MA CONTEMPORARY ART, 2020 SUPERVISOR: JOHN GRZINICH





"How have the Yorkshire Dales and interpretations of this location influenced an artistic practice that seeks to understand the tie between the son and the mother?"

JAMIE DEAN AVIS MA THESIS "How have the Yorkshire Dales and interpretations of this location influenced an artistic practice that seeks to understand the tie between the son and the mother?"

My mum has been off work for ages. She has pain in her back extending down one leg to her foot. Sometimes when you ask to help she insists that she is fine. Once on a Sunday morning the paramedics came. They asked her how she was. She said "I'm fine". She's been fine ever since.

"We all carry trace fossils within us - the marks that the dead and the missed leave behind. Handwriting on an envelope; the wear on a wooden step left by footfall; the memory of a familiar gesture by someone gone, repeated so often it has worn its own groove in both air and mind: these are trace fossils. Sometimes, in fact, all that is left behind by loss is trace - and sometimes empty volume can be easier to hold in the heart than presence itself." - (Macfarlane, 2019). These trace fossils are distributed across this paper anecdotally, in chalk marks, across ley-lines and in the residue of myths.

Across three chapters ('bedding', 'burying' and 'telling'), this thesis will present a study of ties through personal histories in re-representations of the geological, mythological, anthropological and environmental landscape of the artist's home. Across these chapters are sub-topics that are discussed through a range of lenses, concerning the delicate tie of a mother-child relationship and the landscape that embodies and hosts this intimate dialogue. Broadly autoethnographic in approach, a number of practical outcomes are acknowledged across projects that have been fabricated as a result of a cross-symbiosis in active practice-led research and reflective writing, academic study spanning several research fields, walking with and within a frame, and a series of semi-structured anecdotal interviews. This document also introduces aspects of autobiographical meta-narrative, most vividly in images that have surfaced both during the production of other works for a singular project, titled 'I Cairn'. Their visual language approach is as unfixed as chalk.

As both a written and illustrated study this thesis exists with the potential interest of academics and students whose work encourages and activates artistic projects, and creative practitioners working across a broad horizon of disciplines.

"Kuidas Yorkshire'i jõeorustikud ja koha tõlgendused on mõjutanud kunsti praktikat, mis püüab selgust saada ema ja poja vahelisest suhtest?"

Mu ema pole pikalt tööl käinud. Teda vaevab seljavalu, mis kiirgab edasi jalga. Kui vahel abi pakun, kinnitab ta, et kõik on korras. Ühel pühapäeva hommikul saabus kiirabi, nad uurisid, kuidas ta ennast tunneb. Ta ütles: "Minuga on kõik korras." Siiani on kõik korras.

"Meiega käivad kaasas fossiilid - jäljed, mida meile surnud ja kadunud inimesed on endist maha jätnud. Kellegi käekiri ümbrikul; astumisest kulunud puidust trepiaste; mälestus tuttavast liigutusest, mida on nii sageli korratud, et see on justkui õhku ja meeltesse kulunud; need on fossiilsed jäljed. Mõnikord kõik, mis kaotusest maha jääb on vaid jälg - ja mõnikord on tühimikku palju lihtsam südames hoida, kui kohalolu ennast."- (Macfarlane, 2019) Need samad jäljed on sellesse töösse jaotatud küsitletute isiklike kogemustena, kriidi tahmas, müütide jäänukites ja üle koordinaattelgede.

Läbi kolme peatüki ('ase', 'matus', 'jutustus') käsitleb see lõputöö sidemete tekkelisuse uurimist läbi isiklu ajaloo - geoloogilise, mütoloogilise, antropoloogilise ja kodukoha keskkonna maastiku taasesituste kaudu. Peatükke läbivad alateemad, mida on võimalik erinevate filtritega vaadelda: ema-lapse õrn suhe ja maastik, mis seda intiimset dialoogi kehastab ja võõrustab. Autoetnograafilise uurimistööna sobib kunstiline tulem – aktiivse praktikapõhise uurimustöö ja reflektiivse kirjutamise ristsümbioosina, akadeemilise õppe mitmesuguseid uurimisvaldkondi hõlmates ning raamiga ja raamis kõndimise ja poolstruktureeritud isiklikel kogemustel põhinevate intervjuudega – erinevatesse projektidesse. Siin tutvustatakse ka autobiograafilise metanarratiivi aspekte, kõige eredamalt läbi visuaalsete kujundite, mis on esile kerkinud projekti "I Cairn" jaoks mõeldud teoste valmistamisel. Nende visuaalne jutustus on õrn nagu kriit.

Nii kirjaliku kui illustreeriva uurimustööna pakub käesolev töö potensiaalselt huvi nii akadeemikutele kui ka tudengitele kelle tegevus innustab ja aktiveerib kunstiprojekte ja laialdase silmaringiga loometöötajaid.

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Finally, thanks are due to my patient, supportive and ever tolerant parents.

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INTRODUCTION

This thesis proposes a mapped coalescence of lines across modes of thinking, anecdotalism and reflective writing that contextualises and re-contextualises my practice. This practice exists in a larger discourse surrounding mother-child dynamics of dependency framed in a specified landscape, which itself carries histories and implications. Despite this, there is a universality to how we connect with both our mothers and our landscapes through emotional ties that we all carry. It is a changing constant. My contribution to this topic stems from a reflection on my own dynamic with my mother, expressed initially through a series of paintings and videos, followed by the considerations featured in this paper that have surfaced through interviews and research.

Established will be interpretations and re-interpretations of child and mother relations, understood in the nostalgic, the present, and in the frame of a rural landscape. This text is supported by the research of neighbouring texts in relevant fields of study such as Lines (2016), the writings of Robert Macfarlane, discussion-led interviews with psycho-geographers and folklorists, and an ongoing artistic practice that draws on emotional experiences in the landscape and with my mother. These topics will be contextualised in a visual and non-visual language that refers to ties between the parent and child, with a specific emphasis on generational exchanges of dependency and how these relationships are understood across temporal distances and mythologies. The latter will be partly explored through walking acts. This study will be framed within a localised area surrounding the artist's home (in this case, the Yorkshire Dales), while being further conceptualised in video works and paintings that ruminate on the mother and child dynamic.

Structured under three independent and interlinked chapters, each are titled accordingly (bedding, burying and telling) whilst being divided in individual yet connected parts. The first chapter, 'bedding' will deliver a detailed understanding of how a mother-child relationship is discussed anecdotally in relation to the emotional and medical, documented from recorded and transcribed conversation, with a series of artworks materialising and contributing to this analysis. Our mothers exist in our sedimentary pasts.

A second chapter, 'burying' looks to initially unpack the term in the broader landscape beyond the artist's home, examining both symbolic and literal processes for leaving an idea or physical form in the underland. This chapter will be informed by localised walking practices and conversations with leading professors (such as Phil Smith, Tony Whitehead and Helen Billingshurt) and writers (including Sonia Overall, Amy Jeffs and John Billingsley) on said practices.

Finally, the chapter 'telling' will survey the approaches that can be taken to preserve our ties, returning to notions of bedding and burial through a sentimental and nostalgic lens, incorporating anecdotal, literary, mythological and pseudo-scientific perspectives. Here will lie a dedicated space to unpack the artworks of this masters thesis. The works featured in this paper's illustrations have been produced in the duration of the MA, with a predominant focus on works from April 2021 onwards.

CHAPTER ONE - BEDDING

PART ONE - MOTHERED

"Remember the womb of your mother, in which the Creator of all things fashioned you...
bringing you forth in the world while the birth-pangs tore at her vitals because of you.

Remember all the care and anxiety I endured for your sake..."

- Geoffrey of Monmouth, The History of the Kings of Britain (c. 1136)

With an initial focus on visual outputs, those centred on my mum have previously taken the form of a short-story meta-narrative accompanied by chalk illustrations (see fig. 1) and musical vignettes, a short series of graphite drawings depicting a secondary meta-narrative involving her fictional photo-bombing imagined in the photographs of fictional strangers whilst on holiday for four days in Dubrovnik, Croatia (see fig. 2), and a number of acrylic paintings that also play with grand narrative and mytheopathy in a looser visual language. The latter body of work produced between April and July 2021, (see fig. 3, 4, 5 and 6) was instrumental as a preliminary support for works produced under the 'I Cairn' series from August 2021 until present, later addressed under the heading 'Process'.

Emphasis should be drawn initially both anecdotally and practically on the role of the bedding as a form that shares inherent fibres with that which is motherly. As a place of comfort and renewal, nostalgia, slumber and security, the bedding has become an intrinsic and recurring motif in all of the painted works that accompany this thesis. 'Don't Get It On Your Bloody Bed' (see fig. 7) illustrates a transition in visual language, from narrative-led portraiture to representational image making. The painting is Janus-faced as a departure from technical frustrations in specific rendering stylings, as the bedding-as-land-mass motif slinks across the canvas, towards a reproduction of 'In Rainbow' (see fig. 8); a painting later that traverses the local Yorkshire landscape with me. 'Don't Get It On Your Bloody Bed' anecdotally refers to the cautionary warning my mum would give with the suspicion that I was painting or drawing whilst sitting on my bed as a teenager. Its titling was instrumental in a conveyance of a frictious relationship, being revisited as a playful misdemeanour in the meta-narrative painting 'Mapping The Peaks', thus opening a window into my production process as painting is used as a mapping device in a manner that harks back to a teenage rebellion in the bedroom. The picture as a cartographical tool will be returned to in this thesis.

And so the image-making began at the bed, the surface mirrored in my images as a satellite-view surrogate and an amniotic protective wrap, both of which are depended upon for nourishment and sufficiency but are part of an ecosystem that can become unwell. It is effectively from these two readings that I will extrapolate further ideas that interweave and originate in a range of fields.

Remaining with the latter, it is this 'amniotic protective wrap' that leads discussions of dependency, specifically that which is shared between a mother and child, whether this is distinguished through the symbolic role of an incubator (occupied or unoccupied) or umbilical cord (unplugged or remaining connected, see fig. 9).

In building a comprehensive collage of ideas of the mother and one's relationship with this figure in both the collective consciousness and in the individual's reflection, a series of eleven semi-structured one-to-one interviews have been conducted and transcribed. Participants here all remain anonymous with exception of my own mother. It is the aim of the following transcribed recordings to determine an emotional reading of this relationship of dependency as a collective portrait and so a presentation of a series of quotes have been curated in such a way that merges recollections of mother-child relationships as if one possible recollection of many mothers is being made from one individual. The intention here is to expose conversational contradictions as an amalgamated semblance of a motherly figure.

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I was trying to be the correct kind of daughter.

We call each-other too but it's also because she doesn't have a lot of people to speak Estonian to out there, so she kind of uses me so that she can be not-stop talking, and she talks and talks and talks. And then she's like, okay, now, tell me everything about your life. And it's such a broad question, after she's been non-stop talking for half an hour. I don't know what to say or where to start. But my mum is definitely a warm, loving and caring person. She really searches for harmony when we are all together. That's something that I got from her, and I'm very proud of it. And Emily, she was brilliant to me, she was like a mother figure to me. I became her world in that sense that, I mean that I was one of the reasons that she was okay for that amount of time. But we definitely didn't get on that well at that age. She was very controlling and we didn't really understand each-other. I didn't even realise before how much she was hiding stuff, not in the sense that she was hiding a lot of secrets, but just her general feelings about herself.

And my relationship with my mum was always intertwined with my brother and their relationship. I don't think I ever had a true mother-daughter relationship with anyone.

She is mud or clay and she's really into BTS, like the (K-Pop) band, she's very much in her teenage phase at the moment. I think this kind of fanaticism is really important because it just keeps her going. It's belonging. She's also here teaching and working and doing her PhD, but as much as she can she lives in Sweden, and now I'm all over the place as well, so the dynamic has already been broken. My mum and I have already talked a few years ago about how this expectation that they and my grandmother had and my great-grandmother had that you would be staying at home and cooking and doing stuff like that, it just doesn't exist anymore. I mean my mum and my grandma also have antagonisms but I don't know exactly where they come from. But my mum struggled to be a mum to us. Her life was guite different, really. She wasn't very faithful to my dad. She wasn't fit to be a mum, really. We had a step-mum for a few years when my dad remarried, and life was brilliant then. We were well looked after, and everything went swimmingly. And when my dad died, I didn't have much choice but to live with my mum, and it wasn't a very nice environment or atmosphere to be brought up in. My mum wasn't in a good place and I kind of heard that I should take care of my mum. At twelve I was told to take care of my mum. It wasn't clear to me that I wanted distance. If she wanted to be an actress then she should could just go be an actress. I would say she was always the calmest one. I could tell her everything I do, honestly, she knows most of the shit that I've done, and at some point she had such bad taste in fashion.

I feel like in a way my mum needed me to need her. How I recycle those memories and add to those days, and I see how many errors there were in her approach to her raising her children. Nothing was bonding us that much except religion, and I guess over time this bond faded away because I was departing from the church. Saving our souls, going to heaven, whatever that means to her. I got huge bollockings sometimes. Yeah, it made a very unpleasant situation as well and it didn't make a happy household. But it's part of growing up. I will unconsciously do things that my mother was doing to me because I was grown that way. And I'm really afraid of this happening, but I guess there is no control over this. It's just going to happen.

I became a teenager and became rather testing and the relationship became rather volatile at times. And it's hard for me to understand when she was actually dependent on me and when I was dependent on her because this is something created in this dynamic, in both ways. She pretty much always knew what I liked. My mum died of alcoholism in the end. She really wasn't interested, which is really sad. I guess for me my mother was a very powerful figure in my life and so I wanted not to pleasure her, but meet her expectations and everything. I've realised how much she had to hide about herself, how she was feeling and what she was going through to raise me.

But then, I think that maybe it makes you into a better mother because you want things differently for your own children. I ended up making my mum out as a very bad figure but she's a lovely woman and very fun to talk to actually, but I guess the human mind has this ugly

thing of thinking about the bad things first and recycling them. And what frustrates her are often the things that frustrate me as well. As a child I would try to break this code and try to understand what I did wrong. I would see quite clearly what she cares more about.

She was angry at me because I was angry at her for being worried about me. But I think I didn't understand that because I was too naive or too stupid to care about this at the time. Looking at me right now, I look exactly like my mum. But we just fight. The fighting is the battleground before you come up with something else, and then the 'something else' is that coveted thing in a relationship, this symbiosis that produces something else. But I feel like I'm always being very careful with how I touch her, but then again also in how I speak to her and how I choose my words towards her.

And Mary, she looked after us well and she ensured we were well fed and clothed and everything. When I was little she influenced all of my music tastes, my movie tastes, my fashion, everything, so much that I grabbed everything that she gave me and dived into it and started to explore more. As she became older she wasn't interested in those things anymore, so she just had those things that she was interested in when she was twenty-two. But there's a similarity with me and my mum. It's very difficult to get past the things that really hurt her very much and I feel like that's something that I have from her also. And our thoughts are always all over the place and we're not neat and tidy on the inside. I know her, I've seen her and I'm the same.

She would be like 'let's get bubble tea'. I was a lot more sympathetic in the end, because I wasn't going to see her and I would miss her. And she was so lost when I was little, she didn't know what to do with her life. She used to worry us awfully about whether there was something wrong with her. But she wants to provide everything that she has from her motherly perspective in that short amount of time. She went from living with my grandmother and my great-grandmother to living with my dad, and then she's been living with me, and then we moved back to my grandmother, and now she's moved back to her new place and she has this new boyfriend. She's never for a moment been by herself. That's one thing that I can't imagine.

Before we would go to bed she would comb my hair and pray in my ear. I was close to my mum until the other man took my place which broke my heart. Our relationship is different now, but I never stopped loving her. And then I hugged her again and I went down into the train station and she walked this way, and we looked at each other as I descended.

(References 1, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22,)

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This accumulative quote-mosaic portrait of the mother child-dynamic is representative of the conversation as a navigable landscape that can be traversed, collated partly through a Burroughs-esque cut-up process. Exchanges take like paths, paths walked that diverge and dovetail, and in this instance are always guided by two ramblers exchanging an unclear and partly-drawn map, with a route that only surfaces as responses play out. In each walk my partner has departed where the conversational path resolves and I journey back in reverse, recalling words that flitter in audio mist and reconstructing the ground we covered when I'm home and dry. What remains are an interchange of musings on a single connection, abound with its own joys, knots and aches.

PART TWO - ACHES

"Mother, any distance greater than a single span requires a second pair of hands.

You come to help me measure windows, pelmets, doors, the acres of the walls, the prairies of the floors.

You at the zero-end, me with the spool of tape, recording length, reporting metres, centimetres back to base, then leaving up the stairs, the line still feeding out, unreeling years between us. Anchor. Kite.

I space-walk through the empty bedrooms, climb
the ladder to the loft, to breaking point, where something
has to give;
two floors below your fingertips still pinch
the last one-hundredth of an inch... I reach
towards a hatch that opens on an endless sky
to fall or fly."

(Armitage, 2001).

In May of 2021 my mum underwent several sessions of acupuncture as an alternative and supplementary means to resolve sharp nerve pain that is mainly concentrated in her legs. The legitimacy of the effectiveness of such treatment is commonly subject of discussion in scientific fields concerning chronic pain, meaning that it is best categorised as a complementary or alternative medicine. Hypothese from different Western medical perspectives state that acupuncture works in several ways. For one, it is said to work through neurohormonal pathways. In this case, the needles focus upon "specific points in the body to stimulate the nerve. The nerve thus sends signals to the brain, and the brain releases neural hormones such as beta-Endorphins. By doing that, the patient may feel euphoric, or happy, and this increases the pain threshold and they feel less pain as a result". A second hypothesis posits that the treatment functions by "reducing proinflammatory markers or proteins in the body", and a third hypothesis "applies specifically to how acupuncture can be used to treat nerve damage, such as chemo-induced peripheral neuropathy, a condition that often causes numbness or weakness in the feet and hands" (Palermo, 2017).

This course of treatment however was ultimately ineffective, but the meridian lines that supposedly map the connections of nerves across my mother's body remain a visual interest in my practice, materialising as 'linked' chalk lines that begin as a compositional and symbolic device across a number of paintings, with a secondary role of also being mapped and walked across a local area upon which I would once walk with my mother.

In conversation with my mum, she explained that:

"When they do the injection they take measurements of your back under the scanner, and then the injection into your back is guided - they have to make a mark on your back for where the injection is going. So in a way it goes back to the lines - you know like those lines in your paintings - it's like a guideline. They have to form a guideline under the scanner for where the injection goes. Like the lines that you marked out for the walk. Acupuncture begins essentially with certain points where they can put the needle in to kill the pain, but the needles work off of one another. I had shooting pains coming up my leg, unlike down my legs, and they twizzle them a little bit to try and stop it being painful. And that is like a nerve pain. The spots interconnect - just like a ley line. The nerves travel down your spine, branching out to your legs like the roots of a tree, down all the way to your feet" 1.

Her likening of acupuncture therapy to the mapping of ley lines is far from coincidental, with the therapy and Alfred Watkins' ley line mapping both strongly considered pseudo-scientific and deemed outliers of their respective fields. The former also relies on a mapped understanding of the body, with this mapping being reconsidered and reinterpreted for centuries in China before its adoption as a modern alternative therapy in the West, though the idea of "meridian lines that run like veins through the body, conducting its vital forces and emerging at its surfaces" (Ingold, 2007) continues to be questioned strongly by Western medical circles.

Despite this complimentary treatment, it proved ineffective in reducing pain lingering in her lower back, waist and legs. She has since undergone a number of procedures, both related and unrelated to chronic back pain and relying on Western medicine. One example of this has involved a double back (see fig. 10) injection provided via the National Health Service in an additional attempt to address the chronic pain in her back. Most recently, she has undergone two diagnostic colonoscopy procedures that have resulted in the majority removal and identification of polyps, with one operation to resolve this health issue entirely. The removed growth has since been analysed for its potentially parasitic nature.

These medical experiences are only one facet of her health and my attempt of merely an objective approach to discussing said experiences (or intrusions) fails to acknowledge her own resilience and articulacy of her anxiety prior to and post-procedure. The intrusion is as if a dry-stone wall in the Dales, it limits and guides for operation.

And so this concern that she either communicates, alludes to or withholds is telling not only of her role and characteristics as a mother but behaviourally a means to minimise the concern and anxieties of others, lessening the discussion and thus affecting my conscious decisions for this to be one of the major underlying themes of my work under the studio practice banner. "There's always something bloody wrong with me", she says. Her concern is my own and in my own terms this is a greater unknown. I do not have the lived experience of my mum's ailments and pains, nor their diagnosis, prognosis or treatment, and so in the absences of a physiological understanding of my mother's health experiences forms an emotional underpinning of my image-making as a rumination on what I do not know and my own considerations and concerns for my mother's health-care in future. Residing in this realm of unknowing is a specific dynamic and a faded bed-shape, embodying inherent motherly qualities.

Mum says "I don't want you and Whitney to have to think, you know, "we need to look after mum". Especially when we're older. I don't expect that from you. Because you've got your own lives... When I'm old I wouldn't want you to have to give up your life to look after me" 1. But my life will continue to be intertwined and heavily affected by hers, and this is one facet of the 'carrying' act. In domestic reality these conversations are awash with often a dark, absurdist and occasionally gallows humour that helps the swallowing of the reality pill and an acceptance of ill health. Whether an acute pain in the lower back or an incessant sting in the leg, these ailments are not without their causes and can be attributed to a number of strains spanning years of activity; inclusive but not limited to daily tasks, a lack of back support in seated positions, and improper footwear affecting gait and posture. This comes in addition to career demands (the lifting and carrying of small children in a nursery) and the walking across an at times unforgiving Yorkshire landscape.

In ways of emotionally navigating this familial experience, interchangeable phrasing to illustrate our landscape can be appropriated for describing our own forms and physiologies, and vice versa, whilst stripped of romanticism. In broader anthropocenic terms we see a planet in ill health. This comes with its own diagnosis and prognosis, with rewilding efforts aiming to 'remedy' areas to be more hospitable to promote greater biodiversity, though not without human intervention. Intrusions upon the body shape the perception of the form and how we emotionally navigate the idea of our bodies, as much as intrusions upon land (the clearing of a path, the clearing of a woodland, the edgeland images of George Shaw) affect our emotional experiences in our walked journey.

There are geological fractures such as those seen upon Malham cove, nerve-like subterranean fungi networks that support inter-specie tree communities, and cairns - an accumulative body of piled rocks and stones that form a navigable point across a landscape. The arteries of a nation often lead to powerhouse cities of industry. Beyond them, a bodyscape of ridges, headwalls, canals, foothills, curves, folds, napes and feet lie. Our physical immersion in a landscape is also our tie to it; the hands pulling weeds, the bent knees of legs scrambling up-mountain. We are active in anthropization and the soil aches under us.

In heavy Yorkshire hills the carrying of someone's image is a soft intrusion and a purposeful suggestion of complex relations with a specific individual, with an emphasis of carrying as the caring labour act of transportation and provision, as well as what is psychological by extension. I'll carry my mum across Ilkley Moor if she cannot walk it and you will see that her image sees it. I consider the points at which I strengthen a hold on an umbilical cord for her benefit. One day there comes a consideration of care home costs. Maybe one day my sister and I will have a pragmatic chat at the dinner table, about after-care, post-op, who does what. There may be a slow transition of the carrying dynamic and questions for later in the day. How often does a colostomy bag require changing? Should I go private? What day should I collect your repeat prescription?

In the creative process, the act of carrying the mother was initially proposed as a reversal of the mother as the child-bearer and therefore a personal rumination on where my own responsibilities lie as a future-caregiver and son, for when my mother becomes frail or wrestles with aspects of her own independence as they change and lessen, with these identities, values and lessons of independent living altering and shifting. Video works titled 'Heather Hunt' (2021), 'Heather Hunt, Clementine Dale' (2021), 'Moors Missed' (2022) and 'I Cairn' (2022) are meditations on this through a documented walk in key locations within a five-mile radius of the artist's family home in the Yorkshire Dales, UK. A number of these video works were presented and documented alongside a series of twenty-one paintings in a one-week solo exhibition hosted at Vent Space in Tallinn, Estonia in March, 2022 (De Jaeger, 2022). (See fig. 11 & 12).

With a focus on the practice in these videos and introducing the notion of (in)dependence in a familial relationship, the act of holding the painting by its large frame is a representation of a restricted physical autonomy to walk 'freely'. In either my case as the walker who is involved in two physical activities simultaneously, or my mother, who is only represented through their image, it is heavily suggested that she may not have the autonomy to walk and her image is a possible surrogate. Meanwhile, there is a dual-action to protect the image while exposing it to the elements in the atmosphere as a walking weight-bearer. And to bear someone's weight as a transaction is also manifested here, the exchange ongoing and unforeseeable in how it may alter across time.

CHAPTER TWO - BURYING

Walking the broader reaches of the word's definition, this chapter will stray from the oft-macabre decompositional images of the buried body, and with it will steer from an analysis of cross-cultural burial practices. Instead, burying is understood here in the symbolic sense, with reasoning for the action summarised by Macfarlane (2019), as "we bury materials in order that they may be preserved for the future... we bury materials in order to preserve the future from them. Some kinds of burial aspire to repetition and re-inheritance (storage); others aspire to oblivion (disposal)." In many instances of my own practice, what is buried is intangible and idea-oriented, circling home truths and the burial of oneself in the amniotic wrap of the blanket. In the material and cultural, this process is further ruminated upon in an interview between Macfarlane and Kirsty Lang (BBC, 2021), as "our urge to go low is ancient. It's as ancient as we are anatomically modern humans, it is arguably much older than that. We've been burying since before we were homosapiens". The action of burying thus transcends changing cultural perspectives and holds a complex relationship between human and earth, as what has been buried can be exhumed and the status and condition of these objects therefore changes. For example, extracts of mythologies spanning continents speak of the restorative or even transformative qualities that the earth holds when an object is buried.

"We are drawn down to store what is precious to us, to get rid of what we fear the most, and to retrieve, to bring back up to the surface what's valuable. We've been doing that for tens of thousands of years". Though perhaps sparse, signs of burial inform a psychogeographical reading of the rural landscape with warnings, wreaths and part-erased graffiti on a long-abandoned and defunct tractor. Burial has been a fundamental for how we navigate the mythologies of the landscape, with archaeologists either consciously or unknowingly becoming "active in creating stories about place, without realising their mythologising role in doing so. Storytellers then overlay their own stuff... They consciously mythologise, often; and always according to the memes of their time or subculture – pagans and goddess people, sometimes vintage earth mysterians are even notorious for shoehorning places and lore into their own belief systems" as a result of unearthings ². What transpires is a sedimentary amalgamation of tellings (whether cautions, warnings, romances, instructions, moral tales or beyond) that is equivalent to the landscape itself, an "enclosing and exposing heft of places" or shifting strata of story (2019, p.168).

Walking the dense heather of Elslack Moor I feel this heft in the atmosphere and in my hands (a painting of my mother). I don't know what is buried. A cairn is questionable. Bones below? Through the binoculars of a Scottish hiker an effigy walks in a one man procession. Is this a memorial ceremony? Perhaps the journey ends under ice grey sky, in a metre by metre plot cleared on the moor.

Occasionally, what is buried may be the unspoken or unacknowledged, for lack of language or a reliable translation. A place to put away the unresolved or shameful, to say goodbye and to start again, or to protect those above ground. For some the exacerbated fallout of a petty feud is akin to nuclear material. It is buried in heavy layers and cushioned so as to minimise toxic radiation for generations that are yet to inherit the home (land). Whether material or immaterial, a product must be carried before it is buried. Carrying my mother's image, my aim is to bury my own absence of intimate knowledge of my mother's experience with ill health, to rinse away the ignorance and use the act of carrying as a rumination on this burial in its psychological and emotional sense. The lines I walk have no fixed end point or marcation and no burial site.

PART ONE - LINES

"Surface engraved with a narrow stroke, path imagined between two points. Of singular thickness, A glib remark, a fragment, an unfinished phrase. It is any one edge of a shape and its contours in entirety. Melody arranged, a recitation, the ways horizons are formed. Think of levelling, snaring, the body's disposition (both in movement and repose). It has to do with palms and creases, with rope wound tight on someone's hand, things resembling drawn marks: a suture or a mountain ridge, an incision, this width of light. A razor blade at a mirror, tapping out a dose, or the churn of conveyor belts, the scoured, idling machines. A conduit, a boundary, an exacting course of thought. And here, the tautness of tent stakes, earth shovelled, the depth of a trench."

- Donovan (2003).

Lines lend a weight in my work that is hierarchically equal to the painting that they sit upon. Pictorially a tool for compositional support (holding the image as much as the subject of the image), they additionally function as compositional obstructors or distractors, flattening or cancelling out the image below and thus (pro)posing a redundancy for the painting. However, this is not a decision to undermine the painted image or question its material value, rather to address material balance between the fixed and the temporary. The line is emblematic of a bond or tie, a fragile joint of bone dust, a spinal column holding the body or the image as a whole. Furthermore, a line possesses greater underlying connotations that are anchored by the emotional (a symbolic sentimental line-tie between relations, ruptures, conflicts and knots), the psycho-geographical (ley-line routes and desire paths), and the geographical (paths pre-marked and designated, or those invented through repeated behaviours becoming reductive traces 3, see also fig. 13). In addition, there exist pseudo-scientific lines (a spiritual diviner, a dowsing rod), the genealogical (family lineage, blood lines, origins and legacy), the bodily (an artery, the umbilical, a spine, a stretch-mark, a lineament of the heavy carrier-bag in your hand) and the medical (intrusion and treatments; injection procedures, acupuncture needles and nerve correlations across meridian lines).

A straight uninterrupted line suggests the measured distance where two points meet, a line that relies on the two points to exist yet these points are unfixed. A start and an end, two parties or individuals tethered end-to-end. Additionally, Smith (2017, p.12) refers to "mytho-geographical fault-lines as thematic trajectories" for the navigation of a landmass, though here Smith is erring from that which is deemed pseudo-science, as it is not proposed in opposition or as substitution for scientific models for said navigation. In the instance of videos such as 'Moors Missed' these thematic trajectories are affected and challenged in the editing suite, when video works are recut in my practice as a true linear journey, though there are thematic (atmospheric) shifts at each new cut.

In "Lines" (2016), Ingold illustrates a cultural omnipresence of the line, initially splitting the line in two classes, a thread or a trace. The former is "a filament of some kind, which may be entangled with other threads", having a surface of its own despite not sitting upon one, much like "roots, rhizomes..". The latter is differentiated as an "enduring mark left in or on a solid surface by a continuous movement", and so discussed will be the chalk lines on the surface of the picture plane as an additive trace. This additive trace seeks to bridge its own acknowledged material difference to the picture plane as a formal element that is unfixed and therefore challenged by other forces when transported and handled. For example, the 'I Cairn' series of paintings have accumulated a number of incidental additive traces through their movement as a proof of the activity that they have been carried, in a suitcase or in Viktor's car during journeys to and away from VENT Space, Tallinn. This is an equivalent to the marks amassed on the dimensions of 'In Rainbow', a painting of my mother seen carried in a number of videos that has collected further additive traces from the brushing of wheatgrass, faint dirt marks from old moorland dry-stone walls, and scrapes against my waterproof coat upon the painting's surface. Naturally these are subtle and seemingly imperceptible details, yet they form their own trace lines as document of the walked experience.

The application of chalk lines in the painted images stems from encounters with methyl methacrylate road-markings; determining pedestrian safety, two lines for designation, division, demarcation. Periods of documenting heavy fixed-font markings, specifically the isotype-esque methacrylate mother and child (see fig. 14), led to a curiosity for material juxtaposition wherein chalk is the naive marcation tool that substitutes the fixed and industrial, its authority challengeable. Chalk also represents the changeable, temporary, and poetic, that which is not 'heavy' but accumulative of histories in white sediment. Some histories can be mapped in lines, genealogically or cartographically. From this point onwards, we will focus on the latter.

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Ley-line routes were first posited controversially by the 19th century antiquarian Alfred Watkins. Initially devised as energy lines that converge across key sites of spiritual significance, objects and natural phenomena across the British Isles, the travelling of their routes encourages an active appreciation for the walked journey of England beyond the strongly academic, objective analysis or the corporeal experience. Instead, they are followed in the less tangible and more phenomenologically immersed sense and are bound initially with existing localised English folklore, pilgrimage routes, astrological readings and spiritual understandings of the time in relation to specific locations. Billingsley (2004) describes that "soon after it was suggested, the concept took on a mystical ambience, and by the 1930s ley-like lines were being described by occultists such as Dion Fortune as mysterious lines of subtle energy criss-crossing the countryside" 2. This marks a developmental turn towards how ley lines are acknowledged today, as the authorship of these routes disappears in the processes of adaptation, alteration and addition, both offering a democracy for mapping (what makes a site of spiritual significance can be made subjective), in turn raising questions over the epistemological validity of new personal additions made by quasi-cartographers. Were I to publish a localised map of walks made for the video series under the 'I Cairn' title, my practice would fall in to this latter camp, as many plotted routes walked were determined by chalk lines first drawn in the painting series, later being superimposed over satellite imagery of the local landscape (see fig. 15). Here lies an ongoing line of self-questioning: What validity does a painting have as a cartographical tool? A superimposition of chalk lines featured in a metre by metre painting exist across a satellite image of likley Moor, followed for a filmed walk.

Watkins' proposals were much maligned by cartographical groups of the time and raised questions of his academic credibility in archaeological and geographical terms. Despite this, ley-lines have kept a quiet legacy and use in and out of walking communities, with the likes of Philip Heselton and John Michell producing post-war texts that maintained ley-walking as an activity that informs an "understanding (of) the more mysterious implications of the landscape", ². Today, each route's intermediary points (sites) may be lost to the past, half-remembered in vague recollections, revisited and thus recalled, or graced with a plaque by the National Trust. "Maybe we have in ley-hunting our own desire paths, in the sense that we see in alignments what we want to see..." (Billingsley & Haigh, 2006). Furthermore, these lines are carried across time in language and directional advice, some never recorded, even in an age where seemingly all is recorded and uploaded.

Tom Davies maintains a Youtube account and channel under the alias 'GeoWizard' ³ who's online reputation and popularity has followed an upwards trajectory, thanks in part to an ongoing series of videos whereby Tom commits to the walking of a straight-line route across several countries (Norway, Scotland and Wales being a few). His walked journeys have no emphasis on establishing spiritual alignments along any one point, and instead there are a number of alternative priorities seen in his mission-making, a sort of self-mythologising of

journey that relievedly avoids self-aggrandisation of the self. Assisted by various necessities, Davies is aided by a GPS monitor that displays a pre-mapped straight-line path devised using Google Earth software and lidar imagery to which he limits his deviation, filming each daily walk on a series of Go-Pro cameras. Said footage is later edited, annotated, scored upon, narrated over and uploaded as part of an ongoing series of self-made and crowd-funded documentaries. When journeying, Davies is essentially walking an extensive desire path, continuing the straight-line legacy as mapped by Watkins, though now established with satellite technology for mapping specified coordinates and advanced digital imagery. Therein also lies differences. Whereas the guiding lines that were initially calculated and described in "The Old Straight Track" (1925, p.5), Watkins asked "whether it is a humanly designed fact, an accidental coincidence, or a " mare's nest," that (sacred sites) and mark stones fall into straight lines throughout Britain," Davies' maverick uploads unfold as objective adventures with lines devoid of a spiritual bind.

For Davies, this is a mission; decisive and strategic actions amounting to uploaded attempts to cross a landmass with utmost efficiency, whereas for those following ley-line routes, the motivations of ley-walkers differ, as the priority is a spiritual pilgrimage involving a personal immersion. Geowizards brazen barrelling through stinging nettle hedgerows differs from Billingsley's multi-sensory experiences of alignment and my own decisive yet emotionally-seeking manoeuvres across likley Moor or Elslack. The nature of my walking is indebted to pilgrimage and rooted in image.

Returning to the words of Ingold (2016), "the straight line has emerged as a virtual icon of modernity, an index of the triumph of rational, purposeful design over the vicissitudes of the natural world" and it is at odds with the untamed that sits below it. Beyond the measuring of landmass as a plain or depth or the telegraph poles upon which crows perch, the Yorkshire moorland on which I wander is largely devoid of straight lines. There are seldom short-cuts or desire paths and this environment does not welcome the walk of a straight line. Of course this is partly due to the partitioning of the land that stems from the over five thousand Enclosure Acts in the UK, implemented over three centuries from 1604 to facilitate land ownership. In this local instance exists the remnants of limited mining and expansive agricultural practices across Yorkshire mooland. Additionally, a shifting and often extreme terrain gradient may deliver your path to a sudden precipice or sharp ravine. It's no man's land and your line is severed, and so your own fixed line of little deviation has a begrudgingly forced compliance with dry-stone walls, stiles, dirt paths, and tracks determined by quad bikes. The impracticality of following such a route is clear as day, and so in my own practice featured in 'Moors Missed' and other video works I have worked with these limitations, acknowledging that to identify the panorama as 'nature' or 'rural' would be a mislabelling and immersion in the natural in these instances means adhering to the ephemera and human remnants of what surrounds me. Somewhere below is untouched chalk soil.

PART TWO - CRETA

Chalk has a permeability, a wearability and a soft tactility that renders the most temporary of marks of all rock types. Compacted sedimentary layers in both time and solidified marine organisms (commonly "foraminifera, coccoliths, and rhodoliths" 4), its most visual everyday use lines the hands of gymnasts, coastlines and pavement games, whilst its more industrious purpose exists in cosmetics, putty and linoleums. It is aeon matter compacted over, "and the accumulation of particles on a surface... bones, stacks of books, the lines of text on (a) page", (Godsalve 2018, p.3). It is this sleeping sedimentary time document that sprawls across much of Britain, underfoot. It is a tool for me.

As Helen Gordon explains, "the chalk world began to come into existence around 80-100 million years ago, when the Earth was entering a warming phase. Seas rose rapidly, and one third of the landmasses present today disappeared beneath the rising waves. Geologists call this period the Cretaceous, after creta, the Latin for "chalk", and it is the longest geological time period on the stratigraphic chart: at 80 million years, it lasted far longer than the 65 million years that have elapsed since it ended" ⁵. Thus we perceive chalk geologically within deep time, not only through biomicrites on a miniscule scale but as a sedimentary carbonate rock that has formed in such varied ways as escarpments, aquifers and cliffs not only limited to the British Isles, but spanning Europe and North America.

Remaining in the UK, its presence in the landscape also exists in the restoration process of sites such as 'The Long Man of Wilmington' (see fig. 16) that slope above the bedrock of my mother's childhood home in 'The Downs' of East Sussex, England. Chalk blocks are sourced from local mines and transported to such sights of monumental image, which are then relayered into the existing exposed carved lines of the hillside, used as a reinforcement of the line and thus maintaining the giant glyph for new generations to come. With this process comes a responsibility to not only keep the image alive, but the continuation of the mythologising of the figure too, through means of debate of its unclear origins, broader folkloric story weaving and oral histories (astrological alignment with passing constellations, spiritual readings, for example), or more grounded and data-driven discussions of a potential socio-historical role (the claim or reclamation of land in battle, research striving to date the site based on records of similar bodily representations, excetera). First recorded in 1710, the documentation of such sites in writing and drawings (such as Eric Ravilious' 1939 romantic depiction) have both generated curiosity and speculation over the potential to date such illustrations in the hills.

As well as being a place of modestly popular tourism, an inspiration for Eric Ravilious and of my mother's childhood, 'The Downs' as a way to be walked is also a chalk escarpment. It sits amidst a Southerly region of England that "still hold the secrets and traces of our earliest ancestors" (Pearson, 2019), with "evidence of prehistoric occupation, innumerable burial mounds or barrows; defensive earthworks; and ring encampments", whilst possessing some of "the oldest routes in England... having been in use for at least 5,000 years" for agriculture and trade.

The Long Man's image also recalls 'Sleeping Figure' by Louise Bourgeois (see fig. 17) in its economy of form and stark physicality. In "Moors Missed" and "Heather Hunt, Clementine Dale", I mirror the out-stretched posture of the figure, albeit with the plain of the carried painting obscuring my own body, as if a human shield from the viewer's gaze. Jeffs (2021) also talks of images "imprinted onto the landscape" observing that from the "fifteenth century, there was a huge carving of a man wrestling a giant in the chalkey turf of Plymouth Hoe, on the Devonshire coast. The image was destroyed in the 1600s, but the locals called it 'Gogmagog'" (see fig. 18), the same boulder-carrying giant having been recalled in and translated from numerous middle-age era tales as a titan who warred with the people of Albion. Consequently, chalk has a poetic presence as a communication tool, and despite said examples resisting us the pleasure of singular origins and sole significance, this only perpetuates our habit of myth-making. Alternately, my inclusion of chalk across the 'I Cairn' series of paintings adopts "the material of the (additive) trace and the implement with which it is put on as one and the same", (Ingold, 2017). The chalk is present above ground in the work, and there are potentialities for its form and use to be unpacked in new projects. One hypothetical work comprises a small series of 165-centimetre tall 'cairns' constructed from a number of white chalk blocks and stones. Participants will walk to an outdoor 'privilege point' marked on-site, upon which they will be instructed to carry the chalk provided by the artist and to form a cairn in collective action as an organised rock-pile. Its form will be dictated by the order and decision making of the participants involved, mirroring notions of carrying sentimental memory that I have previously performed, albeit now as a collective construction with additive chalk traces recorded on palms as lineament. Practically speaking this drastically alters the dependency relations in the work to be far more ambitious and playful, with possibilities for fault, misunderstanding and improvisation in the landscape.

CHAPTER THREE - TELLING

PART ONE - PANORAMA

"When I cross a moor on which no tree, habitation, or person is visible, and come upon a ring of ragged stones, a single rough-hewn pillar, a line curving away over a hill, a gently rounded mound or cairn of stones, I know this is human-made. I think neither of a boundless nature nor of gods and goddesses, but of the people who made these places. Art itself might be partially defined as an expression of that moment of tension when human intervention in, or collaboration with, nature is recognized. It is sufficiently compelling not to be passed by as part of "amorphous nature." One stops and asks oneself: Who made this? When? Why? What does it have to do with me?"

- Lippard (1995, p.4)

Our understanding of the navigable rural landscape in the binary regard of either being wrought from labour acts (the assumed experience of the inhabitant working the land) or for frivolous pastoral delectation (the assumed passive experience of the tourist) can be disregarded. In an interview conducted with Helen Billinghurst 7, she raises an important questioning of rurality's definition, stating that "in terms of the 'rural', I am less inclined to think there is a difference between 'rural' and urban space when you walk the UK: there is so much development everywhere now, and many apparently 'wild' spaces have industrial human histories when you look closer. And there are lots of micro-spaces rewilding themselves in the city. Walking has taught me this". Though it may be harder to form a psycho-geographical reading of the 'rural' than the Situationists perusing Parisian boulevards and back-streets, authors such as Sonia Overall (Heavy Time) identify signifiers such as common throw-away modern detritus as clues towards the interrelationship between the wild and the industrial. Through walking the landscape identified here and seen in video works such as "Moors Missed" (filmed a five-mile radius of my home in North Yorkshire, UK), the backdrop panorama gives hints as to its own bruises, limits and contradictions. Spanning the vaster throws of the vista, six-hundred and thirty-seven marked rocks sit inscribed in pockets of the Dales disguised under moss and lichen. On the edge of Ilkley Moor I launch on a left-foot from one such rock, marked with a cup and concentric circles (see fig. 19).

Later in my partial eye-line comes grazed land and overgrowth where electrical lines disappear, stone barn ruins emerge from fog cover and the curves of tin mining pits follow from shooting shelters, beyond information plaques on wooden erects, trodden paths of wet prints and a chocolate biscuit wrapper. "There is always a tension in (the) landscape between the reality and autonomy of the nonhuman wild and its cultural construction, between the

human impulse to wonder at the wild and the compulsion to use, manage, and control." (Spirn, 1995, p.133). I walk through a sprawl that evidences this relationship, seeking traces. The painting is carried as a dowsing rod and I walk to find what connects my mother in the image and the landscape on my feet. In truth I am the line, or series of lines, interwoven in my physiology; skeleton, nerves, synapses, tendons, all that are a physical connection between the mother and the land, and through the act of walking I become only what I seek in these traces. Abound the moors is a 'rionnach maoim' formation of dancing light, piercing clouds and illuminating the upper edge of the canvas as it hobbles metre by metre, its full width equivalent to a long stride. I seek what Gilbert Simondon (2011) calls 'privileged points" that others have found with necks bent to the knotted cosmos before me. In an interview conducted with Overall, it was discussed that "rural walking tends to be a form of striding out, quest-walking, or completing a set route" 8, and so each of these three suppositions lean towards a truth in my instance. The quest in question is a seeking of traces not only in Ingold's terms, but as Whitehead reflects in a transcribed interview, "we pick up traces... but the psychic noise is so much less, which may be the thing that gives rise to the feelings of expansiveness, enabling a sort of soft clarity. You walk around a city and it's full of symbols, you're being given information all the time, whereas in the rural you're not really being given easily interpretable symbols or information all the time, because it's just you and the tor" 9. Chippindale and Nash (2002, p.5) expand on this with consideration of "the phenomenology of visiting a place - say, a building, landscape vista..." involving "setting oneself apart from the objectivity - creating experience".

Beyond the ephemera and traces that operate as psycho-geographical clues "the moorland landscape exists as an emotional, subjective experience that enters into the being" with the vista containing loaded "symbols of personal freedom, to be treasured precisely because they are untameable... as modernity's resistant otherness", Fowler (2020). This is stubborn and timeless ground upon which I am not alone. My Samsung Galaxy smartphone is held a metre above the ground on a lightweight tripod recording the walked journey but evidencing my immersion in the landscape is a tough negotiation. What becomes of truth when my actions are recorded? Later on I browse the files. Wind-shaken footage is stabilised in Adobe Premiere Pro and I test edit, grade, convert and upload.

The Yorkshire Dales has a continuing filmed legacy of labour on the farm in raw slanted fields. This is imagined in a seemingly decidedly anti-pastoral filmic depiction of the same landscape as seen in Francis Lee's 2017 feature film "God's Own Country", set in North Yorkshire, with an intimate focus on the labour identity of the landscape, the location serves as the physical and psychological context of a young farmer whose stricken exterior, isolation and familial responsibilities present a dramatically non-pastoral and demystified depiction of working life in the local moors of my upbringing. I walk the same place.

The protagonist's conflict lies between his commitment to the farm; a business carried through generations now lies in his care during the sudden illness of both his grandmother and his father. His aspirations to study fall to the way-side. And the images in the film are not of sweeping Brontë grandiosity but of close honesty in harshness. Treating the narrative strictly as fiction (with autobiographical beginnings in its screenplay), in this medium it is prone to a romantic reading, not only due to its depiction of a developing relationship between two young men, but its place in the pantheon of literary and cinematic presentations of Northern moorland.

Though easily misconstrued as the commodification of place in the interest of national trust support, or as the governing of regional identity for gaining and retaining annual tourist visitor numbers, this agenda too can be questioned. From "Wuthering Heights" to "A Kestrel For A Knave" these tales only mythologise Yorkshire further, with or without their on-screen adaptations. Film-makers such as Lee lead the pack in a depiction of place that is grounded in the lived experience, whilst the production of the work stays honest to Lee's own experiences as a young man with a commitment to the land. As Bright (1985) declares, "...every representation of landscape is also a record of human values and actions imposed on the land over time."

Furthermore, Andrew Kötting's "This Filthy Earth" (2001) presents the labour life of a small cast of English inhabitants in the far-flung rural. Described by Kermode (2016) as "a work of such raw tactility and tangible physicality", it holds an ambition to show the heavy landscape in "its full beauty and brutality", with Bradshaw (2001) also noting the film's ability "to counterbalance any lingering misapprehension that the countryside is a place of picturesque tranquillity", confirming the directors intentions of demystification. Kötting himself elaborates in conversation with Nick Dawson (2001), deciding to portray "the countryside as incredibly beautiful, elegiac, inspiring and contemplative - a space that is not costume drama, serene and beautiful all the time, but becomes visceral and very, very dense and rain sodden". Concluding it as "a celebration of the landscape", the film is brash and uncompromising in its script, mirroring the destabilised panorama in shot. I continue to walk and film. Towards the horizon line hangs a trembling mark of charcoal in the sky, ready to break and pour. A bitter squall ripples over peat and lichen. Pheasant or thunder.

Fowler (2020) expands upon this distance between the pastoral and the labour character of moorland by stating that "...moors are commonly depicted as wilderness and wasteland and are far removed from the domesticated landscapes of pastoral poetry", and this may be partly due to the challenging conditions of the moors themselves - occasionally overgrown, inhospitable and weather-beaten at times, and always uncultivated - its untameable nature sets its reputation, contributing to waterways while sustaining a safe haven for biodiversity, despite today's grouse-shooting culture. Distant pops from firing shelters, red wings

scattering, and heather trembles uncut in Yorkshire. T. F. Powys further describes the heath as being "a different matter from the garden where all there is nature, and she is a wild, fierce, untutored mother" ¹⁰.

Amidst the bracken and moss sprouts snaking patches of heather, hillsides past prophesied would become my mother's home. In "Tarka the Otter" (1927), Williamson poeticises its timelessness, as "the heather here was the same heather of a thousand years ago... the leaves and stalks were gone into the peat, which nourished the present plants... There was no age on the moor; there was no change". Additionally, Thomas Hardy's quote from "The Return of The Native" (1878) resonates, as "underneath had been from prehistoric times as unaltered as the stars overhead" ¹¹. The untamed Dales observe across time.

Through this literary lens perhaps there is a grappling with the moorland's place in deep time, the incomprehensible life-span of the land when we experience it at its oldest. Godsalve's definition is of "deep times (as) places that we live within even though we can't experience their durations" (2018, p.6) may seem somewhat accurate, though I think this undermines attempts to quantify and comprehend vast stretches of earth history (epochs or periods such as the cretaceous) considered deep time, also ignoring discussion that we exist enfolded in it and will long in to the future be a little layer in its time sediment.

These expanses remind us to surrender our arrogance, as we are more fleeting than the heather's bell-drooping lilacs. It is unruly and evergreen. Fowler (2020) supports this in declaring moors as "resistant to human intentions", and "composed of geological materials from elsewhere", latterly implying a broader study of the landscape and a wider colonial past that sticks in the soil. Furthermore, it is stated that "inevitably, moors' established literary associations tend to stress their Englishness and this overshadows the histories of their relationship with travel, empire and migration". Macfarlane (2019) also ruminates upon the same lines, specifying with the subterranean, as "in a dynamic I have seen so often in the underland that it has become a master trope, troublesome history thought long since entombed is emerging again", with discussions of colonial traces in the landscape seemingly only recently resurfacing, a delayed exhumation in academic and public discourse.

In a personal mirror's image, Macfarlane also portrays heather's secure embrace in the moorland "as a winter duvet", lying "full-length in it and sinking down a foot, the heather rising up and leaning over me in a gesture I experience as a sheltering. I lie there for a while, looking up and out, feeling the anxieties of the day flow from me. Late light glints in the west of every raindrop held in the bones of the lichen, beading on the bosses of moss". This embodiment in the earth as a grounds for containment, preservation and shelter will later be extrapolated further, as we lean towards the bog bodies of Manchester and the earth as an encasement.

PART TWO - PROCESS

'I Cairn' (2022), 'Moors Missed' (2022) and 'Heather Hunt, Clementine Dale' (2021) revisit the first steps of 'Heather Hunt' (2021), utilising video to deliver a self-portrait that addresses the relationship with the mother. The former's title plays as a triple entendre (I care, I can or I am the cairn, as if becoming a cairn and a constant). The woman pictured on the canvas is not explicitly identified and this is not seen as necessary, instead the recording and the context of the action should take precedence. The image is carried as if a divining rod, "a tool for the spiritual pilgrim", Lonegren (2004). Heaword (2004) further explains that divining or dowsing "has a long and respectable history, and united itself to the study of prehistory in the early 20th century... following lines that provide an intellectual matrix; at once hospitable and flexible; it was just a matter of time before the transfer from water (diving) to 'energy' was effected". In this regard the phenomenological experience of carrying the mother's image is a director for my own walk, or a detector for a presence and/or limit in the landscape that heightens a feeling of closeness, belonging, or evidence of familial truth, closure or comfort. What is sought is not singular. Armitage (2012, p.26) cites "The Power of The Pendulum" by Thomas Charles Lethbridge as a key text that posits the notion that "recollections can inhabit or cling to places, and that objects can become infused with the sentiment of an experience", informing the sense of an "emotional charge...". Reflecting as I walk, these residual traces are what I seek, where the 'charge' is heightened and the emotive language of the landscape and its physical constituents build to an intimate crescendo. Much like Watkins, Lethbridge's former academic reputation was scrutinised for its epistemological validity in light of publishing works regarding 'alternative realities.

Perhaps it is a fruitless chase to articulate this pilgrimage in experienced spiritual terms, and rather it is through emotional language that can better summarise these walks. I am largely concealed by my mother's image, and with this brings its own connotations. Smith (2017, p.7) summarises some of my emotional intentions succinctly in describing "...a nostalgia-object, a massive marker of what had gone, but, evidently, had not gone itself. Absence marked by what remains."

Though not consciously anti-pastoral (neither do I aim to depict the land as a place of labour or frollicking, a-la 'Wuthering Heights'), I use the landscape as a place to house this performed pilgrimage. A borrowed motif from English gothic literature, the choice mist that casts the moorland in 'Moors Missed' imbues the footage with an "atmospheric state of mind that slows deeds and motion... when you can't see what's in front of you, slow down, refocus...", Ballard et al. (2019, p.224).

In addition to origins in said 'ley' line routes, the anecdotal retellings of a prophecy that my mum would one day live amongst the heather (the North of England), from a place of chalk (the South) are also supportive of my actions. The bodily image is a tribute to 'The Wilmington Giant', a colossal image in a hillside in East Sussex whereby the surface is carved away as a reductive trace, revealing a chalk image. Ultimately, universality is the aim here, as it's the act featured in the video that should be the audience's focus.

Recent iterations of the video works ('I Cairn' and 'Moors Missed') are initiated as pilgrimage routes that are determined by maps that are produced by digitally superimposing chalk lines featured in the 'I Cairn' painting series on to satellite imagery of select locations in a close proximity to the artist's home (see fig. 20). The role of these maps as walk determiners is a clarification of the role of the chalk lines featured in the series as a commitment to a route that could be brushed away by a coat sleeve or spilt water.

Previously, this transposition of image has been explored in paintings such as 'Under The Dale', 'Trace', 'Domestic Deluge' and 'Making Plans For...'. This layering of images is referential of both time being read as sedimentary and thus layered and shiftable, in addition to 'fade-in' - to - 'fade-out' transitions used in past video works. The latter introduces the notion of the bed linen as a place for mapping geographic potentialities and to begin the walk of the 'ley' lines in the room. This is the first example in the series of using the resemblance of linen creases to suggest aerial views of the Yorkshire Dales, additionally returning to the 'overlay' as a visual motif via the subtle image of an open book.

An aspect of my research converged with observation of the work of the eighteenth-century surveyor William Smith, who pioneered the geological mapping of the British isles across rock types by following sequences of strata. His "Delineation of the Strata of England and Wales with part of Scotland" (see fig. 21) was initially published by cartographer Jon Carey in 1815, and its availability impacted land value for owners, allowed a broader understanding of coal distributions across said strata, and influenced agricultural practises. As Sharpe (2015) notes, "his other discovery was the realisation that certain fossils were associated with particular strata" allowing for the "identification of where a layer of rock lay in the sequence of strata." This breakthrough had since led to a better identification of sedimentary rock types such as chalk, indicated by Smith in green. However, geological studies of the British Isles have changed and with it means of mapping landmasses, doing away with the idea of a linear narrative formation of earth. Godsalve (2018, p.50) continues in describing how "...nineteenth-century geologists committed to orderly chronologies of older=lower, newer=higher, but the law of superposition had to ignore conflicting field evidence to fabricate theories of linear succession" upon the discovery of tectonics and a shifting of layers. Therefore, a geological understanding of time cannot be read so clearly in a linear and chronological fashion.

Further works are a result of a turning point in embracing the significance of the bedding in its connotations and inherent motherly qualities, as well as the manner in which its fibres and fabric layers shift and interchange, behaving as the body beneath it.

Each painting repeats yet deviates from the same production process (at times utilising the gradient to represent a visceral or cerebral transition), including the bed's surface as a double for the aerial view of the landscape, with the linen being a place of safety, healing and dreaming. Titles such as 'Amnion' are a direct reference to the amniotic membrane, an area of the placenta that cushions the developing foetus. This image of the cradled foetus is representative of the incubation of an idea, the motherly hold and the dependency between two lives, both in development. And so these works are a meditation on comfort and home. Included in this body, 'Finally Aligning' depicts scattered chalk, arranged in a vague circle that along with the title evokes sacred circles and early examples of the designed landscape. 'Two and Throw' continues the use of chalk, this time as a delineator, representing a tie for packaging or carrying, or the parallel walking paths that traverse a land mass. The chalk however cannot hold like a cable tie - it is sedimentary and as a mark, temporary.

PART THREE - MYTHS

We renew our landscapes through remythologizing, or as the antiquarian Watkins (1925) describes the "lingering fragments of fact disguised by an overlay of generations of imaginings". This is to say that 'fact' is carried and embellished, reinterpreted and recontextualised, transformed and retold through the customs and words of that story's newest day. It is a superimposition process of myths upon experienced reality. In an interview conducted with Phil Smith in January, 2021, he explains that any primary impulses for mythologising the landscape "will emerge from an entangled web of entities and agencies", the kind that develops from accumulative experiences and freedoms of addition, reduction, exaggeration and simplification. He continues in explaining that:

"Any kind of 'mythologizing' will likely involve something like a narrative, myth-making, telling and -ologizing that sits somewhere between representation and magic... Not the often-used definition or assumption that magic is a changing of the natural by supernatural means, but rather a means by which to find close connectivity with all others, a seeking of 'instruments' (refrains, rhythms, symbols, images, for example.) that bring the user of magic into an intimate connection with the universe's others. This may appear as somehow super-natural because myth is something more (or "super") than everyday representation, as it is a 'transcendence' of the division and separation of things. But rather than being a spiritual transcendence, it is the opposite, an intimate immersion in the matter of other things, into the grime, into the moonlight, into animal tracks, into the factory ruins, an immersiveness that is sensitive to the connections to everything else in each thing." ¹²

There exists a mythopoeic interest in my own work - specifically in the video series - whereby the walking processes and their implications are heightened in the recordings, perhaps via on-site choices (the fashion in which the image is carried, locations that are emphasised most e.t.c) or the treatment of the footage (grading, specific editing choices, sound). It is a motivation to create a subtle mythos regarding my mum, with effects of the landscape as contributors, whilst following a lineage of past projects.

And whilst reflecting on oral histories and myth construction in conversation with author Amy Jeffs, she concludes that "in the Middle Ages, myths helped foster a sense of belonging and ownership. They are tools now as then and can serve many purposes" ¹³. Jeffs later cites the tales of Conwenna and her sons, Teneu and Mungo (albeit in utero) and Estrildis and Sabrina as interesting for their mother-child relationships ⁵. In writing "Storyland" (2021), the author confirms that her inspiration stemmed from "encounters with the primary sources and the works of modern authors like Madeline Miller and Margaret Atwood".

In its entirety, her text can be seen not only as a re-establishment of common and more obscure-leaning mythologies (at a time when Bruts, Picts, Danes, Scots, Saxons and Normans occupied changing regions of the British isles) but a reimagining and therefore re-mythologising of long-told and long-lost tales. With these myths in common is Poly-Olbion (1612), an epic topographical poem that sprawls wide and high the tales of the time in thirty-comprehensive cantos (songs), each of which is regionalised in mapping the British Isles. Questions of authorship and the writer's creative autonomy dominate my reading of these fresh interpretations, curious as to a contemporary agenda that may lie in the subtext of such reimaginings, political or otherwise, and whether this truly matters when the translated source is acknowledged.

In the case of Yorkshire, Drayton portrays the county in terms of its conflicts and ownerships, both with the neighbouring Lancashire - "grafting of the White and Red Rose firme together" (in reference to the wars of the roses) and exchanges of royal power - "vnto a Land with wealth aboundantly that flow'd: aboundantly againe, so he the same bestow'd". Poly-Olbion has a legacy that now spans four centuries through later literary documents that both map and encourage a mythopoeic approach to a country and region's cultural identity. Even now these cantos are resonant beyond their origins of aristocracy, instead applicable to our personal relations in the everyday or political treaties and policies discussed in more political terms. This is not to invent a prescience about Drayton's writings, rather their lasting cultural presence.

Mythologies can become buried. In this instance, mythologies can be entangled in that which was buried, such as the Lindow Man (an example of a peat-preserved body) whose meandered theories and mythologies occupy the spaces of information that carbon-dating and archeological research in its objectivity can't provide. And from this is the potential of the construction of myth. In an interview with the Yorkshire-based folklorist, John Billingsley reflects that "mythologising place is inherent to human consciousness, that we derive our place legends from the landscape, i.e. the land we settle in is our cultural mentor, and we reflect it back to itself. If we took a population of people out of a place and put a new population of people in, they would come up with a broadly comparable set of place narratives" ².

Unresolved histories of our earthly artefacts house ever-expanding sprawls of semi-stories in pseudo-histories and old wive's tales. This is a ripe sediment to wonder and wander upon, to feel a possibility of belonging in the land between its polarities of harsh labour-pasts and pastoral ideals. Our soil can embody homeliness in its symbolic status; able to hold roots, to bed, to bury, to recycle decay, to mark bloodshed and conflict, and to keep myths, cautionary tales and ideas, conflated or otherwise. Corinne Fowler states in her work "Green and Unpleasant Land" that "generations and writers have associated moors with 'deep time'.

This claim has geological dimensions: peat preserve being only one of them, along with soil studies and imaging of how our landscape has changed over time. Whilst remaining on the former, William Atkins (2020) observes that "peat contains no oxygen, which is why bodies can be dug up intact...", thus gifting us a suggestive image that could be lent a totemic status. This revives the image of the Lindow Man, a body discovered preserved in a peat bog in Lindow Moss near Manchester, UK in 1984. Instances much like the Lindow Man are forms of natural preservation rather than human-initiated preservation, wherein the mythical status is overlaid across an absence of knowledge, instead of a mythology being constructed and altered across time as a narration or lesson. Estimated to have been living between 20-90 AD and understood to have been approximately 25 years of age at the time of a violent death, the peat bog that encased him had resulted from a development of decomposed vegetable matter in wet acidity. In somewhat more poetic terms, Mitew (2019, p.84) describes:

"A bog: layers of human culture, layers of planetary history. The small pool of peaty water is a dark mirror of cloud and bird. Pond skimmers dimple the surface of water and sky. A dragonfly alights on the tensile surface. Tiny ripples expand to the borders of flowering cotton grass and asphodel. I peer into the dark shine and see only myself reflected back. What lies beneath? A thousand-year-old woman might be recovered—skin leatherned by tannin and time. Compacted layers of ancient forest are a black sunlight that will fuel small hearth fires today and maybe tomorrow."

In the use of such language, further mythopoeic practices are invited. A reconstruction of imagined life-span fills the dig from which the body was exhumed and in public consciousness the communities of Lindow own these myths, the stories upon fact. In reality, by removing the upper layers of moss, grass and topsoil in a peat bog ensures the release of large amounts of carbon dioxide that was once stored below his duvet of dirt. Thus, the exhumation of a figure such as the Lindow Man or the thousand-year-old woman comes at an environmental price.

Of course, mythologising by narrative-building in the space of indeterminate knowledge is a choice (or accumulation of any number of choices or tellings) that affects the epistemological context of the subject and its own contexts. As Jeffs (2021) describes, "myths hold the echo of collective emotion, whatever they reveal of events." In stating this, Jeffs is promoting the practice of myth construction as a tool that invites compassion and a history in place. A previously cited example that could be treated as such is "The Long Man of Wilmington", a towering hill-side engraved image of a figure in a rigid and reduced depiction, a staff held vertically in both arms in East Sussex, England.

The tall staffs held may be supports or guides, symbols of a protector or defendant, a god of war or warning, or an emblem of a royal house claiming land ownership. Myth construction is a right, an extension of old image making and storytelling impulses.

In closing this chapter is a short story that aims to ruminate on these means of myth-construction whilst introducing a new myth that is not unlike those featured through my research. The emphasis here is on the carrying of word and image in its temporal transcendence.

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A child one-hundred metres from a sun-blocking ridge maps with an index finger a sleeping giant. Hobbomock, Colebrand, Gogmagog, Grendel, Ute... or perhaps some other long dormant. She blocks the summer sun from her eyes with her left palm, and takes her right hand to an outreached placement in the sky for a contouring of the bodily terrain. Her eyes walk the edge of a side-ways head, climbing to a rounded shoulder and angling down a chest and a padded ridge of ribs, riding down the depression of a waist, upwards to the curve of a pelvis, then easing down a leg, folding downwards and completing the panorama of an escaping line that wanders to an abandoned hamlet. Ending the hillside, she places the same hand on a young breathing chest. Her lungs synchronise with the slow heave of the land to a rise and fall and the local legend lays stoic in its slumber. A six-year old girl creates a land legend, then walks the family hounds home.

On the next day her Northern hand sings in spinning ink, syruping weird from a quill under lamp-light onto a tattered scrap. Blotted lines describe a lop-sided hulking lump, draped under sediment, and above that, a blanket of enclosure, bleating beasts and wind-beaten heather, prowling smoke feathering skyward. The crude lines mark the giant in the hill and in time. Her misspelt annotations litter the remainder of the paper, tight to torn edges; i'm hapy down here... they don no i m sleeping... but im... sun at the end of the day... some times i like to waik up an haf bread... my nam is Eric.

"The sleeping figure stirs, unsettled. The figure's foot is poking out of the covers, the toes exposed to the iciness of the night. A half-conscious rearrangement of blankets. The foot retreats; the head settles under the covers, only the nose poking out so the body can breathe."

- Ballard et al, (2019, p.353).

Prior to years assisting in the kitchen, she would traipse the same lime skyline in ceaseless child-height summers, eternity summer in the giddy company of the girls on her lane. Daisy-chain tales would develop in a circle of crossed-legs and faces breathing in the sun, leaning back in someone else's field, listening in for birdsong and stories of Eric. Her words were always the last, a soliloquy, dreaming up his days and adventures, some hero, a one-time warrior misconstrued by lads of the land. On occasional days her faint soul would be carried on the bones of her father's shoulders, her arms locking across the breadth of his chest. A giant of her own could carry her, in a time when she was weightless and his body wouldn't buckle. The lining of his stomach was an unknown, and in it a tight white web had old roots, riddling him, a weakening. Quiet tumour territory. Where deep bedding lines coalesced to cruel cairns the blood would muddle, matter held in tissue a victim to its own conflict, in cold blood and in his spine.

One-hundred and forty-seven years later it's 1981. In the attic of a bungalow in the calmest corner of Walthamstow is a cardboard box. One of several. It's almost shut, dust-topped, parcel tape peeling itself away as it holds eight decades worth of memories in family photo albums belonging to Jo Grahame, its contents filled out by a small portion of her husband's trainspotting logs. Buried at its bottom is a memory box; itself a deep tray of personal histories comprising of a daughter's first lost tooth (a yellowed incisor), a framed, signed and collectable photograph of Neil Diamond, a birth certificate, a pair of arch-supporting insoles wrapped in clingfilm, assorted foreign currencies, and a loaded HMRC envelope - a folder of flotsam. Must of mildew rises to the eyes as the paper gasps for breath. Amid folded letters, redundant bank statements and birthday cards is "the cutting", a flaky and fragile remnant from another century. Suddenly disrupt it and its atoms just crumble, disappearing into the dust that catches below the single lightbulb of the loft.

Blotched ink stains mark out a grey ghost of jotted lines that are as if a crawling path of ants, outlining a sleeping giant on frail paper, in the frail hands of a frail mother. Jo's son has made her a cup of tea downstairs.

CONSIDERATIONS

A neat conclusive line to draw below this existing body of image and text is hard to come by, and instead the proposal of new steps beyond this point as 'considerations' are offered. In them is a summarised iteration of ideas explored throughout this text.

The collected matter, conversations and research that cumulatively forms the spine of this thesis extends beyond its deadline, and sees an artistic practice that continues and departs with fresh energy and renewal. Some constants remain in theory and fabrication. The Yorkshire moorland in deep time and for deep future, the mother-son relationship as considered in the now and near future, and mytheopiac approaches for sheltering and preserving this tie open out with unmined potentialities. One continuation is a further immersed involvement in walking practices, as "in walking and writing we become capable of sensing the imprints left by disappearance", Ballard et al (2019, p.167). This familial disappearance either physically or across distance is an inevitability. We move on, by and across, and so residual traces that persist will hang in my work, and hence there will also persist a presence of chalk as a trace revealer, as well as an 'additive trace'. Sensing these imprints extends outside of the psycho-geographical as sought in the Yorkshire landscape and into realms of auto-ethnography, anecdotal literature and hauntological theory. These are lines on my artistic horizon as pursuits to be led by process.

Carrying these 'imprints' or traces in physical terms will encourage a more collaborative and process-emphasised practice that hinges on collective participatory moments of interaction with chalk as a document of time in its sediment. As discussed in 'Creta', this may manifest as a series of made chalk cairns that function as a memoriam, 'privilege points' for a mapped pilgrimage, or monuments built to be responsive and affected by their conditions and atmospheres.

Furthermore, a continuation of this thesis' explorations will be through meta-narrative myth construction, with a greater engagement in specifics of local folklore customs in the North of England and Yorkshire. Practically I will be looking back to manoeuvre forwards, centring a focus on totemic status, honouring, and the mother figure as something that is already showcased in this Masters project. Remaining rooted in the formal properties of portrait painting, this path will encourage the transposition of personal and landscape histories.

Thirdly, a pursuit of personal and landscape histories through the continued walking of the straight line as discussed in this paper will aim to further an immersion and acknowledgement of psycho-geographical traces, albeit in plotted and collective journeys alongside participants. Documented personally and appropriately as plans, field recordings, field notes, interviews and after-thoughts, this line of enquiry may intertwine with the acts of collaborative chalk cairn construction.

Finally, there is uncharted ground for new mythopoeic possibilities in embracing other modes of storytelling, including but not limited to musical composition; a field that I currently work in, structured-narrative film-making (deviating from my existing impromptu video work), and prose writing. The latter has previously proved an appropriate format for presenting a semi-autobiographical metanarrative portrayal of my mum, emphasising the 'clothing' or decoration of this figure in a more universal regard, returning to intimate written nuances as seen in the first part of this thesis, 'mothered'. A repurposing of transcribed information and quotations may offer the exhumation of a body of ideas that may soon rematerialise, in addition to a reconnection with my own mother and an ongoing exchange of conversations on her health. Her last words are often "I'm fine, honestly".

ILLUSTRATIONS

Fig. 1



"Drive-Thru", chalk on ceramic, 2021.

Fig. 2



"Photobomb, No.3", graphite on watercolour paper, 2021.

Fig. 3



"Trace" 40.5 x 40.5 cm, acrylic on canvas board, 2021.

Fig. 4



"Amnion" 51 x 61 cm, acrylic on canvas board, 2021.

Fig. 5



"Mapping The Peaks" 25.5 x 25.5 cm, acrylic on canvas board, 2021.

Fig. 6



"The Peaks", 71 x 91.5cm acrylic painting on stretched canvas, 2021.

Fig. 7



"Don't Get It On Your Bloody Bed", 25.5 x 25.5cm acrylic painting on stretched canvas, 2021.

Fig. 8



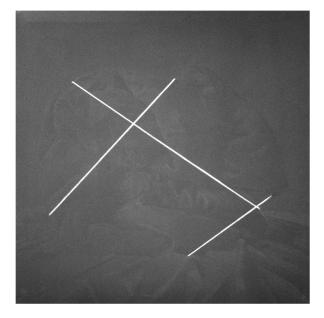
"In Rainbow" 100 x 100cm, acrylic on canvas, 2016.

Fig. 9



"Tether II", 10 x 30.5 cm, acrylic and white chalk on canvas board, 2021.

Fig. 10



"Double-Back", 100 x 100cm acrylic painting on stretched canvas, 2021.

Fig. 11



"Moors Missed" video work exhibited at VENT Space, Tallinn, Estonia, 2022.

Fig.12



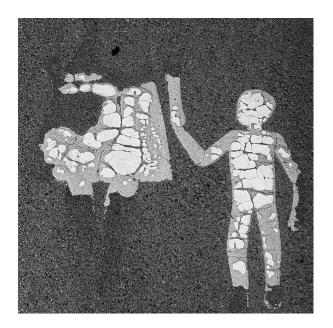
"I'm Fine, Honestly" and "No Hands!
(On The Spinning Lil Blu)" paintings
exhibited at VENT Space,
Tallinn, Estonia, 2022.

Fig. 13



Richard Long, Dusty Boots Line, The Sahara, 1988. Online Source: https://uxdesign.cc/linesmade-by-walking-richard-long-and-desirepaths-be1e9b23671d.

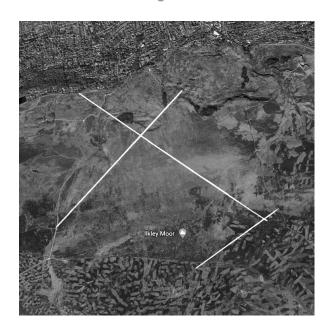
Fig. 14



Methyl Methacrylate pavement markings, photographed in Kristiine district, Tallinn.

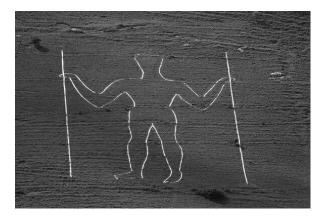
October 2020.

Fig. 15



Map, Ilkley Moor, Yorkshire, UK.
Chalk lines digitally superimposed
from 'Double Back' over aerial
photography (Google Maps).

Fig. 16



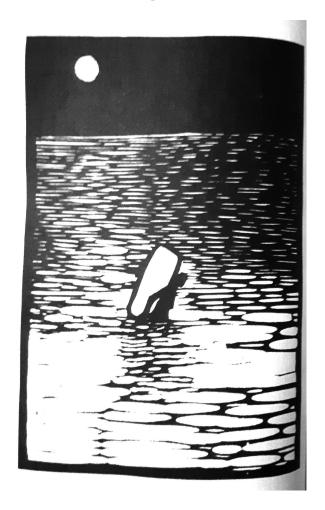
"The Long Man of Wilmington", photograph Credit: Steve Daniels: Atlas Obscura. 2018.

Fig. 17



"Sleeping Figure" by Louise Borgeois (1950) Credit: Museum of Modern Art. 2021.

Fig. 18



"Gogmagog" woodblock print by Amy Jeffs (2021). Source: Jeffs, A. (2021). "Storyland: A New Mythology of Britain". Riverrun Publishing. London, UK.

Fig. 19



"Cup and double ring marked rock above the Cow and Calf Hotel." Article: Ilkley Moor & Rombald's Moor Source: http://www.stone-circles.org.uk/.

Fig. 20



"Moors Missed", 13:58s digital video Performed walk in Ilkley Moor, Yorkshire, UK.

Fig. 21



"A Delineation of the Strata of England and
Wales with part of Scotland"
by William Smith (1815)
Credit: National Museum of Wales (online).
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