



## Andy Goldsworthy Uses Natural Materials to Make Ephemeral Art Installations at the Presidio in San Francisco

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August 19, 2013



The best works of art aren't always the ones that last the longest. Take the case of Andy Goldsworthy, one of the most famous land artists in the world, whose work is by nature ephemeral. Some of Goldsworthy's pieces last just minutes or hours, while others can last decades or more. Two of Goldsworthy's most popular contemporary installations are currently on display at the Presidio, a decommissioned military base in San Francisco, and they'll soon be joined by a third. With *Spire* (2008) and *Wood Line* (2010), Goldsworthy used natural materials found nearby -- wood from Monterey cypress and eucalyptus trees -- to make two truly memorable installations.

Andy Goldsworthy is a world-renowned artist, known for constructing complex and elaborate site-specific sculptures from natural materials. He has produced works using everything from icicles and mud to flower petals and stones. Because of the ephemeral nature of many of his works, they are often captured in photographs and video. The popular 2001 documentary *Rivers and Tides* explores a broad range of Goldsworthy's art and his artistic process.

Goldsworthy's first sculpture at the Presidio was a towering spire made from 35 cypress trunks that is located near a Monterey cypress grove. The older trees that were used in the Spire were removed by the National Park Service at the end of their lifecycle to make way for younger saplings. To stabilize the sculpture, the keystone tree was anchored into a metal sleeve within a 12-foot-deep hole and surrounded with concrete. At its base, the sculpture is 15 feet in diameter. The Spire soars 90 feet above the ground, and at its base a new crop of trees have been planted. In time, the towering spire will decay, and the trees surrounding it will continue to grow until they completely obscure it.

"[T]his work for me is a very powerful image of growth, the determination of the tree to push upward," Goldsworthy told the *San Francisco Chronicle* soon after the sculpture was completed. "It feels as if it's coming from deep in the ground and that's another reason, besides seismic safety and wind, that it's got to be really rooted."

Two years after completing the Spire, Goldsworthy followed it up with *Wood Line*, an undulating strip of eucalyptus trunks and branches that snake through the forest near Lovers' Lane. More than a century ago, the US Army planted a mix of eucalyptus and cypress trees, and the eucalyptus trees — an invasive species — out-competed the cypress, leaving a large gap in the middle of the forest. By linking curved logs together, Goldsworthy constructed on continuous line that makes S-curves as it meanders down a 400-yard path.

In October, Goldsworthy will unveil a third installation at the Presidio entitled *Tree Fall*. Although the exact details of the installation haven't been released yet, the piece, like the Spire, will be made from a tree that was removed during reforestation efforts. The piece will be displayed inside the historic Main Post in Building 95.