.
27. Press Release, Have Art: Will Travel! Inc., announcing *The Fluidity of Gender: Sculpture by Linda Stein*, 2012.
28. <http://www.ontheissuesmagazine.com/2012spring/index.php>. Accessed July 26, 2012.
29. <http://haveartwilltravel.org/>. Accessed July 26, 2012.





Pl. 8. Linda Stein, *Heroic Lineup 599* (2007),  
3-D collage with archival inks on paper.  
42" x 21" x 3". Photo: Stein Studios.



Pl. 10. Linda Stein, *Vestment 628* (2008). wood, metal, also 12" Lucite  
extensions resting on shoulders, 52" x 18" x 6". Photo: D. James Dee.



Pl. 9. *Security Knight 646* (detail),  
paper, archival inks, wood, metal,  
foam, Lucite extensions.  
Photo: D. James Dee.