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, 46th and 8th 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. Devouring more than 20,000 square miles of land worldwide every year, it affects 75% of the land in North America and 73% of the land in Africa.

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 Convention to Combat Desertification*
Stress Tests: Un-sites No. 1-2 & 3-5 (Homage to Gordon.) 2013