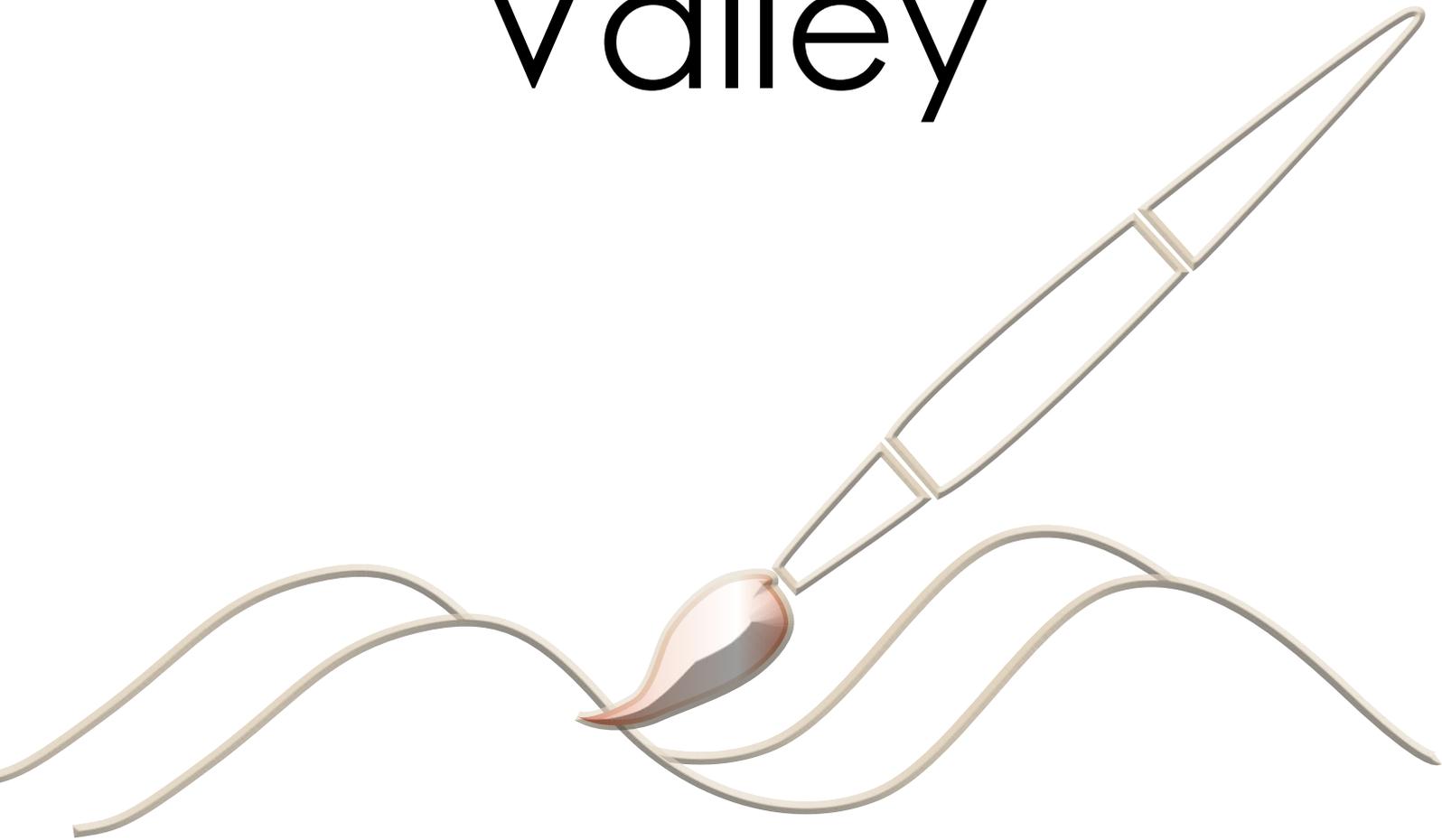


Land art in the Teleorman Valley



Identification of rediscovered land-art in the Teleorman Valley

By Douglass Bailey



In the 1960s and 1970s, Bogdan Păcăliciu, a previously unknown local dissident artist created a series of important works in Teleorman County; none of the works survived the political control of the time or of the years since. Based on an anonymous tip, the *Măgura: Past and Present* project has been able to locate three of Păcăliciu's lost works and thus to contribute to the ongoing revision of Romanian art history. Absent from all official accounts of pre-1989 artists, Bogdan Păcăliciu and his work offer a unique insight into the underground pulse of contemporary art within the totalitarian dictatorship of Nicolae Ceaușescu.

Long forgotten and now the subject of significant erosion and land slippage, the three works were made on the southeastern terrace banks of the Teleorman River Valley. The first work (pictured here) is substantial in size (the layered parallel cuts run for over 300 metres). A team of French and Italian experts from the European Union's Committee for the Interpretation of Local Artistic Traditions (based in Brussels) made an emergency visit to the valley in fall 2010 to document the land-art; that team suggested that the work represents an important statement about the layering of society and the role that the earth played in giving a veneer of naturalising organicism to the political processes of social sedimentation in which the supposed horizontal distribution of social diversity is exposed by the vertical separation of each social stratum from the one below it. More detailed analysis by local Romanian scholars will commence soon.

Biographical information about Bogdan Păcăliciu is sparse: born in Alexandria in 1942, he moved with his family to București when he was 12. He graduated from the Școala Superioară de Arte din București and then the Institutul de Arte Plastice Nicolae Grigorescu (under the tutelage of Cornel Medrea). The last documented reference to Păcăliciu is his being awarded a national sculpture scholarship in 1964. The Muzeul Național de Artă Modernă plans to hold a symposium on the newly restored artist and his work early in 2013. A spokesman at the MNAC called the discovery of the work in the Teleorman Valley, "one of the most significant additions to our knowledge of major artists of twentieth century Romanian art."

