VARROOM! LAB

online journal - issue two

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UNIVERSITY OF WALES
Trinity Saint David
SWANSEA - ABERTAWE

Swansea's Metropolitan University
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Spatialising Illustration

The award winning *Varoom* magazine was established in 2006 to address the lack of opportunity for writing and as a vehicle and platform for enquiry within the specialist subject of illustration.

Rick Poynor, in his paper *The Missing Critical Link*, suggests that the lack of critical framework for the subject leads to it being marginalised as a discipline, describing Varoom as “a ray of light in this poorly lit area”.

An invitation from the AOI to academic institutions to form strong partnerships through VaroomLab as a catalyst for innovation in illustration in the 21st Century has been instrumental in fostering essential discourse between the practice of illustration and relatively emergent academic research, building upon the success of Varoom magazine in asserting its cultural value.

This unique collaboration between the UK’s professional subject association and representatives from respected academic institutions with critical support from its panel of peer reviewers is testimony to an ambition to cultivate a symbiotic beneficial relationship. The exchange facilitates both an interrogation and nourishing of the rich complexity of practice, drawing upon and optimising areas of expertise.

Received by major institutions internationally, *Varoom* magazine makes research available to a diverse international audience: design houses including the Nike graphic design studio in the USA, Pentagram, Universities, illustration and design professionals in Europe, the Far East, USA, South America, Russia and the Middle East. Through symposia and publication of papers in this digital format VaroomLab augments this effective mechanism for dissemination, seeking optimum impact.

Issue Two contains selected papers submitted for the Swansea Metropolitan/VaroomLab Spatialising Illustration symposium held at Swansea Metropolitan on 24/25 January 2013. The shortlisted papers were selected into two categories: peer reviewed and non-peer revieved.

Laura Carlin, Chris Aldhous, Nicola Davies and Simon James were Keyote Speakers and their presentations about their practice in relation to the symposium’s theme were not peer reviewed. All four Keynote Speakers were invited to submit a synopsis of their presentation or a short statement, and they are included in the Journal as an important contribution to the Spatialising Illustration symposium.

Spatialising Illustration Symposium

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Hosted by Swansea Metropolitan, Spatialising Illustration was the second VaroomLab symposium. This two day event explored many ways in which we encounter space and place through illustration. The symposium roamed beyond seeing illustration solely as a commercial discipline and explored it as a visual language inherent in many artistic activities: a medium that evokes ideas and narrative, and one that offers subtle messages about worlds we encounter.

In the true spirit of illustration, academics, practitioners, writers, illustrators and artists came together, all with personal interpretations and meanings about the symposium's theme. Mitch Miller's enlightening and vernacular documentary of the daily life of a street through his Dialectograms were celebrated in his paper titled Draw Duke Street, whilst Bella Kerr's searching paper explored the 'building' of a space in words, visually.

All 13 symposium speakers and 4 keynote speakers offered many perspectives and ways in which illustration locates us in the world. The picture book narratives of Nicola Davies and Laura Carlin had an airy, spatial aura that almost left the symposium audience without words.

In thinking of Marilyn Brooke Goffstein's observation that "all the pictures in a picture book add up to one picture that isn't even there," there is an argument illustration, itself, is invisible: that illustration is mindful.

Papers and presentations that took us on journeys from the non-spaces of Luton airport to spaces of the cyber kind; from the commonplace to the bizarre, showed we experience our surroundings in a profusion of ways.

Whether geographically or historically, culturally or psychologically, place is bound to shifting meaning and significance. Illustration has the capacity to lead us to both physical and mindful places: like a symbolic map of society, navigation is by way of interpretation; putting into context - spatialising.

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Derek Bainton is a founding member of VaroomLab

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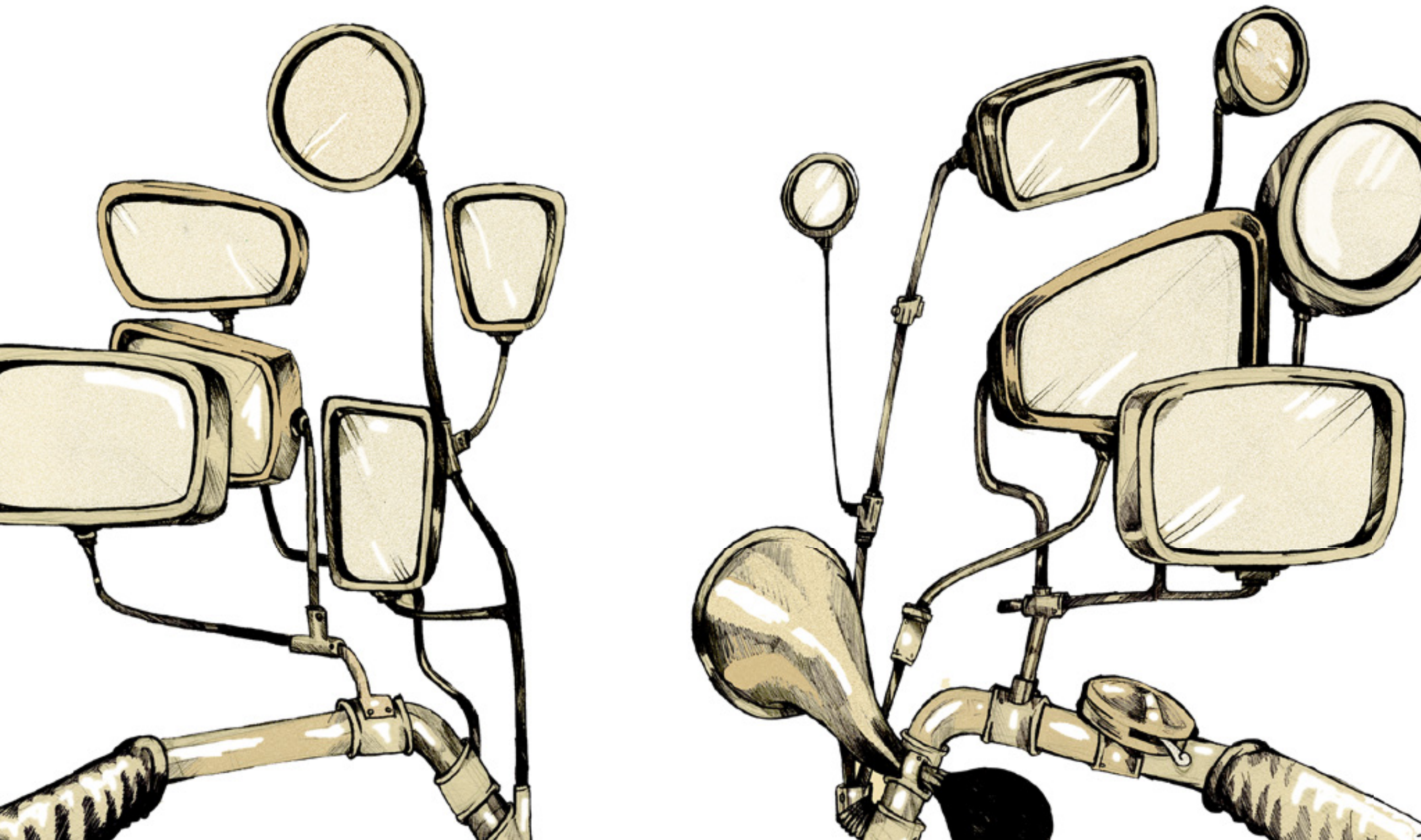


The Space Between my Work and Myself

Laura Carlin

‘…I think it’s difficult for students when speakers come in, stand on a stage and say, ‘I did this and I did that,’ - failing to mention the five years they spent working in Pizza Hut and dragging round their portfolio. Those years can be just as important as any commercial work.

One of the most difficult pieces of space to form is the gap between my work and myself. And the ability to be honest with it. When you become an illustrator, you’re an artist, but an artist that has to solve a brief.

I spent all my spare time drawing in sketchbooks because that was what I knew. It took me years to come out of them and make them into anything.

So much of studying is the balance between working and then being able to step away – trying to see what’s developing or whether it’s even worth developing…’

The Promise by Nicola Davies illustrated by Laura Carlin, Walker Books, 2013

Architects Of The Invisible Idea

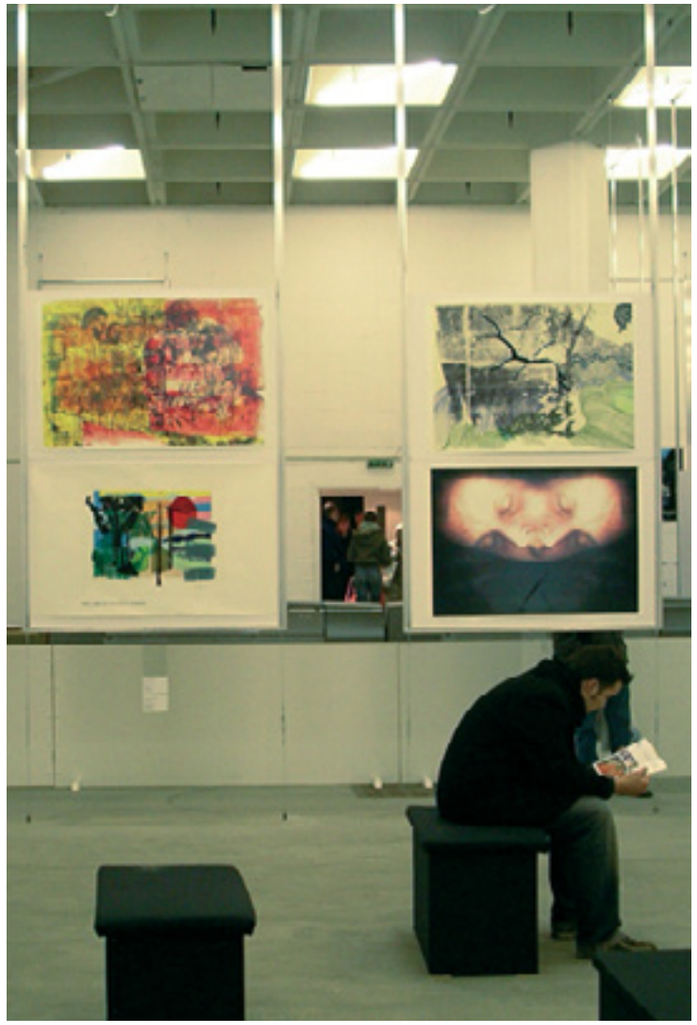
Chris Aldhous: Creative Director GOODPILOT - Ghost of Gone Birds

Hype London frontage

We once opened a chain of DIY pop-up art galleries across Europe: London, Paris, Moscow, Milan, Berlin and Amsterdam with a slightly off-brief detour to Singapore. We called it HYPE partly because it gave local up and coming artists the tools to print, project and promote their work to a new, wider audience; to get their name out there - their work noticed. The galleries started off empty-blank walls, blacked out film screens, then the space filled up with digital art and film and we invited the local movers and shakers of the art world to pop along and see the work on show. We also called it HYPE because we'd persuaded Hewlett Packard to pay for the project and we thought the letters HP should appear somewhere. To their credit HP didn't plaster the galleries with their logo – or even dress any flat surface with their brochures and leaflets – they were just happy for contributing artists to see the HP name on the printers and projectors that they were using to produce their work for the exhibitions. For once, it seemed a fair deal. An open exchange of exposure for endorsement and suddenly the potential for advertising briefs to open up, rather than close down, creative experimentation seemed very real.

We call it 'strange chemistry' – that wonderful collision of incongruous ingredients that is guaranteed to yield an unexpected creative outcome. The spirit of experimentation extended to the promotion of the show:

Hype fly poster



Hype artwork

we invited 12 young filmmakers to shoot HYPE films (they simply had to feature the letters H and P in the title so we got ‘Hairy Pooches’ and ‘Hedonistic Penguins’, ‘Help’ and ‘Hair Piece’). We also recruited a wonderful artist called Moose, aka Paul Curtis, to use his clean graffiti technique to inscribe the HYPE logo in the dirt-encrusted pavements and rusting skips of the Shoreditch neighbourhood. Artists and visitors seemed to like the concept: in just three weeks, HYPE London attracted 1,200 pieces of art and 9,000 visitors. The gallery filled up three times, so we refreshed the hang each week so that there was a reason to return to the show and see a whole new selection of work every Monday.

Hewlett Packard clearly got the attention of the creative community they wanted to open a conversation with, but what did the artists and film-makers get in return? There was the exposure to the 9,000 visitors that made it to the HYPE Gallery – but we also uploaded everybody’s work to a clone of the space online: that unbelievably got over 4 million hits from 140 countries. We made sure that most evenings there was an event that would attract picture editors and commissioners, curators and art buyers to see the work. And the way we managed the press coverage was important; we kept the artists at the forefront of the story and HP as the modest patron in the wings.

We heard back from some of the artists and photographers who took part: it had raised their profile and they did get more work (additionally every artist was invited back at the end of the HYPE shows to collect their A0-sized exhibited print). More than anything I'd like to think we gave the artists and film-makers the space to create something interesting. When you work for big sprawling multi-national agencies you end up attending way too many pre-production meetings and artist's briefings where the lights go out in the eyes of all the creative beings sitting around the table - as soon as they realise that the artistic endeavour under discussion has been reduced to simply recreating something that has been researched, story-boarded and neutered to death. A commercials director once confided in me that he had been asked to do a shot for shot copy of another ad – the most depressing aspect of this was that the agency was unknowingly asking him to copy one of his own ads – which he was ashamed to admit was already a copy of someone else's work. A photocopy of a photocopy. Double jeopardy.

So this is why we set up GOODPILOT six years ago – as a creative experiment to see if we could persuade clients to spend their money in a more meaningful way, to take a leap in the dark and invest their marketing money in communication projects the like of which haven't been seen or done before. Like asking Hewlett Packard to fund a series of empty art galleries across Europe, or telling Volvo that we were going to launch their new C30 with a campaign over which none of us would exert any creative control. We started by stopping people on the street and asking for their first reaction to a picture of the new urban hatchback. Negative or positive. Rational evaluation or subjective rant. Words of wisdom or instant rejection. It all got noted down and written up in our book of collected C30 quotes called the Volvo Vox Populi. You see we'd looked at the design of the new car and decided its unexpected lines and features were clearly the result of a Scandinavian designer doing his own thing – essentially producing a product of free will. So we became equally determined to make the marketing similarly uncensored excursion into the unknown – setting up an idea that invisibly withheld the client (and us) from any level of editorial control. So we took our book of C30 quotes and gave it to two dozen artists and filmmakers and told them to take any phrase that appealed as the starting point for a piece of work to enfold the car. Illustrators and graphic artists like Luke Insect and Nomoco gave us gothic landscapes and cloud-filled dreamscapes. Then there was the picnic with giant ants. An underwater Las Vegas dance routine. A German heavy metal video. Greyhounds and exploding grannies. All strange chemistry in full effect. I'm a writer by trade, but I would never have penned the line 'it will attract many, many eyes' to describe the strange beauty of the car – and I would never have scripted the short film that evolved out of that line and turned it into a road trip across a Dali-esque landscape of swivelling eyes.

By subtracting the usual draconian levels of creative control from the advertising process, we seemed to be rekindling the spirit of visual invention: putting artists back in charge of taking our idea and transforming it into something wonderful and unexpected - restoring the mystery of creation. In this way we began to construct robust ideas that had the architecture of everything the client might need, but the breathing space within for creative expression to flourish without the dead hand of executionally-obsessed market research, ideas and projects that can't be qualitatively- or quantitatively-tested, micro-dissected or x-rayed into submission to yield a guaranteed creative result. Because where's the fun in that? Instead we worked hard to build something that each time established the structure of an idea – but left the artist/ photographer/ film-maker to spread their wings and go a little crazy within. It's not easy. It takes a brave client. Or a low-risk budget. But it can be done. It's a vision thing: you have to find the words (we try to avoid pictures) to conjure up a sense of what you're aiming for and get the client to *believe* in it. A leap in the dark becomes the slightly less terrifying leap of faith.

Oh Martha, Victoria Foster, 2012

So we work with a lot of charities and NGOs – ActionAid, International Alert, Bollocks to Poverty and Global Campaign for Education - and when appropriate we bring art into the communication mix. In a way, we've been so Tumblr-fied and Instagram-ed that photography has lost a lot of its narrative potency in this sector: the democratic triumph of citizen-journalism has deadened the art of image–making to the point and click of a smartphone.

Illustration now has the opportunity to claw back some of this visual story-telling territory. To bear witness and document through pen and ink and sketchbook. To paint and print the truth without an X-Pro, lo-fi Nashville/ Valencia filter. So on one of our latest projects, we put art to work versus extinction. *Ghosts of Gone Birds* (it always helps to give your project an intriguing name) set out to raise awareness of frontline conservation projects around the globe by raising a creative army to promote it. The brief was simple enough: choose an extinct bird and bring it back to life. And it turns out there's more than enough subjects to go around. Once you get past the dominating story of the dodo, there's nearly 200 other species that have gone the way of the dodo. From the laughing owl to the red moustached fruit dove, the paradise parrot to the snail-eating coua.

Visitor to Ghosts London studies Harry Adam's *Tahiti Rail*

Wonderfully-named, intricately coloured, each one with a particular tragedy to tell; the task of the *Ghosts* artists was to report back with details of what we had lost in such a compelling fashion that we would be propelled to act to ensure that there were no further additions to the ongoing avian flight into oblivion.Each illustrator, painter, sculptor, musician and poet would help us re-introduce these gone birds into the wilds of the modern imagination. Extinction proved a great levelling field: all art was treated equally. There were no wildlife artists. Or urban artists. Just artists working collectively to resurrect the ghost flocks of lost and forgotten species. Sir Peter Blake hung alongside Cally Higginbottom, a first time exhibitor recently graduated from Liverpool School of Art & Design, the venerable Desmond Morris shared wall space with younger talent like Le Gun and Charming Baker. And every artist was offered the same deal: 50% back on any sale of art – the other 50% split between the project's running costs and supporting frontline conservation projections chosen in consultation with BirdLife International.

When the show opened, the *Ghosts* space resonated with the vibrancy of restored bird life; people enthused over spotting species they'd never seen or heard of before – only to then realise that the gallery was no more than an echo-chamber, the *Ghosts* work a collection of after-images offering visitors the only possible opportunity to encounter these long gone species. Of course it could have been a funeral march of an experience. Solemn, didactic, hectoring, but instead the contributing artists made it a celebration of bird lives well lived. We were not interested in capturing the musty, dusty remains of an avian mausoleum; we wanted the vim and vigour of life restored. An aviary of optimism, Gone Birds made cat and bullet-proof by the alchemy of art: re-cast in wood and metal, pen and ink, paint and poetry, caught in the first flush of their avian exultancy – flying, preening, hunting… Each show finished with a bang up to date tale of species in jeopardy – and the simple direct action that visitors could take to help haul them back from the edge of extinction.

As the project evolved, so did the artists' approach to the brief. Each successive exhibition in Liverpool, London, Brighton and Swansea produced wonderful new images for breathing life back into the birds we have lost. For example, Luke Thomas Smith took digital prints of classic bird engravings and layered them with thin sheets of Japanese paper allocating the number of layers in direct relation to the species period of extinction in the wild.

He then embedded individual QR codes in each artwork that allowed visitors to download that particular bird's lost song to their smartphone. The streets of Brighton came alive with the ringtones of Gone Birdsong.

Guadalupe Caracara, Brandon Lodge, 2012

The Demise of Bishop's "O" O, Oliver Harud, 2012

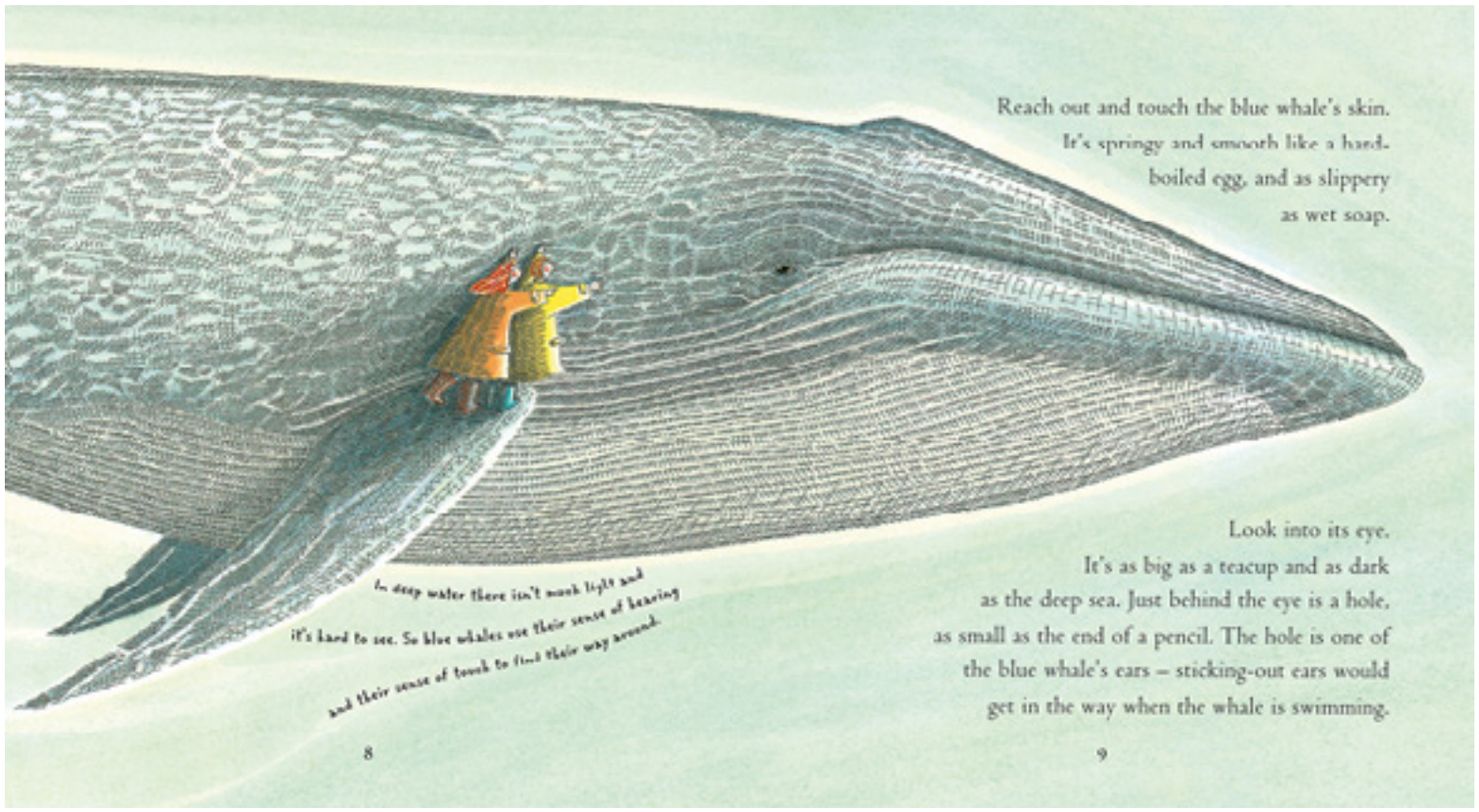
Ghost of Gone Birds artwork by GOODPILOT, 2012

Ghosts will continue to exhibit throughout the next year in unexpected gallery spaces around the country (we have a coastal lookout tower lined up for next summer), drawing work from as wide a range of artists as possible. The *Ghosts* book is published by Bloomsbury in October with 50% of our royalties going to frontline conservation projects.

Ghosts. HYPE. C30 – A Product of Free Will. Each time we tried to build a communications idea that liberated the contributing artists from the usual briefing restraints, to create a space that protected their creative talents from editorial interruption. It's what we feel compelled to do on a day-to-day basis-ideas like art exhibitions in an abandoned swimming pool, artist-in-residences at city gyms, graphic novels about people's future relationship with their feet, installations documenting the work of visually-impaired artists. Odd, even arcane ideas but always looking to achieve *meaning*, working hard to be *different* because we know that the work those ideas inspire will take that difference and run crazy with it - get you to somewhere *really* unexpected. At its heart, isn't that what advertising and marketing is all about? Taking a thought/ idea and making it memorable, exciting, engaging, motivating but above all different.

Story Space

Nicola Davies



Big Blue Whale by Nicola Davies, illustrated by Nick Maland, 1998 (Walker Books)

'Narrative' or 'Story' is a psychological bag - the device we humans have used since we sat around the first fires, to carry information and to pass it to others. Story is an incredibly flexible and robust container - it can hold information about the deepest tides and currents in our nature, the instructions for making a soup or the life history of a polar bear.

Story Space is the place between the exterior world and the interior world of emotion and reflection. In it, boundaries are dissolved, the real and the imagined are combined in unique cocktails of experience, allowing us new insights into the world and our place within it. And the power of the story space that words and pictures create together is immense - a learning environment far too important to be set aside at any stage of our lives.

A Place for Picture Books

Simon James

Nurse Clementine by Simon James, 2013 (Candlewick Press)

For me, I connect illustration to story.

As a child I was influenced by great cartoonists, like Searle, Hoffnung, Addams, Francois, Schultz, Sempe and so on. They all told a rich story of humanity in their drawings. All I had to do was search it out in those beautiful lines.

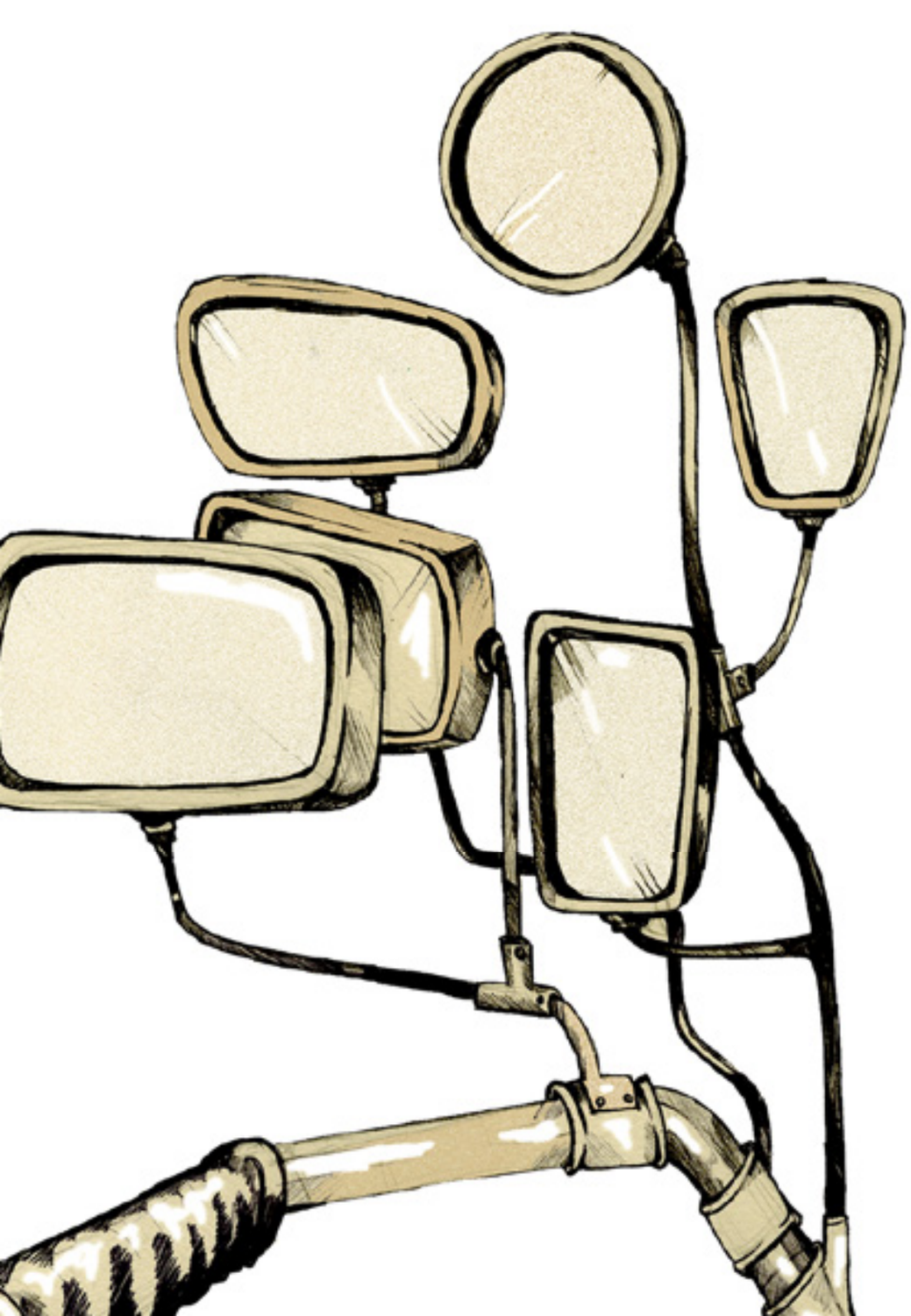
I am stimulated by ideas, bringing them to life through words as well as pictures. I enjoy how these two mediums can inter-weave, and achieve quite different meanings on the same page. It's the reader who can bring words and pictures together to tell a story. That for me is the intimacy of picturebooks, the reader brings the meaning.

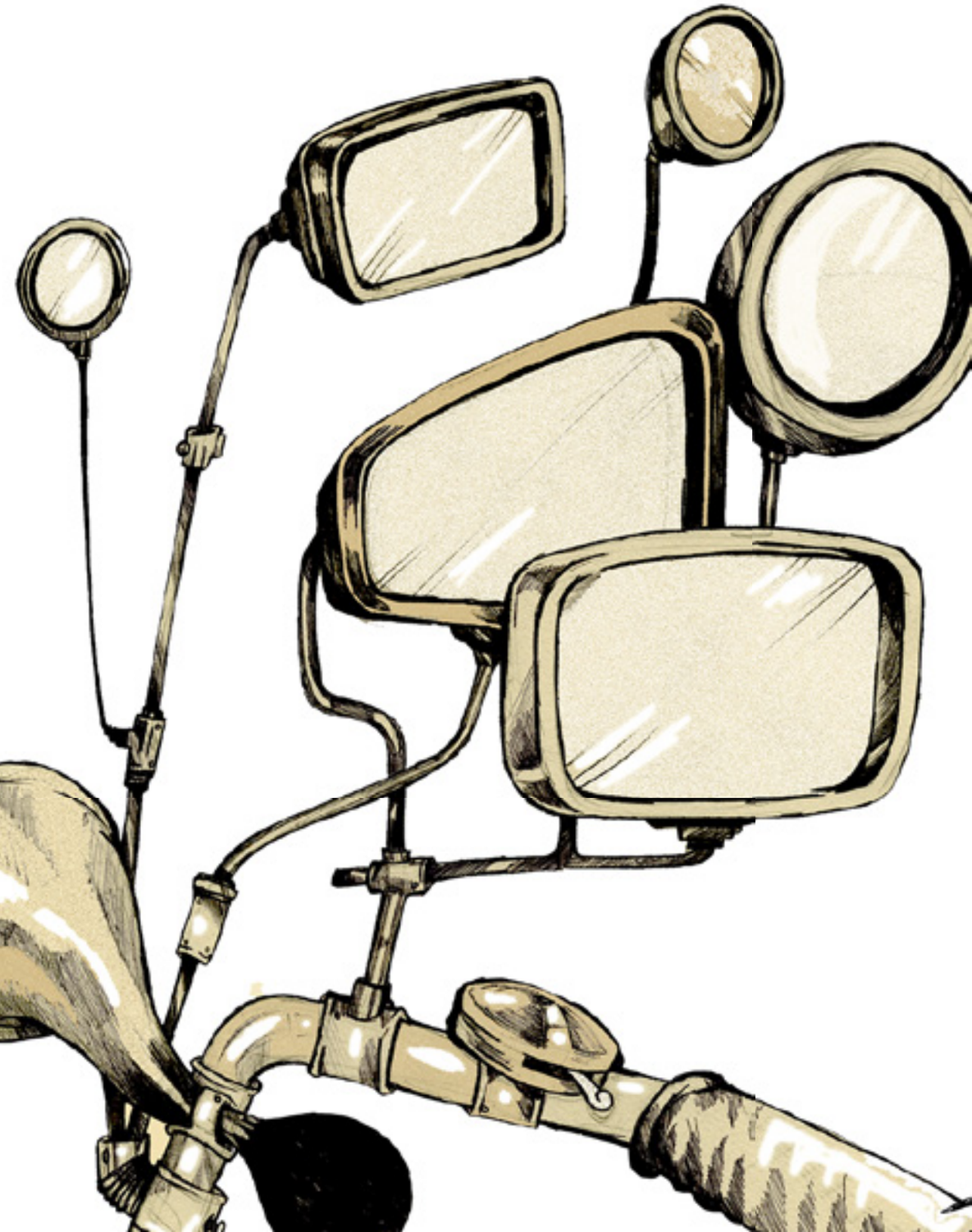
A good picturebook for me, is littered with gaps. The gaps are between the words and pictures, it's these gaps that the active reader has to fill and connect. It can even be done in a way that perhaps the artist didn't intend, that's the freedom found in picturebooks.

During the symposium we discussed how modern technology is influencing how we all read and see illustration, I find I am not particularly stimulated by moving images, or animated illustration for picturebooks. An electronic picturebook seems to regress the reader back to a passive viewer, an onlooker, who can press a bear that then jumps up in the air with a funny noise, over and over again. However, it contributes nothing to drive the actual telling of the story. Recently, I saw a Beatrix Potter electronic book have 'real' blackberries pouring down the page. Should the subtly of the illustrators craft be reduced to this? I adore the 'still' image where the reader needs to actively find the narrative by looking, and sometimes looking again. 'Poring' over a picture is a desirable feature of illustration for me.

Reduced to it's most basic element, illustration is about drawing for me, a kind of conversation with myself, full of adventure, frustration, surprise and occasional outbursts of laughter. It's also full of lines, gaps, dots, boundaries, shades and spaces. I don't wish to over analyse it, it's simply our first language.

Selected Abstracts





Sharon Beeden

Utilising Spatial Positions to Promote Idea Generation and the Enhancement of Creative Thinking Processes within Illustration Contexts

This paper seeks to demonstrate the use of physical spatial areas as a strategy for creative thinking, and the subsequent, resultant creative process.

Adapted from a Neuro-Linguistic Programming, (NLP), strategy devised by Robert Dilts, relating to the working methodology of animator, Walt Disney, this approach when used within the early stages of a live commission or college project brief, focuses on the interrelatedness between three different perceptual states inherent within the creative cognitive process – the Dreamer (the visionary, highly creative state), the Realist (the planning and organisational state), and finally, the Critic state, (the constructive fault-finder and problem-solver).

In recognising that every experience has a structure, by means of decoding the way in which we think and consider the possibilities within a specified context of a brief or goal, in association with the use of designated spaces within the studio, college or work-based environment, this exercise has broad-ranging applications.

The intention of this paper is provide a greater insight to this creativity strategy, and to share action-based practice research findings within a range of contexts and subject specialisms.

Richard Levesley & Marc Bosward

Illustrated Worlds

The practice of the contemporary illustrator is no longer exclusively defined by the traditional orthodoxies of the commissioner and illustrator relationship. Contemporary Illustration has expanded the parameters of the discipline to include toys, games, animation, collectable objects, fashion and other forms of media and merchandising. This multi-disciplinary and authorial practice is often predicated on the creation of an identifiable, virtual 'world' that is manifest across an illustrator's output, independent of variations in audience, purpose and subject matter. This paper will explore the illustrator's use of visual language in constructing virtual, illustrated worlds.

Drawing from a range of contemporary examples, the paper will explore the capacity of illustration to generate a virtual world that engages and absorbs its audience. The paper will argue that a sense of place established through non-representational approaches can address the actual, socio-historical world through the interpretation of the constructed world's diegesis. The paper will also consider how a world is realised across personal and commercial outputs and the interrelationship and interface of authorial and commercial imperatives.

Paul Edwards & Carole Burns

The Space Between: The Relationship Between Image and Narrative in "Imagistic"

For "Imagistic," eight artists were asked to provide images to eight writers. Some of the images provided a clear narrative hook, a sense of place, a moment in time or an action interrupted. Others were more obscure: through a glass darkly. Each writer was asked to choose an image to respond with a piece of flash fiction, no more than a thousand words - a translation from the language of image into the language of word.

These are some of the aspects of the relationship between image and narrative we wish to explore for "Spatialising Illustration," looking at the space or hinterland between text and image. By asking writers to respond to pictures 'Imagistic' looks at how writing explains the visible world, and images - even when unintended - contain stories. It also raises questions about what an artist intends, and whether that idea emerges from an image as story.

Talking to writers, we will look at how they may draw a narrative hook from a detail or idea in a painting, through the practice of "ekphrasis," in order both to understand an image as well as to create a new story – to "make it new." With artists, we will discuss whether there is narrative behind their images, and explore the space between that narrative and the writer's story.

As the two presenters and co-curators of "Imagistic " – Paul Edwards as artist and Carole Burns as writer - we will pursue these questions in relation to our fields of writing, and painting and drawing, and also in relation to our own practice. We will interview the participants of "Imagistic," draw upon previous ideas about image and word by looking at work by artists/writers such as John Berger and George Szirtes, and use our own practice to illuminate these issues.

Nick Dodds

Spatial Poetics: Control of Time and Space in Graphic Narratives

Deceptively simple on the surface, under close analysis the comic strip page is something of a paradox, a complex and multi-layered structure. For the artist, the formative layout of a graphic narrative is both a conceptual and spatial activity, involving a high degree of reasoning in the selection and placement of any textual and visual elements. In reception, the effectiveness of any narrative depends on the readiness of the reader to recognize, synthesize and decode the linguistic and visual information at hand, in short; to navigate spatial relationships and make meaningful connections between one panel and the next in the strip sequence. For this reason, graphic narratives offer up tremendous potential for textual analysis: for studying at close quarters issues pertaining to spatial design, visual literacy and the breach between expression and readership. This paper will address the formal and spatial apparatus of the comic book, with reference to selected examples of theorists and practitioners, focusing on i) page composition and spatial orientation, ii) the dynamic between text and image, iii) the utilization of panels as temporal markers and iv) connoting a sense of socio-geographical setting.

Rachel Gannon

Being There: Conversational Drawing in a Non--Place

This submission proposes the presentation of a practice led project. At the centre of this project is a month long drawing residency (in 2012) at London Luton Airport. These drawings, made in situ at the airport over the busy summer period, document and record the travellers (and airport staff) that pass through this self-contained non-place every day. Marc Augé states, in his analysis of supermodernity, that Airports are concerned with standardisation and are often remembered in very generic terms. This provides an interesting dichotomy as the drawings address a highly personal narrative; seen, imagined and remembered. The stories of these journeys, both dreamt and recorded, emerge from the drawings, creating a palimpsest of both rumour and fact. It is the experience of these transient moments that is documented and displayed in the subsequent exhibition.

The word drawing can be defined as both gesture (verb) and object (noun). This research is concerned with the former; the act of drawing or drawing as process. It does not look at drawing as a distinct discipline or an outcome but as an experience. It takes the phenomenological position of 'Intuition in Action' - Deleuze and Guattari; drawing as an experience that is felt. It is, in action, during the experience of drawing that we think; addressing drawing as thinking not as thought. This is concerned with a space where thinking is presenced not presented - drawing as a tool to extract memories and heighten experience. John Berger states that photography stops time whilst drawing encompasses it. There is a significant urge to stop time, to pause and return to the scene over and over again. However, this urge can be resisted (as is attempted here) and the process of drawing is seen as the intended outcome. This project addresses drawing to encompass; a practice that is both conversational and immersive.

Geoff Grandfield

Illustration and Narrative as a Spatial Experience – the Jewel House at the Tower of London

Specifically I will address the perception and understanding of the visual within a constructed environment and seek to explore examples and possibilities with direct research via my commission for the Jewel House at the Tower of London and my illustration practice. It will include a summary of the working process of originating 16 panels of narrative illustration in association with an architectural design practice and the Historic Royal Palaces. This will explore and detail the issues of originality, expression and content. I will examine the use and effectiveness of coherent visual language (specifically original to a project, not applied from existing sources) and the importance of scale, lighting, the control of pov and expectation.

In particular I will compare the cinematic experience as a static seated event with the dynamism of audience motion. The paper will also explore the international 'voice' of image in regard to the Jewel House commission; with an annual visitor figure of over two million from all over the world a primary objective was to communicate British Royal history with as little written titling as possible.

Bella Kerr

Word Room

> The low ceiling sloped down on three sides, the slant being interrupted on the east by a single square window, swinging outward on hinges and held ajar by a hook in the sill. This was the sole opening for light and air. Walls and ceiling alike were covered with a yellow paper which had once been very ugly, but had faded into inoffensive neutrality. The matting on the floor was worn and scratchy. Against the wall stood an old walnut table, with one leaf up, holding piles of orderly papers. Before it was a cane-backed office chair that turned on a screw.
> (Cather 1925: 16)

Perched at the boundaries of domesticity, the spare utility of this study is the location for the essential exchanges of Willa Cather's novel, The Professor's House (1925). The text in one way provides a simple drawing of the room, but, like a pocket into which the whole can be folded, the novel's narrative is tucked within the meanings and patterns of the word's sounds and shapes.

'The low ceiling sloped down' drops as we sound it in the internal voice that reads with us, confining and curtailing the attic room. Alliteration hisses awkwardness into 'sloped down on three sides, the slant', as does 'interrupted on the east', throwing up hard ts in words that unsettle. Single, swinging and ajar continue the sense of lop-sidedness, a state of imbalance and indecision, while square window supplies completeness, drawing single to its side, with hinges and hook to anchor the reader in the solid and material world. Sill is sensible enough, as are walls, floor, chair and table (building the room as we read), but its sibilance connects it to the slippery sounds above and offers a threshold, the place of change from interior to exterior. Outward and light and air see and breathe, wide and far, with good reason in the context of the narrative - if lost, all is lost. The piles of orderly papers tell us where we are, the Professor's study, orderly and office restoring our belief in 'o', as an indicator of wholeness, echoing outward and opening in a quiet reverberation across the paragraph. Three words for singularity, 'single - sole - one', signal the Professor's solitary state and anticipate his possible desire to leave life and family.

The words are their own illustration, the 'slide show' a gentle re-choreographing of the word dance on the page, as patterns and sequences appear and sink back into the text.

Mitch Miller

Illustrating Space as Collaborative, Socially Engaged Practice: The First Report from the DRAW DUKE STREET Residency

This paper reflects on DRAW DUKE STREET, a residency at Glasgow's Market Gallery between early October and December 2012. This formed a case study in AHRC-funded PhD research into 'the dialectogram' (a word made from adding dialect/dialectic to diagram). Dialectograms are large documentary pen and ink drawings of places/spaces in the city of Glasgow, made on A0 board. They borrow from but do not conform to, the conventions of illustrative journalism, cartography, Psychogeography, architectural drawing, ethnography, oral history and sequential art to understand, and interpret, urban spaces. The aim of the residency was to draw as much as possible of a stretch of Duke Street in Dennistoun (where the gallery is located), documenting how this shared space is used, perceived and imagined by residents and local businesses. The drawing was created through the efforts of a team of local volunteer researchers who will assist me in gathering information and interviews, and through operating my workspace (in the gallery itself) as an open 'surgery' to gather further insights and ongoing input into the drawing as it develops. The final results were presented in a strip mimicking the shape of Duke Street, pieced together from A0 panels added as they are completed.

This process was carefully recorded and scrutinised through an action research model. Of particular interest were issues of social engagement in illustration, collaborative working and the use of insider/outsider perspectives in creative research. This paper is an early opportunity to report on emerging findings, share insights on the experience and show some examples of the work produced. It should be of interest to those engaged in socially-engaged practice, spatial illustration, illustrative journalism/documentary illustration and practice-led research.

Roderick Mills

Illustration for the Internet Space

As newspapers and magazines slowly migrate to digital platforms what are the consequences for Illustration? Rather than seeing only the negative, what are the opportunities offered for images existing within a timeline as they do in the online interface? I would like to suggest that this timeline offers the chance for illustrators to explore sequence and narrative, the corner stones of much Illustration practice, and to offer the reader further insight into the visual language of the Illustrator.

What are the precedents currently being used that suggest the direction Illustration might take in the future? It is vital that illustrators occupy this area without fear of technology to show what can be achieved and the possibilities for new areas of commercial enterprise. The digital has to be embraced as surveyed in the 2001 book *Pen & Mouse: Commercial Art and Digital Illustration* by Angus Hyland and Roanne Bell. Not in the creation of artwork, but in the platforms that we readily receive images these days – invariably on our desktops.

The paper will explore the potential for this new area of Illustration that sits somewhere in between the still image and animation. From the small movements of Julian Opie's computer generated pictures, to the interactive observations of the London 2012 Olympics by Illustrator Christoph Niemann.

Chloe Regan

The Set

I am creating an illustrated book that explores space in significant ways. The protagonist of the narrative is based on a friend. She has lived in the same flat for forty years. She moved in with her ex-husband and now lives with her partner of many years. I have never been to the flat but have heard much about it. It is sparse. In fact it is almost empty. She is glamorous, citing film as an inspiration for a way of dressing and urban existence. This is misleading. Her flat and the city act as a film set on which she leads her life. She demonstrates a repetitive nature of rituals informed by the flat and the city, always remaining anonymous.

The protagonist inhabits specific spaces, her flat, and the city. These spaces are both reflective and evocative of her psychological state and inform her patterns of existence. Psychogeography is a relevant context for my narrative; particularly with reference to Walter Benjamin's 'Arcade Project' and Charles Baudelaire's 'flâneur' which both examine human responses to the city and urban alienation.

As an illustrator I reflect and wonder on behavior and the psychological effects of space through drawing. I use people I have met and whose lives intrigue me. Taking a woman I know I observe and draw…Can you live out a fantasy? Can one rely on film to help to establish an identity, to cope with previous sadness and disappointment?

Space continues to be explored through my process of drawing. The use of space on the drawing page and manipulation of composition are significant. John O'Reilly's 'A Phenomenology of the Sketch' proves a significant context.

> 'The sketch as…the unresolved relationship of word and image...as observation, as voyeur.' (O'Reilly, 2011)[1]

I have also experimented with collage and creating three-dimensional models of significant spaces in the book from which I make drawings and take photographs from multi-perspectives to evoke and communicate.

Through drawing as a tool for visual thinking, I convey the subtlety of the effects of space.

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[1] John O'Reilly [2011]: *The Wondering Line*. London: Self-Published. INK Illustration.

Professor Allan Walker

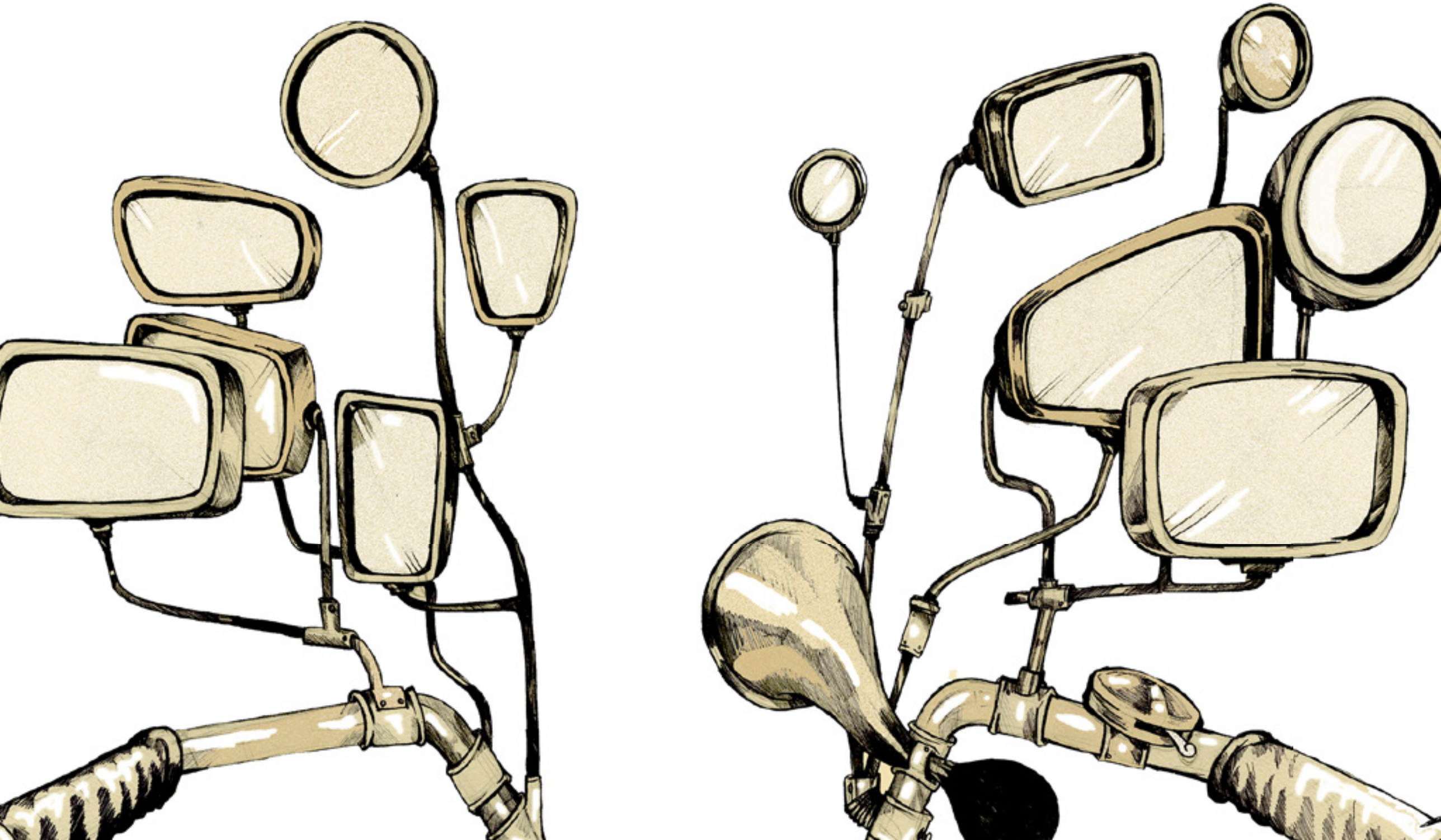
Alternative Traditions: Flat as a Way of Visualising Space

Two narrative traditions are analysed in this critical examination of 19th Century images from Japan and the Plains Indians of North America. Although at first glance comparison between such different cultures seems unlikely, both have long histories of making visual chronicles and areas of common ground emerge in their treatment of subject matter and pictorial space.

Plains Indian drawings were traditionally produced as winter accounts of events in the life of the tribe in relation to warfare, hunting, religion and courtship. Following increased contact with soldiers and settlers during the mid-19th Century, the Plains Indians began to use bound ledgers drawing on the military or trading inventories using pencil, ink and watercolour. In Japanese woodblock prints, the influence of European perspective had been absorbed in the 18th Century and the 'opening up' of the country during the Meiji Period ushered in a period of frenetic print production using the foreigners as subject matter. Despite this, the contemporary artist Murakami considers that the defining quality of Japanese art and culture is the feeling of flatness.

This study compares the treatment of space in two examples from these cultural traditions and provides insights into the construction of graphic flatness in narrative art. Both artists have created highly versatile surfaces on which to convey representational and symbolic meaning and there are many similarities relating to the composition of space and depiction of movement. Contrasts also emerge principally in the application of orthographic and other systems for representing space in two dimensions. Although the influences of American Indian and Japanese art on Western art have been well documented, the physical and psychological dramas revealed in these examples identify relevant vocabularies for contemporary picture-making in the graphic arts and it is hoped, the study will enable practitioners to see and 'read' these images afresh.

Peer Reviewed Papers



Mitch Miller

Mitch Miller is an Illustrator and PhD Student at the School of Design, Glasgow School of Art.

In 2001 he co-founded *The Drouth magazine* and has published books, essays and articles on a range of cultural and political subjects. Past projects include the web- documentary *Boswell in Space* (www.boswellinspace.org), and a period as resident artist at the Red Road Flats Cultural Project. He is currently working with clients such as Glasgow Life, Glasgow Museums and Collective Gallery (Edinburgh) on a number of socially engaged, documentary illustration projects as part of his insane scheme to draw all of Glasgow in dialectogram form.

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Illustrating space as collaborative, socially engaged practice: The first report from the DRAW DUKE STREET residency

The DRAW DUKE STREET Project

A dialectogram is an invented, slightly tongue-in-cheek word combining ‘diagram’ with ‘dialect’ or ‘dialectic’ to describe large, detailed drawings of places in Glasgow. Each of these images sit somewhere between a map, an architectural plan, comic strip and diagram, using techniques from these disciplines to contain and arrange information on their subject within the image. The drawings use ethnographic methods to collate personal narratives, local knowledge, feelings and imaginings about place, to create a unique social and aesthetic document. The dialectogram bears a slight resemblance to the intricate and beautiful satirical maps of Adam Dant, but the method and style of the former developed with no knowledge of this artist’s work and was initially a gradual, piecemeal response to the difficulties of creating complex documentary drawings of life in the east and north of Glasgow. While Dant successfully subverts and satirises the informational drawing in his work, dialectograms offer a much ‘straighter’ documentary treatment of their subject and also, require sustained engagement with communities to gather the raw materials and shape the final piece. Furthermore, as I will later demonstrate, dialectograms owe much more to the literary and visual culture of Glasgow.

The dialectogram has been used to create documentary illustrations of the Red Road Flats as part of the Red Road Cultural project (now acquired by the People’s Palace Museum), and to record the living arrangements of the travelling showpeople of Glasgow’s East end (Fig. 1, 2). The DRAW DUKE STREET residency (*Market Gallery*, 30th of October to the 16th of December) was the first of a series of case study dialectograms for my PhD. These case studies centre on locations that are; in deprived and marginal areas; ‘hidden’ from public view or; are in a state of transition.

DRAW DUKE STREET set out to work with locals and a team of volunteer researchers to create a 10 metre long dialectogram of the stretch of a high street in the Dennistoun area of Glasgow between two local rail stations. Duke Street (probably named for the Duke of Montrose, who held lands along its route) is one of three major thoroughfares that connect Glasgow city centre to the east. The area covered by the drawing, with its stark contrasts between the relatively affluent north side and much poorer south sides of the street (Fig. 3) displays many of the features that makes Glasgow’s east end one of the most deprived in the UK (McCartney, 2011).

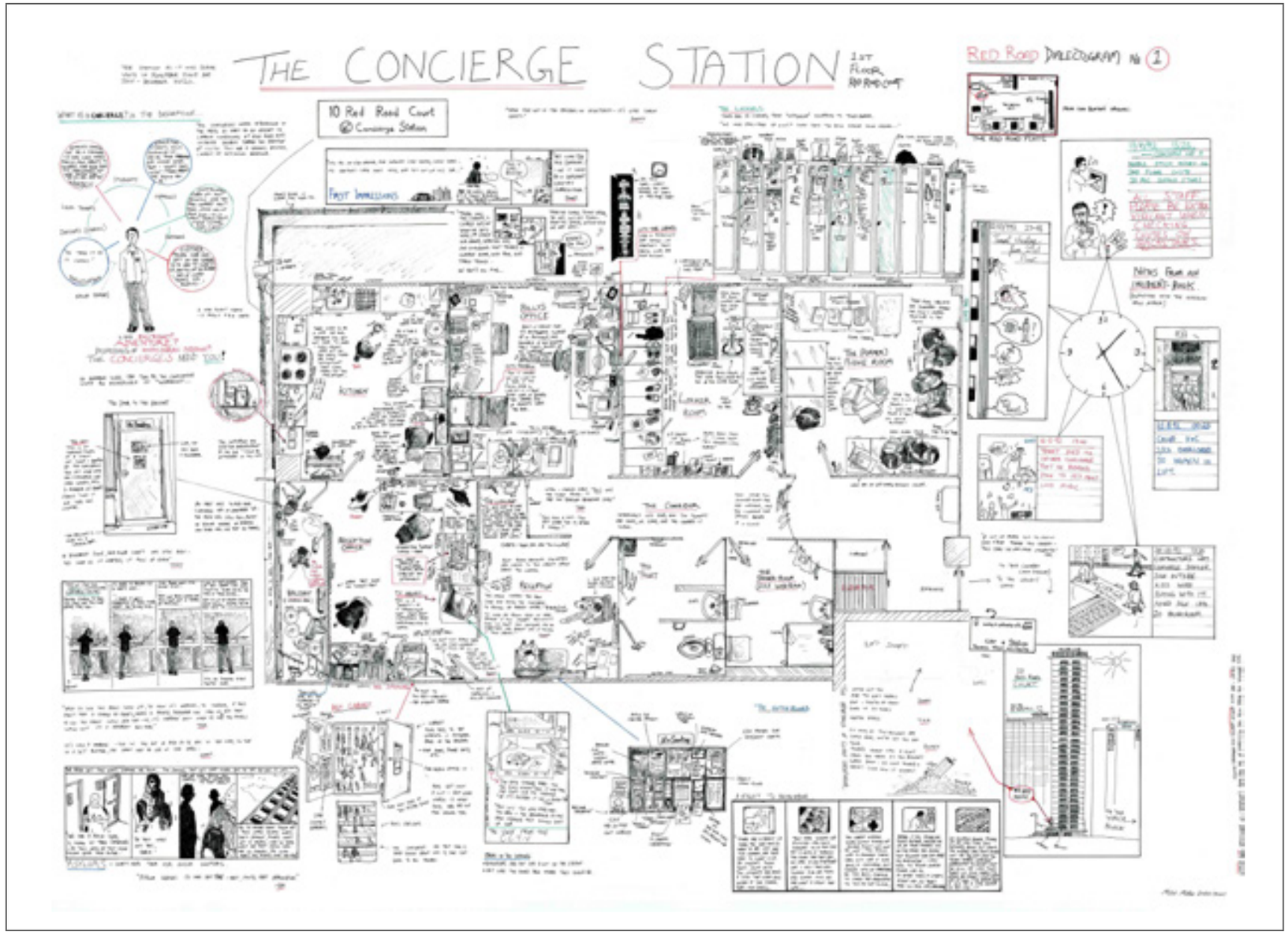

Fig 1. Red Road Dialectogram No.1: *The Concierge Station,* Mitch Miller, 2010 (http://tinyurl.com/pj76jxo)

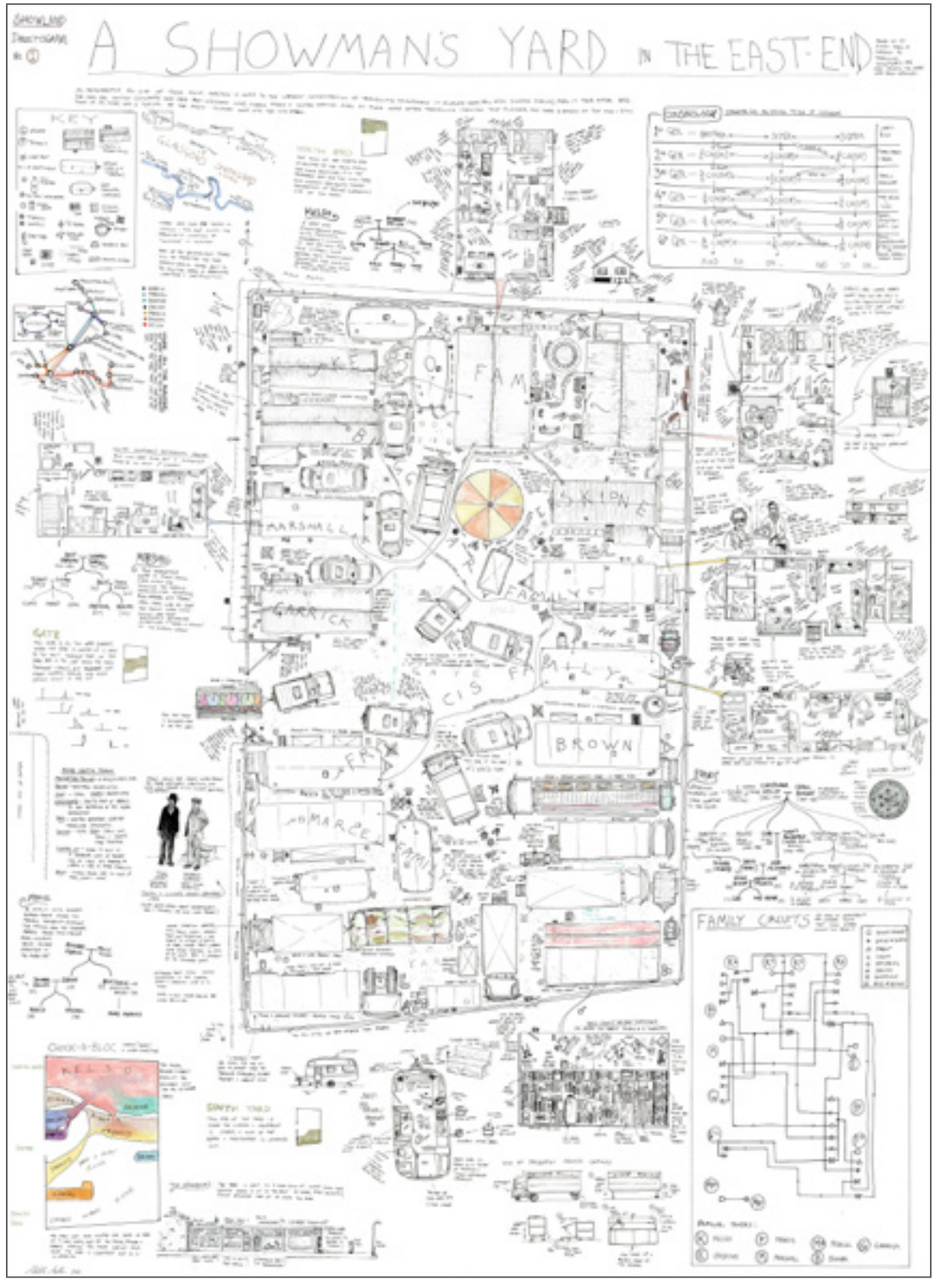

Fig 2: *Showman's Yard in the East End, Pencil and ink on mountboard*, Mitch Miller, 2012 (http://tinyurl.com/ccavzle)

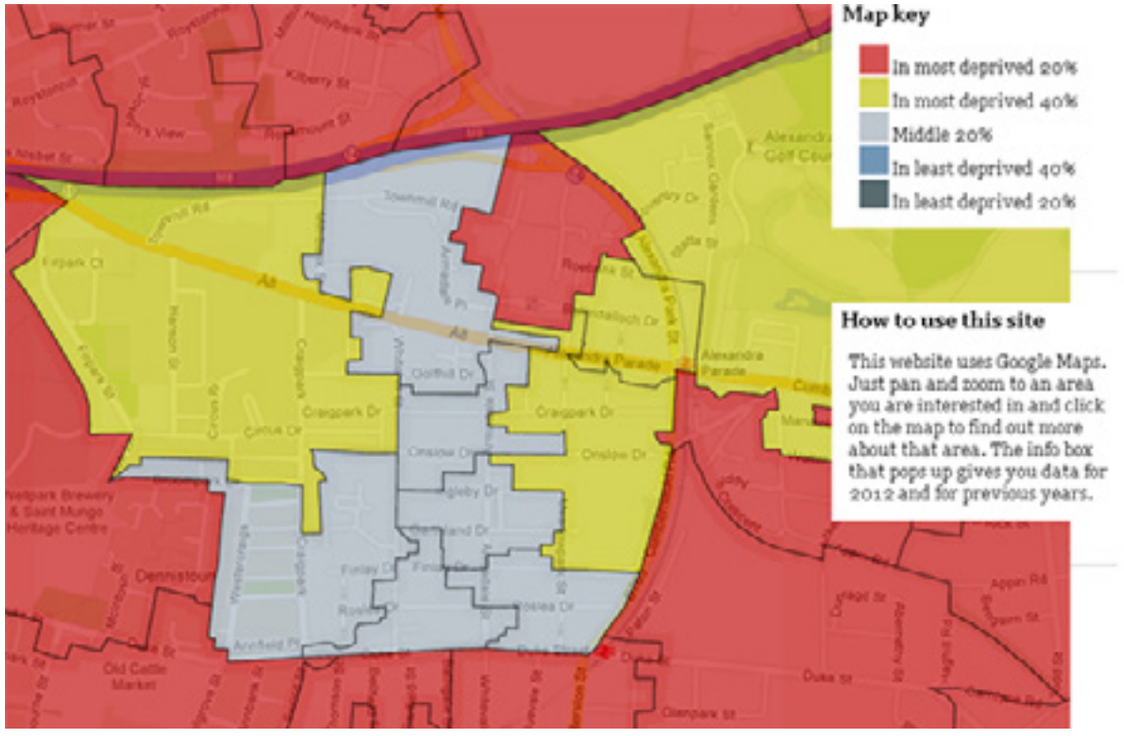

Fig 3: Social Deprivation levels in Duke Street, from *Map of Social Deprivation in Scotland,* 2012

The residency was designed to incur changes in the practice and the practitioner. In describing these changes, it seems appropriate to use the first person in this article. I was investigating - and disrupting – how *I* was used to working, and trying to challenge *myself* to consider new practices and ways of thinking about them. Among the latter, I wanted to investigate my belief that dialectograms are a 'socially engaged' creative practice, a claim I will admit to have undergone little serious self-reflection before I started the PhD project. This case study was a chance to begin to address the question of how dialectograms fitted a "socially engaged" model. In his *Living as Form: Socially Engaged Art from 1991-2011*, Nato Thomson outlines the development of "socially engaged" art:

> In recent years there has been a rapidly growing movement of artists choosing to engage with timely issues by expanding their practice beyond the safe confines of the studio and right into the complexity of the unpredictable public sphere. The work has many names: "relational aesthetics," "social justice art," "social practice," and "community art," among others. These artists engage in a process that includes careful listening, thoughtful conversations, and community organizing. (Thomson, 2012: 7-8)

In this case study I wanted to look more closely at how dialectograms may already fit a socially engaged model and explore whether this could – and should – be expanded through greater collaboration. By choosing to work in an open studio in a deprived area of Glasgow, and by making a process of listening and talking to local people as core to the manufacture of these drawings, I already felt I ticked a number of these boxes.

Change would also come through working under pressure. Somewhat paradoxically, my plans were also much more ambitious than previous projects; the drawing would in fact, be eighteen times larger than its usual A0 dimensions, yet engage with a much more diverse and complex space than in previous works. The Market Gallery offered me a place on its programme of studio projects that run on a six-weekly basis throughout the year. This was nowhere near the ten-week residency I had hoped for (previous dialectograms typically took several weeks just to research). Given the proximity to Christmas, I was able to negotiate a seventh week to exhibit the drawing in the gallery, and decided to work within the six-week limit and see what could be achieved. This relatively short time period in which to research, plan and execute the drawing meant that regardless of whether it was ready, the dialectogram would be hung on the 7th of December. Applying these pressures gave me the opportunity to test my practice and introduce new approaches that could potentially become part of the 'rules' of making dialectograms. I framed this process around the 'emancipatory action research' cycle defined by Ortrun Zuber-Skerrit (1992) and its goal of effecting radical change within a system or organisation – in this case, the system of practices that had built up around myself. For the purposes of this paper, I would like to explore some of the background to the work, explain why the case study was set up in this way, then through a narrative account of the project, give some attention to the role that 'spatialising illustration' played in suggesting changes to my practice.

Ethnography and the Everyday: The theory and practice of the dialectogram

Dialectograms are creative works, but they do relate closely to two distinctive academic disciplines; ethnography, and the philosophy of everyday life. Ethnographic fieldwork is used within anthropology to study the structures, practices and contexts at work within human cultures observation, consisting of observation, informal interviewing and participation in the community being studied – very similar to the "listening" and "thoughtful conversations" involved in

socially engaged practices (Burawoy, 1991: Blomberg et al, 1993). In creative fields product designers have used ethnography to investigate the 'needs and wants' of their users, understand how the products are used and shape them accordingly (Wasson 2000). Historically, Illustration has played an important role in anthropological recording and note taking, mainly to create components for the ethnographer's final synthesis of their studies into an 'ethnography' (El Guindi, 2004).

This somewhat subservient relationship with the ethnographic tradition has changed, as illustrators have begun to use these techniques to create standalone creative works. The 'artist as ethnographer' is a trend been noted and problematized by Hal Foster within the fine art tradition, while new research networks such as *Artful Encounters* brings artists and arts academics together with anthropologists and other social scientists to explore these problems (Foster, 1996, Artful Encounters, 2013). Limitations of time and space make it impossible to work through all of these problems in this paper; suffice to say that as well as offering new and exciting opportunities to the illustrator, ethnographic technique presents her/him with an additional set of concerns, particularly with regard to ethical practice Some excellent examples of how illustrators have seized these opportunities can be found on the *Reportager* network run by the illustrative journalist Gary Embury. *Reportager* brings together illustrators who produce works of illustrated journalism and ethnography in a range of styles and approaches. Embury notes a shared sensibility between dialectograms and *Reportager* member Olivier Kugler's travelogues (Embury, 2013: 67). While it fits more definitely within the 'gonzo' journalistic tradition, Joe Sacco's method involves spending long periods of time with communities, often participating in certain activities and taking a very reflexive approach to how he gathers his material, which means his comics journalism is an useful touchstone for ethnographic practices within illustration (Hedges and Sacco, 2012). Ethnography is used very successfully within the socially engaged practice of Julien 'Seth' Malland. Malland's highly participatory street art projects operate as a filter for the skills and abilities of the communities he engages with, and in giving away the autonomy and authority of the creator to them, resembles Nicolas Bourriaud's notion of presenting new 'models of action' to the practitioner who wants to work in the community (Bourriaud, 1998:13). Malland's recent work enabled villagers in Southeast Asia to apply their own crafts and skills to create murals and demonstrate the value of their own traditions and lifeways (Manco, 2012). This example inspired me to encourage more participation and interaction in DRAW DUKE STREET.

It should also be noted that dialectograms' focus on social engagement as both practice and theme has many forerunners within the visual culture of Glasgow itself. The most relevant of these to the visual approach I take would be writer and illustrator Alasdair Gray's time as Glasgow's 'city-recorder' with the People's Palace social history museum (Gray, 2010: 173-198), in which he produced new works for the purposes of expanding and enhancing the collections of the museum, and generated these by working closely with local communities and networks. In addition to portraits of notable Glaswegians and painted landscapes of east-end streets due to be redeveloped or demolished, his illustrations incorporated documentary detail through writing notes or included found objects and personal effects onto the images, as shown in this image of the *Third Eye Centre*. (Fig. 4)

If ethnography has provided me with the necessary tools to work within this tradition, then it is in the sizeable literature on the philosophy of everyday life that the ingredient that turns technique into actual methodology can be found. A particular inspiration is Michel de Certeau's *The Practice of Everyday Life*, a text much read by socially engaged practitioners and practitioners of "psychogeography" (Coverley, 2010). In it, he describes how those without established power structures – usually characterised as the 'consumer' but

Fig 4: *Ken McGrath in his Office at The Third Eye Centre with Secretary Linda Haase and View Through the window behind of Scott Street*, Alasdair Gray, 1977

in his system as 'the user', produce culture of their own from the products made by the authorities, corporations and other 'producers' (everything from consumer goods to buildings, religions, roads or laws). In his system the producer is 'strategic' – they work from a secure position of authority (a town hall, an architect's office or company head office) and are reinforced by legal and commercial legislation. The consumer or user is by contrast, 'tactical'; they consume these products, but do so by thinking on their feet and 'making of' them what they will. It is a form of 'soft resistance' where outright opposition or self-expression is impossible. De Certeau gives several examples, such as the ways in which Native Americans subtly altered the Christian rituals imported by the Spanish (as part of their strategy to pacify the natives), by adapting their own folk beliefs and traditions to the new culture. His clearest demonstration of the dichotomy between strategic producers and the tactical users is the example of the synoptic view enjoyed by an observer looking down from New York's World Trade Center; the view of the streets below is expansive and 'privileged', but is unable to register the ground level realities of walking on and using those streets, especially the shortcuts, conversations and dalliances that are part of the everyday use – and meaning – of the streets. De Certeau identifies parallel 'poaching' techniques in of language (between competence and actual usage)

and sees an appreciation of these practices as a Marxist, regards these as the basis of a new radical and emancipatory politics (de Certeau, 1988).

Again, we can link this to my local context. The Glaswegian novelist James Kelman "tactically consumes" literary norms in creating his own 'workerist' literary style, but takes this further and incorporates it into *modus operandi* of his alienated, marginalised working class characters (Miller and Rodger, 2012). I first identified this link when I visualised a location from a Kelman novel (Fig. 5). This image that my own practice, could, like Kelman's, be framed as the tactical consumption of illustrative traditions such as the map, architectural plan, diagram or comic strip, to illustrate environments according to how they themselves, are tactically consumed.

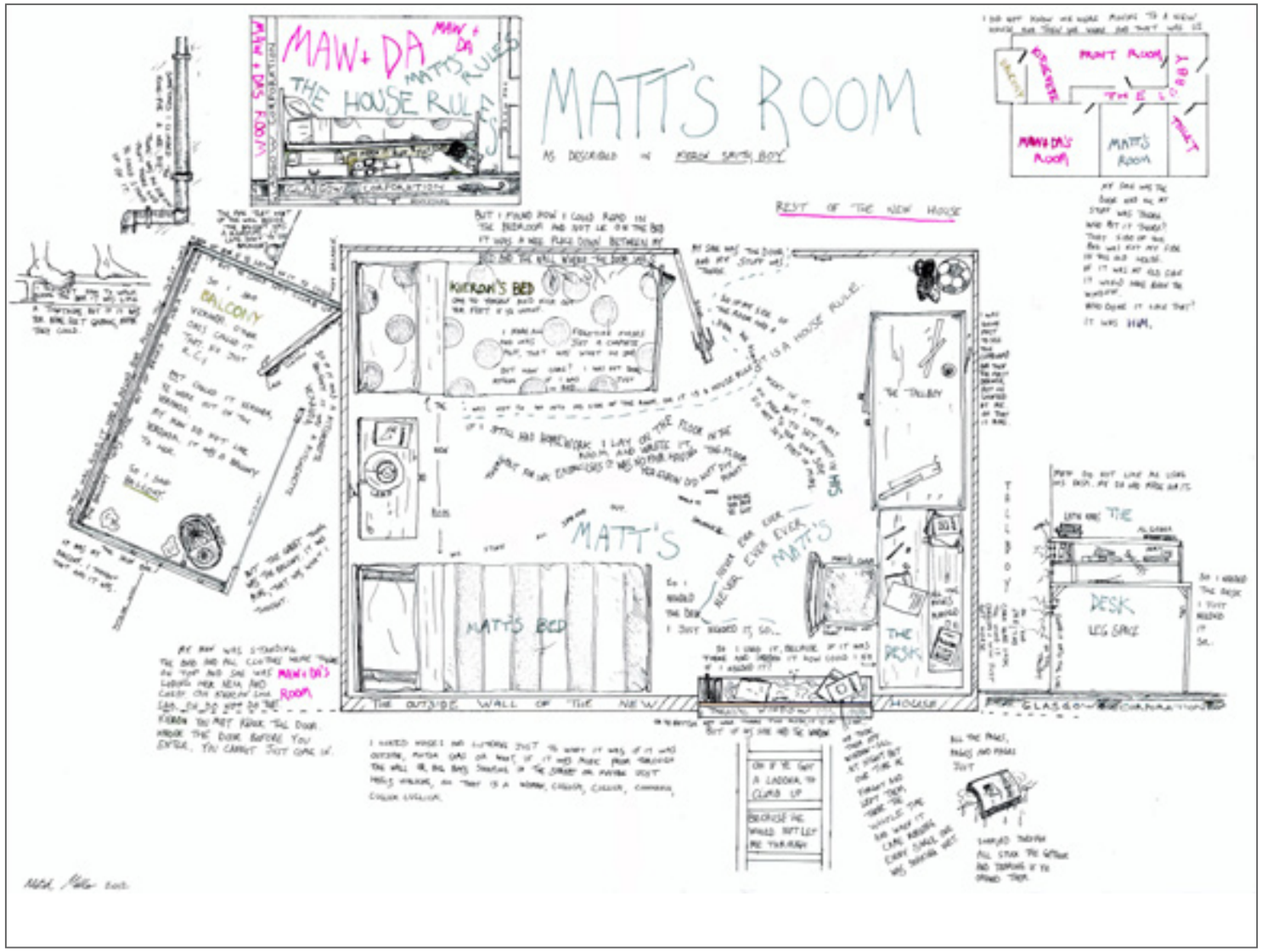

Fig 5: *Matt's Room as described in Kieron Smith, Boy,* Mitch Miller, 2012 (http://tinyurl.com/psg47d7)

DRAW DUKE STREET as action research: Setting up the case study

Following Zuber-Skerrit's advice I examined my existing methodology to see how it would hold up against the difficulties posed by the Duke Street brief and to identify changes I would like to bring about. One of these was giving participants more opportunities to influence the drawing. In previous dialectograms there was potential

for the participant to request changes and corrections, but to date, none have been willing to suggest any at such a late stage in the process. At earlier stages in the drawing process it is hard to see how the drawing will pan out, while others have been reluctant to see it before it is finished. I have had more luck when showing small, rough sketches during the early stages of the work (Fig. 6a, 7) than showing the participant a latter stage in the actual finished work itself. A past participant in the Red Road Dialectograms, who had seen a drawing in its early stages, but preferred not to see it before it was finished explained why (and how the 'surprise' enhanced his experience), while raising important ethical concerns:

> It was quite a surprise to see it like that, and everybody likes surprises, so instead of getting told about it […] the way you done it [with the big reveal] wid be better. But I suppose if you'da says speak to the people that are involved, and say look, do ye WANT tae see it? Ask them, get an opinion and say look I'm gonnae be putting this [detail] in you know, before it, you could dae it that way. I suppose you don't want tae finish it, and then a guy go "look, you cannae put that in, I told you that in confidence" or whatever […] so I suppose it would make sense that way.
>
> (interview with Concierge Station Participant, March 2013)

The problem of encouraging participation is frequently encountered by design ethnographers who find the public are unwilling to make changes, either because they feel unqualified to speak up, or the product looks too finished (Blomberg et al, 1991:140). The other problem, of what is and is not confidential, can be difficult to keep track of when the fieldwork takes place amid the cut and thrust of everyday life, but this comment establishes a general principle of checking at various stages during the process whether a participant want to input on the final form of the drawing, one which I tried to put into practice in this case study. The gallery was used as an open studio where locals could come in to see the work underway and potentially, participate by giving informal interviews.

By putting myself into a publicly accessible space, I hoped it would be easier for the community to take a look without feeling self-conscious or intrusive (as they might if coming into my studio on an arranged visit, or if I was a visitor in their home or workplace). Participation would be further integrated into the project through engaging a team of volunteer researchers to gather information from the shops and public spaces along the street., as I would have no time to do this myself.

I also ensured that informed consent was secured through release forms and applied Meskell and Pels' principles of 'embedded ethics'. This involved being strongly connected to the research site and giving preference to my responsibilities to the community I was working with, rather than more traditional models aimed at protecting professional rights (Meskell and Pels, 2005: 3). I made a commitment to stick to the rules I had set for the residency – opening from 10-6pm at set hours, during which I was at their disposal and could be 'interrupted' at any time (see below). I took it upon myself to explain, whenever asked, what I was doing and exactly how I would use their contribution (it was helpful to have the 'target' walls where the drawing would be hung, and past dialectograms nearby, to give them an idea of what I was trying to accomplish).

I also kept a blog entitled *The Duke Street Diaries* (DSD) that documented my thoughts, feelings and intentions and recorded visitor numbers to give some record of the levels of activity and engagement with the community (we recorded 202 visitors between 30th October and 7th of December). Finally, I invigilated the free exhibition that ran from the 7th which offered up the chance to incorporate feedback from local residents and participants in the specification of the final piece, although visitor numbers were overall, very low.

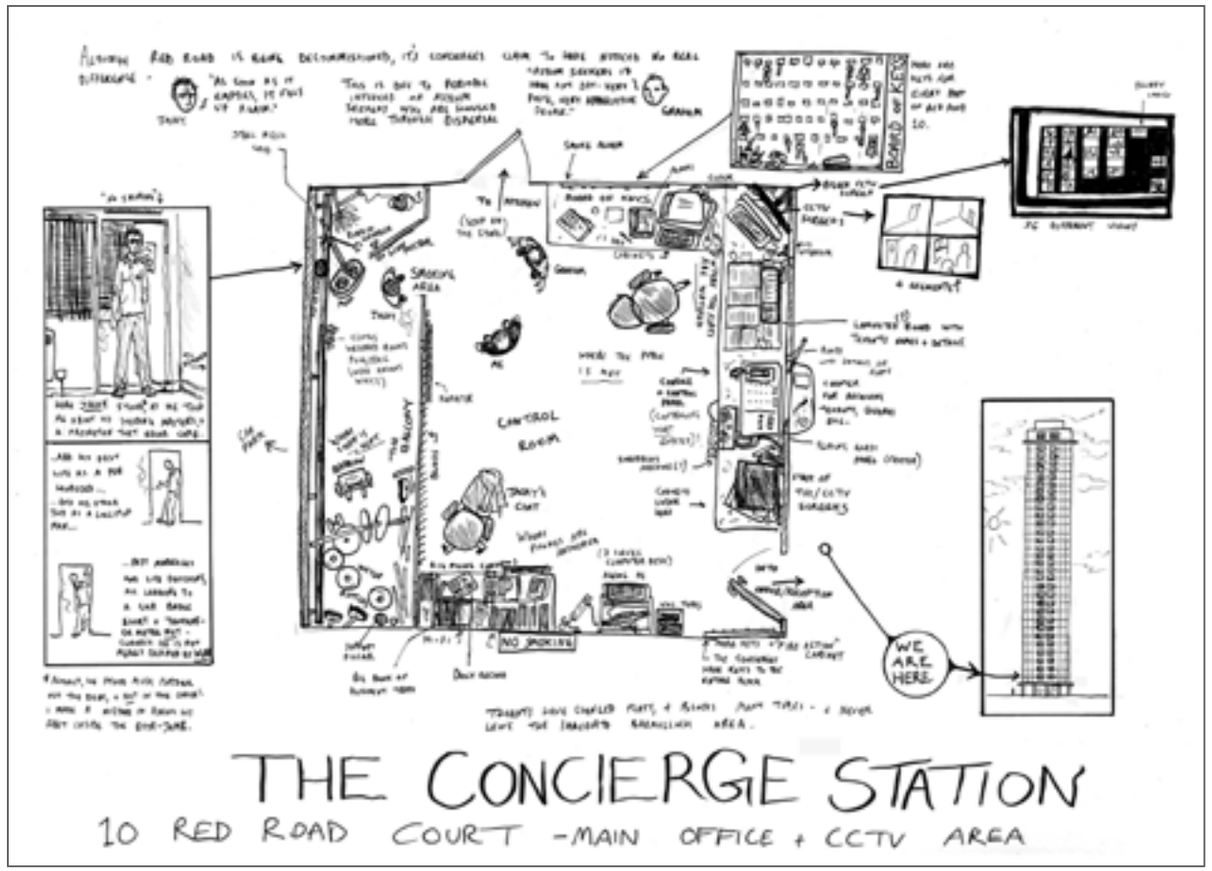

Fig. 6: *Concierge Prototype,* Mitch Miller, 2009

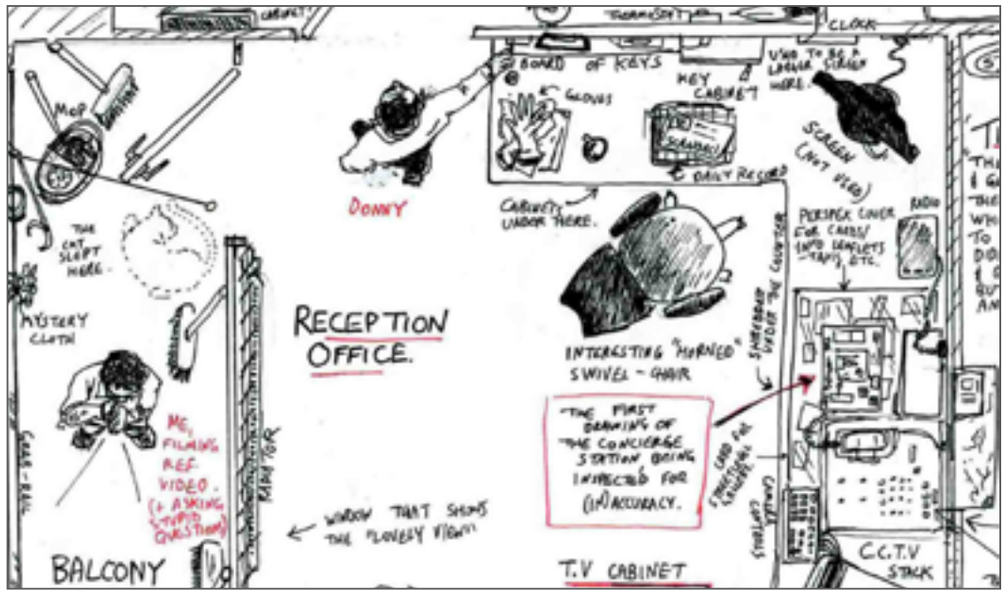

Fig. 7: Detail from *The Concierge Station* with prototype drawing being shown to participants, Mitch Miller, 2010

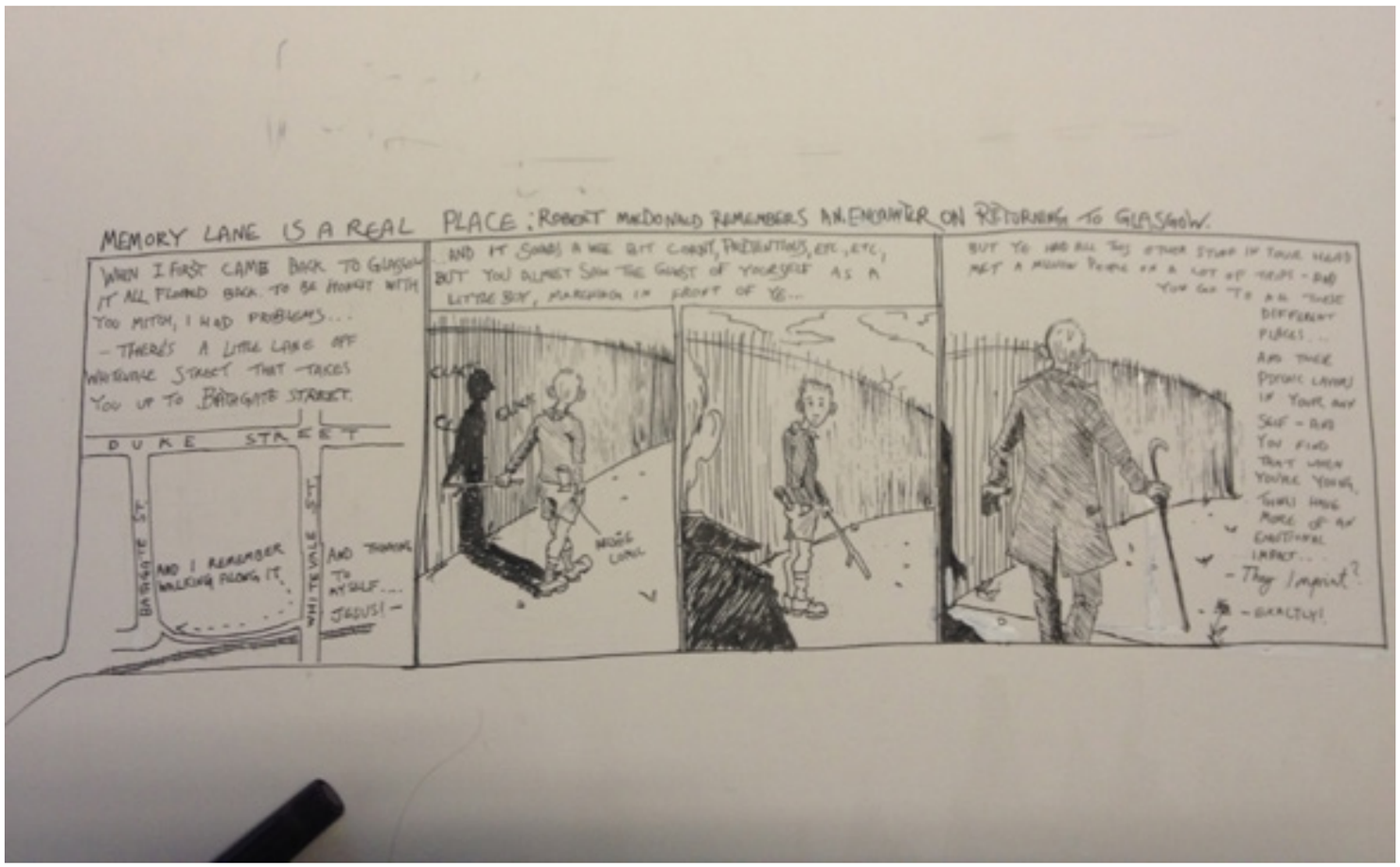

Fig. 8: Detail from *Duke Street Dialectogram,* Mitch Miller, 2012

DRAW DUKE STREET as Spatialised Illustration

Whereas previous drawings such as the *Concierge Station* illustrated a microcosmic 'story world' within Red Road it was immediately apparent that Draw Duke Street would deal with shared space that contained different modes of use, access and occupation. Consequently, this drawing had to contend with a range of different subjective relationships people had with the street, what the theorist of space and 'the practice of everyday life' de Certeau describes as 'the ciphered river […] a mobile language of computations and rationalities that belong to no-one' (de Certeau, 1988: v). To this end, the 'peeks into' the interiors of shops that can be seen on the drawing were accompanied by narratives drawn directly onto the street and pavement areas, with comic strips used to capture smaller, imaginative interactions and insights (see Fig 8)

As well as a setting for the work (Fig. 9a, 9b) the space of the gallery was also a tool. Its function could be as practical as exploiting my location to check details or using the available space on my 'target walls' to work out the appropriate scale of the drawing. Beyond that, the space helped me to build trust and offer a safe environment for working with my subjects. Being visible, both as a collector of information and, through the workspace as I went through the process of using the material I had gathered was also beneficial. Not only

Fig 9a, 9b: *Views of Market Gallery, October-November 2012*, Mitch Miller, 2012

could I, in a Goffman-esque sense make it clear what role I was playing while trying to 'get inside' the community, but it embedded an ethic of my being open to scrutiny and on display to the community I set out to study and depict, a principle of public access and partnership articulated by Meskell and Pels (Meskell and Pels 2005: 8). I honoured this principle by making the space more open to, and welcoming of visitors from the street. Some weeks earlier I had participated in a community event at which locals had indicated the breezeblock and white cube aesthetic of the gallery was intimidating and off putting. I set out to offset this as much as possible by rearranging and tidying the space and ensuring it was well heated (it was usually very cold). I provided an urn, beverages and biscuits located next to historical displays and gave much of the gallery over to community services, providing a notice board, a small reading-room and wall space for local artists and poets to hang their work. Some of these works were eventually incorporated into the drawing.

Once enticed through the door, locals were encouraged to ask questions about the project and, if they were interested, record an interview. In these cases it was important to both the ethical and methodological framework I set up, to show that I was available and valued the time they were giving me, and was ready to do nothing else but listen. I would stop drawing, make tea or coffee for the visitor and either do the interview on the spot, or arrange a better time. As many participants would forget or not be able to come back I made getting an interview a priority over anything else. This helped to create an atmosphere of openness and approachability that was vital if the work was to succeed. In many respects, it did; of the 30 hours of interviews we recorded over the six weeks, twenty hours came solely from the drop in facility. While very fruitful, the success of the drop-in approach created difficulties in terms of actually producing the drawing. With as many as twenty visitors in a day, work became very slow. Some participants also began to regard me as a friendly ear and began to drop in regularly, beyond the 'official' research interaction, a situation that, operating an open studio, could not easily be prevented. This led to an extension of working hours with the studio closed from 6pm, in order to try to make up drawing time. In short, the open approach could not really be reconciled with drawing as easily as it could with the principle of conducting original research interviews. It worked very well in gathering information and informants, but was in many respects, a victim of its own success.

I was however, very much a fixed point in the project; my ability to engage directly with the community was limited to my daily walks to the gallery, my trips out for lunch, and early morning or evening visits to the political and public spaces of Dennistoun such as meetings with the community council, the local writers group the conservation society and the local library. This met with some success, with the local public library offering access to a number of community groups such as the Bounce and Rhyme playgroup, several of whose members came to be interviewed at the gallery; Dennistoun Community Council is currently looking at ways of financially supporting the dissemination of the drawing; the Conservation group providing archive material and oral histories and the writer's group contributing poems and personal accounts directly to the drawing itself. Not all of these opportunities for social engagement could be realized at the time, but there is potential for doing so at a prospective phase two of the project.

The gallery was also important for coordinating my team of volunteers. Fifteen people came forward, with nine being able to commit to the project. Of these, two carried out archival research, two helped with the install and the remaining five went out in the field. This solved some problems, while causing others; my lack of experience in running collaborative projects of this scale left me ill prepared for the additional work required to properly orientate and guide the volunteers. Another problem lay in giving these researchers the tools to collect the

information; I had never had to explain how I worked to others before. I soon abandoned any concept of the volunteers as 'proxies' for my style and sensibility. As the first interviews came in using the very basic questionnaire I had drafted, I realised that I had failed to notice an opportunity to make the most of the volunteers. I began to encourage them to draw upon their own backgrounds, perspectives and practices in carrying out the research, which led to more diverse – and interesting – information coming back.

This outsourcing of my usual tasks went beyond what was originally planned. As the pressure of the final days mounted and I became increasingly desperate, I asked the volunteers to listen to interview recordings and direct me to specific segments and quotes. More than one volunteer would listen to the same interview in case any one of them missed something. I was very reluctant to give this aspect of the work over; in previous projects this process of listening had been a crucial, and rather private aspect of forming my thoughts about what the drawing is going to look like and what it would contain, It felt like giving a major part of myself away and also, like I was abandoning my duties. I accordingly, noted feelings of guilt and unease in my blog (DSD 30 December 2012).

Nevertheless, the ways in which each researcher's take on the material differed slightly from the other was in itself interesting and had there been more time, could have led to much more diverse, subtle treatment of the material.

As the final week loomed with the drawing still looking very sparse and unpopulated, I decided to abandon the open studio concept and work with the shutters of the gallery down from the morning through to the late evening. This was a difficult choice made between 'the delicacies of the concept' and 'the needs of production' (DSD, 1 December 2012), the rationale being that I needed to produce some sort of illustration to display on the 7th and demonstrate to my collaborators that the project had an actual purpose. While gallery staff and locals understood the pragmatism of the decision, I was very aware that I had broken one of my own rules and potentially compromised the embedded ethics of the project. This was offset against the obligation I felt to allow community members to see their contributions realised in the drawing, though even then, lack of time meant that a poem written for inclusion in the drawing and a huge amount of usable material did not make it into the exhibition. In the event, a coherent piece was produced, but it was by no means a finished one (Fig. 10).

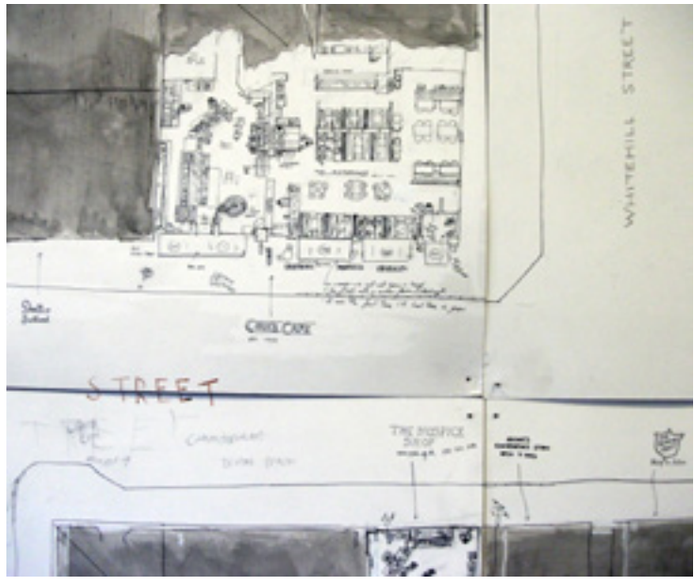

Fig. 10: *Eastern corner of Duke Street Dialectogram,* photo by Damon Herd, 2012

Fig 11: Panoramic View of *Duke Street Dialectogram,* photo by Stuart MacMillan, 2012

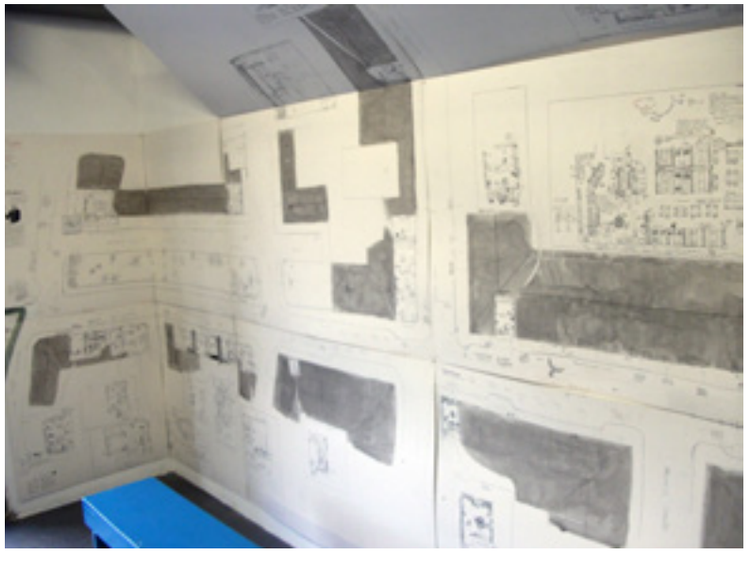

Fig 12: Detail of *Coia's*, from *Duke Street Dialectogram*, Damon Herd, 2012

DRAW DUKE STREET as…failure?

A glib conclusion from this case study is that it is not possible to create a drawing of such a large space, of such a large size, in this style, in less than six weeks. Nevertheless, the unique conditions of the residency created a hothouse effect that allowed a great deal to be achieved, very quickly. (Fig. 11, 12). It was in many respects a 'campaign' that raised awareness of Duke Street and used its visibility to create the conditions for further work within the community to finish the drawing.

I began with questions over how well engineered my process of social engagement actually was, and whether putting my own methods under pressure could suggest new and 'emancipatory' alternatives. I do not have conclusive answers to these at present, but the account indicates that if I can be reconciled, and readied for the additional pressures created by collaboration, these may may indeed exist, and that spatialising the illustration process has played a major role in doing so. As I go on to apply my initial findings in my next case study in Govan, the spatial dimension will be central in establishing the 'rules' of the dialectogram as a socially engaged practice.

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He is currently responsible for teaching contemporary design discourse and narrative theory across a number of course areas including BA Graphic Design, BA Illustration and BA Film and Television Production. Nick has a longstanding passion for comic strips and graphic story telling which feeds directly into his own artwork and academic research. Recently, Nick has worked collaboratively on comic strip themed projects with organisations such as Tullie House, Carlisle (as part of the touring exhibition *Cult Fiction: Art and Comics*) and Copeland Arts in Whitehaven. The latter involved designing public art installations for Whitehaven Civic Centre. Current projects include a graphic novel called *The Collector* and writing and performing film soundtracks with the band *Pecker.* He is the editor and prime mover behind the anthology *Bagatelle*, a magazine published annually by the University of Cumbria and featuring 'comic strip tales'.

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Spatial Poetics: Control of Time and Space in Graphic Narratives

Deceptively simple on the surface, under close analysis the comic strip page is something of a paradox, a complex and multi-layered structure. For the artist, the formative layout of a graphic narrative is both a conceptual and spatial activity, involving a high degree of reasoning in the selection and placement of any textual and visual elements. In reception, the effectiveness of any narrative depends on the readiness of the reader to recognize, synthesize and decode the linguistic and visual information at hand, in short: to navigate spatial relationships and make meaningful connections between one panel and the next in the strip sequence. For this reason, graphic narratives offer up tremendous potential for textual analysis: for studying at close quarters issues pertaining to spatial design, visual literacy and the breach between expression and readership. This paper will address the formal and spatial apparatus of the printed comic book from a predominately western perspective, with reference to selected American and European theorists and practitioners, focusing on i) page composition and spatial orientation, ii) the dynamic between text and image, iii) the utilization of panels as temporal markers and iv) connoting a sense of socio-geographical setting.

For the purpose of this paper the term ‘graphic narrative’ refers specifically to anthologised print collections of comic strip stories and one-off graphic novels; as opposed to storyboards, illustrated stories, info-graphics and other published or printed ephemera. Historically, academic study has tended towards framing the comic strip as a narrative form with “limited intellectual accomplishment” (Eisner, 1996:3), often associated with a proto-stage of reading or contextualized within the narrow confines of the superhero set. Thankfully, this attitude no longer prevails. Currently, western comic book scholarship is a vibrant, albeit still emerging field, located in keynote American universities and the Francophone school of semiotic discourse. In Britain, the post-war boom of the printed weekly strip pamphlet (see Sabin, 1996:44-91) may be long past but the ‘graphic novel’, an entire strip narrative in book form, currently appears to be enjoying a healthy flush of visibility and respectability. In the case of the former, a burgeoning information economy, and more specifically, a penchant for screen-based, interactive social narrative and game-play amongst younger readers in the 7 to 14 age bracket has led to a decline in circulation (witness the decision taken in 2012 by publishers D.C.Thompson, to move the *Dandy* comic to an online version only). Although difficult to categorize, it can be argued that the audience for the graphic novel is comprised of a different demographic or community of readers: adult, male-centric but not exclusively so, culturally aware with a visual sensibility that still prizes the physicality of the printed object over the digitized copy. The latest graphical works; often combining lush production values, complex character driven narratives and underscored with diverse sociopolitical themes, are just as likely to be reviewed in the broadsheet press as they are a scholarly journal.

In contemplating the current relevance of the sequential form, there is a further dimension worth touching on here. There are clear parallels between the navigation of the printed artifact or the fragmentary narratives contained between the margins, and the digital sphere, that resonates with a contemporary media-savvy audience. In an age dominated by new media forms and multi-modal ways of experiencing narrative, any discussion of the term ‘reading’ that seeks to equate literacy with text-only formats seems increasingly antiquated. Eisner’s comment on the perceived criticism of the strip format by a (unspecified) literary intelligentsia signals a pedagogical framework that is no longer tenable. According to some, the predominance of the digital has led to a profound re-evaluation of the “balance between word and image” (Harris, 2006:213), shifting the literacy debate away from the purely verbal or alphabetical. In respect to readership, contemporary structural analysis of strip narratives challenges “long-held hierarchical notions of what constitutes appropriate discourse” (Hoover, 2012:177).

In part, there are idiosyncratic features associated with the strip medium that may explain previous academic resistance. It is, undeniably, easier to paraphrase a cinematic sequence or a passage in a novel than it is to describe the surface 'clunkiness' of a page of graphic fiction, largely because the viewing or reading experience is plurivectorial. The reader is constantly traversing and rewinding across the page, from panel to panel, to retrieve the information necessary to propel the story onwards. Deviation from the prescribed route laid out by the author is also a common occurrence; the direction of eye movement can be erratic, often moving ahead in a sequence or arresting on a choice aesthetic detail. Seasoned comic book artists are aware of these anomalies and will either design around or incorporate them into the narrative structure. Secondly, the imaged surface on the graphic page represents only a portion of the narrative content. The negative space, at the margins or between panel frames, functions as a surrogate for the omitted or undisclosed parts. It is into this latent space that the reader must enter, in their imagination, to fashion a coherent whole of the story. With regard to readership, there are other factors to consider too. Strip narratives come with a readymade iconographical system, a lexicon of graphic signifiers (panel, text containers, pictograms, onomatopoeia symbols etc), which are self-referential and require some prior knowledge of their usage and application. Lastly, most (but not all) comic books are a hybrid of verbal and pictorial elements. The correlation between text and image creates the tension on which the narrative depends, which at a semantic level presents a fascinating conundrum; do we read or view the comic book page? Which do we prioritize first, text or image?

Comic books may be awkward to describe yet paradoxically have a reputation for being easy to read. However, the apparent expediency in their reception belies an underlying complexity. Defined by Umberto Eco as an "autonomous literary subgenre" (Eco 1987:25), comic books have evolved over time into a highly efficient medium for telling stories. Eco's contradictory phrase signals both a decoupling from *and* link to other visual narrative forms, as well as aptly illustrating that strip narratives defy such casual definition. To scholars of the western tradition, an agreed upon, catchall definition that encapsulates the form, whilst acknowledging historical staging posts and contemporary nuances is elusive and ultimately self-defeating (see Meskin, 2007). Some theoreticians, essentially formalist in approach, have sought to move beyond the definitional project and look at the component parts that most graphic narratives have in common; the amalgam of formal rules, the economy of two dimensional space and the breakdown of narrative action and narration.

1: 0 the architecture of the page

In respect to any formal analysis, it is useful to start out by opening up the architecture of the comic book page, the grid structure that governs the page layout. In *The System of Comics* (2007), Thierry Groensteen encourages the reader to imagine the 'contentless' comic; the page emptied of its iconic and textual innards, leaving only the skeleton of panel frames and balloon outlines that comprise what he calls 'the spatio-topical system' (Groensteen, 2007:24). Under Groensteen's impressively forensic gaze the page 'multiframe' is unpacked as a series of interrelated frames within frames; text boxes and balloons, panel frames, strips, hyperframe, page margin, single page and double-page, eventually expanding out to include the whole book, the ultimate multiframe or the grand sum of all frames (2007:27-39).

This appreciation of page design exemplifies the panoply of choices open to the comic book creator at the outset of a project and confirms the complexity of the spatial operation at hand. Each drawn panel frame has a relation not only to abutting panels, but to other frames in the network; in particular the hyperframe, the boundary separating the assembly of panels (or usable space) from the page margin. Additionally, each panel frame occupies a designated site and area on the page, directly affecting the "the range of possibilities" (2007:92) for surrounding

Fig. 1 *Curse of the Molemen*, from the *Big Baby* anthology, Charles Burns, © Fantagraphics Books, 2007

frames. The configuration of the page is outlined in geometric terms, as a framework of contours, although to fully appreciate the impact of the design it is necessary to factor in panel content and styling. It is also important to note that the site of textual reception is not bound by a discrete measure from page surface to the readers gaze. Just as the eye can move erratically *across* a page, it may also telescope in and out, taking in the whole page in one moment and alighting on a single panel detail in the next. In this way, spatially, it is possible to contemplate the schemata of the printed page (or the double-page spread) extending out towards the viewer in three dimensions.

At mid-distance or arms length the page is viewed in its entirety. At this distance, at the level of the page, the reader may register that there is a commonality in the constituent parts or note the division of the multiframe. Fig. 1 shows page 16 from the *Curse of the Molemen* story, taken from a Fantagraphics anthology of *Big Baby* stories by the artist Charles Burns. At the level of the page certain motifs are clearly visible, notably the broadly symmetrical composition which scans like a pyramidal altarpiece with the balloon in the second panel marking the apex. Also detectable is the chiaroscuro design; the stark arrangement of black and white areas, the thickness of the border and gutters and patterns of negative spaces left by the speech balloons. At this distance, the untrammelled gaze of the reader moves freely and does not necessarily follow the predetermined trail of narrative set by the artist. For example; looking again at the *Molemen* page, we may register the L shape pattern of character close-ups that comprise the left hand side and bottom strip of the page or observe the oppositional lines of perspective on the window and garden landscaping in panels four to seven.

The second viewing stage concerns the way that panels are grouped together into horizontal bands or *strips*. At the level of the strip the reader becomes more conscious of the aesthetic qualities of the artwork. It is at this juncture that the reader may adopt the learned behaviour (at least in western culture) of mentally routing sequences left to right, top to bottom and correlations between panels will begin to motion the narrative. In the *Molemen* sequence directional flow is immediately established, as the light from the open doorway in panel one is shown on Tony's bedspread in panel two. Additionally, artists will often utilise the strip as an intermediate unit in the unfolding narrative, a brief hiatus in the reading function to denote an *ellipse* in the action or shift in location (2007:58). The *Big Baby* page is comprised of three strips that dissect the page into horizontal thirds. Burns uses the natural metre of the strip to cut back and forth between the character of Tony and the subterranean

creature (the moleman) climbing out of the empty swimming pool.

Focusing closer still, it is at the level of the panel that arguably the reader is most engaged in the visual and textual content, tucked into the internal rhythm of the narrative. The panel is the basic unit in any strip sequence, seen in a chain (or composite strips) with other panels and has a dual function; as image container and temporal marker. For a variety of logistical reasons - demarcation of positive and negative space, internal rhythm and ease of re-drafting - panels tend to be (but are not exclusively) right-angled quadrilaterals. The panel contents are enclosed by the panel frame which in turn is separated from adjoining panels by the gutter; a calibrated negative space that divides the page into the aforementioned grid design. The gutter may be voided, un-drawn space but cognitively it signals the site of transition between one panel and the next (Scott McCloud has some ideas on this that will be explored later).

In respect to mapping out the page, there are certain coordinates on the grid that assume more significance than others do, in particular; entry and exit points and the geographical centre. Experienced artists such as Burns tend to utilise these positions to punctuate the narrative, to highlight dramatic peaks in the story structure. Seen over a number of pages, the correlation of keynote panels with prominent sites on the page has the accumulative effect of instilling a formulaic orderliness, a rise and fall tempo in the mediation of events. In the *Molemen* extract, the panels that occupy the privileged spots (top left and bottom right) serve to bookend the sequence signalling the entry point (in this case literally, as Tony's Mom is opening the door) and cliff-hanger, or exit to the next page. The central panel is negated to favour the looping mechanism of the strip.

This sequence embodies Burns' diligent approach to spatial design and the partitioning of the page. Throughout the entire *Curse of the Molemen* story, Burns opts for a functional and uncluttered layout with consistent geometrical panel framing. There is little deviation from the three-strip structure, the majority of pages containing between five and seven panels. Indeed, there is only one point in the narrative where the neutrality of panel division is compromised, which happens in a double-page sequence where the panel frames morph into the television screen (Burns, 2007:24-25). The 'transmitted' dialogue emanating from the horror feature that Tony is watching is placed above and outside the panel frames which has the effect of drawing attention to the disembodied words spoken by the TV characters whilst indicating that their source is elsewhere, out of scene. For Burns, neutrality equals readability. His approach to page layout, consistently reinforced throughout the *Moleman* narrative, encourages the reader to bypass the homogeneous grid structure and focus in at the level of the panel. However, as Hignite suggests, it is also possible to argue the opposite; that Burns' approach to image making, so "flawless as to visually confound the source" (Hignite, 2006:104), can appear to amplify the signification of the design.

An alternative approach to layout can be found in *How to Draw Comics The Marvel Way* (1986), in which Stan Lee and John Buscema advocate page structures that are shaped by or accentuate character actions, body language or the rapport between several characters. By way of example, a page that depicts a rooftop fistfight between *Spiderman* and the *Silver Surfer*, is composed to exaggerate the spectacle and the shifting power dynamic between the two combatants (Lee & Buscema, 1986:133). In layouts of this type, panel dimensions are frequently determined by representations of the expressive body and the reader is encouraged to view the page primarily at the visceral level of the image. Alternatively, page layouts dominated by body text or where the linguistic content has primacy are less common. Panel sequences that demand a close meditation on the written word over

image content tend to either betray their prose origins or else have a predominately expositional function. I'm thinking here of strip adaptations of literary works or alternatively collaborative pieces between a writer and artist where the authorial voice is key; say, for example, some of the strip monologues from *American Splendor* by Harvey Pekar and various artists, notably Robert Crumb (see Pekar et al, 1986:45-46).

Spatially, the network of balloons and/or narrative boxes forms a distinct yet peripheral pattern of flat spaces within the image artifice. Text containers effectively cover surplus parts of the panel image not necessary to character or narrative development. They may also extend out of the panel frame, breaking the 'fourth wall' to dramatic effect or, alternatively, may be employed as a linking device between panels. Their size, frequency and placement directly influences eye movement and narrative flow. The positioning of the text balloon within the panel is an integral part of the design, judged carefully in relation to the character that is speaking (or thinking), the panel frame and adjacent balloons. As can be seen, the verbal text has a contributory but secondary role in the *Big Baby* sequence. Note the relative proportion of the balloon in comparison to the panel image, that the balloons are clipped at the panel edges and how the long tails on the speech balloons do not interfere with the reader's expansive view of the scene. Moreover, the third person narration (in the text boxes which slightly overlap the top edge of the first and third panels in the first strip), adds only minimal information in respect to setting the scene.

It is clear that the central function of the page architecture is *control* - the removal of ambiguity - over the creation and reception of the narrative. Furthermore, page design is a principal hallmark of the artist's style and preferences, indicative of the value placed on spatial parameters, the corroboration of narrative flow with reader direction and the convergence of text and image. At the experimental end of the spectrum, there are creators who test the practical limitations of the page with inventive configurations of the multiframe. Chris Ware's *Acme Novelty Library* is a fine example, an ongoing periodical (first published 1993), that serves as a showcase for his most audacious and playful layout digressions, some of which have manifested into fully-fledged graphic creations. His recent *Building Stories* publication (Ware, 2012) confounds the traditional novel format (or grand multiframe) with a portfolio set of broadsheets, booklets, comics and posters - separate parts but with interconnecting narratives. Ware has a high-concept approach to page design, drawing upon an encyclopaedic knowledge of the comic strip to create sequences which are often non-linear and rhythmically dense, described as possessing a "staggering architectonic filigree" (Hignite, 2006:228). Reading a Ware narrative can feel disorientating as the conventional readership function is often disturbed, re-routing the reader through unfamiliar, zonal pathways.

Other artists have a more decorative take on layout, transforming the page into ostentatious display. David Mack's *Kabuki: The Alchemy part nine* (2007) for example, dispenses with the regular panel matrix altogether, utilising the page as a freeform canvas to dazzling effect. In *Kabuki*, the narrative is schematically directed through the selection and juxtaposition of meta-images, photomontage, panel sequences, diagrammatic snippets and reoccurring visual motifs. Typically though, the transformation of the multiframe in layouts of this type tend to beguile the reader at the level of the page and consequentially, may affect the internal mechanism of the panel or the "reader's captivity to the rhythm" (Groensteen, 2007:60).

2:0 panels as controllers of time and space

Such is the predominance of a cinematic code of visualisation within contemporary culture, that the eye and the camera lens have become almost synonymous conceptually. In seeking to make sense of a world where complexity is the abiding narrative; personal experience,

memory, unconscious thought and how we interact spatially with our surroundings are often mediated and relayed internally or externally using an optical film syntax. An overview of American syndicated comic strips (especially the thriller and adventure genre) would reveal they have developed in tandem with the Hollywood film since the mid 1930's onwards. Early strip luminaries, such as Milton Caniff and Will Eisner, developed a canny eye for filmic shorthand and understanding of the audience predilection for screen imagery and plot lines; adopting cinematic cues such as montage, shots and viewpoints, editing shifts and character types into the strip medium. The same mid-century American newspaper strips and pulp comic books, especially those espousing teen romance, science fiction and schlock horror storylines, form much of the base material for Burns' graphic work (Hignite, 2006:107). In this context, *Curse of the Molemen* reads as an alien invasion cautionary tale appropriating the iconography of a 1950's B-movie. Except, filtered through Burns' severe-edged graphic, which effectively nullifies the camp flimsiness of the original, it becomes a much more disquieting experience.

Whilst it may be tempting to equate the comic panel with the still-frame or cinematic shot, cognitively and temporally they signify different things. The cinematic shot, which has a duration which runs from one edit to the next and is contained by a constant (ultimately) projected ratio, signals a definite passage of time. In contrast, the duration of time for a single comic strip panel and frame is unfixed and depends on a number of determinants including; panel shape and dimensions, the expressive rendering of the panel image and frame, the volume of accompanying text and the compatibility between one panel and the next.

The partitioning of time in a comic book is generated through the rhythmic chain of panels and strips. Eisner writes tellingly in *Comics and Sequential Art*, sampling from his own back catalogue of *Spirit* stories, how the shaping of panels in a sequence can help circumscribe the tempo, speeding up for thin vertical panels and slowing down for fat horizontals (Eisner, 1990:31-37). However, any panel can only indicate an approximate temporal measure because of its transitional nature. In Scott McCloud's pioneering text *Understanding Comics*, the author deliberates on the notion of *closure* in comic strips and in particular, the role of the gutter as a transitional device between panels (McCloud, 1994:62-66). McCloud argues that time lapses in strip sequences can (to a certain extent) be quantified, classified and directly related to the readers ability to construct a unifying whole across the interspaces of the gutter, from the visual content in two or three neighbouring panels. McCloud marks out a set of six transition models, applicable to most graphic sequences. To briefly summarize each in turn; *moment-to-moment* transitions denote tiny increments of time [literally seconds] between panels. *Action-to-action* sequences trace the separate actions of a character in one scene. *Subject-to-subject* transitions cut between different characters [or objects] in the same abiding scene or location. *Scene-to-Scene* transitions indicate a change of location, which may involve considerable temporal or geographical displacement between one panel and the next. The point of an *aspect-to-aspect* sequence is primarily one of scene setting. Temporally the narrative is paused to allow the artist to highlight elements that are important to the mise-en-scene. Finally, there is the *non-sequitur* where there appears to be no discernible link in the textual and image content between one panel and the next (1994:70-72).

With the exception of the aspect-to-aspect category that obviates any forward momentum in the narrative, McCloud's transition models can be plotted out in the order described above, on a temporal x-axis; the amount of deductive reasoning required (to bring about closure) increasing proportionally with each transition. Thus, a moment-to-moment panel combination requires apparently little closure. Conversely, at the opposite end of the scale, a non-sequitur sequence necessitates much greater reader involvement to secure a corresponding

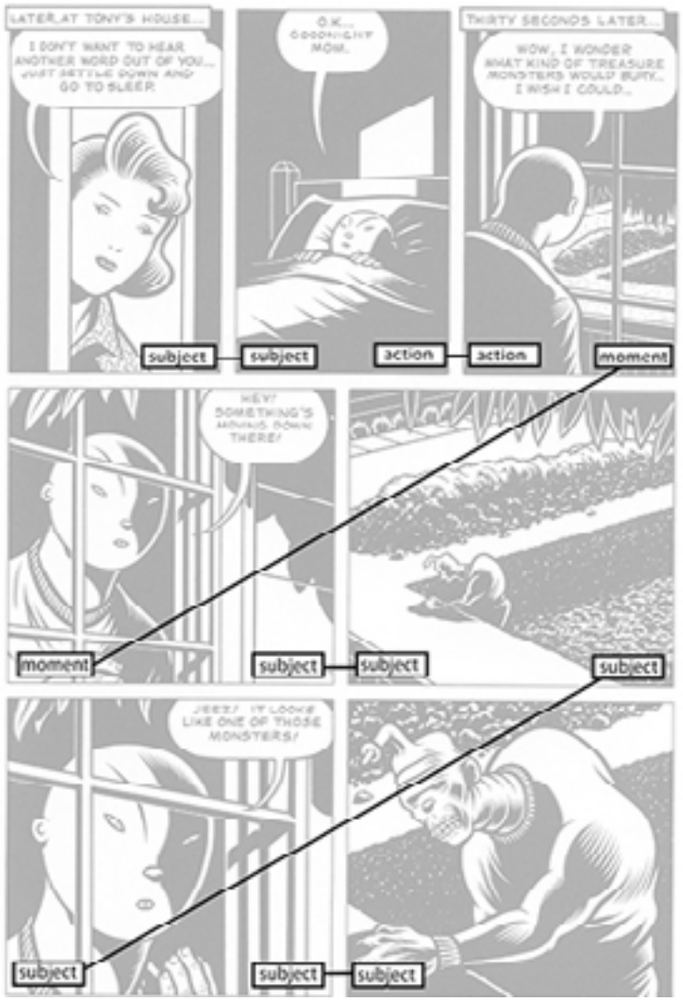

Fig. 2 The application of Scott McCloud's panel transition models from *Understanding Comics*, HarperCollins, 1994

effect. Fig: 2 shows how transition models might be applied to the *Molemen* narrative, which broadly translates as a *subject-to-subject* sequence as the action takes place at a clearly signposted location ("LATER AT TONY'S HOUSE") and cuts between viewpoints showing three separate characters. However, there are two points in the page structure that signal different transition types. In panel three Tony is shown standing at the window so has clearly just got out of bed (action-to-action). The narrative text "THIRTY SECONDS LATER…" drolly indicates how quickly Tony has disobeyed the warning from his mother to "GO TO SLEEP" and also gives a precise timeframe for the 'action' of getting out of bed and moving to the window. The second point concerns the moment-to-moment transition between panel three and panel four, moving diagonally from strip one to the strip below. According to McCloud's logic, in a moment-to-moment transition, the transferal of meaning from one panel to the next is dependent on a continuous, uninterrupted viewpoint of the subject. In the examples shown in *Understanding Comics*, there are only slight graduations between each panel image (or breakdown) to show the minimal time delay; for example, the time it takes to show a character's facial expression change from a blank countenance to a smile (1994:70). The difference here is that Burns moves the reader a full 180 degrees, from a vantage point behind Tony's shoulder to facing him directly through the window pane, although there appears to be little palpable temporal movement in the actual narrative. In this case, the panel transition dovetails with the strip transition (or ellipsis) mentioned earlier.

Understanding Comics remains an accessible introduction to the treatment of time and space in sequential narratives, remarkable for appropriating the strip format as the means of expression. The six transition models provide a roughhewn template for the close analysis of graphic texts, especially for regular page layouts. However, as can be seen from the *Big Baby* extract, there are inconsistencies in the application. In this case, at what point does a *moment* elongate to become an *action* or how do we quantify the disjuncture from the close of one strip to the panel that signals the start of another? Moreover, as McCloud acknowledges, sequences that contain a substantial textual content, affect the internal rhythm and the rate in which the narrative action is processed (1994:96-98). In some of the visual examples McCloud uses, notably scene-to scene transitions, the inclusion of text is necessary for closure to occur (1994:71). Clearly, there are key semantic differences between reading a piece of text and looking at an image. Even when the style of the artwork leans heavily towards abstraction, and image content may be pared back to basic lines or squiggles that resemble punctuation icons,

it is still possible to differentiate between the flat zone of the text and the zone that delineates the illusion of three-dimensional space. The dispersal of letter formations within a text box requires the reader to order, decipher, conceptualize then relay the corresponding (previously learned) mental concept back to the image. Hence, to answer the question posed earlier, the primacy of the image in the strip format is irrefutable. Text containers require the context of the adjoining image, whereas an image-only sequence can proceed perfectly well without text.

One final point on the transitional/closure ideas put forward by McCloud concerns the application of the aspect-to-aspect transition. Establishing the socio-geographical setting of a storyline is crucial in providing the context for character driven narratives. Rather than create a separate cycle of panels to denote atmosphere or setting, it is more common for strip artists to incorporate aspects of mise-en-scene into the fabric of images; thus, the aspect-to-aspect transition assumes a de-facto auxiliary function in panel sequences. In the seven panels that comprise the *Molemen* page Burns provides interior and exterior detail that reflects the white, suburban, American mid-fifties sensibility that provides the ideological context for the narrative. It is this sense of ordered social and geographical space that makes the encroaching horror in the storyline more palpable. Ultimately however, for the social setting to be meaningful, it requires the reader to recognize the visual clues at hand. In this way, comic books provide a fragmentary spatial landscape, a montage of signs, which call upon the subjective 'real life' and mediated experience of the reader to confer meaning and/or evoke empathy. To quote Alain Rey, the comic book page is "the organized space that cheats between the two dimensions of the format and the perceptive suggestion of the world" (Rey, 1978, cited in Groensteen, 2007:12).

Despite constraints concerning scale and structure, the printed graphic page represents a partial and unfixed spatial visuality. This paper has highlighted some of the formal methods by which strip artists counteract or subvert the receptive instability of the medium, namely; the demarcation of the page multiframe, strip ellipsis, utilizing key panel coordinates, motioning narrative rhythm, controlling the tension between text and image and driving the transitions between one panel and the next. The pre-selection, design and arrangement of the component parts that comprise the page "incarnates comics as a mental form" (Groensteen, 2007:28). There are of course inherent problems with generalizing audience reception and speculating on notions of *closure*. The symbiotic relationship between creator and audience is difficult to quantify, as any reader will naturally bring to bear their own prejudices and knowledge to the practice of reading of a comic book text.

Moreover, the audience may be "constituted by those with a vested interest in their reification and analysis" (Dittmer, 2010:224). However, it is clear that the conceptualization of the comic book page is a complex multi-modal activity, with symbolic depth, that requires an acute spatial awareness of visual forms. At their best, graphic narratives articulate the poetics of montage in how we perceive, order and rationalize the spatiality of human experience.

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Sharon Beeden

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Her research interests relate to the study of Neuro-Linguistic Programming applications, and she is a NLP Certified Master Practitioner. Her work has been recognised and published in a range of conference proceedings and books.

Having graduated from the RCA, she embarked upon a successful freelance illustration practice, gaining commissions from clients such as, Habitat, The National Trust, Dorling Kindersley and Rosenthal of Germany. Sharon's current creative practice, relates to her artist residency in North Cornwall, where she has initiated site-specific exhibitions, with work being held in national and international collections.

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Utilising spatial positions to promote idea generation and the enhancement of creative thinking processes within illustration contexts

Members of the *Fingerprint Club* collective within the 'Dreamer' thinking zone

The use of physical spatial areas as a strategy for creative thinking aligned to the resultant creative process is currently under-used, and under-valued within learning environments and studios alike.

Whilst locations outside of these areas can often provide effective opportunities for team-building exercises, blue-sky thinking and a sense of communal goal-sharing in the form of educational visits or away-days, the way in which we consider space in the everyday use of our creativity and learning pursuits, could be more considered.

In recognising the need to originate new and inventive approaches to learning and teaching within an educational creative environment, this on-going action-based research study identifies and explores a strategy adapted from Neuro-Linguistic Programming (NLP) that may enhance awareness of the creative thought-process within illustration, which can also be applied to other creative industry-led contexts.

Background to the NLP model

Neuro-Linguistic Programming (NLP) is defined as 'the study of subjective experience', and was developed in the early 1970's by Richard Bandler, a graduate student studying mathematics, and John Grinder, a professor of linguistics, at the University of California. Together their pioneering work has evolved into the systematic study of human communication and behaviour, which continues to advance with new techniques by a range of contributors and practitioners to this day.

To define the form of applied psychology more fully, and to typify the individual words, NLP signifies the following –

Neuro – refers to how the mind and body work.
Linguistic – relates to the insights into a person's thinking that can be obtained by careful attention to their use of language.
Programming – refers, not to the activity of programming, but to the study of thinking and behavioural patterns or 'programmes', which people use in their daily lives.

Bandler's early work is particularly interesting, as he had been studying and modelling the work of Fritz Perls, originator of Gestalt psychology, relating to utilising perceptual and spatial positions to identify behaviours and perceptions within given situations. Perls also was one of the first psychologists to utilise the VAK learning styles – visual (V), auditory (A), and kinesthestic (K) - representational systems within his work.

The term 'modelling' within NLP is a seminal one, as it represents an ability to abstract and de-code the process

of the structure of excellence in people from all different areas of life, identifying strategies when implemented in given scenarios, to enable the capacity to transform previous limitations and practices.

According to the co-founder of NLP, John Grinder, 'NLP is an accelerated learning strategy for the detection and utilisation of patterns in the world.' (O'Connor 2002, p.127). The term modelling, within NLP, entails the fundamental principle that; 'If one person can do something then it is possible to model it and teach it to others.' (O'Connor 2002, p.127). Therefore, modelling elicits identifying behaviour, language patterns and internal thought processes from an exemplar of good practice. By interpreting and replicating these aspects in an accessible way, it enables others to learn from such strategies. (Beeden, 2009).

Robert Dilts, a current-day contributor to leading NLP thinking, recognised the potential of this methodology, by examining the work, and importantly, the process of the approach, of exemplars of excellence, including Aristotle, Einstein, Mozart and Walt Disney.

It is with particular reference to the work of Dilts' study of the animator, Walt Disney (1901 – 1966), within his book 'Strategies of Genius' (Dilts 1994), and Disney's 'creativity strategy', that is the focus of these subsequent research findings.

The Disney creativity strategy in detail

Essentially, the creativity strategy combines utilisation of both spatial and perceptual positions, thereby effecting a 'thinking by doing' (kinaesthetic) activity, coupled with the use of language to enhance the VAK learning style 'sub-modalities' (a term used within NLP to describe visual, auditory and kinaesthetic qualities within our senses), which links and further relates to aspects of creativity, problem-solving and working methodology.

Therefore, in light of the fact, that as the nature of illustration is so closely aligned with experimenting, exploring and innovating in a highly imaginative way, there is a natural synergy between these attributes that, in turn, promoted greater investigation of this study by Dilts.

In order to model the work of the genius animator, Dilts undertook an in-depth study of Walt Disney, by means of reading articles and books, watching film footage of Disney and gathering together anecdotes and quotations from Disney's colleagues.

Through his study, Dilts came to realise that a significant factor within the profile of Disney, was his ability to explore an idea, a project etc., from a number of different spatial and perceptual positions. An important insight into this key part of Disney's strategy comes from the comment made by one of his animators that; `…there were actually three different Walts: the dreamer, the realist and the spoiler. You never knew which one was coming into your meeting.' (Dilts 1994, p.163).

Dilts discovered that for Disney there were three very separate and yet integral parts to success and identified these as being –

The Dreamer state – the phase in which one is visionary and highly creative without restraint. Within this state, the 'bigger picture' is visualised without limitations and there are no boundaries to what is possible. Interestingly, the Dreamer state relates to the visual representation system within the VAK learning styles system developed by Perls.

The Realist state – the phase in which one is evaluative as the achievability of a plan is reliant upon constructive thinking to devise a plan of action. The Realist state relies upon the kinaesthetic VAK representation system, to effectively 'get a hold' on the situation.

The Critic state – the phase in which one tests the plan, where problems and difficulties are encountered, and

ultimately solved by positive thinking, acting as a filter for overly ambitious ideas, but also to add a 'voice' to provide a incentive for refinement. The Critic state is aligned to the auditory VAK representational system, with the role of being a problem-solver.

According to Dilts also, Disney had the capacity to overlap two or more of the senses together simultaneously, as when one feels what one sees, or sees images of sounds that one hears; a process more commonly known as 'synesthesia'.

In defining the three states of the thinking process related to creativity, Disney went further in combining this in conjunction with establishing three different thinking areas or zones for his employees, in which to originate new and innovative ideas for his ground-breaking animations. According to his colleagues, Disney set up a series of rooms in which to enter into the role of the Dreamer, the Realist or the Critic.

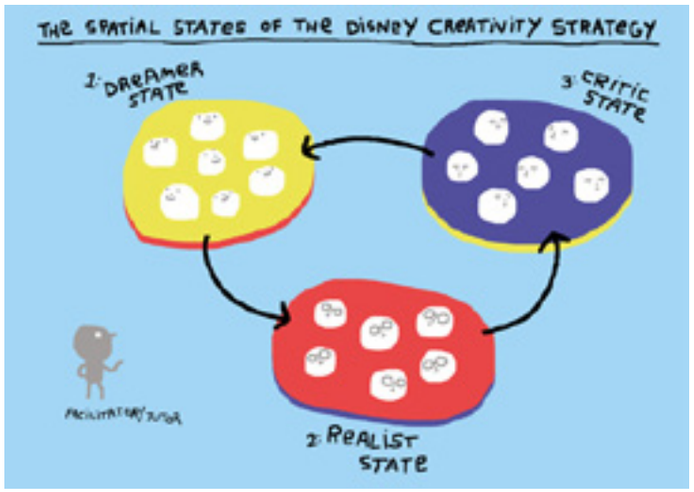
The strategy also involves a temporal aspect related to the three perceptual stages -

The Dreamer stage is orientated towards the longer future term, The Realist stage is focused more fully on the present and whilst future paced, is more short term than the Dreamer stage, and finally, the Critic stage considers both past and future time-frames.

In recognising that every experience has a structure, the act of creativity has a synthesis of different processes and phases. Essentially, Dilts captures the procedure of unconscious competence of creativity and the thinking process, to enable us to translate that into a conscious competence of thought and ultimately, action.

Having identified the main construct to Disney's Creativity Strategy, Dilts, then built upon this approach by including other steps to enhance the creativity process, whilst retaining the essence of Disney's technique.

In facilitating the Disney Creativity Strategy, Dilts, firstly established three spatial positions and labeled them, accordingly, Dreamer, Realist and Critic. He then invited individuals to step into the Dreamer state, where recipients were asked to recall a time when they were able to enjoy creative freedom with no restraints, and to relive that experience. At the peak of their positive experience in recollecting this instance, Dilts asked the recipients to 'anchor' this peak of excellence, thus the recollection provides a positive attachment. (Anchoring is the NLP process of associating an internal response - visual such as a colour, auditory such as a sound, or



The spacial states of the Disney creativity strategy, Jonny Clapham, Bournemouth student, 2012

kinaesthetic such as a feeling - to an internal or external stimulus. Examples of this, could, for instance, relate to physically pressing the thumb and middle finger of each hand together, to provide a kinaesthetic anchor, or trigger, to act as a recollected state of excellence). Having undertaken this action, the recipients were then asked to step into the Realist state and to identify a time when they were highly realistic and effective in putting together a plan of action. Once again, the recipients were requested to anchor their recollected state of excellence relating to establishing a good working methodology, and having done so, were then asked to step into the final state, that of the Critic. Within this spatial position, participants were required to recall a time when they were able to constructively criticise a plan, and to remember ways in which they demonstrated good problem-solving ability. At the peak of this recounted experience, an anchor was required to affirm the positive state.

Acknowledging the significance of entering into various thinking zones in which to adopt a different focus, Dilts, then, directed that the sequence was repeated by the participants in re-entering the three spatial and perceptual positions, but, that they should relate and apply it to a current day context, project, goal or session. Participants were requested to trigger their respective anchors within each of the states, to act as catalyst to further enhance their ability in recognising their own internal resources available to them, albeit perhaps, from an unrelated past context, but one in which such qualities, were proven.

In effect, the exercise entails 'outcome thinking' and knowledge transfer, whilst also utilising 'positive thinking' to facilitate results by means of a structured, cognisant strategy for creativity within a wide range of applications.

A case study - BA (Hons) Illustration course at The Arts University at Bournemouth (AUB)

In terms of the application of the Disney Creativity Strategy as devised by Dilts, in relation to the context of Illustration, the process can be facilitated in several ways, and adapted accordingly. Primarily, consideration needs to be given to the context of the exercise and the desired end outcome; for example, in relation to a particular learning and teaching session, or aligned to a specific project, or commission. In turn, this will dictate the timing of the exercise, to enable the maximum benefit to the individual/s participating. Placed shortly after the commencement on receipt of a briefing, the strategy enables for a wide range of ideas and resources to be considered, which can be subsequently implemented, whilst conversely, placed slightly later in the duration of a project or commission, allows for greater objectivity to work in progress.

Just such an instance, presented itself within the BA (Hons) Illustration course at The Arts University at Bournemouth, (AUB), 2012, as we were invited to submit a proposal of printmaking images for installation within the prestigious restaurant, 'The Print Room', in Bournemouth - http://theprintroom-bournemouth.co.uk which is located in the former press room of the Bournemouth Echo office building, built in 1932.

The collaboration, under the auspices of The Gallery at AUB, http://aub.ac.uk/about-us/campus/gallery/ was led by Simon Pride, Head of Marketing, and implemented by the BA (Hons) Illustration course, which promotes a wide diversity of traditional and digital approaches in relation to image making, as it fosters a natural synergy between the medium and the message, plus the context. Coupled with the resurgence of the hand-made, 'the bespoke', this has led to the formation of a collective, called 'Fingerprint Club', a group of five final year Illustration students, and one second year Illustration student, dedicated to the artisan skills of printmaking. Their abilities encompass the range of printmaking techniques, lino-cutting, screenprinting, etching, wood engraving, woodcuts, mono-printing, letterpress, lithography and risograph, (a form of three colour printing), to name but a few. Our brief was to respond to the expression, 'Print is Dead. Long Live Print', and so this led to writing the following proposal, with the sub-title –

‘A Sign of the Times’

‘It is 80 years since the construction of the Bournemouth Echo Office Building, by Seal and Hardy, in 1932.

Invariably, with the turning of each decade, the media is filled with a lot of retrospection about the developments and happenings over the past years, and recollections of seminal moments in time. In the UK, the 1960’s for example, were identified with the era of free love, women’s lib, the pill, the Beatles and the Rolling Stones, to name but a few occurrences. By comparison, the ‘70’s, were typified by social unrest, three-day weeks’ and Glam Rock, whilst the ‘80’s epitomized an age of self-interest and greed. Conversely, the1990’s denoted a growing awareness and regard for the planet and green issues, but what of the 21st century, how might this be perceived?

‘A Sign of the Times’ will provide a representation of popular culture, iconic objects, signs, symbols, depictions and images, using printmaking approaches such as screenprinting, lino-cuts, mono-printing, and lithography, with a twist of contemporary modernity.’ (Beeden, S. 2012)

So, using the sub-title, ‘A Sign of the Times’, as a catalyst, facilitation of the Disney Strategy was employed at the commencement of the project, as an idea generation exercise, within an extra-curricular activity to students within the ‘Fingerprint Club’ collective. Designated thinking zones were mapped out in the studio, and acting as a facilitator, the students were directed through the various stages creativity strategy, as previously described, whilst relating it to the context of the brief.

Using predicates (words and phrases indicating a representational system) relating to the three respective modalities of visual (V), auditory (A) and kinaesthetic (K), VAK representational systems, the experience is heightened. For example, within the Dreamer state, students were initially asked to ‘picture’ a past creative success that ‘illustrates’ their ability ‘in light of’ the circumstances, all of which are expressions that denote the visual modality. Conversely, students were required within the Realist state, to consider ‘handling’ a past creative project and realising that ‘by taking a hold’ of the situation, a successful outcome could be achieved,

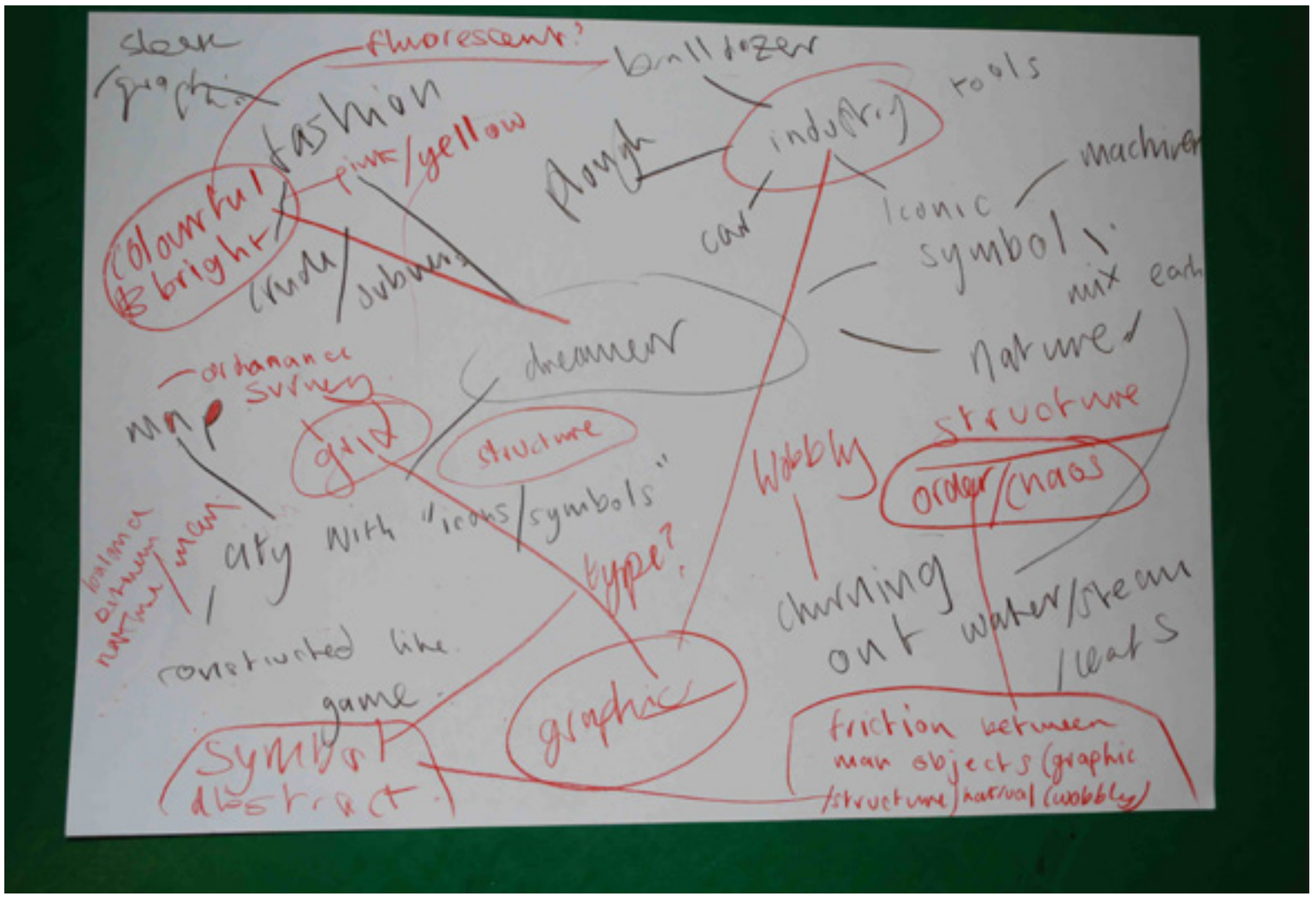
Members of the *Fingerprint Club* collective within the ‘Dreamer’ thinking zone. All photographs by Sharon Beeden

The other thinking zones mapped out on the studio floor

which is indicative of the kinaesthetic modality. Similarly, the Critic state necessitated students to engage with the idea of proffering positive constructive criticism in relation to a past creative venture, such as providing 'an internal dialogue' with oneself, by recollection of questions such as, 'What was averted?', 'What was missing?', and in turn, responding in an assertive way, which corresponds to auditory modality.

> 'NLP (O'Connor and Seymour 1995), tells us that good educators use communication that conveys visual, auditory and touch (kinaesthetic) messages to engage a broader range of learners in a more effective way. Learners may have preferred ways of receiving and handling sensory data in order to construct their own 'map' of reality whereas lecturers may rely exclusively on their own preferred representational systems when communicating.

Awakening and enhancing the senses and associating them to learning activities can create more powerful learning. In turn, sensory stimulation alters moods and emotions and can increase learning. Consequently, the more senses we stimulate



Visual mind-map from the *Fingerprint Club* collective, 2013

> in an activity the more memorable the learning experience will become. The greater the involvement of the learners in an activity, the deeper their learning will be and therefore this will inform their future practice, thought processes and behaviours, as identified by Thayer (1966), on the role of everyday moods.' (Beard and Wilson 2005, p.8)

Having visited all of the three thinking zones, the sequence was repeated by the students, in re-entering the three spatial and perceptual positions, but, that they should relate and apply it to the brief, 'Print is Dead: Long Live Print', with the sub-title, 'A Sign of the Times'. So, as the facilitator, the occasional question was asked, 'And what else can you picture in relation to the brief?', 'How are you going to handle the treatment of the work?, 'Are there any restrictions to your vision created within the Dreamer state, how could this be overcome etc?', within the respective thinking zones. Interestingly, as is often witnessed having facilitated the strategy numerous times, one third year student, asked if they could write down their ideas having immediately stepped out of the Dreamer state.

The Dreamer state, visual mind-map from the *Fingerprint Club* collective, 2013

Having anticipated such a request, a broad range of pens, coloured pencils and large sheets of paper were made available for the students to undertake 'visual mind-maps' (Buzan, 1995), to capture their ideas empowered by this fresh inspiration relating to the brief.

As a result of exercise, a fusion of new ideas and themes evolved, such as sustainability, industry, ecology, life-style choices, innovation, productivity, accomplishment, communication, work/life balance etc., coupled with thought given to various techniques to be employed, with practical considerations to problem-solving and working methodology being made, which consequently developed into a series of thirty printmaking illustrations.

Written evaluative feedback from the 'Fingerprint Club' collective on completion of the creativity strategy reflects one or two initial doubts about the process before its commencement, (which is not unusual!), but clearly demonstrates positive comments having undertaken the activity, as follows –

‘The designated thinking zone exercise really gave me the opportunity to directly focus my thoughts on specific areas of the project. It enabled me to see potential problems more clearly and being surrounded by everyone in such deep concentration really helped to direct my thoughts to come up with direct, clear and dynamic concepts.’

(Robin Mackenzie, third year Illustration student, AUB)

Lithograph landscape, Robin Mackenzie, 2013

‘The ideas generation workshop was unlike anything I have undertaken before, I was a little skeptical to begin with but the relaxed atmosphere and different thought zones really helped me bring forth strong well considered ideas, I will definitely try to execute this process in my own time as I found it very useful.’

(Adam Wilson, third year Illustration student, AUB)

Sustainable, Adam Wilson, 2013

‘Thinking in this respect allows you to both objectively and subjectively reflect upon your ideas, in an environment which shuts out modern day distractions. I must say I wasn’t convinced at the start, but it did really genuinely help, I’ll use it on other projects for sure.’

(Elliot Coffin, third year Illustration student, AUB)

Polyp, Elliot Coffin, 2013

‘The meditative nature in which the workshop was held gave me clarity in mind and aided cognitive thought. Breaking down the steps of idea generation into clear, concise sections made the process easy to follow, allowing a greater focus on ideas. Each step of the process opened the gateway to the next, ensuring ideas logically flowed and were well considered.’

(Luke MacMaster, second year Illustration student, AUB)

Take the Old, Luke MacMaster, 2013

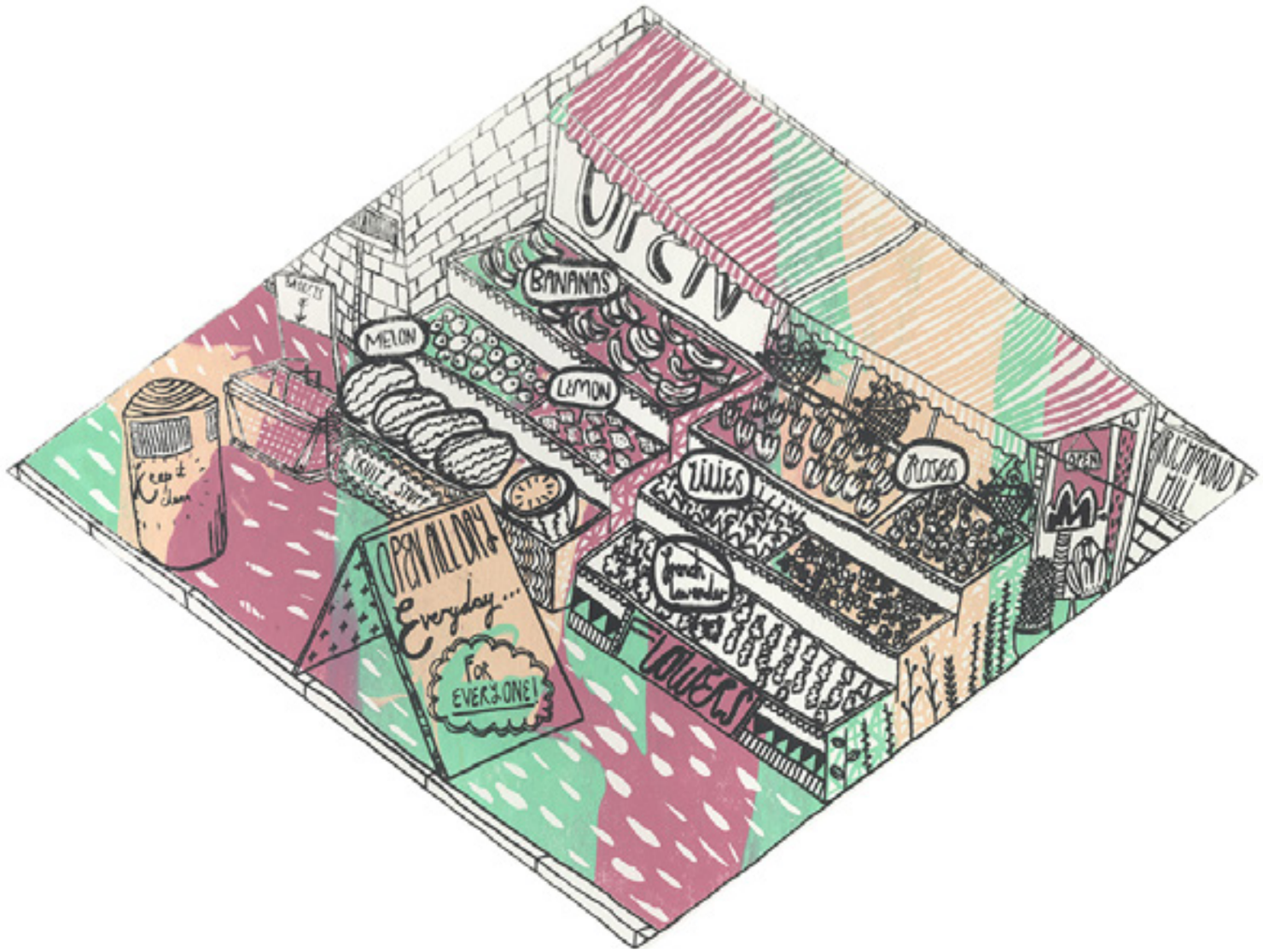
‘I found Thursday evening’s ideas generation really helpful, although slightly dubious at first, I found the method to be really helpful and useful the longer the exercise went on. I think this method is a really good way of thinking about separate parts of a project without them overlapping each other!’

(Matthew Waudby, third year Illustration student, AUB)

Sign of the Times, Matthew Waudby, 2013

‘This workshop allowed me to slow right down, forget about everything else going on in my life and imagine myself doing this project, and by seeing how I did it in my head, now gives me the feeling that it is possible to take this on.’

(Lydia Thomas, third year Illustration student, AUB)



Diamond four, Lydia Thomas, 2013

Whilst NLP has enjoyed widespread, positive publicity relating to business, training, sales and law contexts, for several decades, its presence within educational and creative environments is less well established.

The aim of this paper has been to provide a greater insight to the creativity strategy within NLP, and to share action-based practice research findings from a range of contexts and subject specialisms, including Animation, Media, and students within a Post Graduate Certificate of Education (PGCE) course. An additional investigation has been facilitated and undertaken to a wide range of learners at a workshop/seminar for professional artists, teachers, counsellors and therapists in a regional arts centre.

The above feedback serves to support previous qualitative research findings from participants within the range of focus groups undertaking the creativity strategy, coupled with recording a 60-100% increase, to their respective creativity, effective working methodology and problem-solving abilities.

Within many educational and studio environments, the use of space is at a premium, however, the way in which we utilise this resource in terms of designating certain areas in which to 'think' has potential for greater scope and development. Essentially, the creativity strategy de-codes and de-constructs a process that we all undergo as creatives, but this process transforms this into a conscious one, which can be built upon and utilised to our advantage, in a form of 'conscious competence'. The Dilts creativity strategy contributes to this ethos in association with the use of space, as it is versatile, and can be applied cross-disciplines and within different contexts, in addition to being used to support and suggest ways in which to arrive at specific desired outcomes, as evidenced within the recent case study.

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Image Credits

Clapham, J. 2013. *The spatial states of the Disney creativity strategy.*

Rachel Gannon

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Rachel works from INK's London Studio on a variety of commissioned and self-initiated projects including editorial, retail, curating, museum installations, teaching, lecturing, craft and exhibitions. She is represented by EyeCandy Illustration Agency. Rachel's research is routed in drawing as reportage, the reflective sketch and the role of the sketch within contemporary illustrative practice. She has work on permanent display at the Victoria and Albert museum and the Royal London Hospital. It is within these bodies of work that she has explored her interests in anthropology, fieldwork notebooks and oral histories. Rachel is a Lecturer in Illustration at Norwich University College of the Arts and University of Bedfordshire.

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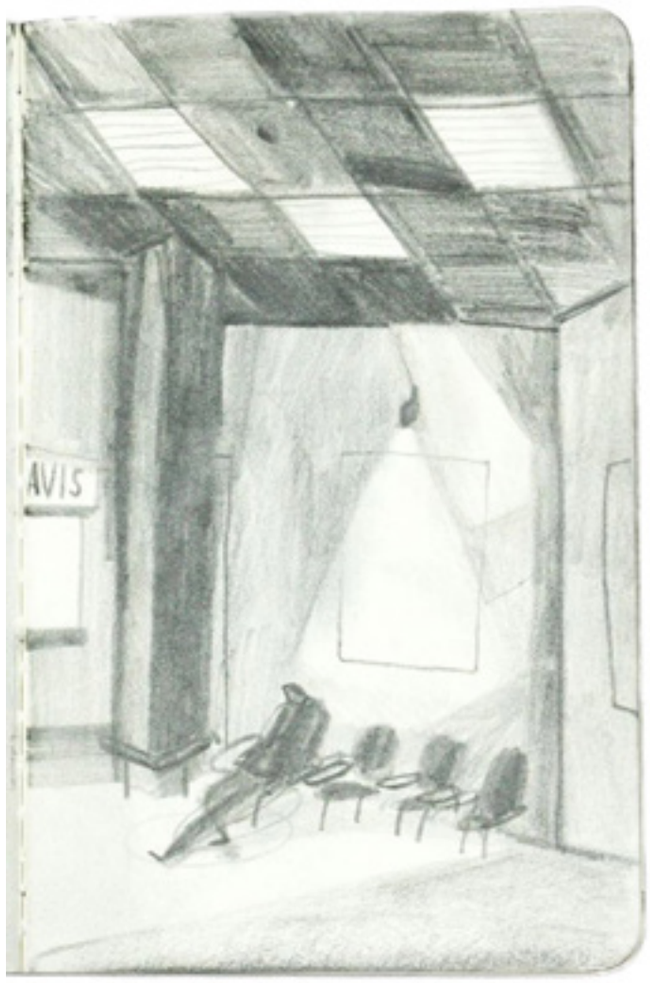
Being There: Conversational Drawing in a Non-Place



All sketchbook drawings done in situ at Luton Airport, 2013

Introduction

> Where are we, during the act of drawing, in spirit? (Berger, 2007, p.123)

To answer this question I will be discussing a practice-led project, at the centre of which was a month long drawing residency at London Luton Airport. I worked in-situ at the airport to document and record the space and the travellers (and airport staff) that passed through this self-contained 'non-place' (Augé, 1995) every day. The residency lasted a month, with the singular condition of creating a body of work for display at London Luton Airport. The open remit of this residency meant that I was able to make work that explored my interest in documentary illustration. This project was guided by practice in the truest sense of the word. It is through the practice or act of drawing and *being there* that I have explored the relationship between drawing and space. Questioning why I made these drawings, these marks, came later and is the focus of this paper.

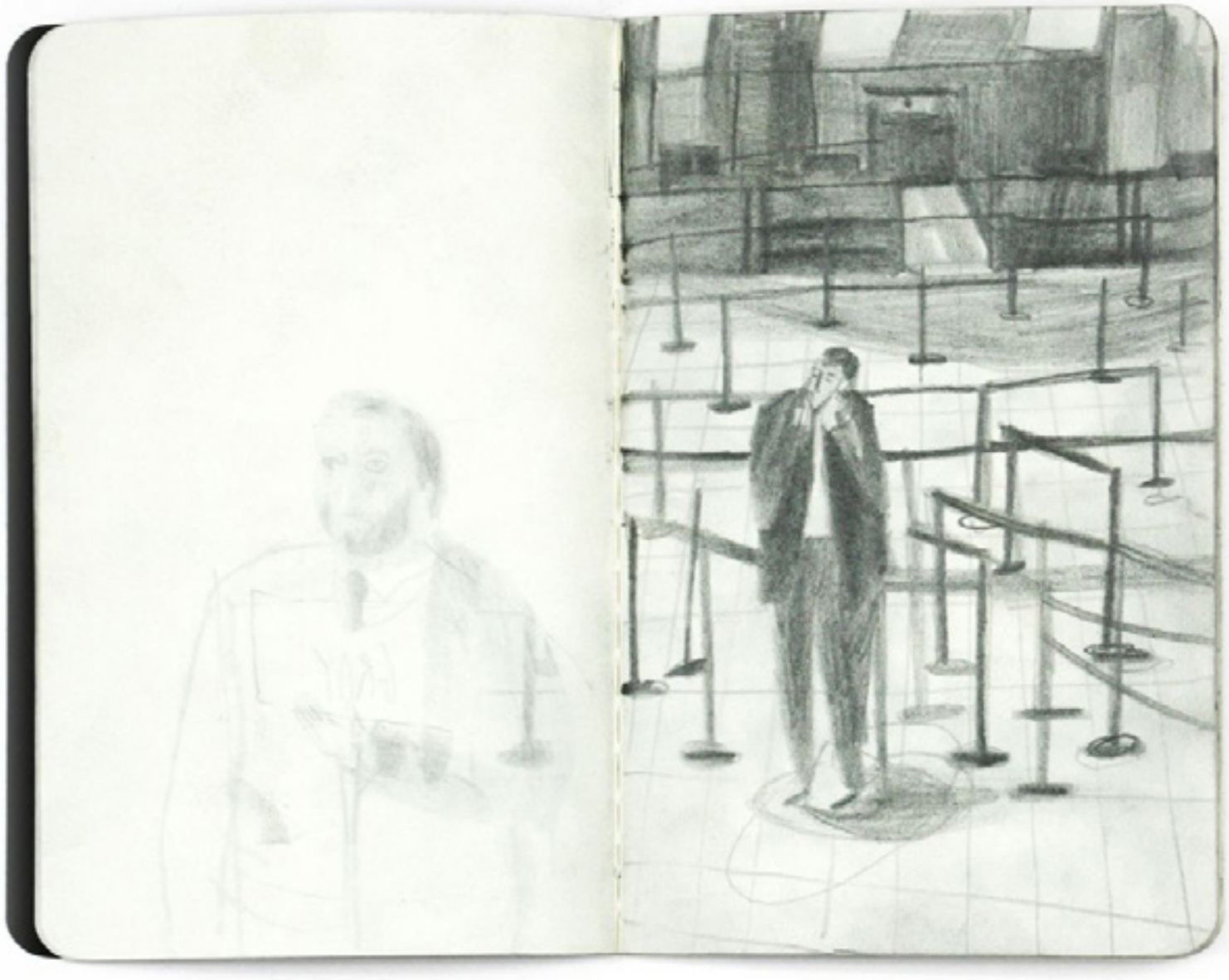
> "I seemed to need a new place," she said. "Not necessarily an interesting place. Just a strange place. Without associations. A place where I would be very much alone. Like a hotel. (*Lady in the Lake*, Raymond Chandler) (Buchanan, 1999, p.393)

Why did I choose this place, this airport? It was because of this very paradox, a place that is both strange and familiar. I was not particularly drawn to the aesthetics of such a place although I have become so. I was, instead, interested in documenting these strange yet familiar spaces in which we spend ever increasing amounts of time; shopping malls, hotels, stations and airports. In this sense, the airport was an understandable choice. I had not anticipated the opinions that I am going to present to you today.

My paper will address the following:

- the experience of drawing in a non-place, a critical framework for this and further investigations;
- why I am interested in drawing as thinking rather than thought; and
- the conversations that I feel have taken place within the drawing process.

I will weave these three strands together in order to make clear what I believe has happened in this particular drawing project.



Non-Place

I have been questioning why I draw in-situ or in-place. Drawing these often barely inhabited corridors and spaces in the airport I have asked myself what it is about this process that I am drawn to or perhaps, more accurately, drawn in by. What happens when I draw in non-place, a place that is not concerned with identity and is measured in periods of time? The security conditions of the airport meant that I was not allowed to take photos for reference, as such my only way of recording the space was through drawing. This meant that all the drawings made for this research project were made in-situ and not retrospectively.

I have travelled through London Luton Airport many times and given little thought to the architecture or the sense of place. I get a vague feeling of being someone else in airports. This may be the constant barrage of instructions, both verbal and visual, meaning you make very few of your own decisions. Or the vast array of shopping experiences and often long stretches of time in which to indulge in them. But these are thoughts I have had recently, after the event. Indeed, when I went back to London Luton Airport for the first day of the residency, I was not sure that I had ever been there at all. Indeed, the drawings shown today could have been drawn in one of many airports across the UK, or indeed across the world.

Airports along with highways, hotels, and even cash machines can be defined as non-places. The very premise of these non-places relates to their standardisation as well as their lack of integration. I turn to anthropologist Marc Augé who coined the phrase 'non-place' in his essay and book of the same title, *Non-Places: Introduction to an Anthropology of Supermodernity* (1995). It is here that Augé gives an explanation of the relationship between space and non-space.

> If a place can be defined as relational, historical and concerned with identity, then a space which cannot be defined as relational, or historical or concerned with identity will be a non-place (Augé, 1995, p.63).

Augé argues that these non-places do not integrate with those that have come before. Instead, they promote these existing places to the status of spectacle or 'places of memory'. He states that non-places are defined by their over-abundance of space and contain excessive information. The way we as travellers or visitors relate to non-places are through these instructions for use. The space of a non-place creates neither singular identity nor relations; only solitude and similitude. This definition of non-place provides a reason for the feelings I had when visiting the airport; had I ever been there?

> Non-places deal only with individuals, alone but one of many (Augé, 1995, p.82).

The figures in these drawing are usually singular. They are alluded to in shadows. Even when these figures are observed in groups they seem silent. There is no engagement. There is no eye contact. Each passenger is an individual in a crowd. There is a reassuring anonymity in spaces such as these. You only have to keep line and follow instructions. Augé makes clear that this is one of the defining characteristics of non-place; our experience of our surroundings is mediated through words and text, we are told what to do and where to go (Augé, 1995, p.77). We are therefore set free of our daily worries and baggage (quite literally). As we pass through these spaces, decisions are taken out of our hands; we are directed ('take the right hand lane') and told what to do or not to do ('no-smoking'). Arrows, numbers and other symbols appear throughout the drawings. Arrows in particular dominate the images and figures are dwarfed by imposing signs. These signs ensure safe passage through these non-places. Non-spaces are measured in units of time: motorways, airports, hotels. The time of check in and out or the time it takes to pass through define these places. Each is governed and experienced through itineraries, lengths of stay and timetables. It is the experience of these transient moments that is documented.

Marc Augé states that non-places are a product of supermodernity. He defines supermodernity as an intensification of modernity and an emphasis on the ability of biology and technology to overcome all natural limitations. A profound lack of integration between past and present is caused by an outright repudiation of historical knowledge. The three characteristics of supermodernity as described by Augé (1995) are excess of time, excess of space and excess of ego. The non-places of supermodernity are those that we feel we know even if we have not been there before. Augé tells us that airports are concerned with standardisation and are often remembered in very generic terms. One airport looks very much like the next. This provides an interesting dichotomy as the drawings produced here address a highly personal narrative; seen, imagined and remembered. In these drawings, space is distorted and stretched and perspectives are skewed. The expansive stretches of artificially tiled floors slope upwards and away from the bottom of the sketchbook. Elsewhere the spaces depicted feel cavernous – dark walls loom over shadowy figures. Space is inconspicuously missing in a number of the drawings. It is merely alluded to.

Encompassing Conversations

So far, I have attempted to understand the particulars of the place in which I was working. Now I will address what

is happening between the subject and the paper when I draw in this non-place. There are numerous analogies for drawing that I could cite however I will refer to the English lexicon for clues. We say we are drawn to something or more specifically we are 'drawn into a conversation'. As if we are being physically pulled in. It is this being drawn to the subject that interests me and is what I believe is happening when I draw. Writer and art historian John Berger describes the intensity of looking and the energy of whatever is being scrutinised as being in discourse. The discourse he is commenting on is between the person drawing and the subject they are drawing from.

> The encounter of these two energies, their dialogue, does not have the form of question and answer. It is a ferocious and unarticulated dialogue (Berger, 2007, p.77).

I feel that Berger's suggestion that drawing is like a conversation is close to the way that I experience drawing. This is not a conversation with someone I know but with a stranger. Someone I am struggling to get to know, searching for common ground. I am trying to remember if I have met them before. This is the time in which objects shed their mute quality and speak (Trieb, 2008).

It is important at this point to clarify exactly what I am discussing for there are two distinct parts to drawing – the act and the image. The word drawing can be defined as both gesture (verb) and object (noun). Here I am concerned with the former; the act of drawing or drawing as process (Garner, 2008, p.109). I am not looking at drawing as a distinct discipline or an outcome but as an experience.

I have not shown any drawings I would interpret as a 'finished object' although I find the term finished a problematic one. Perhaps it means those images that conceal the act of drawing rather than revealing it. Or perhaps those that feel like the drawing process has been interrupted or stopped short of reaching a conclusion and therefore displaying the drawing activity. Either way, these drawings were all drawn at the airport, and whilst the event depicted took place.

So drawing draws you in like pulling a thread, pulling it out of its knotted tangle (Taussig, 2011, p.xii). What of the time this process takes? I refer to Berger (2007) again who puts forward the notion that photography stops time whilst drawing encompasses it. When drawing there is a significant urge to stop time, to pause and return to the scene over and over again (Taussig, 2011, p.22). If you have ever drawn from life you will understand what I mean. However, this urge can be resisted (as I have attempted here) and the process of drawing is seen as the intended outcome. Drawings are left 'unfinished'. Where drawings are more prolonged they have as much to do with my recent memory of the scene as to that which was directly in front of me at that moment; that is if the conversation has been longer than a simple question and answer. I must be dredging my mind, searching for similar experiences on which to draw. This is perhaps what Berger means when he states:

> A drawing is an autobiographical record of one's discovery of an event – seen, remembered or imagined (Berger, 2007, p.3).

Memory and documentation co-exist in these images; the past and the present. I am as much documenting my own experiences and memories, as the subject in front of me. Johannes Fabian, cultural theorist and anthropologist, isolates these different forms of time. Fabian's seminal work *Time and the Other* (2002) advances the idea that these differing notions of time have caused a contradiction within the field of anthropology. In ethnographical fieldwork the anthropologist and the peoples being studied are contemporaries, existing in the same time and able to respond to one another and are in dialogue. On the other hand in anthropological writing, instead of acting as interlocutors, the people of the other culture become separate: an individual that the anthropologist observes or has observed form afar, or the 'Other'. Fabian calls this anthropology's 'denial of coevalness'; the denial that the anthropologist and the Other have existed in the same time and space. The former notion of time, is relevant to this discussion, Fabian calls this 'intersubjective' time (Fabian, 2005). Intersubjective time transpires in the interactions between two subjects in dialogue. It is associated with the way people relate both temporally and spatially. This is the notion of time in which these drawings take place. The drawings are both produced during and document intersubjective time.

Anthropologist Tim Ingold in *Redrawing Anthropology* (2011) suggests that a maker or artist uses their tools to intuitively follow the materials; trowel in earth, pencil on paper. He introduces us to Giles Deleuze and Félix Guattari who call such a following 'intuition in action'. In this sense drawing is an experience that is felt. Although the work may be repetitive, it is as though each time was like the first (Ingold, 2011). I am not a Deleuzian and I admit the critical positions I take here may appear forced, however, I do feel the phenomenological *essence* in Deleuze and Guattari's *Intuition in action* (2004) dovetails well with the more material stance of Berger. It is, in

action, during the experience of drawing that we think and feel our way. Intuition in action, in this sense, relates to the act of drawing that Berger identifies, a discovery of an event for the first time.

Drawing the strands together

What I am trying to define here is personal and idiosyncratic.

In the opening of this paper, I stated that through the practice or act of drawing and being there I have explored the relationship between drawing and space. I was referring to being in the space and in front of whatever I was drawing. I meant quite literally that when I was drawing airport passengers, I was there in the departure lounge. This is obvious, of course, but what I have actually started to address is the notion of 'there' in less literal terms. I refer again to Berger (2007) who asks the question:

> Where are we, during the act of drawing, in spirit? Where are you at such moments – moments which add up to so many, one might think of them as another life-time? (Berger, 2007, p.123)

An answer could lie in understanding pictorial traditions:

> For instance, the European tradition, since the Renaissance, places the model over *there*, the draughtsman *here*, and the paper somewhere in between, within arms reach of the draughtsman, who observes the model and notes down what he has observed on the paper in front of him. (Berger, 2007, p.123 [authors emphasis])

Is there something in this – the opposition of here and there? Does the idea of being in a place (either here or there) have a significance to, or relationship with the act of drawing? Should I have called this paper 'Being Here' as western drawing tradition dictates that is where we are when we draw; I am here and the thing I am drawing is over there. (Berger, 2007, p.123) This is a material understanding of the spatial relationship between draughtsman and what he is observing. But Berger quite clearly says 'in spirit', this does not denote a material stance. Therefore, is it through the drawing conversation that we pull ourselves closer to the subject? This may be the case but it does not help to make clear what has happened when drawing in a non-place. Berger was no doubt talking about drawings he made from the veranda of his Parisian home and not in the departure lounge of the Charles de Gaulle Airport.

House Plant, screen print, 2013

Sports Bag, screen print, 2013

Perhaps a temporal answer is needed rather than a spatial one (Berger, 2007) to fully understand the relationship between the process of drawing and non-place? Paul Klee's comment that the line 'goes out for a walk' (Klee, 1968, p.16), Klee's drawn line is ever changing; not fixed as an artifact might be, but constantly developing. A drawing is a process of continual corrections. A line is full of potential. It is in this sense a time-based medium. It is about becoming rather than being (Berger, 2007).

Augé states that non-places are there to be passed through and are therefore often measured in periods of time: timetables, departure times and itineraries. I have already discussed the inescapable urge to pause time when drawing and yet the obvious impossibility of doing so. Berger would have us believe that drawing encompasses time instead of stoppping it. These inherent qualities of drawing mean that the very essence of non-place is documented; the time in which it takes to pass through the space.

So drawings contain time. When writing about drawings in his fieldwork notebook, Taussig discusses the unique power of drawing as a visual document. He looks at the relationship drawing has with time slightly differently, suggesting:

Being There, exhibition, Luton Airport, 2013

> The images that inhabit time – the recursive time of rereading – are historical, in a peculiar way. Being recursive, they flow with time yet also arrest it… They are allegories punched out of time waiting… Chronology is grasped and analyzed in a spatial image.
> (Taussig, 2011, p.53)

He is proposing that drawings explore and record the intersubjective time in which they were made. For Taussig, these drawings are documents; they are to be taken away from the scene and reread. What happens to these drawing of mine when they are taken away from the airport? Or indeed any documentary drawing when they are viewed after the event? If we look back to Fabian (2002) and the contradictions he sees in anthropological work, then the drawing as document can be seen as the 'anthropological writing'. Therefore separating, in this case, the draftsperson from the observed scene. Thus they are spatially and temporally different or representing the denial of coevalness as Fabian labels it. The denial is that the two have ever existed in the same time or space. Yet here is the very same contradiction that I am presenting you with. I have discussed at length the process of drawing whilst showing you the 'finished' drawing. However, (anthropological) writing and drawing are different acts. This is a relationship that has honoured much debate and discussion – though here it is enough to say that they *are* different. In the process of drawing, whether encompasses or grasping, time is made into a spatial image that lays bare the drawing activity. The resulting drawn document serves to lessen this denial of coevalness, by chronicling the intersubjective time in which it was made. This drawn document of the airport is unlike other forms of documentation. It not only contains time but also the empathetic nature of bearing witness. In these places of excess and individuality, these non-places, the strange and the familiar coexist through the very process of drawing.

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Bella Kerr

Bella is currently the Programme Director of the Foundation Art and Design course at Swansea Metropolitan University.

An active practitioner since graduating, drawing has provided continuity in a practice that has spanned installation, small-scale multiples, film, set design and photography. Bella has exhibited in a range of contexts from film screenings in major London galleries, to museums, and regional galleries. Recent work has been expressed in the form of large-scale installation, written research, digital prints and an ongoing interactive project.

Primarily educated in London (PGDip Communications, Goldsmiths College, BA (Hons) Fine Art, Middlesex Polytechnic, Diploma Foundation Art and Design, Central School of Art and Design), Bella completed an MPhil at Swansea Metropolitan University in 2008. Produced as written and practice-based research Reading Rooms, Manifestations of Domestic Space in Visual Art and Literature examined a series of room spaces reiterated through the longer history of the novel and contemporary visual practice.

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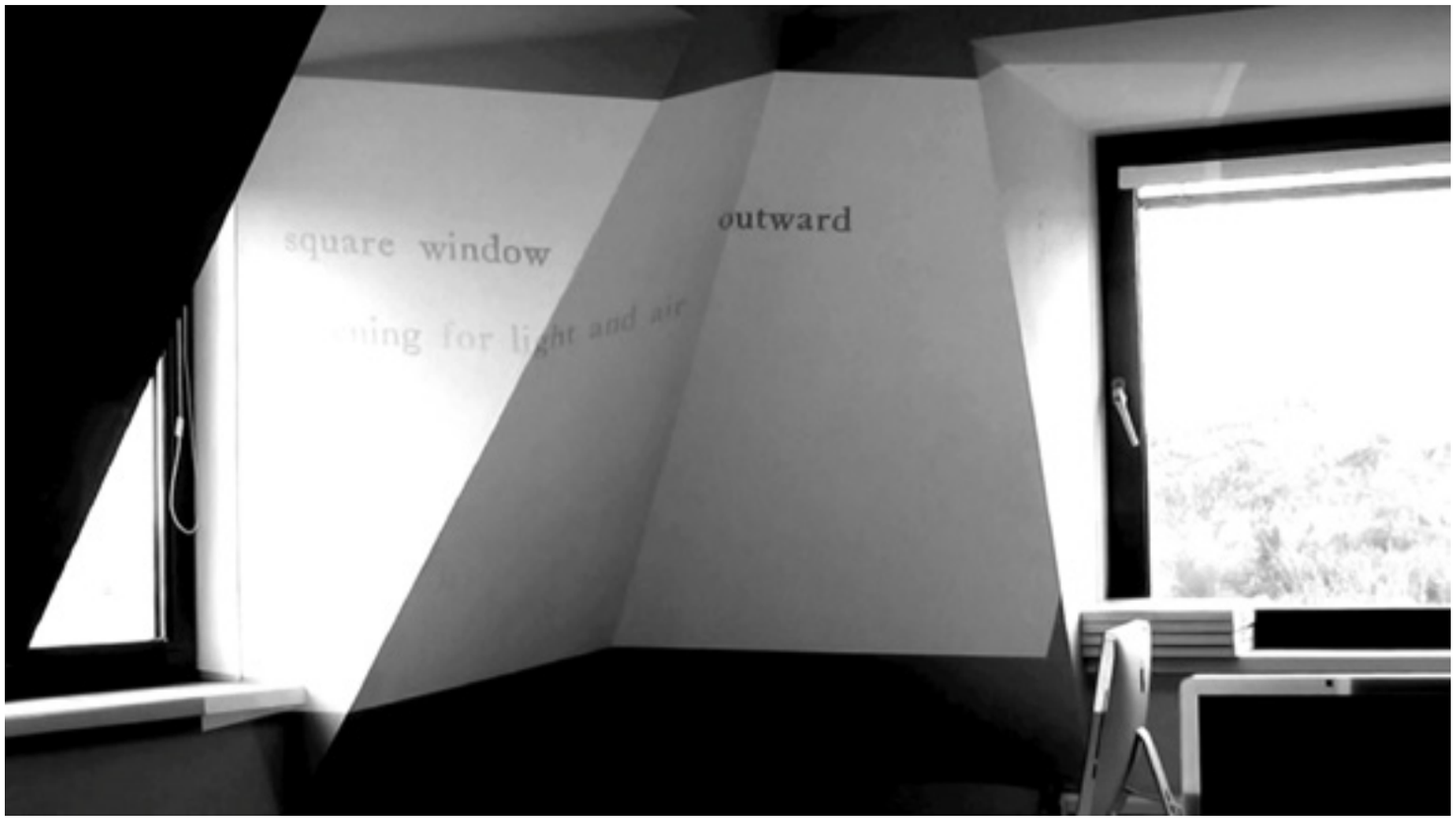
Word Room



Sited Projection

This paper introduces a short sequence of animated text, (http://youtube/2lWEYs46_Rg) drawn from a paragraph in Willa Cather's novel of 1925, *The Professor's House*. Devised as research through practice, the initial intention was to present the animation, looped, as a sited ambient work, without a supporting paper. But as the work progressed, writing and making became an integrated research process and so they are presented here as one work, each part elucidating the other. The purpose was to work experimentally with a text that had been considered in my previous research, in which the *study* had been identified as one of several particular and recurrent images of domestic space found both in visual art and literature. The animated 'deconstruction' of the text is not primarily a literary analysis, but a visual exploration of the 'building' of a space in words.

The choice of this quote was directed by the unusual characteristic of summation of the novel in one paragraph, the simplicity of the language used to express this complexity and the graphic expression of the room on the page.

The animation is shown in three forms and as installed in a possible site. I consider the visual to be work still in progress and it may find a variety of forms as part of my wider practice. In the context of an illustration symposium, book forms in which a sort of concrete poetry has been extracted from this or any novel, as illustrations, becomes an interesting future model also.

The first part of this paper introduces the analysis that led the decision making for the animation, while the second part considers the technical making process.

The novel and the room

Cather's essay of 1922, *The Novel Démeublé* ends in this way:

> The elder Dumas enunciated a great principle when he said that to make a drama, a man needed one passion, and four walls. (Cather 1988(1922): 43)

Perched at the boundaries of domesticity, the spare utility of the Professor's study is the location for the essential exchanges of Cather's novel and provided the material used for the animation:

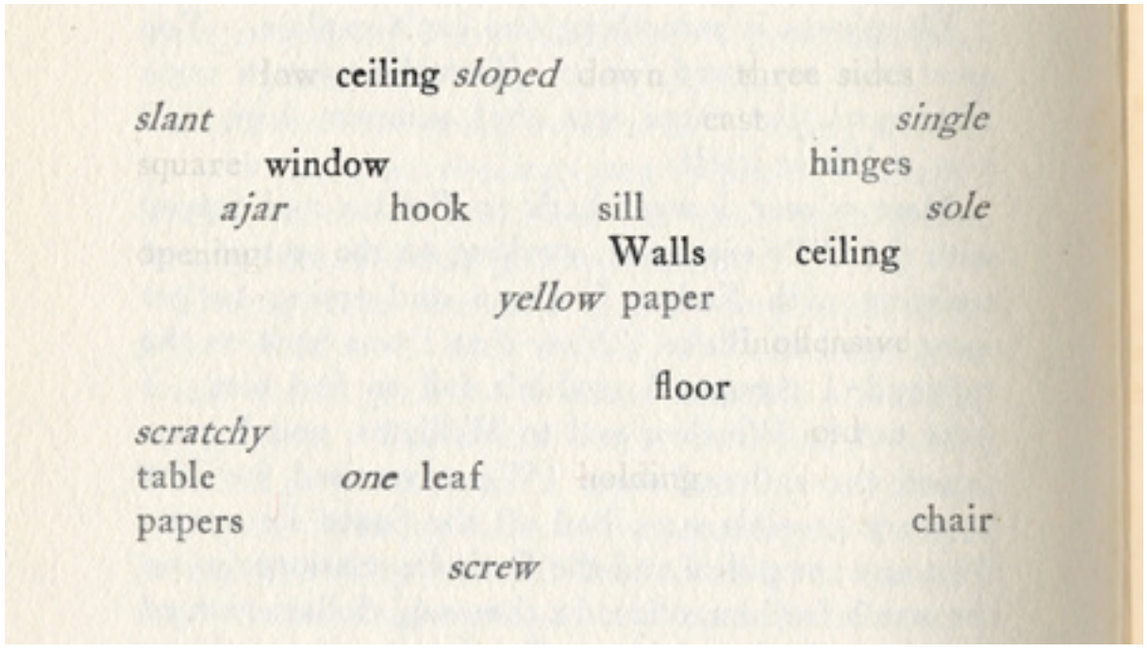
> The low ceiling sloped down on three sides, the slant being interrupted on the east by a single square window, swinging outward on hinges and held ajar by a hook in the sill. This was the sole opening for light and air. Walls and ceiling alike were covered with a yellow paper which had once been very ugly, but had faded into inoffensive neutrality. The matting on the floor was worn and scratchy. Against the wall stood an old walnut table, with one leaf up, holding piles of orderly papers. Before it was a cane-backed office chair that turned on a screw.
> (Cather 1981(1925): 16)

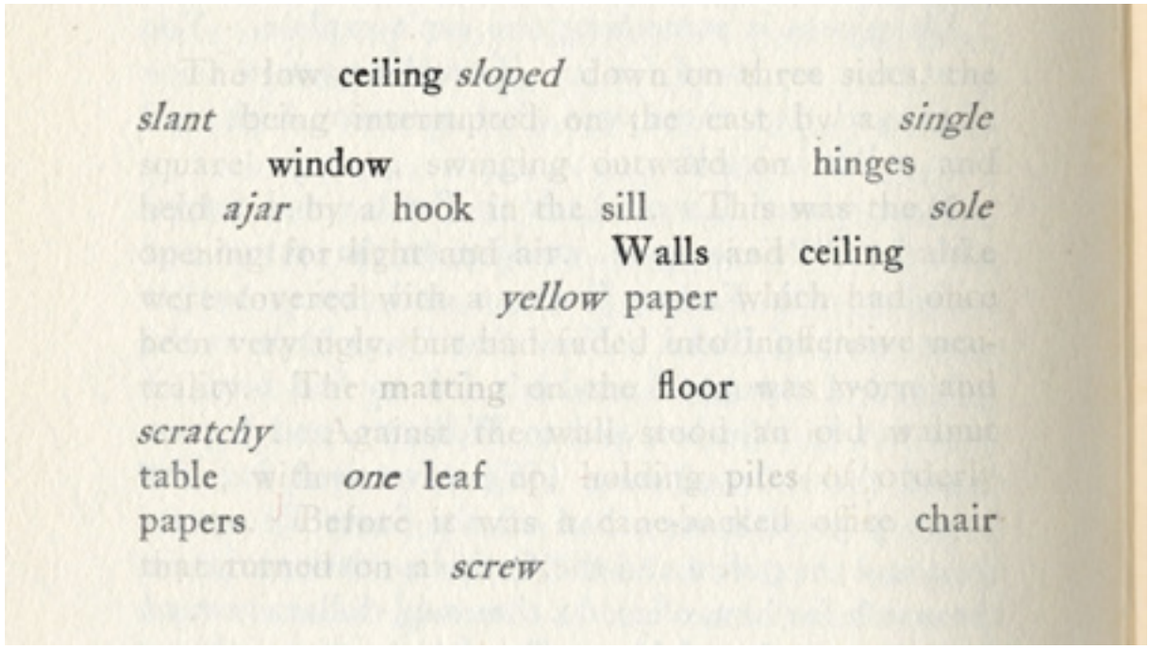
The text in one way provides a simple drawing of the room, but, like a pocket into which the whole can be folded, a sense of the entire novel, it's narratives and structure, is tucked within the meanings and patterns of the words and sentences, within their sounds and shapes. Animating this quote is an attempt to mirror the act of reading, a process both simple and complex, as words offer up individual meanings and reveal further readings in conjunction, and in context.

The low ceiling sloped down drops as we sound it in the internal voice that reads with us, confining and curtailing the attic room, but these sounds are then echoed by *sole opening*, permitting a view from the interior.

Alliteration hisses awkwardness into *sloped down on three sides, the slant*, while *interrupted on the east*, *matting* and *scratchy* throw up hard *t's* in words that unsettle. *Single, swinging* and *ajar* continue the sense of lop-sidedness, a state of imbalance and indecision, while *square window* supplies completeness, drawing *single* to its side, as *hinges* and *hook* anchor the reader in the solid and material world. *Sill* is sensible enough, as are *walls, floor, ceiling, chair* and *table*, building the room as we read, but its sibilance connects it to the slippery sounds above and offers a threshold, an uncertain place of change from interior to exterior. *Outward* and *light* and *air* see and breathe, wide and far, with good reason in the context of the narrative; if these are lost, all is lost.

The words are their own illustration, the animation a gentle re-choreographing of the word dance on the page, as patterns and sequences appear and sink back into the text. When the main body of the text is removed the words either jostle in the space, filling it with diverse ideas, or when reduced to simple nouns, map out the shape and structure of the room, providing the word/furniture of the page/room. Constellations of a few words float free of the overall meaning or are weighted on





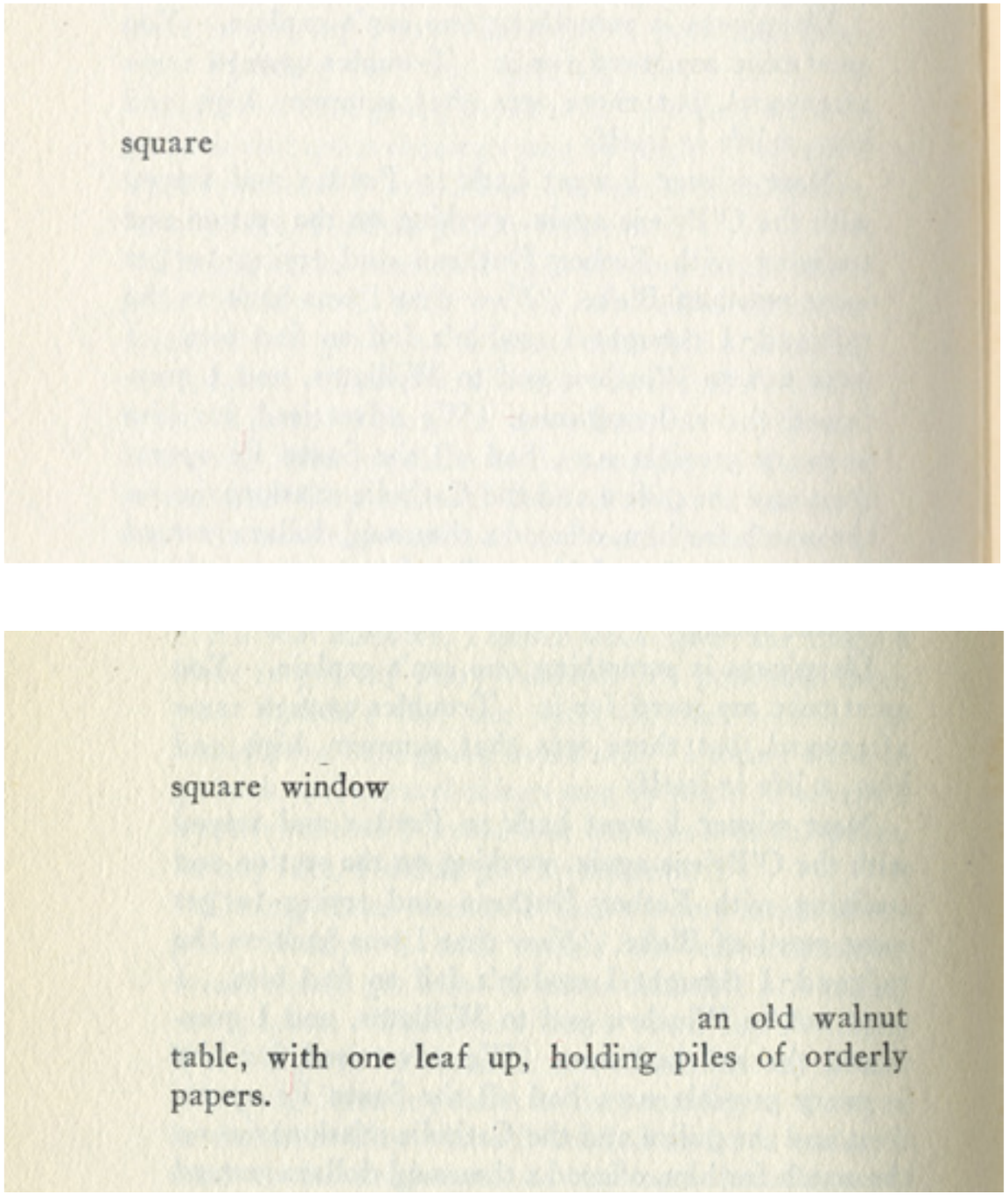
All images on this page - Stills from the *Word Room*

the page - *hinges* - *held* - *hook* - by shape, sound and meaning.

The piles of *orderly* papers tell us where we are, the Professor's workroom, *orderly* and *office* restoring our belief in 'o', as an indicator of wholeness, echoing *outward* and *opening* in a quiet reverberation across the paragraph. Three words for singularity, *'single - sole - one'*, signal the Professor's solitary state and anticipate his possible desire to leave his life and family.

The novel presents a middle-aged history professor with a wife, two daughters, and two sons-in-law, to whom a recent publishing success has brought money and a new house. The move from the old house is nearly completed, but the Professor stays on in his old study in the attic when the family leave for the summer. His only companion is the occasional visitor, Augusta, the plain German seamstress who shares his workspace. He despairs of life, love and family, and then the danger immanent in the room comes to pass: the faulty stove blows out, the window blows shut and he is overcome by fumes. Just in time Augusta drags him from the room and he lives to face the future.

Cather had expressed her sense of 'the world having broken apart in about 1922' (Lee 1989: 183) and this



All images on this page - Stills from the *Word Room*

feeling in the aftermath of the Great War, with a sense of her own ageing, seems to have created the profound sense of aloneness, division and duality within *The Professor's House*. Hermione Lee's inspection of the novel finds the 'house is made of negatives' (1989:234); a makeshift quality mirrored in the wording of the first few pages:

> The very sentences, long, trailing, as if randomly constructed… seem not to have been neatly 'fixed'… Even the language is ill-at-ease with itself. (Lee 1989: 235)

In contrast, the paragraph selected for this work builds the solid structure of a room, described in relatively short, compact sentences, while the confining, *sloping*, *slanting*, *scratchy* lop-sidedness cuts into and constricts the space around the reassuringly 'square window'. Cather explains that:

> In my book I tried to make Professor St. Peter's house rather overcrowded and stuffy with new things; American proprieties, clothes, furs, petty ambitions, quivering jealousies - until one got rather stifled. Then I wanted to open the square window and let in the fresh air that blew off the Blue Mesa. (Cather 1988:31,32)

During the long summer, the Professor has a task - to edit the journal of his old student Tom Outland, killed in the war and who, before studying discovered an ancient Native American cliff city. And so *Book Two* of the novel becomes the story within the story, the *nouvelle* within the *roman*, the 'single square window' in the narrative. As Cather describes it:

> Just before I began the book I had seen, in Paris, an exhibition of old and modern Dutch paintings. In many of them the scene presented was a living-room warmly furnished, or a kitchen full of food and coppers. But in most of the interiors, whether drawing-room or kitchen, there was a square window, open, through which one saw the masts of ships, or a stretch of grey sea. The feeling of the sea one got through those square windows was remarkable… (Cather 1988(1938): 31)

The Professor does not die, he is saved by Augusta, the one person in the end to whom he feels any remaining 'obligation'. Just as the reader turns to the last pages of the book, there is again, as Cather describes: 'The feeling of the sea … through those square windows'(1988(1938): 31), as *outward*, a word from the description of the study reappears offering hope and possibility, again opening a window in the text.

> There was still Augusta… a world full of Augustas, with whom one was outward bound. (Cather 1981(1925):281)

The concrete poetry of e e cummings provides an interesting parallel for ideas raised in relation to the text and its manipulation. The expression of aloneness found in Cummings' poem *l(a* both echoes and contrasts with Cather's.

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> iness
> (Cummings 1958)

Where Cather presents three solid and simple expressions of the solitary state - *single*, *sole* and *one* - Cummings creates a string - *l*, *one*, *l* and *iness* - with *la* and *le* offering a question of gender if read in French, and the *ll* at the heart of the poem proposing either a double assertion of singleness or pairing of two ls. As with handwriting, the typewriter or word processing programme can confuse the distinctions between 1, l (lowercase L) and I (capital i), and Cummings' arrangements suggests both the path of the falling leaf, as the eye descends down the page, and a bold assertion of 'I', the singular human figure standing on the page. Iain Landles investigates the notion that:

> …Cummings' experimental work, like Mallarmé's, provokes a crisis in language by showing the unstable and undecidable relations between meanings, between meaning and form, and between different grammatical categories.
> (Landles 2001:31-43)

While Cummings' works invite these questions, ones that underpin whole strands of the history of the writing and analysis of poetry, Cather's prose provides contrasting structures, from Lee's fragile, 'trailing' sentences at the start of the novel, to the clear assertion of the Professor's

room-space, built with 102 simple, densely packed 'word-bricks'. The five words of more than two syllables - *interrupted*, *opening*, *inoffensive neutrality* and *orderly* - are the concepts that flow around the concrete simplicity of the expression of the room. As Landles notes of Cummings' poem:

> The falling of a leaf is a concrete act, whilst the word "loneliness" is an abstract concept. (Landles 2001:31-43)

The animation does not destabilise the language, but in excavating the room, removing, examining and replacing the words, it finds the solid foundation. Even when only one or two words from the passage are present they are, alone or in combination metonyms or synecdoches for the domestic, the room and the house.

Examining Roni Horn's book *Another Water*, Jane Rendell notes:

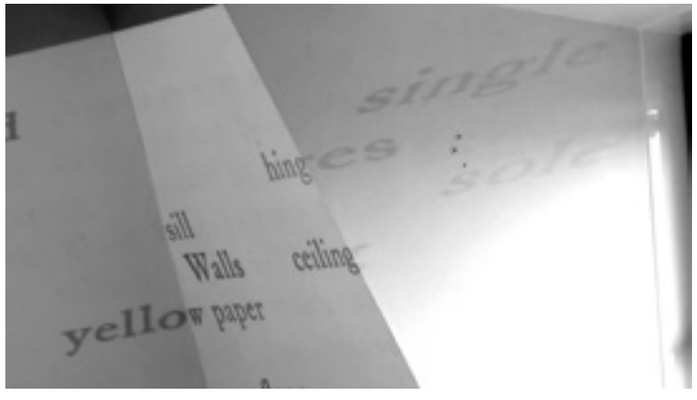
> …books are public sites accessible to diverse audiences but not usually regarded as physical locations. However, it's important to recognize that these kind of sites have specific formal limits and material qualities, for example the size and layout of words on a page, and that they are produced through particular spatial practices or habits of use... Horn's work points towards how different texts …can… produce critical spaces through the act of reading... (Rendell 2006:65)

In Horn's work it is the relationship between images as the 'main 'reading material" (Rendell 2006: 64), technical accounts and footnotes in the form of first person comments that create the 'critical space'; in Cather's it might be said that the narrative space is created by the structure of the novel and the word patterns of each page, while the manipulations of the animation attempt to create a further visually analytical space.

The making of

After writing and making my MPhil dissertation constructed through both written and practice-based research, I was left with the problem of what to do with the 'textual illustrations' I had selected. 'Textual illustrations' was a term invented with my supervisor to account for the chunky quotations from various novels, such as the one used for this piece, each describing a room. They felt solid and three dimensional, in addition to being expressed perfectly in the thin space of the words inked on the page. An examiner had asked if they should have been lifted from the written work and placed

Text only (without page texture layer)



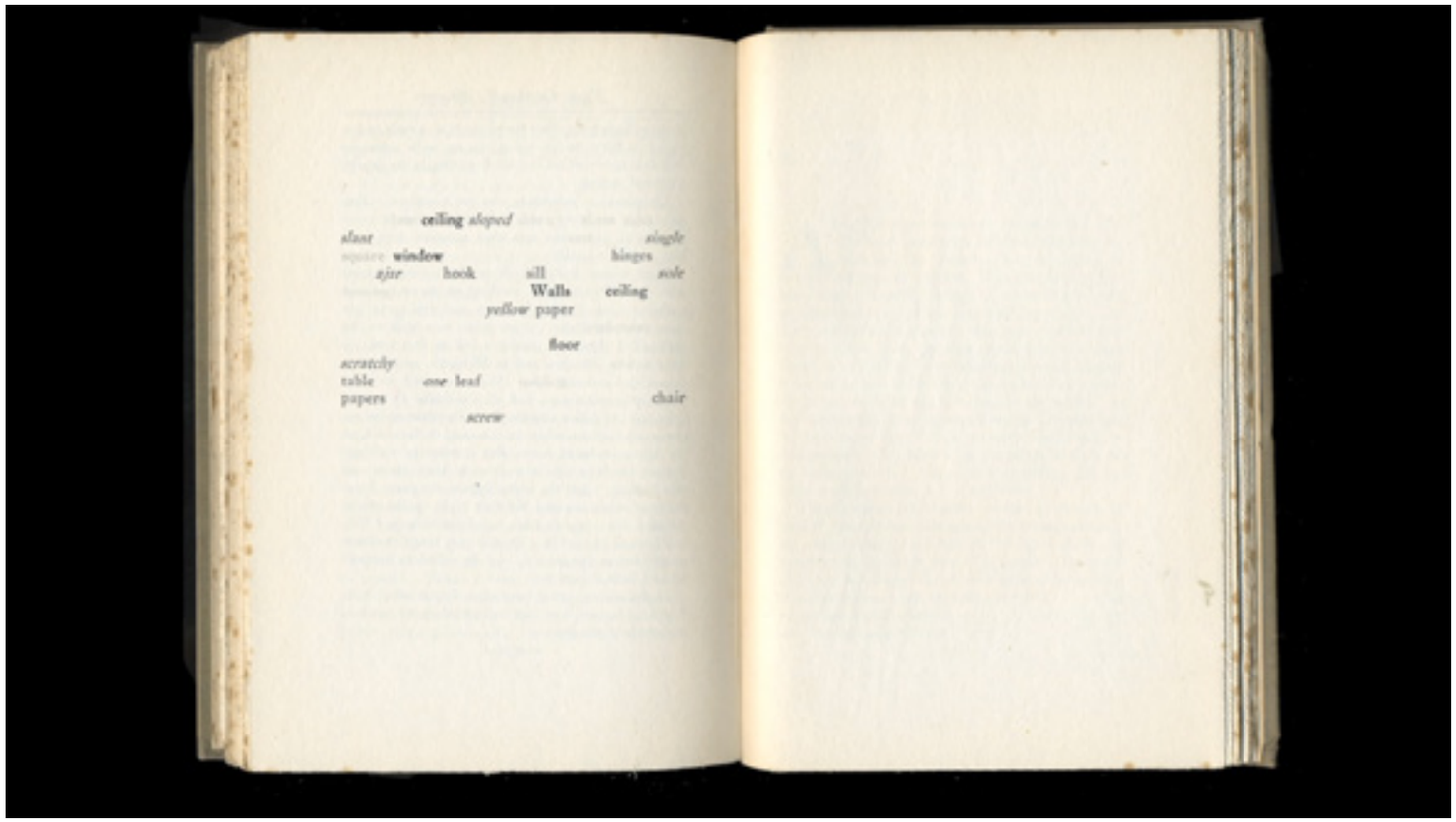
Sited Projection

within the visual work, which was a large-scale, sited installation. We imagined them, shaping them as blocks or bricks as we talked, our hands moulding them in space. At this point translations of the texts into some kind of concrete poetry, whole or in parts, suggested Dadaist 'cut-ups', letterpress prints or the weightier, sited words of Ian Hamilton Finlay. Dissolving the physical into the digital had not been considered.

In his introduction to *Tree of Codes*, a 'translation' of Brono Schulz's novel *The Street of Crocodiles* into a 'book/sculpture' by Jonathan Safran Foer and publishers *Visual Editions*, Olafur Eliasson writes:

> Your body cannot help but chart the shape of a building, the time it will take to reach the other side of the intersection, spaces and gaps… This also happens in books…The gaps in-between words and pages - all of the book that isn't black ink - resonate.
> (Eliasson 2010: rear cover)

Visual Editions' intention, as publishers is to create 'visually interesting' books or 'visual writing'. Safran Foer's appropriation and disruption of Schulz's novel provided a precedent for experimentation that I found compelling; one that created a desire to understand how



Word Room

the physical world and narrative are 'made' or evoked on the page.

Tom Phillips' 'A Humument', an evolving 'treated' novel made from a secondhand book (*A Human Document* by W.H. Mallock, 1892) bought in 1966 and remade over the last 47 years, might be seen as a model also, and in his introduction to the 5th edition Phillips mentions a rule important to his intervention and mine.

> Nor, more importantly for otherwise the whole task would become too casual and easy, is there any but the slightest divergence from the general imperative that Mallock's words should not be shunted around opportunistically: they stay where they are on the page. Where they are joined to make some poetic sense or meaningful continuity, they are linked by the often meandering rivers in the typography as they run, with no short cuts. (Phillips 2012)

Phillips', though, 'spoke of 'mining and undermining' Mallock's text...' in an early introduction to the work. He describes in the 2012 edition how he first approached the book:

> In my eagerness of darting here and there I somehow omitted to read the novel as an ordered story and, though in some sense I almost know the whole of it by heart, I have to this day never read it properly from beginning to end. (Phillips 2012)

It might be said that while Safran Foer intensifies the narrative and meanings of Schulz's novel, Phillips diverts Mallock's anti-Semitism, 'class prejudice and imperialist hauteur' (Phillips 2012) into humour and beauty, a recycling of now unacceptable values into something of worth. Through drawing and collage the hand of the artist has been used to transform the original object, to illuminate the typeset words into new meaning.

It is the play with the orderliness of the typewritten or typeset page that creates part of the intrigue in cummings' poems, the limitations and possibilities of the given typeface, the space bar and carriage return mechanism. As Salvatore Marano writes:

> These early samples, which laid down the foundation of Cummings's future experiments with the pulviscular aspects of visual composition, have in common the exhilarating effect produced by the mechanical spacing of the typewriter on the poet's compositional habits. Far from being the constrictive prison that its automatic functioning may suggest, the machine helped the author solve his problems with both verbal disposition and synctactical consistency (Marano 2003:123)

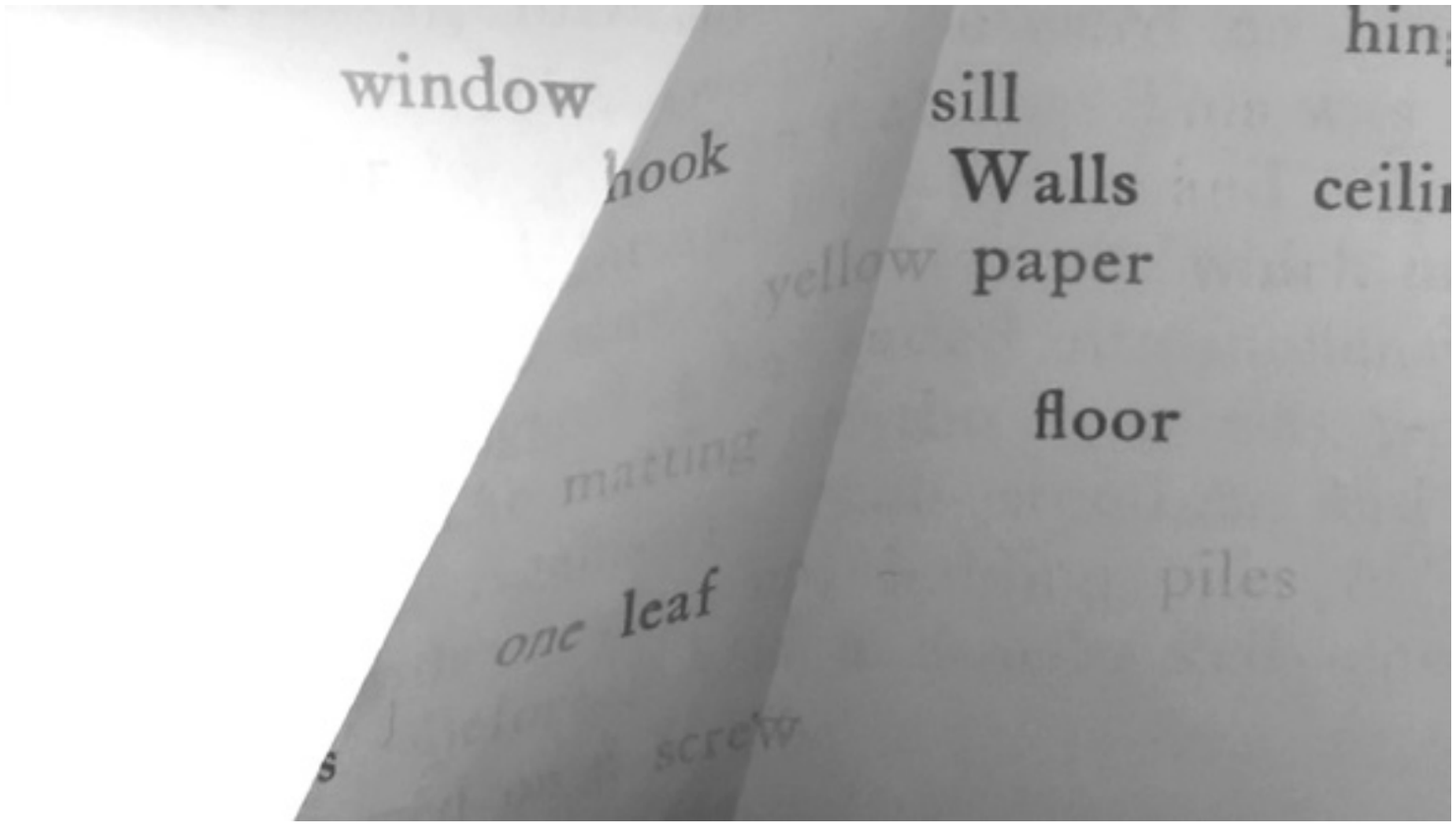
To initiate the project with Cather's text I made a 'sketch' by retyping the words in *Word* and then animating them simply in *PowerPoint*. I liked the idea of utilising programmes that are used in everyday office life, of not meddling with their 'decision making'. *Word* typesets for us everyday and *PowerPoint* has some possibilities for animation. Ultimately these factors were too limiting and did not reference the original, physical presence of the book. Equally I could not ignore the fact that we are in a period in which the relevance of the book form is being questioned by the possibilities offered by the digital and felt the need to reassert the presence of the original printed text.

To create the slide show in Final Cut Pro, the initial cells for the animation were made by scanning the book, a hardback edition from 1925, into Photoshop. The pages on which the chosen paragraph appears were scanned to create a good 'copy' - an image that looked as much like

the page as possible. This image was then manipulated by isolating words and changing the tonal qualities of the text. Problems arose with matching the background around the manipulated or removed words. The text on the pages was then scanned with the colour removed and the contrast heightened. A pair of blank pages were also scanned where the print on the verso was faintly visible and the whole book form visible. All the text cells then existed independently of the blank page base, so that effects could be built up through layering and then dissolving or cross fading the overlaid images in Final Cut, and the sequence shown as pages of a book, or cropped as words only, retaining the page texture or not. The positioning of the words on the page was not altered - each stayed in it's original place when visible.

Eliasson writes that through *Tree of Codes* Safran Foer intensifies the physical experience of the book to create:

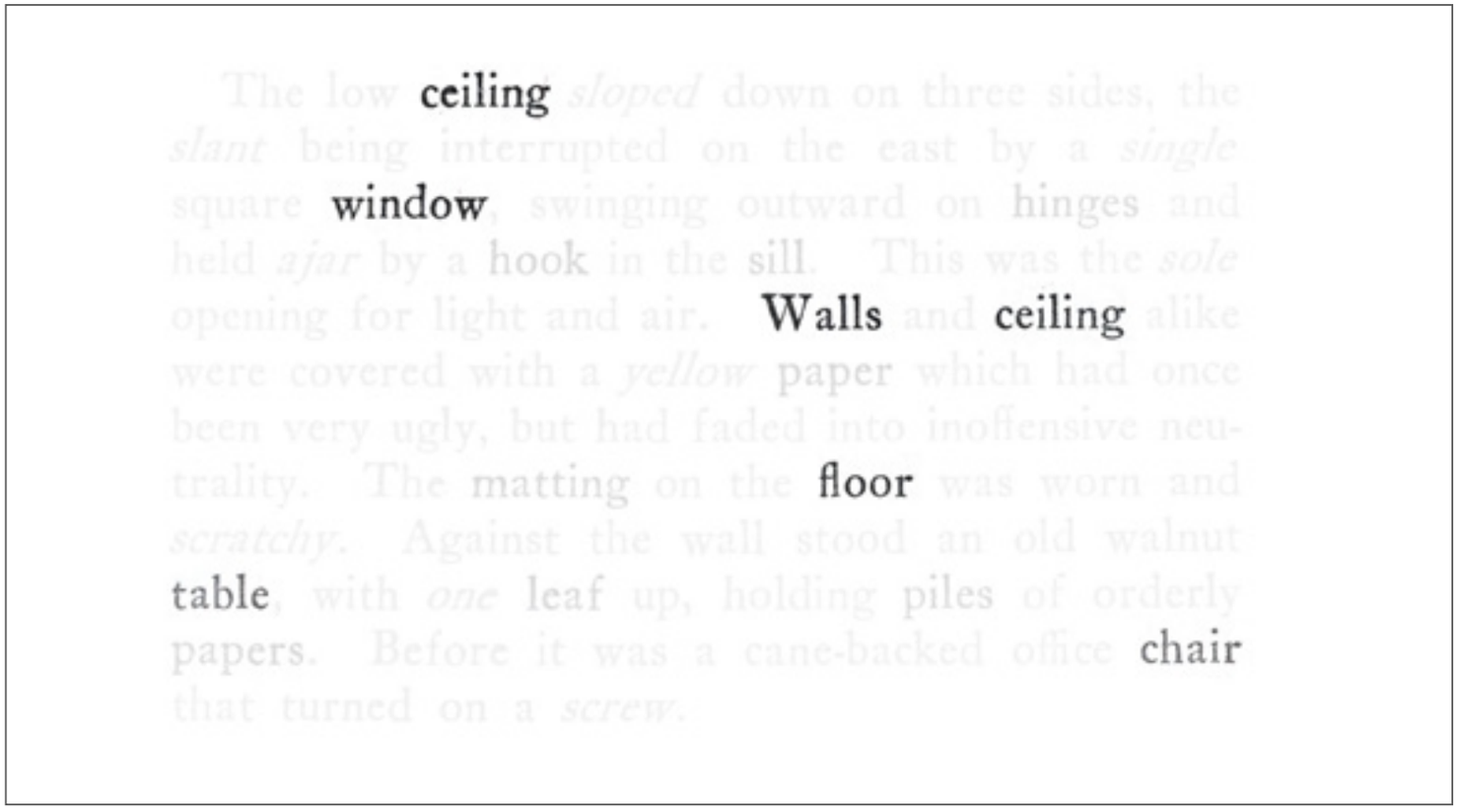
> …an extraordinary journey that activates the layers of time and space involved in the handling of a book and its heaps of words. Jonathan Safran Foer deftly deploys sculptural means… welds narrative and materiality, and our reading experience into a book that remembers it actually has a body. (Eliasson 2010: rear cover)



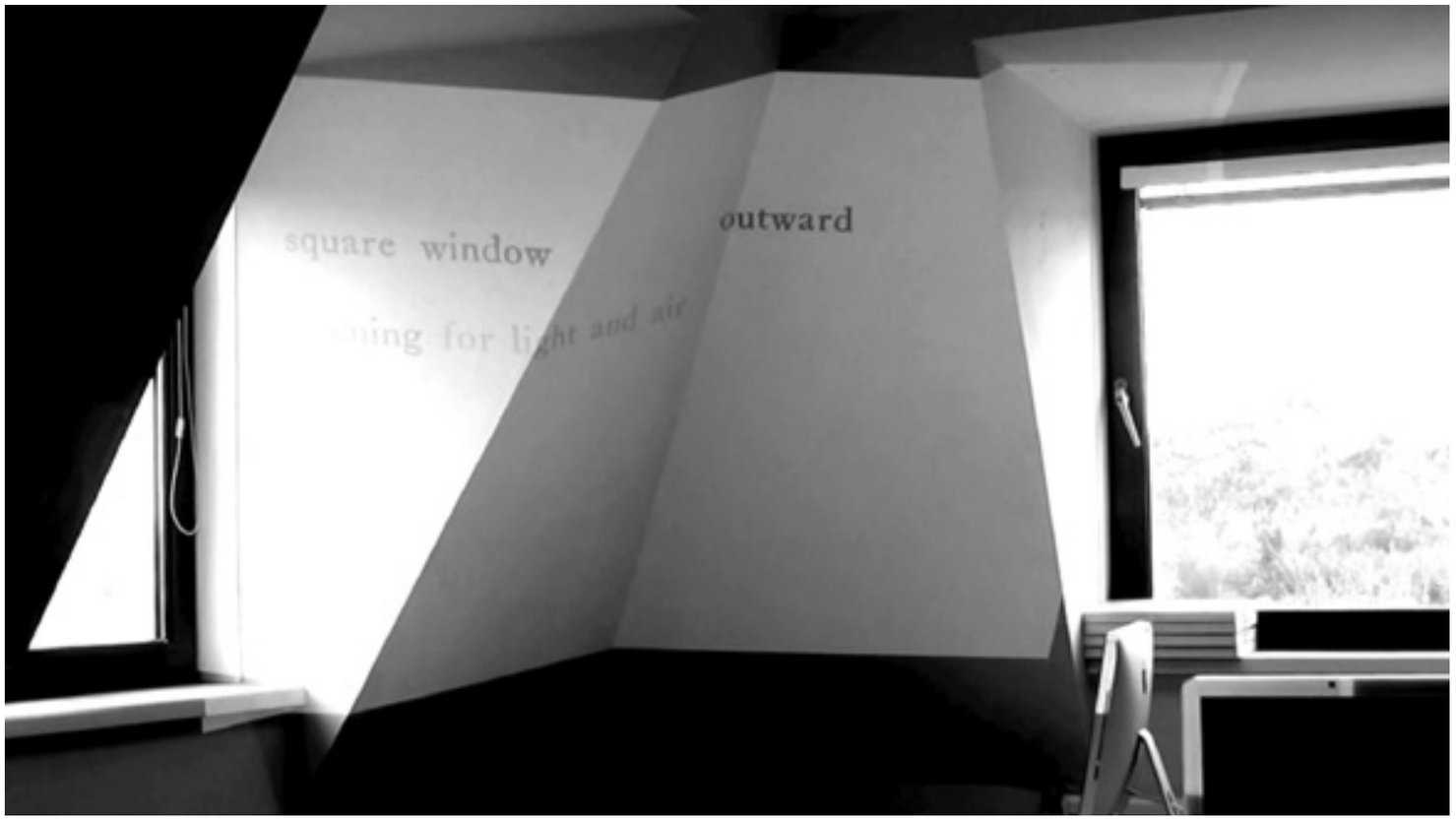
Sited Projection

In making the animation I investigated the exchange between the physical and digital: at first taking the words completely away from the book and retyping them myself, and then lifting them from and returning them to the page to create the cells for the animation. I considered the image of the book as a whole, as an object, and then, cropping to remove the reference to the whole, retained the texture, the reminder of materiality, while focusing on the words and their dance. In one version even the texture of the page is removed to leave only the words. At times, when full black, the reproduced words retain much of the original quality of the print, and yet when the tone is reduced the mid-grey words become unequivocally digital. This representational play came out of experimentation and is indicative of the journey within the work, from the materiality of the original book-object to it's nature as a projected image.
Cather wrote that:

> Whatever is felt upon the page without being specifically named there—that, one might say, is created. (Cather 1988(1922):41)



Text only (without page texture layer)



Sited Projection

I have looked for what has been created; searching in the gaps and spaces between the words for the secrets of this construction, but Cather also wrote that:

> Art is a concrete and personal and rather childish thing after all—no matter what people do to graft it into science and make it sociological and psychological; it is no good at all unless it is let alone to be itself—a game of make-believe, of re-production, very exciting and delightful to people who have an ear for it or an eye for it. (Cather 1988: 125)

I have stumbled into a fictional room and prodded the walls. I have not found a fragile 'set', it has withstood the attention, the words robustly marking out the space on the page even when disrupted by visual deconstruction. I look often look at the cover of my Virago paperback copy of *The Professor's House* and wonder about the picture that is not his study at all, but is an image of *The Artist's Desk* by Vanessa Bell, and I think about the Professor's study, a room that I never fully visualise, but hold as a feeling, a 'place feeling' in my mind, beyond illustration or making in the three dimensional world, and I go back to the words to find my picture.

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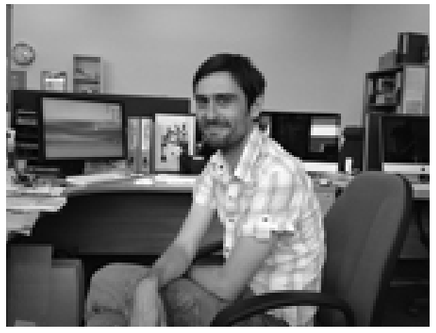
Richard Levesley & Marc Bosward



Richard is the programme leader for Illustration and Animation at the University of Derby.

His research explores characterisation, storytelling, humour and visual narratives. As a practicing freelance illustrator he was worked with a wide variety of clients for over ten years. He also works on self-authored projects under the title ‘wooden dog press’ that promote his personal practice and student publications.

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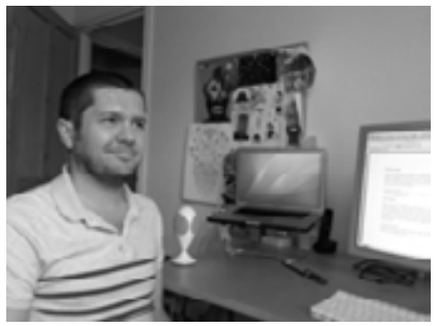

Marc is a lecturer in Illustration and Animation at the University of Derby.

He works in collage, photomontage, and moving image. The primary theme that concerns his personal practice is the human psychologies’ innate need to transcend the isolation of individual existence. Particular focus is given to the destructive and violent expressions of that need from a societal perspective. This central premise underpins the attempt to explore various sociological phenomena, historical and contemporary, related to ideology, authoritarianism, conformity and armed conflict.

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Illustrated Worlds

Andrew Rae, *Crowd,* personal work, part of an exhibition, 2012

Our response to the notion of spatialisation in illustration is concerned with the creation of a sense of place, and how as illustrators we gradually construct believable, engaging virtual environments for our figures and characters to inhabit. The term virtual environment is now synonymous with the digital and the interactive, but our definition of the virtual environment encompasses any drawn or constructed space that is an equivalent or alternate to the real world that does not share its physical, tangible form. In researching for this paper we discussed our own practice as illustrators, and although our methodological and aesthetic approach to the discipline is very different, we recognised that our work shares one fundamental similarity. We are both concerned with the construction of a personal world that we continually revisit and expand across our practice, a preoccupation that the majority of illustrators share.

As illustrators, we recognise the importance of developing what can be described as individual stylistic signature, a distinct visual vocabulary or a personal voice. We understand that this is a fundamental basis for making a contribution to the discipline, and to the pursuit of commercial success. A personal world is the individual alternate reality that we construct through the attainment of a distinctive and recognizable approach. In describing our personal voice or style, we could ask ourselves - what does my world look like? Who lives there? What happens there? and so on.

Relatively recently, it is apparent that the development of personal worlds that are manifest across multiple media and platforms offer new opportunities for independent entrepreneurship and merchandising. Pete Fowler's personal world *Monsterism* and Nathan Jurevicius' *Scarygirl* indicate the possibility of new modes of professional practice that deviate considerably from the traditional art director and illustrator relationship.

In reference to our role as educators, we were also interested in how students of illustration develop awareness of their practice in the construction of a personal world, and the potential value of this awareness in developing a distinctive and individual approach.

During our initial research we referred to the article *Making the Unbelievable Believable by Hayley Potter*, from *Varoom* number 7, September 2008. Her analysis of how illustrators and writers create a believable and engaging personal world provided a basis for our formulation of a number of questions that we have attempted to address. We began to gather primary research by conducting interviews with a wide range of illustrators with a variety of stylistic and thematic approaches. The response was

very positive; the topic of personal worlds appeared to have a particular resonance for the practitioners that we interviewed. Through the interview responses, we hoped to gain an insight into the conceptual and aesthetic qualities that are considered important in developing a personal world, and how that relates to and translates to commercial practice. Many of the responses are included in this paper. Through our research, it is our intention to make a practical assessment of the key issues related to this topic, to begin to define or establish a framework for critically reflecting on practice as the construction of a personal world, that could be of practical value to practitioners, educators and students.

The illustrated, personal world can be described as the expression of the creator's authorial voice. Through the manipulation of various components that signify actual objects and phenomena from material and lived experience, the illustrator creates a world that we recognise through the use of stylistic and thematic consistencies that depict the world and its inhabitants. In this capacity, the illustrator can be described with a number of definitions that identify authorship, with some interesting connotations "The person who gives existence to anything", the "Father of all life", "One who begets", "An inventor, constructor or founder" and "A director, commander or ruler" (Rock, 1998: 36).

In his article *Graphic Authorship* (1998), Michael Rock has acknowledged that Andrew Sarris' definition of the filmmaker as an auteur in *The Primal Screen* (1973) is useful in recognising the characteristics that specify authorship in Graphic Design. Sarris proposes that to identify a filmmaker as an auteur, they must demonstrate technical expertise; a stylistic signature exhibited across several films, and most importantly, demonstrate a consistency of vision and evoke palpable interior meaning through their work (Rock, 1998: 38). In relation to the construction of personal worlds, it is interesting to apply these criteria to the practice of an illustrator. Through a consistency of method and aesthetics, and the preoccupation with certain concepts or subject matter, the illustrator produces variations on the same visual themes that manifest their experience of the actual, real socio-historical and cultural world through a mediated, constructed space that embodies their psychological, emotional and intellectual concerns or fixations.

Mise en scène is generally defined as the filmmakers control over what appears in the frame of the film. It is the method of visual storytelling and establishing themes through the manipulation of the various design aspects that constitute the film's aesthetic, including set design, choice of location, lighting, costume and performance (Bordwell and Thompson, 2001: 156).

Through his innovative exploration of the potential mise en scène to present alternative realities, pioneering early filmmaker George Méliès created 'an unreal world wholly obedient to whims of the imagination' (Bordwell and Thompson, 2001: 158). The effect of Méliès experiments is a constructed, fabricated world that distorted and exaggerated lived experience. There is a strong visual signature contained within his work that has become synonymous with film's facility to transport the audience to another world. Illustration can deploy mise en scène to a degree that is impossible to achieve through the photographic image. The content of the image is not encumbered by any physical restrictions and constraints. The aspects of mise en scène identified by Bordwell and Thompson in *Film Art: An Introduction* (2001) are useful in defining the language of form that an illustrator manipulates in constructing a world that has an engaging and enveloping level of consistency and coherence: these aspects include the environment depicted and its sense of space, the characters that inhabit the space and their qualities of attitude and performance, the use of lighting, color, texture and composition.

The interpretation of the personal world and its meaning is dependent on the semiology that the illustrator employs. The construction of illustrated world is based on a very complex and rich confluence of icons, index and symbols

Andrew Rae, *Weezer: Weezer Greatest Hits* album cover, Geffen Records

that refer to the actual, whilst providing the opportunity for the expression of the internal and sub conscious that allows for poetic interpretations of the world's meaning and messages.

The Illustrator engages in the process of organizing logic in the selection and manipulation of pictorial elements that are loaded with cultural and social resonance. Through the process of selection and manipulation, the Illustrator appropriates signifiers and symbols. The illustrator employs a language that has the facility to refer to the real world; it exploits the viewer's recognition and association with lived experience, whilst also separating the image from reality with the unlimited range of distortions and mediations that transcend physical limitations. The construction of a virtual, imagined world is a manifestation of a consistent and coherent environment that is a familiar analogue to our lived experience in the material world. The fantastical and surreal features of the illustrated environment can exaggerate and distort the social and historical significance of signs that refer to actual existence. This mediation offers a powerful tool for the amplifying and magnifying our emotional, psychological and intellectual experiences. Paul Wells' analysis of the relationship between the abstracted and actual in animation expresses this tension and exchange:

> ‘The ‘otherness’ of animation itself announces a different model of interpretation which is abstracted from material existence and offers the transparency of ideas.’ (Wells, 2002: 3)

The sense of reality we create in illustration is ‘half dedicated to the representational authenticity, half dedicated to the narrational forms which heighten and exhibit the fluid conditions of the real world’ (Wells, 1998: 28). These narrational forms provide the communication of ideas and messages that could not be easily captured or expressed through the photographic image alone.

An illustrator’s practice repeatedly revisits and embodies a recognizable world across their output. Under these conditions, each new image that an illustrator produces is an additional window revealing another aspect of a familiar space. The effect is cumulative, the personal world enlarges; the illustrator’s practice is continually mapping its terrain and depicting its inhabitants. Andrew Rae’s world is gradually expanding across his personal and commercial output, he comments on the cumulative and evolutionary aspect of his work.

> ‘I do have a sense that all the characters and scenes I draw are from another world of my creation that I’m slowly mapping, I guess it’s a form of megalomania that keeps me from trying to control the real world.’ (Rae, interview, 2012)

A semiological approach to communication theory acknowledges the role of the audience and assumes that visual communication can be described as the ‘production and exchange of meanings’ (Fiske 1990: 2). In this exchange, the interaction of the recipient and the signs contained within a piece of communication is the basis for the production of meaning. The recipient is not a passive observer, but an active participant in the process of communication. The cultural and social position of the recipient generates meaning in response to visual signs and symbols; the recipient interprets the message in terms of their personal beliefs and values. Accordingly, the meaning of the work and its interpretation cannot be separated (Barnard, 2005: 25).

Graham Rawle’s work acknowledges this, he understands his audience and anticipates how they might interpret the visual clues and signs his work contains. His images rely on the cultural knowledge and visual intelligence of the viewer; he understands how the visual references that he employs will be read. The viewer derives knowledge and meaning through interpreting the interrelationship of often incongruous and seemingly unrelated components. Graham encourages the reader to be an active participant rather than a passive receiver. In his series *Lost Consonants*, meaning is contained within the relationship between text and image and the visual clues and incongruities depicted. The viewer is invited to decipher the image to discern its meaning; the participation of the viewer is demanded. His personal world encourages the viewer to be involved and engaged in the completion of its communication by solving its visual puzzles. The world contains narrative elements derived from his personal experience and worldview.

> ‘I am driven to create work that connects directly or indirectly my personal history in an attempt to recapture something I feel has been lost from my childhood. Whether it’s through writing or image-making (or a combination of both) the worlds that I create provide the appropriate setting for me to revisit and explore unknown or undiscovered areas of my unconscious past, and to create new stories within them.’ (Rawle, interview, 2012)

Arguably, our engagement with illustration that depicts a world relies on certain conditions and parameters.

Graham Rawle, *Lost Consonants no. 770 - Sheep Cones,* 2002, series featured in *The Guardian* 1990-2000

Graham Rawle, The Yellow Brick Road from *The Wizard of Oz,* published 2008 by Atlantic Books Ltd

Perhaps, the image has a correspondence with reality in that its sense of space employs a convincing weight, depth and volume. Compositional devices can be employed to imply the space and objects outside the image frame, extending the viewer's perception of what the environment contains. These elements that correspond with the material existence can provide a framework of rules for the spatilisation of an illustrator's voice, providing the impression of a world that is navigable, that it can be explored and traversed. The audience's recognition of an illustrator's personal visual signature is based on the consistency and cohesion that is established through common features present across their output. This consistency is maintained by the adherence to methods and principles that are repeated and revisited. These principles can lead to the formulation of the set of rules or laws that define the personal world and its boundaries. Graham Rawle stresses the importance of establishing laws that anchor and maintain the cohesion of a personal world.

> 'It's important to make your world real, however unreal, imagined or nonsensical it may be. There must be an internal logic, a set of rules that define how your world works and how your characters operate within it.' (Rawle, interview, 2012)

Objects, creatures and characters belong in their environments through a process of integration and synthesis that occurs according to a set of rules that dictate colour, texture, composition and other aesthetic devices. This imbues the world with a sense of cohesion and coherence. The world's internal logic, based on the rules that the illustrator establishes, creates a sense of believability.

For many illustrators, the sketchbook is basis of experimentation and testing that leads to the development of a personal world. It is through experimentation and discovery that we realize and manifest a world. It is the act of drawing that drives the cumulative process of revealing a world and its inhabitants. Andrew Rae reflects on the process of action and reaction in discovering and uncovering the elements that populate and define his world.

> 'When I'm drawing in my sketch book I just let thoughts float into my head and then start drawing and react to the last line that I made. This is a really enjoyable process and means that I don't know what I'll end up with, after a bit certain things start to resurface.' (Rae, interview, 2012)

Andrew Rae, *Crowd,* personal work, part of an exhibition, 2012

The elements that resurface in sketchbooks represent our individual preoccupations and obsessions that coalesce and merge to form our personal world. It emerges through the process of combining and reconfiguring these elements into a coherent whole. Typically, observations and experiences from everyday life are recorded in the illustrator's sketchbook. Recognizing the value of our own personal histories and experiences is important in developing a world that has individual and unique characteristics. These observations are often incorporated into the world and form connections to everyday, lived experience and our shared social, cultural and historical bonds. Andy Smith recognises the value of everyday experience and observation in the development of a personal world.

> 'I like taking things that you see in everyday life that you might not normally notice and representing them in a way that you will notice them. Going out drawing kind of trains you to look a bit harder and then little things like that get noticed' (Smith, interview, 2012)

Andy Smith, *Orange World*, commissioned by Enterprise IG for a brochure, 2000

As a personal world begins to take shape, new work is evaluated according to its suitability for, and relationship with, the existing environment. Through experimentation and testing with method and media we refine the selection and application of method and materials that define the aesthetic principles of the world and its stylistic qualities. New experiments are either rejected or adopted according to their appropriateness for the world. This reflection questions how a new character or objects will interact with and relate to the established world and its present inhabitants. In a sense, the personal world develops a separateness, a life and existence in it's own right that dictates the course of an illustrators decisions and actions. Tim Ellis reflects on the how his world determines his process:

> 'Think of your illustrations as polaroids from an illustrated world. Think about what a car looks like from that world, a dog, a tree, an apple etc. The more you add, the more you world is built'. (Ellis, interview, 2012)

As educators, we encourage our students to continually develop a personal voice, or personal world. Professional experiences influence the further development of the graduate's personal world. There are many challenges for the emerging illustrator at the onset of a career. Ideally, graduates will have an understanding of how their worlds can be applied to professional practice. They should also be prepared to be adaptable and flexible, with a willingness to continually evolve as an Illustrator.

Professional practice offers illustrators the opportunity to deploy their personal worlds in a commercial context. A strong sense of personal voice and an individual, unique approach is crucial in attracting commissions from art directors and clients. Andy Smith reflects on the importance of developing of a personal world in attracting commercial work.

> 'I think it took me a long time to realise that I had created my own little world and that when clients commission me that's what they want a piece of. I'm seeing everything through my world and when I do an illustration job that becomes my angle in to it, to solve the problem that I'm presented with. It's like I have developed a filter that I see things through.' (Smith, interview, 2012)

The healthy and productive collaboration between art director and illustrator is one of sharing thoughts and ideas. The illustrator's personal approach does not necessarily have to be compromised or damaged by a commercial project. As a project develops, the illustrator can take ownership of its direction. There is the opportunity to authentically integrate the project into the personal world.

Although regular compromise is inevitable, through gaining experience and pursuing suitable jobs, commissioned work can develop and enhance the personal world. In some fundamental respects, completing the commission can becomes a project with its own personal goals to solve. Even projects that at first feel uninspiring offer creative opportunities that allow for the persuit of personal development and expression. Commercial and personal objectives can form a productive symbiosis that benefit an illustrator's practice holistically. Alan Sanders says that:

> 'It isn't just a case of personal projects feeding into commercial work but often the other way around too. I think it's healthy that one side of my practice should inform the other. If the personal work and commercial work are very different things then the authenticity of it becomes questionable.' (Sanders, interview, 2012)

Graham Carter, *White Water Warrior.* Limited edition print, silkscreen with overprint varnish

Graham Carter has developed his world using the repetition of recurring characters and elements that constitute an engaging and memorable environment. He is a highly motivated illustrator who employs a variety of approaches and materials across drawing, painting, digital animation and sculpture. Regardless of method and material, his work consistently evidences the features and principles that he feels are important and fundamental to his practice. His images are surreal and otherworldly, yet they maintain a sense that they are grounded in reality.

He says: 'There may be a giant Samurai in a forest surrounded by Origami birds or something, but if you add a normal looking phonebox nearby or streetlamp, it automatically makes it a little more convincing, that this could actually happen.'

The visual codes and devices that connect the world to actual lived experience are juxtaposed with the repetition of fantastical objects and characters. This provides the contrast of the surreal and the normal, the fantastical and the familiar. Hammerhead people, Yetis, origami birds, monsters and robots populate his environment. Graham acknowledges the importance of distinctive, reacurring characters in encouraging the audience to engage with the world and its inhabitants.

Graham Carter, *The Warrior. 3D,* made from layers of hand coloured wood. The character was one of three appearing in an animation promoting his 2012 exhibition entitled Me, Marionette

> ‘I tend to produce several different prints around the same character, creating an episodic feel to them. The character could be on a journey, exploring different environments. The fact that people recognise the character automatically puts them into a familiar world.’ (Carter, interview, 2012)

Graham Carter has had a successful commercial career, developing memorable advertisements and editorial illustrations as well as personal projects across traditional print and three-dimensional objects. There is a clear sense that the commercial work and personal practice overlaps, and that his commercial work benefits his self-initiated outcomes and vice versa. His commercial outcomes firmly belong in the personal world that he has created.

His recent self-initiated animations demonstrate how he has benefitted from his experience of working with animation for commercial clients and developed this to a higher level of sophistication. Translating his world to animation has expanded and enlarged it’s parameters, whilst maintaining the two-dimensional, flat qualities that are such a strong, recognisable feature of his work. He says that ‘It’s brought much greater depth to the world, and it’s been fun keeping the 2D flatness of my landscapes’. The animations that Graham produces retain his visual signature; they exhibit the same sense of humour and contain the same cultural and historical references as his illustrations.

Graham has created a number of wooden three-dimensional assemblages and sculptures that manifest his characters in physical, tangible forms, whilst exhibiting the features of their two-dimensional equivalents. The three-dimensional pieces give his characters and their world an added element of depth, extending their use into another medium. The figures in his animation exhibit characteristics of motion that suggest a wooden object that has been brought to life. They move in manner that is synonymous with wooden toys and automatons.

Digital layering and compositing is employed to effectively replicate the tactile, textured print qualities of his flat work. Across the wide range of media he employs, the sense of revisiting the same world is strong. Graham has created a world that is applicable to commercial illustration as well as providing the basis of his practice as an independent printmaker and exhibitor.

ScaryGirl by Nathan Jurevicius began as a personal project and has evolved over a ten-year period into a major commercial enterprise. It is a colourful, magical world that combines a huge variety of two-dimensional and three-dimensional elements. The premise of the narrative is bizaar and intriguing, a girl adopted by a giant octopus is trying to discover who is haunting her dreams. The narrative is complemented with an array of strange, fantastical and impish characters, it is a world where tentacles flap behind each rock and mountains wear trilby hats. *Scarygirl* is comparable to the work Graham Carter, Gary Baseman and Pete Fowler in its manifestation across a variety of platforms. From its creation in 2001 it has grown to encompass a wide range of media and merchandising, becoming a franchise in its own right. Nathan reflects on the evolution of the project and it's underpinning:

> 'I'm very open to the evolution of characters and even developing alternate takes on stories and worlds. The one thing that never changes is the thread that holds all the stories together - the over arcing themes stay the same.' (Jurevicius, interview, 2012)

Nathan Jurevicius, *Scarygirl*

Through the *Scarygirl* website the viewer is directed to an online shop where vinyl toys, screensavers, video games and a graphic novel can be purchased. Nathan is presently developing *Scarygirl* as a feature length animated film. Although the *Scarygirl* world is fantastical and surreal, Nathan feels that its relationship to the real world is key to its development and success. He emphasizes that his world contains a 'sense of culture. I try to make my world feel as though there's been an established history and back story.' The inspiration for the characters and narrative are derived from his Lithuanian background and his fascination with the ocean and sea life that is a recurring feature of the work. It is important for Nathan that the world contains an 'imaginary mash up of cultural iconography'. Nathan identifies the conflation of his personal experiences of real life and his fantastical imagination as integral to the success of the project.

> 'Constantly draw, write notes and create a world that you would want to walk around in and inhabit. Also look to your personal influences and your own life, how could some of those components be brought into an imaginary world.' (Jurevicius, interview, 2012)

Nathan Jurevicius, *Scarygirl City Folk* series vinyl figures, Kidrobot

His world has a set of rules, laws, classes, and customs. It is vitally important to Nathan's practice that the back-story and culture of his world is established. This is the basis of the development of the *Scarygirl* world as a commercial enterprise. The production of toys, games and animation extends the parameters of the world and materializes some of its aspects and inhabitants. Playing the interactive games allows the audience to directly interact with the world's environment. These additional features extend the world and become vehicles for the wide commercial distribution of aspects of an illustrator's personal voice. The world becomes a new model for Entrepreneurship in new and emerging markets for illustration that do not rely on the traditional art director and illustrator relationship. Rather than being type cast or pigeon holed, the illustrator's personal world transcends the traditional boundaries of the discipline and moves to other media and platforms.

In relation to the development of a framework for the critical evaluation of the creation of the illustrated personal world, the paper has highlighted a number of key principles and criteria.

The illustrated world's degree of correspondence with material existence provokes recognition and understanding, whilst the unlimited palette of surreal and exaggerated distortions and mediations that the illustrator employs can illuminate aspects of lived experience that reflects the real, material world in a new light. The unreal, imagined world illuminates the actual, tangible world; it embodies and translates complex socio-historical phenomena. It is critically important to recognize the value of individual experience and its rendition as the narrative elements that the illustrator engages to express personal concerns and observations. Drawing from everyday lived experience allows the illustrator to provoke an emotional response that engenders an attachment with the characters and figures that the world contains. The development of a set of rules or revisited patterns that maintain cohesion and consistency in form and subject matter, whilst allowing for evolution and migration of the world across multiple platforms is also crucial.

The history of illustration is punctuated by changes in technology and media that have altered the course of the discipline. The practice of Nathan Jurevicius and Pete Fowler and others indicate the possibilities for illustrators who are engaging with the range of opportunities emerging in new media platforms and merchandising. This practice is outside of the constraints of the historical art director and illustrator relationship and represents different opportunities for entrepreneurship and professional practice that allows for greater independence and autonomy. It is inter-disciplinary and cross-disciplinary in nature and represents the further blurring of the boundaries between illustration, animation and interactive media.

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Allan Walker, currently Head of the School of Arts and Media at the University of Salford, is an artist whose practice-based research includes an examination of the use and construction of space in non-European graphic traditions, in particular of Japan and China. This cross-cultural approach has included the re-evaluation of historical sources for contemporary practice and takes the form of an integration of mechanical and electronic print and other traditional media.

He has an international exhibition record including at the Toshiba Gallery in the Victoria and Albert Museum, Photographers Gallery in Beijing, Hyundai Gallery in Seoul and Peace Gallery in Hiroshima. He has also curated shows and co-founded *EYECON: Digital Print Research Publishing*. His works are in museum collections such as the Brooklyn Museum of Art, New York; Machida Museum of Graphic Arts, Tokyo; and Victoria and Albert Museum, London.

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Alternative Traditions: Flat as a Way of Visualising Space

The aim of this investigation is to compare two examples of 19th Century graphic art from Japan and the American Plains Indians. Both construct space in very different ways from Western (European and American) Art of the same period and the purpose is to identify whether there are similarities in their approaches to the projection of space, description of movement and composition.

The images act as a reflection of the relationship between two traditional societies based on a pre-industrial relationship with nature and the technologically advanced “Western” nations. The European and American settlers from these Western nations provide through their expansionist policies the “other” as subject matter and the stimulus to record and produce works by artists whose ways of life were being threatened by unprecedented external force.

The physical and psychological drama contained in these examples reveal relevant vocabularies for use in contemporary picture-making and graphic production and the analysis aims to enable contemporary practitioners to see and ‘read’ these images afresh. The contention is that there are formal characteristics within these 19th Century examples of graphic art produced in different cultures which share similarities and which are of significance for the education of 21st Century fine artists, illustrators and designers particularly in relation to drawing, print, animation, film and games design. This significance is based on the versatility of these compositions to convey representational and symbolic meaning and the implications of their attempts to show movement.

The two images were produced within a twenty-four year period between 1861 and 1885 and their contents focus on historical narratives which represent differing responses to Western colonisation and expansion. Both images reveal the influence of European artistic traditions, in the Japanese print through its depiction of three-dimensional space and referencing of newspaper illustrations and in the Cheyenne drawing in terms of the paper support and drawing materials used. It is hoped that the study will also be of interest to art historians and those engaged in comparative and interdisciplinary analysis, contemporary art theory, psychology and anthropology.

Fig. 1. U. Sadahide, *Picture of Western Traders at Yokohama Transporting Merchandise,* 1861-4 Edo Period
[Woodblock Print Oban Polyptych: ink on paper]

This woodblock print was produced by Utagara Sadahide as part of a short but distinctive period of print making which occurred at Yokohama during the four years from 1859-1863. Thirty-one artists produced over five hundred designs related to the foreigners and it estimated that over fifty publishers were involved in their production. It is thought that up to 250,000 *Yokohama ukiyo-e* were produced, a dramatic reflection of the fascination of the foreigners by the Japanese. As such they form a distinctive group of prints within the tradition of Japanese woodblock printing. (Dower, p4-1)

Utagara Sadahide, according to Meech-Pekarik (1986), was a pupil of Kunisada and an illustrator with a long interest in international affairs who has been attributed with the drawings for *Kaigai shinwa (Overseas news)*, a book published around 1850 relating to the Opium Wars (1839-1842) in China. He was considered one of Japan's top designers and received the Légion d'Honneur as one of 11 woodblock artists whose work was shown at the Paris Exhibition of 1866. He was influenced by Dutch panoramic maps and his first prints of Yokohama provide oblique perspective views of the growing port. During the period of Yokohama-e he produced 93 designs of ships and various pictures of the foreigners of the five nations. In 1860 he designed fifty-five prints, forty in 1861, and three in 1862. (Meech-Pekarik, p.40)

Fig. 2. Anonymous Drawing, ca 1875-80, *Roman Nose, Cheyenne Fight, at Beecher Island, with Forsyth's Scout,* [1 drawing, 2 leaves] Coloured pencil and graphite

Roman Nose, Cheyenne Fight is a pencil drawing by an unknown Cheyenne artist and was formerly part of a ledger book of drawings, which included a variety of different views of warfare, horse raiding, and courting. The book is described in the manuscript catalogue as containing "drawings by multiple artists, probably both Lakota and Cheyenne, based on the events and war medicine depicted, esp. shield designs……..Inscriptions in the volume give the history of acquisition and identify activities in each scene. The identifications are often in error regarding the nature of the scene and the tribal identity of the enemy. Inscription on the final drawing indicates that all explanations were provided by Charles C. White, also known as Fast Horse, former Sioux interpreter at Pine Ridge Agency." (Online description of Manuscript 4653, Smithsonian Institution)

The analysis is based on direct observation of high quality digital reproductions of the original artefacts, both of which are in National Museums in the US, supported by key texts by Berlo (1996, p.12-96) on Plains Indian Drawing and the catalogue by Yonemura (200, p.21-107) *of Yokohama*, the first exhibition in 1996 of Japanese Graphic Art at the Smithsonian Institute. In terms of the theory and interpretation of drawings reference has been made to the classification of drawing systems by Dubery and Willats (1972, p.6). These authors have created inclusive categories which are applicable to all forms of drawing and the simplicity of their system facilitates easily understood analysis and comparison. Their classification is particularly useful in this study because it examines the ways in which artists, designers and engineers translate three-dimensional space onto a flat picture surface rather than the more semiotic or functions-based classifications identified by O'Toole (1994) and Rawson (1969).

Composition, Pictorial Flatness and Movement

The Japanese artist, Takashi Murakami noted in relation to his exhibition Superflat that "Our culture doesn't have 3-D" (Drohojowska-Philp, p.3) and that the defining quality of Japanese art, once all elements of Westernisation had been stripped away was the "feeling of flatness". He extended this view not just to art but also to Japanese society, customs and culture which he considered had become "completely Westernised" (Beynon, 2012). Murakami identified the key artistic and historical events through which this process of Westernisation had taken place including: "the formal borrowings of eighteenth-century artists, through the rapid modernisations of the Meiji Restoration and the traumas of the Second World War, to the globalised present" (2012, p.2).

Fig. 3: *The Fleet on the Serpentine River,* 1814

Murakami noted that the intention of his Superflat exhibition was to try and identify the elements which characterise Japanese art and which he considered had remained unclear for a very long period. As Michael Darling puts it, “Artistically, Murakami is interested in the formal connections between the new and the old stylisation, pictorial flatness, all-over composition” (p4). This study considers the extent to which *Picture of Western Traders at Yokohama Transporting Merchandise* relies on these essential elements of Japanese picture making and also whether the same elements might occur in the art of other cultures, in particular the Plains Indian drawing *Roman Nose, Cheyenne Fight, at Beecher Island, with Forsyth’s Scouts.*

In addition to the cultural, commercial and military differences with the Western powers which are highlighted by these images, there are also strong contrasts in their construction and treatment of space.

The Fleet on the Serpentine River provides a useful example of the European tradition for depicting three-dimensional space. Watched from the banks by a large crowd, ships are seen preparing for a naumachia to celebrate the Battle of the Nile (1788) during the Jubilee Fair of 1814 on the Serpentine in Hyde Park. It was produced as an illustration for *Blagdon’s Historical Memento* in 1814 (British Museum Web Archive). It includes a distinctive check list of devices to create the illusion of depth including: perspective with a single viewing point and fixed moment in time; diminution of size of objects to a vanishing point; atmospheric depth created by a dominant light source; chiaroscuro which provides a three-dimensional modeling of objects; and rules relating to the saturation and temperature of colour in which objects in the foreground appear to advance and those in background recede. It also characterises the veduta-like attention to detail typical of contemporary copper plate engravings and etchings.

Single point perspective was first developed by the Romans and rediscovered during the Renaissance by Alberti and Brunelleschi in the 15th Century (Anderson, 2007). Once in place, this system of visualizing the world dominated European graphic art and painting from the end of the Byzantine Period through to the late 19th Century. The emergence of photography and alternative influences including art from Japan led to new ways of seeing and thinking with artists such as Manet raising questions about this representation system as one of the fundamental goals of Western Art (Bourriard, 2009). In the context of this study, 'pictorial flatness' refers to the depiction of space **NOT** subject to the formal conventions of picture making to create the illusion of three-dimensions which characterised European Art for over four hundred years.

Picture of Western Traders was produced in 1861 and presents a wide-angle panoramic view of ships of the "Five Nations" in Yokohama Harbour (*Yonemura, 1990*). Part of the last period of the Ukiyo-e print tradition (Bennett, 1986) its production coincides with the Meiji Restoration and documents contemporary fascination with foreigners of the Five Nations (United States, Great Britain, Netherlands, France, Italy and Russia) in the Yokohama enclave in the years following the arrival of American warships under the command of Commodore Perry. It reflects the degree to which, that for the first time after two hundred years (1633-1853) of self-imposed exile, Japan was exposed to the full industrial, military and cultural power of the 'barbarian' Westerner (Dower, 2008).

Roman Nose, Cheyenne Fight by an anonymous Cheyenne artist was produced some 25 years later between 1875-1880 and is drawn on two pages of a ledger book (Berlo, 1996). It shows a view of an episode in the Battle for Beecher Island on the Republican River in Kansas in which a mixed war party of Cheyenne, Arapaho, and Brule Sioux surrounded US Army Scouts and attacked them over a ten-day period. During the battle, Roman Nose, a famous Cheyenne warrior, was killed. The drawing and its theme is a typical example of a genre of ledger book art which depicts some of the final skirmishes in the history of the Indian Wars, a long struggle of displacement and colonisation which started in 1540 and continued sporadically until the Battle of Leech Lake in 1898 (Utley and Washburn, 1987).

The ledger book genre fits within a wider tradition of American Plains Indian drawings which formed part of an annual cycle traditionally using animal hides as the surface for pictographs of winter accounts recording major events in the life of the tribe and a fusing of the natural and supernatural focused on battles, hunting, the spiritual and courtship. This image uses paper and pencils and reflects increasing contact with Europeans, as soldiers and settlers moved west in the mid-19th Century, and artists began to use bound ledgers overdrawing the military or trading inventories. These ledger and other albums have been described as "Encyclopedias of Experience" (Berlo, p. 19) and one of the most famous examples was produced by the Cheyenne warrior, High Bull, and is known as High Bull's Victory Roster. Originally taken from the body of its original owner, a Sergeant Brown of the 7th Cavalry on the battlefield of the Little Bighorn (1876), High Bull drew on top of the inventoried pages, adding his own history, and one page over a list of the best marksmen in the defeated company (Berlo, p.120 -121). A few months later High Bull was himself killed and the book recaptured. These drawings reveal details of the individuals whose stories they narrate and share with Japanese graphic art the ability to convey a degree of drama, pathos and humour, rarely seen in European illustrations of the day.

Both *Picture of Western Traders* and *Roman Nose, Cheyenne Fight* highlight distinctive approaches to story telling in which a range of picture making devices have been employed to create complex surfaces capable of communicating multiple meanings. The analysis considers

the way in which the artists have visualised the external world and represented it on a two dimensional paper surface, how non-Euclidean dimensions such as time and movement have been described to create a sense of sequential narrative in which images appear to move and extend beyond the picture boundaries, and the ways in which a strong sense of composition has been achieved through the use of outline drawing, repeated patterns and negative space.

Pictorial Flatness and Graphical Projection

The depiction of the harbour at Yokohama and the scrubby landscape forming the battleground at Beecher's Creek provide convincing settings for the stories they contain. In both there is a strong sense of geographical location which has been achieved through the ways in which the artists have chosen distinctive elements and translated these onto the flat two dimensional paper surface.

Dubery and Willats in their classification of the historical development of drawing systems based on simple geometrical projections describe a projection as straight lines "running from points on an object to corresponding points on a flat surface" (1972 p.10). Projections are fundamental to design and engineering as communication tools providing details of shape and dimensions by the designer to the maker to enable construction in the real world as three dimensional objects. In *Roman Nose Cheyenne Fight* the method of mapping is similar to an elevation view in a simple orthographic projection in which the various objects in the scene appear at right angles to the plane of projection, independently and without reference to a viewer or specific viewing point:

> "In the simplest case, these lines are parallel, and strike the surface at right angles. The setting sun, directly facing a flat wall, will throw shadows on to it which are the same size and shape as the objects they represent; the sun is so far away the that its rays are very nearly parallel. These shadows are orthographic projections." (1972 p.10)

Beecher's Creek is on the Arikaree Fork of the Republican River in Kansas and is represented in the drawing by the distinctive scrubby plants which are unusual in similar drawings by Cheyenne artists of this period. They represent the thick grass and scrub which provided cover for the combatants and which became a defining aspect of the battle. These plants and the various other elements of *Roman Nose Cheyenne Fight* have been drawn as flattened silhouettes and the only indicators or cues which suggest depth are the use of overlap where, for example, the yellow horse is clearly in front of the grey horse and the Scout at bottom of the picture frame is in front of his comrades who 'recede' up the page, overlapping one after the other.

The flat surface created by this 'orthographic silhouette' allows image and symbol to coexist creating hierarchies of objects with multiple points of focus. There is no fixed point of view and within this scheme the size and scale of objects can be adjusted to express literal, symbolic and psychological meanings without appearing out of place. For example, the composition is created by five vertical blocks which when reading from the left include: line of coloured horses' ears; line of scrubby plants which hide them; fusillade of bullets; firing soldiers; and tethered horses. Each of these blocks form focal points of interest and detail within the flat frame. In contrast, and at a larger scale to the soldiers, the mounted warrior and the two horses are organised horizontally across the page making them the main point of significance in the drawing. These figures are also drawn as complete bodies, whereas in the remainder of the drawing, it is only the relevant parts i.e. the gun holding upper bodies and sight-full eyes of the soldiers which are shown. The flat space operates effectively in two dimensions making maximum use of the vertical and horizontal planes and there is no indication, apart from the overlapping figures and horses

already mentioned, of receding space. The blue and red horizontal lines printed as part of the original ledger page add to this flattened effect.

The treatment of space in *Picture of Western Traders* is more complex and Sadahide has applied multiple systems. Like the Cheyenne drawing, he also uses an axonometric projection, particularly in the background where it creates vertical and horizontal axes so that the edges of the picture are connected by a strong rectangular grid. An angle of 90 degrees has been imposed on the yardarms of the masts, in contradiction to their true perspective alignment. This flattens the image and the viewer is located in a complex position within the paraphernalia of silhouettes of pulleys, rigging, ropes and sails. However, this is where the similarity with *Roman Nose Cheyenne Fight* ends as Sadahide has also applied two additional projections including oblique projection and single point perspective to create the space in *Picture of Western Traders*.

An oblique projection is a form of orthographic projection where the projected points from the object in real space intersect the picture plane at an angle in both horizontal and vertical directions. In *Picture of Western Traders*, Sadahide has used oblique projection to create a bird's eye view. Taking the smaller boats in the foreground as examples, one is viewed in bird's-eye looking down on the oarsmen at a steep angle and in another, both in the same part of the picture plane, the view is sideways in silhouette. A characteristic of axonometric projection is that objects retain their size and do not recede or diminish as in linear perspective. The figures, hull and flag of the French vessel are all much larger than they would appear if perspective had been applied consistently across the whole surface.

Sadahide has also created the sense of three-dimensional space through the application of linear, single point perspective. The towering hulls of the ships and the rigging frame the ships in the middle and far distance and lead to the horizon where the vanishing point is clearly marked or obscured by a stamp. Perspective had been explored by Japanese print artists in the 18th Century and was commonly used by Masanobu and Hokusai in the 18th Century to suggest depth (Isozaki 1979). By the latter stage of Ukiyo-e in the years following the Meiji Restoration this type of space-making device was well known by graphic artists and Sadahide's *Picture of the Newly Opened Port of Yokohama in Kanagawa* published in 1860 provides an example of his expert use of perspective drawing (Yonemura 1990). This shows a view down the centre of Honcho Dori, the wide central street of Yokohama's Business District, packed with people, animals and merchandise receding strictly according to the rules of perspective.

Fig. 4. *Picture of Western Traders at Yokohama Transporting Merchandise:* Detail showing 2 centre panels

Fig. 5. Hokusai K, ca 1829-1833, *Nihonbashi Bridge in Edo,* [Woodblock colour print, 249 x 371mm]

The three drawing systems used by Sadahide combine to create a complex and contradictory hierarchy which, on the one hand, suggests the illusion of three dimensional space including foreshortening, a distant horizon and vanishing point and, on the other, emphasises pictorial flatness by the flat cartouches and details which ignore perspective rules of scale to provide opportunities for greater detail of, for example, people on the boats and through the windows in the hulls of the larger vessels.

The composite application of multiple projections often separated by a framing device or gap was common in Ukiyo-e graphic art and has been employed to highlight dominant social ideas as well as to draw attention to significant details. Screech (1994), and Mende (1999) have discussed the use of Western perspective (Yuki-e) as part of a composite drawing system in relation to Hokusai and Masanobu.

Screech discusses Hokusai's *Nihonbashi Bridge* in Edo (1829-1833) and the artist's application of different drawing systems to emphasise contrasting elements of spiritual and political importance:

> "At the rear of the print, though, the turrets of the shogunal castle and the peak of Fuji, the two great symbols of the realm are discerned; not things of pride or vanity but the noble hubs of the Japanese state and of ancestral culture, these elements remain precisely not included in the perspective scheme: Castle and peak, creatures of an altogether grander dispensation, are shown as inaccessible by way of any of the parallels that unite what dwells beneath." (p. 58-69)

Kazuko Mende analysed the methods used by Masanobu Okumura in his *Interior of a Kabuki Theatre* published in 1743, particularly describing his application of two distinct drawing systems to distinguish the audience from the actors and stage:

> "The artist was also able to create the feeling of actually being inside the theater through the use of one-point perspective and to show the content of the play through the use of combined oblique projection, thus placing emphasis on the main actors." (Mende, 1999)

She describes the way in which two different methods were specifically applied to create the physical depth of the interior of the theatre while also emphasising, at a different and larger scale, the actors on stage. Mende has noted that by using composite systems for creating three dimensional depth and flat symbolic representation Masanobu also created an additional sense of tension and movement.

Fig. 6 Masanobu. O, 1743, *Inside of a Kabuki Theatre, actors on stage* [woodblock print, triptych] © The Trustees of the British Museum

Sequential Narrative and Movement

Both Sadahide and the Cheyenne artist have chosen distinctive horizontal landscape formats suited to the landscape views they describe. In *Picture of Western Traders* this is in panoramic form, a polyptych measuring 37.2 x 127 cm over the length of five standard woodblocks and in *Roman Nose, Cheyenne Fight* the drawing extends over the double pages of the ledger album each page measuring 19 x 32 cm. Sadahide has used an elongated narrative format typical of ink painting on scrolls adapted to the needs of woodblock printing. The Cheyenne drawing is arranged over the facing pages of the ledger and is also closely related to its method of production. Berlo has described the way in which an artist sitting on the ground would have typically organised the composition:

> "Ledger artists usually worked with the book turned sideways, orienting the spine horizontally rather than vertically……..When making a two page composition, the artist drew one portion of the picture on one page, then rotated the book 180 degrees and completed the picture on the facing page. These scenes are often connected through the use of footprints or horses tracks, which pass off of one page to the left and re-enter the facing page from the right…" (p.96)

In both designs, there is a strong sense of animated or cinematic movement and of the narrative extending beyond the edges of the picture frame. The hulls of the three foreground vessels in *Picture of Western Traders* are shown at an angle to the picture plane and appear dramatically to sail into and out of the picture. The ships have been cut off by the picture frame, and like photographs, the image is only half-contained. *In Roman Nose, Cheyenne Fight*, the artist has employed a similar device with the horses extending beyond the picture edges. The vertical mass of bodies of the Scouts' horses are cut off on the right hand edge while all that is shown of the 28 horses on the left hand edge is a vertical line of ears which act as a synecdoche for the larger and implied bodies located beyond the edge of the drawing.

This sense of movement has been enhanced in *Picture of Western Traders* by Sadahide's use of isometric projection. This is a form of axonometric projection in which equal lines and surfaces are represented at angles to the picture plane to indicate depth. The isometric projection was the standard compositional device for Chinese artists and for Japanese Yamato-e and Yukiyo-e. It guided the composition of scrolls using a projection angle of 60 degrees from the horizontal picture plane. In his exhibition Superflat, Murakami included a still from *Galaxy Express 999* produced in 1979 by the Japanese artist Kanada as evidence of the role flat space plays in the connections between the history of Japanese art and animation. In Murakami's view "Kanada's animated sci-fi explosions were simply consecutive design motifs." (Drohojowska-Philp, 2001). Thomas Lamarre describes a similar way of seeing in the anime, *Steamboy*, where the background is framed as series of still planes, in front of which animated characters move in their own plane (Lamarre, 2006). Murakami's connection of Nihon-ga to the games industry and computer graphics highlights the use of non-perspective methods for portraying three-dimensional space on a flat screen.

In *Roman Nose, Cheyenne Fight* the flattened space acts as a backdrop for the depiction of direction, time and movement. This is shown by the line of horses' hooves which signify the number of times the mounted warrior has advanced to taunt and charge the Scouts. Drama is also created by the two volleys of bullets which come from the repeater rifles. The fusillade is controlled as though the Scouts are shooting in response to an order or agreed timing. Advancing at speed into the oncoming hail of bullets, the mounted warrior charges the line of Scouts. He is shadowed by a rider-less horse which has

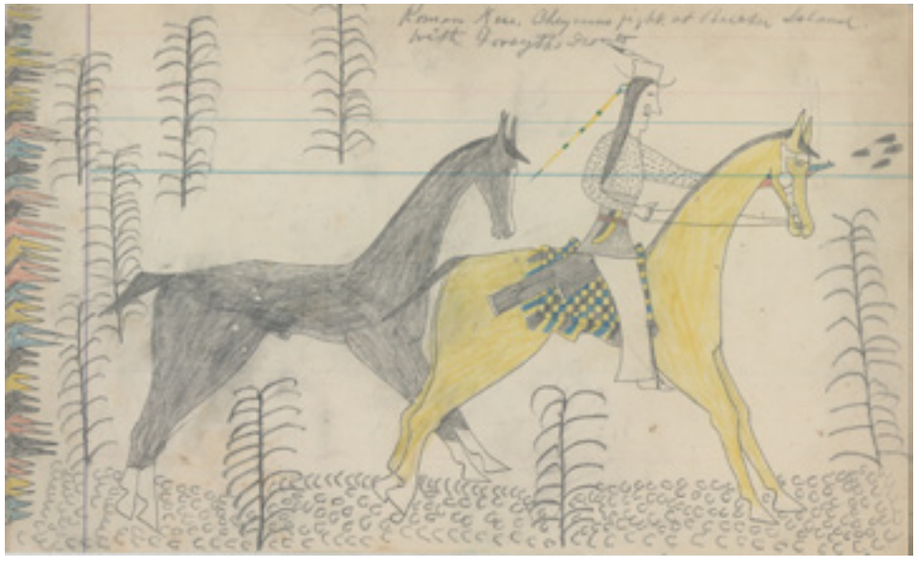

Fig. 7. *Roman Nose, Cheyenne Fight, at Beecher Island, with Forsyth's Scout:* Detail showing left-hand leaf. (landscape format)

Fig. 8. *Picture of Western Traders at Yokohama Transporting Merchandise:* detail of the two right-hand panels

no blanket or bridle and provides an enigmatic 'shadow'. This second horse provides a repetition of the action and a literal sense of movement with both horses shown in full gallop. The warrior is shooting a rifle in his left hand although only the muzzle and the bullets are visible as the remainder is obscured by the horse's head. As he shoots, he is reigning in the horse, almost standing in the stirrups to steady himself. At the same time and in contradiction the images appear still and frozen in time with only the tracks of the horses' hooves tracing out the actual movement on the ground.

In *Picture of Western Traders* the sense of movement is created by combining two contrasting drawing systems and the large vessels in *Picture of Western Traders* appear to move in the swell with a plunging effect on one and a rising effect on another. It is also illustrated by the flags, which act as flat symbols of the Five Nations and as foreshortened wind buffeted emblems of nature. There is a strong tide running and the swell is shown by the repeated patterns of the waves, the tops of which are depicted with characteristic stylization as flat symbols. Movement is also implied by the large numbers of figures rowing, sliding down ropes, climbing up rigging and carrying bales of merchandise and in a more ephemeral way by the smoke from the Dutch ship which billows from its funnel.

Fig. 9 *Yoshitsune Horse-Washing Falls at Yoshino, Izumi Province*, ca 1833-1834

Compositional Unity and Structure

Hokusai's print *Waterfall* in *Yoshino* has been cited as an example which shows the similarity between the artist's use of repeated patterns, in this case a shape like a 'crab's claw' and fractals in which a central reflector or form, is repeated in a series of variations throughout the print (Briggs, 1992). It is considered that these repeated patterns and negative shapes serve to link the work and provide it with a distinctive rhythm and unity.

Both *Picture of Western Traders* and *Roman Nose, Cheyenne Fight* are built on the repetition of similar shapes and symbols to create a strong sense of place: in *Roman Nose, Cheyenne Fight* the two lines of horses, the line of soldiers and the charging warrior in the scrubby landscape; in *Picture of Western Traders* the ships and other smaller vessels and the repetition of figures, waves, rigging and masts. Pattern, negative space and linear composition created by a uniform outline are distinctive elements of flat picture making and are key characteristics of the images in this comparison. Significant elements are created through increasing the level of patterning, repetition and detailing.

The figures and horses in *Roman Nose, Cheyenne Fight* are out-lines which have been meticulously drawn and filled with colour, patterns and texture marks. The observed detail provides specific information on the uniformed scouts, their horses and the mounted warrior who is distinguishable by his feathered hat and braided hair. The heads of both the horses and the human combatants are drawn as flat silhouettes. The Scouts firing their Spencer rifles form a vertical band of repeated, overlapping silhouettes stretching up the page. The rifles are drawn in detail and include the stocks, barrels, triggers and sights along which the soldiers take careful aim. Also shown in detail are the webbing and bridles of the army horses. The horses and the uniformed scouts overlap but they don't diminish in size according to rules of linear perspective. Instead, the necks of the top horses are greatly extended, twice the length of the nearest, representing a reversal of linear perspective and a consequent flattening of the image.

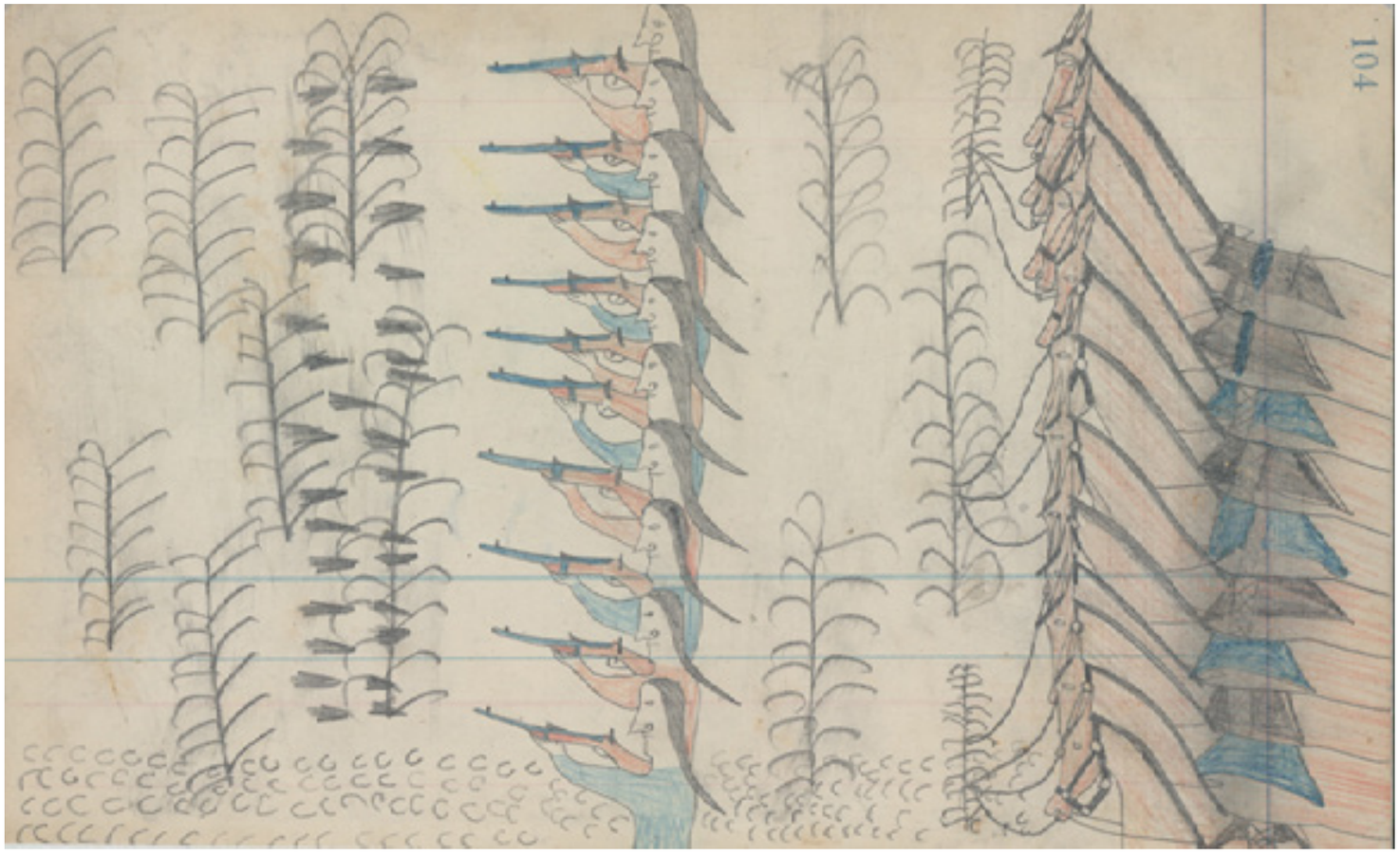

Fig. 10 *Roman Nose, Cheyenne Fight, at Beecher Island, with Forsyth's Scouts:* Detail showing right hand leaf

Roman Nose, Cheyenne Fight similarly contains repetition of flat shapes, patterns and symbols including hundreds of horses hoof prints, 20 plants each drawn with a single stem and alternate leaves, a row of 27 pairs of horse's ears, 10 soldier heads and shoulders shooting rifles with 30 bullets depicted in flight etc. Points of key significance in the drawing such as the mounted warrior have been drawn in greatest detail. The broad rimmed hat, black and white feather, braided hair in yellow and blue, leggings, a textured tunic and a belt with a large knife in a blue and yellow coloured sheath provide a clear description of the main protagonist, the subject of the drawing. The chequer-board pattern and tassels of the blanket on which he sits are also similarly detailed and reflect his significance within the composition.

The composition of *Picture of Western Traders* is formed from outline drawing and the clouds, waves, smoke, and canvas of the sails create repeated patterns which literally tie the composition together. The linear patterns of the lines on the hulls of the ship, the rigging and the grid like pattern of the oars and rigging provide a second group of repeated patterns. In addition to the 5 large ships, a further 8 smaller vessels are depicted moored or in transit and 5 life-boats are visible on deck. Repetition of these hull shapes of 17 vessels creates a strongly repeated fractal-like pattern. Other patterns include the

17 vertical hanko or seals many of which are coloured in red and identify the nationality of the various ships. These are carefully placed, often next to the smaller boats and figures and build a hierarchy of points across the panorama. These hanko both contradict spatial illusion and contribute to the sense of perspective as they recede in size with the ships they identify.

Sadahide's design relies heavily on a mixture of sources including Western reference material as did many of the other 500 plus designs for prints of foreigners in the period between 1859 and 1863. John Dower describes Yokohama acting as a fantasy "dream window" for Japanese artists and writers who:

> "did not hesitate to let their imaginations run wild. Almost everything one could show or tell about Westerners and how they lived was imagined as being present in "Yokohama"—even if it was not really there." (Dower p3-3)

Much of the reference material, according to Dower, was not from direct observation but from publications such as the *Illustrated London News* and the American weekly newspaper *Frank Leslie's Illustrated Newspaper* which contained details on a wide range of subjects including the ships and the fashionable clothes of the European women who appear in much larger numbers than was actually the case. The prints, therefore, represent a bringing together of printed foreign source material, observed "real" Yokohama and the distinctive colours, conventions and stylisations of the woodblock-print tradition.

Both images emphasise key elements of their design through the application of colour to create symbols which represent the uniformity of the soldiers, the individuality of the lone warrior, the cartouches and flags of the five nations and the bonnets and tunics, especially of the female figures. In *Roman Nose, Cheyenne Fight*, the figures of the Scouts and their horses are alternately coloured using brown and blue which match the colour of the rifles which also form a literal extension of their shoulders. In European landscape painting, colour contributes to the illusion of three-dimensional space with the warmest and most intense colours traditionally reserved for the foreground while less saturated greens and blues would be used for middle distance and background. In Sadahide's image, however, some of the strongest contrasts occur on the horizon line where the white of the sea contrasts with the blue sky. Flat areas of colour are also used to highlight and contrast figures and a sophisticated shadowing is seen on the rowers in the foreground skiff and the waves, which reflects Sadahide's knowledge of European chiaroscuro and tone. There is, however, no clear light source and the shadows appear more as flat patterns because of this.

The comparison of *Picture of Western Traders* and *Roman Nose, Cheyenne Fight* has identified a surprisingly large number of similarities in the way the two artists have used flat space to convey narrative including the use of the picture edge to cut off individual images; outline drawing to show complex human action; conventions to create generic features and types; complexity to highlight significant elements; simplification to purge compositions of unnecessary detail and clutter; pattern and colour to reveal intricate detail and individual identity; depiction of time and movement; overlap and repetition of symbols; and use of negative space in making distinctive patterns and short-hands for unifying pictorial elements.

There are also differences between the two images, some of which are a result of their means of production, one being a mass-produced print and therefore the product of a sophisticated graphic and commercial process and the other an original drawing using the simplest of materials. Other differences include the composite use of drawing systems in Western Traders in contrast to the simple flat orthogonal system applied in *Roman Nose, Cheyenne Fight*. Returning to Murakami's quest to identify

the underpinning elements which characterise Japanese art this study confirms that 'stylisation, pictorial flatness, all-over composition' are all key elements in *Picture of Western Traders* although those similar elements can also be found in *Roman Nose, Cheyenne Fight*. The most distinctive contrast between the two images is the use of composite drawing systems in *Picture of Western Traders* which creates a new synthesis and acts almost as a form of artistic syncretism. *Picture of Western Traders* is both flat and depicts three-dimensional space and the drawing systems act to reveal different aspects of the content and purpose of the artist's intention. This is highly distinctive and is in marked contrast to other forms where the drawing system exerts a controlling and unifying device and by convention requires every mark to be made according to a strict code.

Both images, however, use the treatment of space to highlight significant details which allow the key elements of the narrative to emerge. The Yokohama enclave was a cultural bubble which hid the real impact of the Foreigners' arrival which included uprising, rebellion, famine, cholera and eventually the fall of the Bakufu Government (Dower, 2008). Sadahide, earlier in his career had illustrated a book on the Opium Wars and it is no coincidence that in the foreground ship of *Picture of Western Traders* alongside the merchandise, which many Japanese considered had been bought on unfair terms, is a line of open gun ports with their canon visible. Similarly, *Roman Nose, Cheyenne Fight* celebrates the actions of a warrior who repeatedly advances against an enemy line firing volleys of bullets with only bravery and belief in a spiritual and magical invincibility as protection.

European Art experienced profound changes in its Modernist journey and its concern with flat space as the playground of objectless-ness and the interior mind. Joselit considers that the flatness of Modernism is not just visual, rather the development of flat painting marks a transformation in the role of the spectator which "moves from the conscious to the unconscious." (*Joselit* 2000). In doing this, European art could be said to have moved to a closer understanding of Japanese aesthetic concepts particularly in relation to Ukiyo-e and its underpinning concern with "the illusory nature of the experiential world". Joselit goes further in relation to postmodern flatness where optical and psychological depth is challenged and is replaced by a surface which is used to challenge the role of cultural conditioning and stereotype. He makes a plea to bring the "art of form (modernism) together with the art of identity (postmodernism)" (*Joselit* 2000) and in many ways, *Roman Nose, Cheyenne Fight* with its literal battleground and its enigmatic protagonists drained of any sense of melodrama does exactly that.

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Fig. 2. Anonymous Drawing, (ca 1875-80) *Roman Nose, Cheyenne Fight, at Beecher Island, with Forsyth's Scout*, [1 drawing, 2 leaves] Coloured pencil and graphite 19 x 32 cm. Manuscript 4653. Reproduced with the permission of the National Anthropological Archives, Smithsonian Institution.

Fig. 3. Attributed to Dubourg. M, *The Fleet on the Serpentine River* (1814) [Etching and aquatint with colour, 175 x 230mm]. Published by Edward Orme (?), British Museum No: 1880,1113.1927.

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At:http://www.britishmuseum.org/research/collection_online/collection_object_details/collection_image_gallery.aspx.

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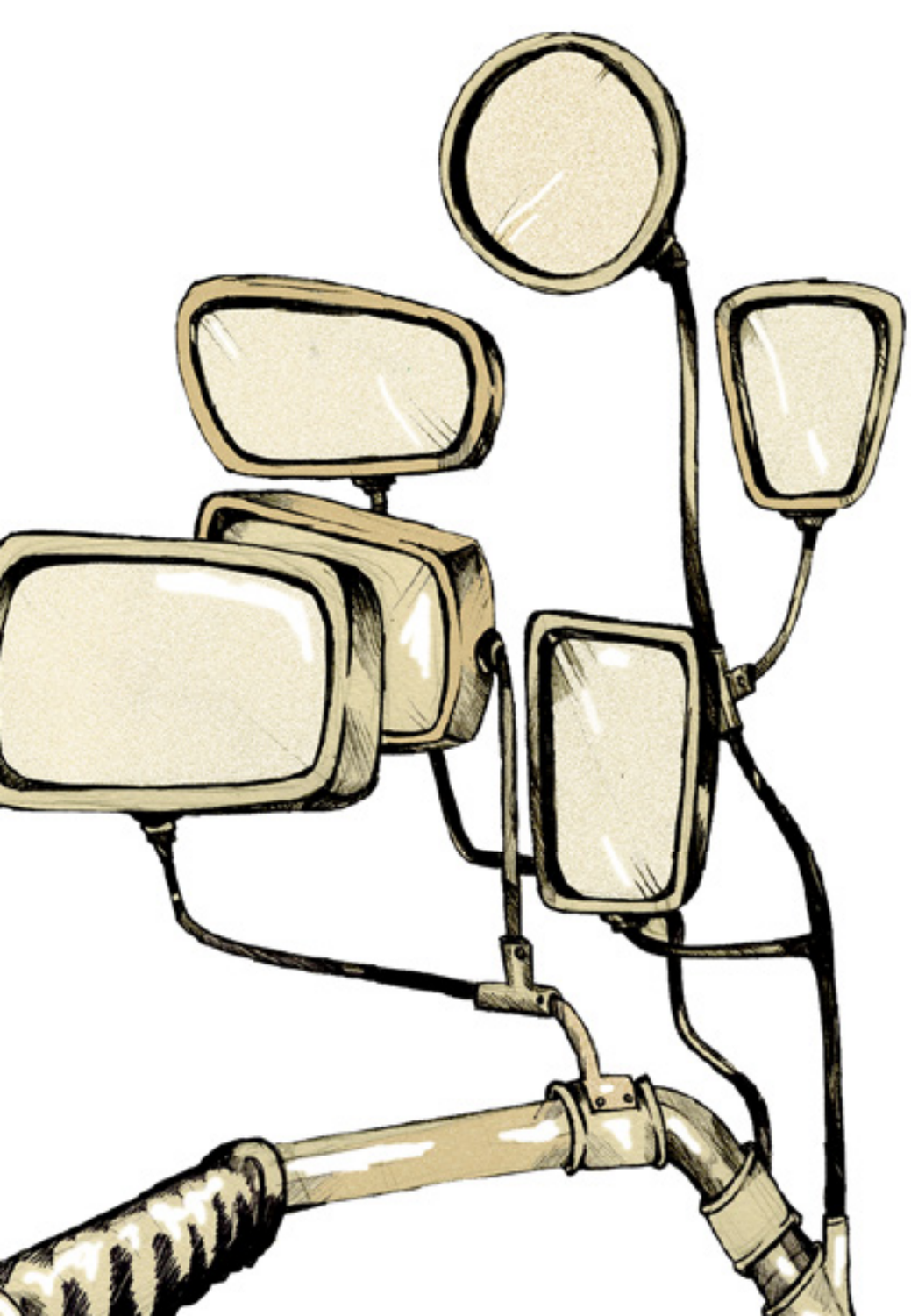
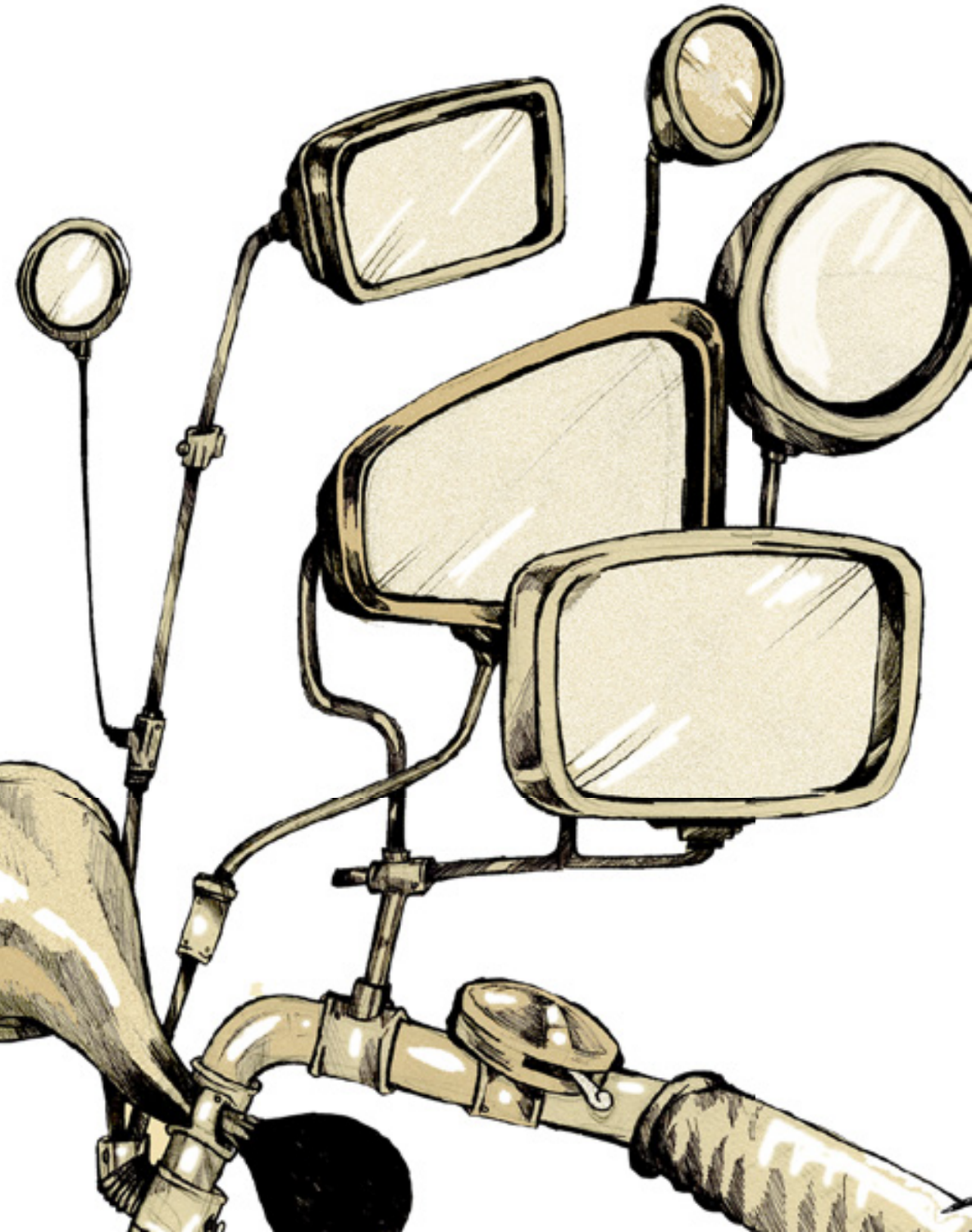
Fig. 9. Hokusai K (ca 1833-1834) *The Yoshitsune Horse-Washing Falls at Yoshino, Izumi Province*, [Woodblock colour print, 249 x 371mm]. At: http://www.wikipaintings.org/en/katsushika-hokusai/waterfall-at-yoshino-in-washū.

Fig. 10. *Roman Nose, Cheyenne Fight, at Beecher Island, with Forsyth's Scouts*: Detail showing right-hand leaf.

Presented Papers





Paul Edwards & Carole Burns

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The Space Between

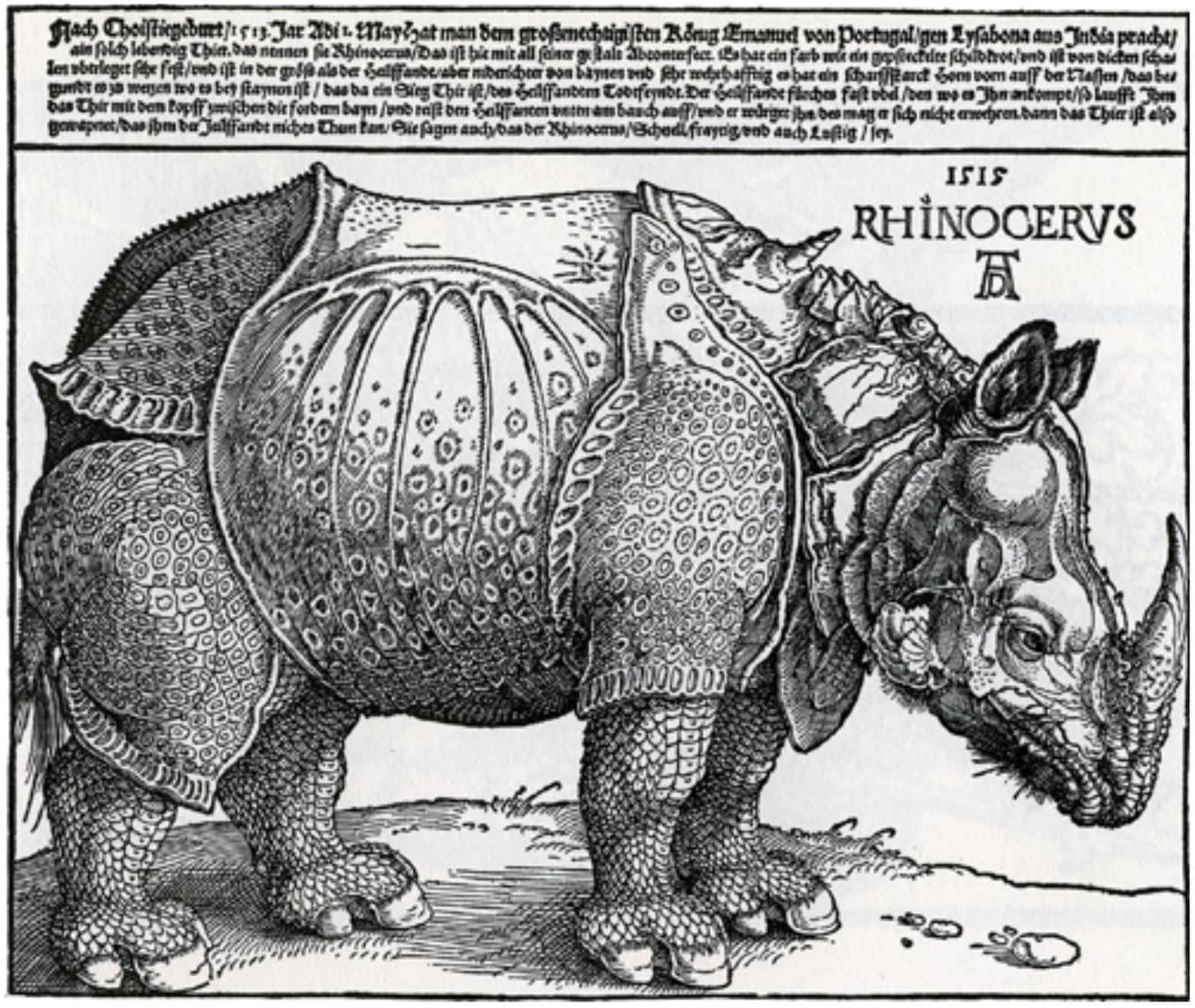
The Jewish Bride, 1667, Rembrandt, oil on canvas, 47.8cm x 166.6cm, Rijksmuseum Amsterdam

The language of drawing and painting, the language of image, is a visual language - it is its own thing, it doesn't translate well.

Here is an image of a man and a woman, painted in 1667 and their clothes reflect this. He has an ornate yellow brocaded sleeve and a de-saturated yellow cap; it appears to be ceremonial court dress. He has long hair and wears a wide-brimmed hat, he has a sallow complexion and sharp angular features. One arm rests on her shoulder, the other lightly touches her breast - her left hand touches his hand and her right arm hangs loose, hand level with her hips. The gestures are formal and not overwrought. His are assertive and proprietarial, hers acquiescent and more passive. She wears an ornate heavy red dress with voluminous yellow sleeves, with pearls round her neck and lace at her breast. Her hair is scraped back from her forehead – where he is thin and angular, she is plump with a reddish complexion. The two figures are illuminated, fully realised and set against a dark, rich Vandyke brown indistinct background. There is a plant to the right, just visible and a sense that this is some kind of interior, but the background isn't the point, the figures are. The background is there to give the figures space to exist in and air to breath.

I could continue to describe this image and maybe at some point it would be possible to make an educated guess at artist and painting - maybe the image has been seen or fits into a known and understood genre, but someone listening to that description wouldn't be able to conjure up a true image of that painting in his head - a painting has to be seen and experienced to be known. Words can only provide a commentary; they can't provide an image with all its particulars.

In order to explore the relationship between pictures and words it is first necessary to examine the differences between the language of text and the language of image, to see how they relate and to appreciate the qualities, the potential and the limitations of each. This connection between language and text is well known and longstanding, text has been re-imagined as image and image has formed the basis for writing. Myths become subject – Rubens paints "the flaying of Marsyas,". Religious texts have been illustrated as frescoes in the plaster of Florentine churches. The unimaginable has been imagined, the power of words has become the power of the image.



The Rhinoceros, 1515, Albrecht Durer, Woodcut, 21.4cm x29.8cm, 8.4" x 11.7", British Museum London

Ekphrasis is from the Greek, its literal meaning is to explain, and is now understood to be a literary description of, or commentary on, a work of art. "Imagistic" takes this to mean – writing the visual, writing that comes in through the eyes.

A well known example of drawing the unknown and unseen – from one language into another and the opposite of Ekphrasis is Albrecht Durer's wood block print of a rhinoceros from 1515. Durer had never seen a rhinoceros, the print was made from a written description and possibly a sketch. Four to five thousand copies of Durer's print were produced during his lifetime and it remained the enduring image describing a rhinoceros until the seventeenth century, even though by then the animal was well known, seen and accurately described. Durer's Rhinocerus is a curious image; it's not quite right. It has decorative armour plating drawn in some detail and attached with what appears to be rivets and it has two horns, one on the shoulder and one at the end of the nose. It is reminiscent of another misplaced horn that will be familiar to every ten year old with an interest in Dinosaurs – another false interpretation of the evidence - the Iguanadon at Crystal Palace, crawling on all fours, a horn where no horn should be, an image eventually corrected by a find at the bottom of a Belgium coal mine in 1878. Textual evidence can evoke, can call to mind, but

when confronted with a new visual experience it can only use the known - the visible world has to be seen to be experienced. Life on Mars may be described, but to know what it looks like, you need a picture.

Robert Morris's "Box with the sound of its own making" is a box constructed out of six pieces of nutwood. Its construction has been recorded – it took approximately three and a half hours to make - so that the piece is seen together with the sounds of its genesis - sawing, hammering, the activity of creation, of making the box. This sculpture has as its subject - the labour of Art - and is about the relationship between sound and image, sculpture and music. This brief description conveys the idea and puts the work in your head - you get it. It's an idea that is packaged, it's an idea in a box, it's a word-friendly idea first that is subsequently and appropriately packaged as an object. To experience the 'Jewish Bride' you have to go to the Rijks Museum, you have to look at the it. Ideas in painting are in the paint and the potential of paint, in colour and composition. Ideas in drawing are in the matrix of marks and gestures and they can't readily be teased out, separated so that they become word and talking. Not so Robert Morris's 'Box'

Writing exists in such a way – even when describing the physical world, writing is made from thoughts and ideas in one mind which enters the mind of the reader via a code called text. It may describe the visual, but it's purpose isn't to be visual. Pictures and words, each have their own, particular relationship to time. To read a book takes time; the work is revealed word by word, sentence by sentence, page by page, and you have to put the time in. To look at pictures, you do not have to put the time in (though it helps). To make pictures you do put the time in. Because images are not made in an instant they contain time, there is a first mark, intermediate marks and a final mark and though we experience pictures all at once, of a piece, they reward looking because they have time in them - Robert Morris draws attention to this.

Every Picture Tells a Story

My own interest in words and pictures comes from working as a painter with a particular interest in drawing and from a number of collaborations with writers who make up stories for a living. I am intrigued by the compulsion to construct a narrative with the materials available - the elements in the picture - and I am aware that paintings have to make their own way in the world, meanings change, what was significant is lost and pictures are reinterpreted, over time, they accrue stories. The meaning of the gestures in the *Jewish Bride* have become obscure, we see them either through a contemporary lens or through a lens darkly. Drawing as

Box with the Sound of the Own Making, 1961, Robert Morris [installation] (Seattle Art Museum)

visual language with a vocabulary consisting of marks and gestures – Ingres said that drawing is the 'probity of Art' and that if a painting is well drawn it is well painted, this identifies drawing as a quality and as a clear language.

That ideas are in the paint opens a rich store of possibilities when applied to working from text, where ideas may be buried in the language, so that how the image is made, as well as what is depicted becomes the idea. My collaboration with American artist and poet, Janet Passehl explores this. "Translations" was a drawing project that was set up to find gestures, marks and image that relate to text. Janet sent me her poem – *and a wrinkle* - and I responded to this by making a large scale drawing. From the outset I decided that my drawing would translate one language into another, so that gestures, mark-making became a visual equivalent for words, the sound of words as well as their meaning. Soft words became velvety marks and harsh language was translated into jagged image. The language of the eye and the language of the tongue, separate, but connected by impulses emanating from the brain, one illuminating the other.

Imagistic

"Imagistic" is a project that explores hidden and imagined narrative in image, exploiting the capacity of a picture to prompt a piece of writing. Eight writers were asked to respond to eight artists and and each collaboration resulted in a short piece of fiction; writing the pictures instead of the more usual picturing the words. The writers came away from this collaboration with a new piece of fiction and the artists with a fresh interpretation of an image seen through a different lense.

The painter Cherry Pickles says: "I was impressed with the story Des wrote and what he said about how it made him write in a different way because of the fragmentation. That made me think more about how my drawings are received and I'm still working on that." (2012)

Keith Bayliss says of his collaboration with Susie Wild: "All images are open to individual interpretation. I see my visual art as part of a conversation which is completed by the viewer, so the story produced took the work in a completely different direction, surreal and with black humour." (2012)

Pictures have to make their own way in the world, and artists cannot be on hand to provide a commentary, pictures are reinterpreted with the passing of time and the coming of new ideas – I look at Durer's *Rhinoceros* and Rembrandt's *Jewish Bride* with eyes informed by contemporary culture and a very particular set of experiences. Another mind, another set of experiences, a different individual will not see what I see looking at an image. Pictures are rich and layered, they are made up of intentions, ambition realised or not, they are the product of conscious thought, of decisions, but pictures are also intuitive, they tap into impulses below conscious thought. They are more than the sum of their parts.

In his forward to *I Spy Pinhole Eye*, George Szirtes says -

> "We may imagine the critic like Rembrandt's Dr Tulp holding forth on anatomy and mortality over the body of his half-dissected patient. The body is not entirely dissected: it retains character, is recognizable, is capable of bearing a personal name, but its parts add up to less than the whole and living figure of Dr Tulp." (2009)

The Writers' Perspective

That a painting must make its own way in the world – just like writing, just like any piece of art – is something that one might say *ekphrasis* is a manifestation of. And this inversion of the usual image-follows-word relationship found in illustration to words-follow-the-image has a long tradition indeed, going back to classical times, such as when Homer, to use a famous example, describes

Achilles's shield in the *Iliad* and through the centuries to further famous examples: John Keats's *Ode on a Grecian Urn*, W.H. Auden's *Musée des Beaux Arts*, Robert Browning's *My Last Duchess*. More recently and locally is Philip Gross's *I Spy Pinhole Eye*, a series of poems that take off from pinhole photographs of pylons by Simon Denison, a collaboration which won them the 2010 Wales Book of the Year Award. While ekphrasis occurs often through the medium of poetry, there is a tradition with prose as well – in addition to classics such as Wilde's *Portrait of Dorian Gray*, contemporary examples include A.S. Byatt's *Matisse Stories*, and Tracy Chevalier's *Girl with a Pearl Earring*. In its use of flash fiction then, "Imagistic: Cardiff Flash Fiction Day" was a good twinning of poetry and prose in ekphrasis, flash fiction being the prose form closest to a prose poem, living often in the borderlands of poetry and prose.

While the Greek word can be translated to mean *description*, or *explanation,* (*ek* means "out of," *phrasis* means "expression" or "speech") writers do not merely describe or explain a painting or image in ekphrastic writing, but take many different approaches: "addressing the image, making it speak, speaking of it interpretatively, meditating upon the moment of viewing, etc." (Hollander p. 4). In fiction, the subject of a painting often yields for the writer character, or places, or objects; sometimes, the artist or model is imagined and becomes a character, or the mood of a painting might be mimicked or tapped. In other words, anything can happen. And that's just the start. The painting is a jumping off point, an inspiration, and how far away the writer strays from the image only matters in that a technical person might wonder if it still was indeed ekphrasis. Yet how faithful, if you will, to the image writers remained interested us. We looked at how far these divergent approaches took the writer from the image itself, and how far the writer went from any intentions the artist might or might not have had: and what we learn, as artists and writers, from looking at this practical example.

The Space (Story) Between

All of the writers in "Imagistic: Cardiff Flash Fiction", it ended up, found inspiration in the subject of the painting – they formed their stories around something in the painting literally, whether a place, a character, or an object. Amy Wack, for example, created a character out of the woman depicted in Shani Rhys James's *Head v. Pink Flock*, in which a careful attentive husband negotiates the volatility of his artist wife (it was only later Amy found out it was a self-portrait).

Head v. Pink Flock, 2010, Shani Rhys James, oil on wallpaper 39cms x 44 cms

Tony Bianchi, in writing about Derek Bainton's painting, set his story in this place, filling it with characters who are hiding (hidden in the painting, and literally hiding in the story) on the other side of that window. Place was often the inspiration for the flash fictions in "Imagistic". The flash fictions varied widely, though, in how close to the image they remained. Rhian Edwards may have strayed the furthest, as she wrote from an oil painting by Paul Edwards. The voice of her narrator is saucy, riff-y, the tone diverging dramatically from the subdued subtlety of Edwards's original painting. Here's the opening:

> "It is not that I treat the world like my bedroom, strewing myself like confetti wherever I care to roam or for that matter disrobe. Nor is it my calling card to discard solitary shoe-wear in a bid that my star-crossed Charming will make every human effort to reunite shoe with owner; 'the Cinderella Pimpernel strikes again,' 'Match dot com, pedary styley'. Nor am I a peg leg, a Heather McCartney, a hopping Galah…" (Edwards, R. "My Mary Jane")

Taff Embankment, Derek Bainton, oil on board, 16cm x 19cm, Night location painting

And A Wrinkle, Paul Edwards, 2011, Greestone Gallery, University of Lincoln

Now Enemies of Freedom Are in Power, Cherry Pickles, 2010

The tone of many of the other stories, however, to me, somehow reflect the tone of the paint, or the colours, or the brushstrokes, or the drawing, in the images from which they derive – providing an interesting example of how ekphrasis can reflect art, rather than interpret or explain. To use the Greek word, the enargia – or energy – of the painting is reflected in the character of the words.

I am particularly struck by such a correspondence between Des Barry's story and the painting that prompted it: Cherry Pickles's *Now The Enemies of the State Are in Power*. The painting, with its lone man watching a screen, and four cameras or microphones recording him, depict a rather pejorative view of modern life, and Barry's story reflects that: a man talks to his son in Iraq on a mobile phone while watching the "pixelated face" of his own girlfriend on Skype. Barry's story also contains many short paragraphs of one-line dialogue, and thus a fair amount of white space on the page, similar to Pickles's image.

This correspondence of theme and tone with image can be found in Richard Gwyn's piece evoked by Emrys Williams's *Night Rower*. The man in the image has no time to waste, with the sea roiling around him, and a destination (invisible to us) in mind. So reads Gwyn's prose:

Night Rower, Emrys Williams, 2009, Charcoal, pencil, watercolour on paper, 99cm x 71cm

so I raised the spike and struck it three four times through the wooden boards and smashed through until I heard the timber crack and splinter knowing I was committing her to the bottom

No full stops – no time for stopping. Even the look of Gwyn's story is similar to Williams's image: the story consists of four parts, four blocks of justified text uninterrupted by paragraph indents: four black and white rectangles that, on the page, end up even a similar size to Williams's *Night Rower*.

Gwyn disagrees. "For me form always follows on as an integral part of content. The content, the emergence of the story as a kind of unconscious surge came first." Yet he added, "I am wondering whether I would want to publish the story without the image, and thinking probably not."

Susie Wild took again another approach to ekphrasis in her response to Keith Bayliss's untitled drawing: image, or its subject, as metaphor. Wild immediately plays on this with her opening line. The story begins: "Heads will roll." It's a way of making sense of Bayliss's strange, comical and disconcerting image, while also being a line of dialogue by the businessman character, who we end up learning is emotionally disconnected (i.e., cut off from himself). The story is told by the businessman's neglected girlfriend, who a few lines later extends the metaphor, saying:

> "I imagine breaking you into pieces. I think you would be more fun. More manageable then. In small parts. I would hold your hand over breakfast. Bend your ear over lunch. At night, in the garden I'd use my diabolo skills to impress you, I'd dance with your head."

Untitled, Keith Bayliss, 2012

I wrote about this Harry Holland painting, and what drew me to *Lips* is how it seems to evoke a moment. It's interesting how the mere fact that this moment is captured – memorialized, if you will – gives it weight, and gives it energy. This doesn't seem to me like a quotidian phone call that interrupts a quotidian afternoon – it doesn't look like her housemate has just called to hear if she watched *Ripper Street*. Something important is happening. This feeling may also have to do with the photorealistic aspect of the painting, which lends the image a dramatic quality.

But who is that woman in the background? This was an irresistible narrative question for me, and I immediately knew one answer: I would make the woman leaving the room the same woman who was in the foreground – her older self looking back, and with regret. I liked the idea of connecting those two figures in a way that Harry Holland probably hadn't intended, but seemed to me suddenly absolutely essential; and I liked the idea of working toward that revelation, or that interpretation of the painting, for the reader, who would learn this twist as the story ended.

Lips. 2011, Harry Holland

Cooling Down, Kevin Sinnott, 2012

None of the writers in May were striving to depict or mirror the painting – each writer instead wanted to "make it new," in Ezra Pound's words. Indeed, the writers at times said they needed to feel a distance from the painting. In writing his story based on Kevin Sinnott's *Cooling Down*, which is told from the point of view of a child, Niall Griffiths said the painting evoked a "kind of innocence which naturally shaded into using a child's voice." And yet he also "wanted to remain detached from the image, as to force myself into it and write, say, from inside the head of one of the two characters, would've felt not just voyeuristic but a rude intrusion; redolent of Peeping Tommery. They're sharing a deeply private and lovely moment. So I felt it necessary to remain on the outside." Rhian Edwards said that her divergence from the tone of Paul Edwards's shoe painting was intentional. To attempt to reflect Paul Edwards's painting, "would be me casting aspersions on the painting and what the painter intended, which I don't think is entirely obvious."

And yet the influence of the paintings and drawings on the stories in every case was obviously powerful. This might hold even truer at the conference Imagistic event, where for the first time we invited artists with more abstract, less figurative work. I looked at a cloth piece, *Dam* by Janet Passehl. In some ways, I did attempt to reflect the piece, whether or not my perception was Passehl's intention. I

Dam, Janet Passehl, 2011, cloth/variable.

also do a very traditional form of ekphrasis – I describe the image, and at the same time I meditate upon my viewing of the image.

Philip Gross has also written about less figurative pieces, including a series of drawings by Tig Sutton. We included less figurative work quite purposefully, and it's interesting that these pieces might be even more tied to the image than the stories attached to figurative work.

Richard Gwyn's question of whether one would publish the story without the image is an interesting one – each story could stand on its own, and yet something would be lost that is more than simply an insight into the origin of the story and the writerly process. While the images came first, the drawings and paintings nonetheless do now almost illustrate the stories in some way – they do that thing with colour and light and shape that words can only, well, say -- wordily, using words. The words try to paint a picture; the images are a picture. Flipping that around, a picture might tell a story (as we've illustrated); but our fictions *are* stories. In "Imagistic", we are graced with both.

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Geoff Grandfield

Geoff Grandfield studied illustration at Maidstone College of Art and the Royal College of Art in London.

Since graduating with an MA (RCA) he has been a freelance illustrator and has combined his practice with education, leading the BA Illustration course at Middlesex University before his current post as Course Director of BA (Hons) Illustration and Animation at Kingston University in London. Commissioned extensively by major clients in publishing, design and advertising, his practice explores the power of visual communication and narrative through single and sequential forms, often exploring the iconography of 'film noir' cinematography. Editorial illustration for The Guardian, The New York Times and a year making a daily picture for The Times developed an economy of expression completing work in less than 3 hours.

His work for fiction book jackets (novels by Walter Mosley and George Pelecanos) extended into internal series for the Folio Society, boxed sets of novels by Graham Greene (1996 and 1998) and Raymond Chandler (2000, 2006, 2007). The Folio have also commissioned series and cloth bindings for non-fiction titles (2008, 2011). Exhibition Narrative has been explored in the 2011 commission for The Jewel House, The Tower of London Historic Royal Palace. A permanent exhibition of triptych lightboxes and wall friezes for 'Royal Symbols of Power' section and 8 etched and enamelled exterior panels summarising 800 years of the Tower and the Crown.

Non-commissioned work has explored the notion of free will set in the Cold War period in the graphic narrative 'The White Corridor'.

Geoff has gained international recognition as a highly acclaimed multi-award winning illustrator.

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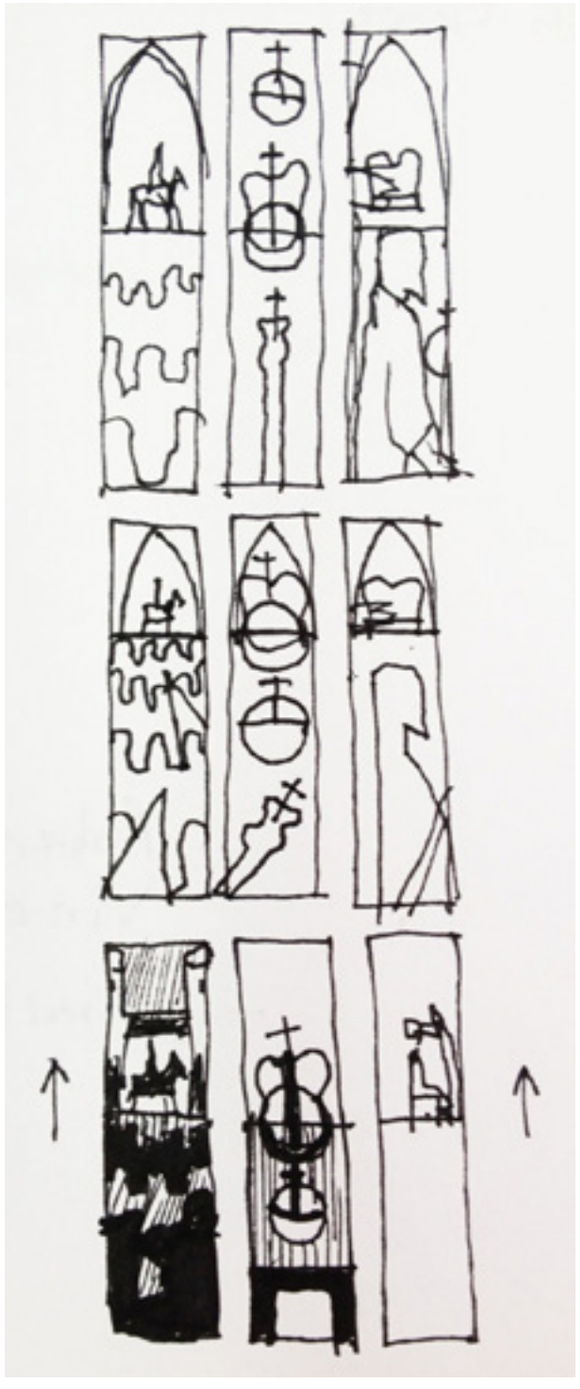
Illustration and Narrative as a Spatial Experience – the Jewel House at the Tower of London

Second triptych of lightboxes in situ at the Tower of London

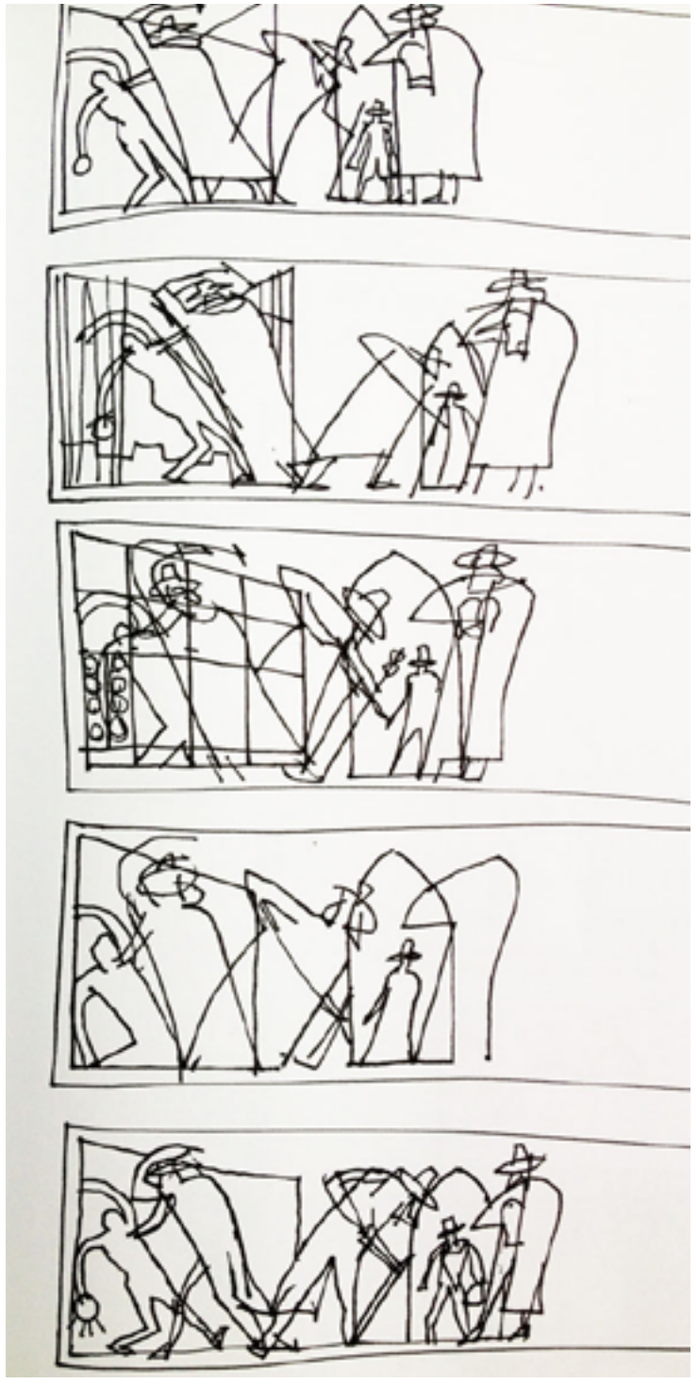
My presentation at Spatialising Illustration symposium covered an interpretation of ‘spacialising’ in relation to my own practice. This is a fuller account of the process and production of that commission, which contributes to the discussion of how work produced for a client is not necessarily a creative compromise, as it sometimes portrayed.

In the summer of 2011 the exhibition design group Ralph Applebaum Associates (RAA) invited me to pitch for a commission that needed a non-disclosure agreement in order to submit a test sample; an increasingly common way of selecting illustration for projects. I was chosen from the submissions and entered into a six-month process that resulted in a new set of my images being permanently (projected lifespan of 20 years) displayed in the Tower of London as part of the newly refurbished Crown Jewels exhibition.

The commission was inspiring for me for a number of reasons, not least the guaranteed audience footfall of over two million per year and the qualification of ‘mass communication’ that had lead me into illustration in the first place; but also in the staging of the work in an environment exploring what happens when an audience encounters work spatially. Up to that point my commissioned illustration was seen only in print,



Developmental line drawings for second lightbox triptych

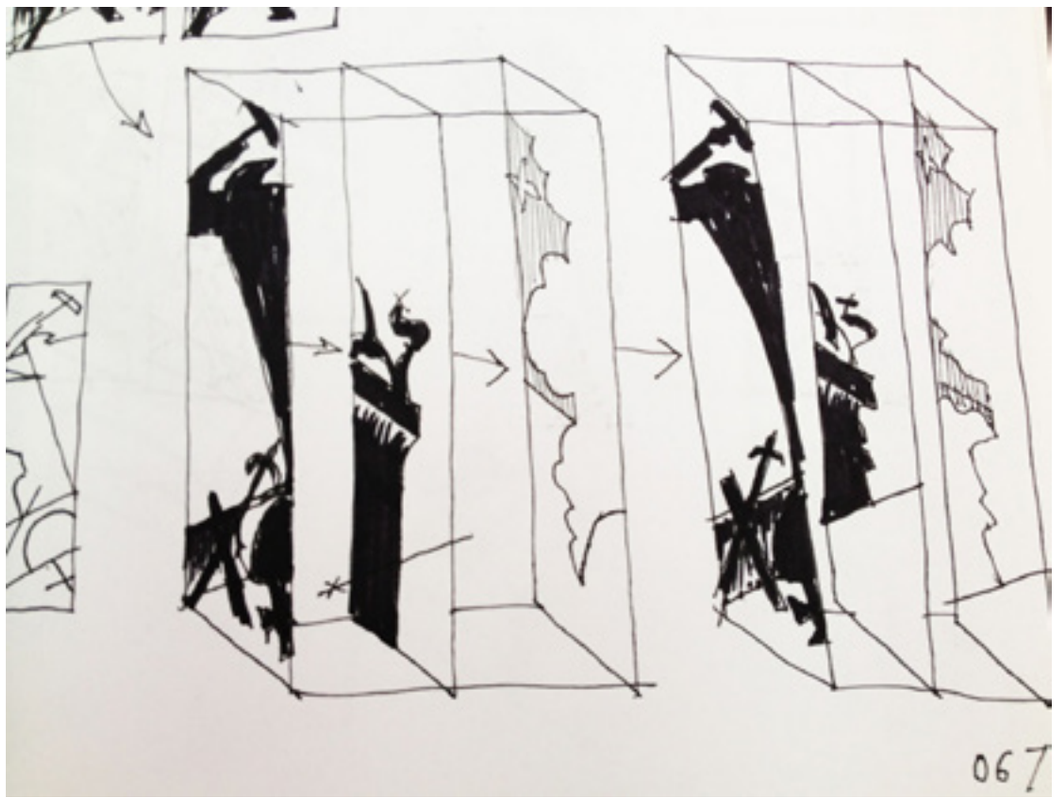


Developmental line drawings for steel panel showing the attempted theft of the jewels by Colonel Blood in 1671

and for promotion on screen; very occasionally in wall-hung exhibitions of framed 'originals' or printed outputs. My process of developing imagery was developed on the understanding that the work was intended for reproduction in print, the 'original' was not the final, but the multiple. If you like, the audience didn't come to see the picture, the picture went to see the audience. The limitations of reproduction; the paper stock, the page layout, the density of ink were all technical factors to consider in combination with an effective visual solution for the brief.

This commission was different. The design team at RAA led by Helen Eger had set out the new exhibition spaces that primed the visitors for seeing the Crown Jewels in the 'flesh'. The exhibition concept explored the artifacts as 'Symbols of Power' and a narrative had been built around the central role the jewels played in 800 years of the monarchy and English history. Though translated into up to ten languages, the story demanded a consistent visual treatment that didn't belong to one period, but could communicate across linguistic and cultural difference.

The Tower of London is a World Heritage Site and one of the group of Royal properties administered by the Historic Royal Palaces Company. They have in-house historians who were very helpful, so I had a great start with the



Draft staging of printed layers for first set of lightboxes

View of exhibition with pikemen mural

research of period detail, which was just as well as the deadline for the set of works was only ten weeks.

Six images arranged as two triptychs were to be constructed as multilayered glass light boxes and displayed in a darkened space, lined with two metre high vinyl images of marching New Model Army pikemen covering the walls. Outside the snaking queuing system incorporated eight steel panels showing key moments of historical events related to the jewels. Just as a book or magazine commission, I didn't try to re-design the allocated spaces, but sought to make the best use of them by understanding the means of reproduction and their limitations. The two different fabrication processes needed quite opposite considerations.

The light boxes being the illumination in semi-darkness using the triptych device of separate but thematic images, each one made up of a sandwich of layers that fragment as a viewer passes. For these two sets I wanted the imagery to link in composition to underline the narrative connections, the first set being centred on destruction (the original Royal jewels were broken up at the Interregnum 1649), the second set on restoration (most of what you see today dates from 1661). The first atmospherically threatening, the second celebratory and reassuring. Each layer physically separated the

foreground from middle and distance, opening up the narrative staging of the combined image and allowing for a certain amount of scale ‘collision’ that has interested me for a number of years.

Out in the courtyard in front of the White Tower, the etched and enameled steel panels lead the audience into the Crown Jewel experience. The process of ‘etch and fill’ demands that different enamel fill pools cannot touch and have to be separated by a fillet of substrate. In practice this meant that the elements all sit on the same level and achieve the opposite of the multilayered over and under lapping glass inside.

Each image was researched and developed individually. My aim was to identify and build a set of iconic object and figurative shapes in a series of frozen narrative actions, using compositional emphasis to prioritise narrative reading. The themes were common to my love of Film Noir scenarios of power, greed, farce, treachery and murder. The internalising and image gestation therefore seemed quite natural, and the real challenge lay in the image translation into the fabrication materials.

Like many analog to digital illustrators (and many digital natives), I use both processes to produce imagery from a drawn, and in my case a chalk pastel, base moving into Photoshop finishing. The fabrication demanded vector imagery and I needed to find a way of moving my ‘line’ from raster to vector. The shapes to be screen-printed were quite simple, but the definition of line in an etch and fill process meant that texture was transformed into an arabesque of digital interpretation. Eventually I found the necessary controls to allow my line and not the programme to show. The result in some places reminded me of poster work by one of my heroes Lucian Bernhard, where pools of tone are concentric and create an aura effect, perhaps for him too a product of technical expediency.

The work was delivered on time, fabricated as samples, adjusted and installed. I was given a pre-opening viewing and invited to the opening party, but no accreditation for the imagery as ‘part of the design process’. An anonymous ‘craft’ contribution, just like the jewellers who created the objects that millions come to see.

The entire project seemed to come and go very quickly and I think many aspects would be different given another chance. But that is the reality for commissioned illustration - you can’t stand next to the image and explain why it looks like it does (unless I try and enroll as a Beefeater), you just need to do the most effective job you can in the circumstances.

The more illustration as a truly international communication tool explores multiple platforms (as evidenced in The AOI Illustration Awards new categories like ‘Public Realm’), the more the challenge and opportunities for what illustration can be increase - and it has always been an art form that thrives by showing.

Roderick Mills

Since graduating from the Royal College of Art in 2001, Roderick Mills has worked across most areas of the Illustration industry including editorial, publishing, corporate literature, and advertising for various International clients including: The BBC, Royal Mail, Penguin Books, Pentagram Design, The Design Museum, Opéra National de Paris, The New York Times, Le Monde, Die Zeit, The National Theatre, Faber & Faber, and is represented by Heart Artists' Agent. Awards have include: Print Certificate of Excellence USA, Society of Publication Design SPOTS, The Folio Society Awards RCA, The Quentin Blake Award for Narrative Illustration RCA, ED&F Man Portfolio Prize RCA, AOI Images Pentagram Prize, & work is included in the collection of Bibliothéque nationale de France Réserve des livres rares. Alongside his Illustration practice Roderick is an International Award winning film-maker, Senior Lecturer at University of Brighton, co-founder of the Mokita Illustration Forum, and Deputy Chairman of the Association of Illustrators.

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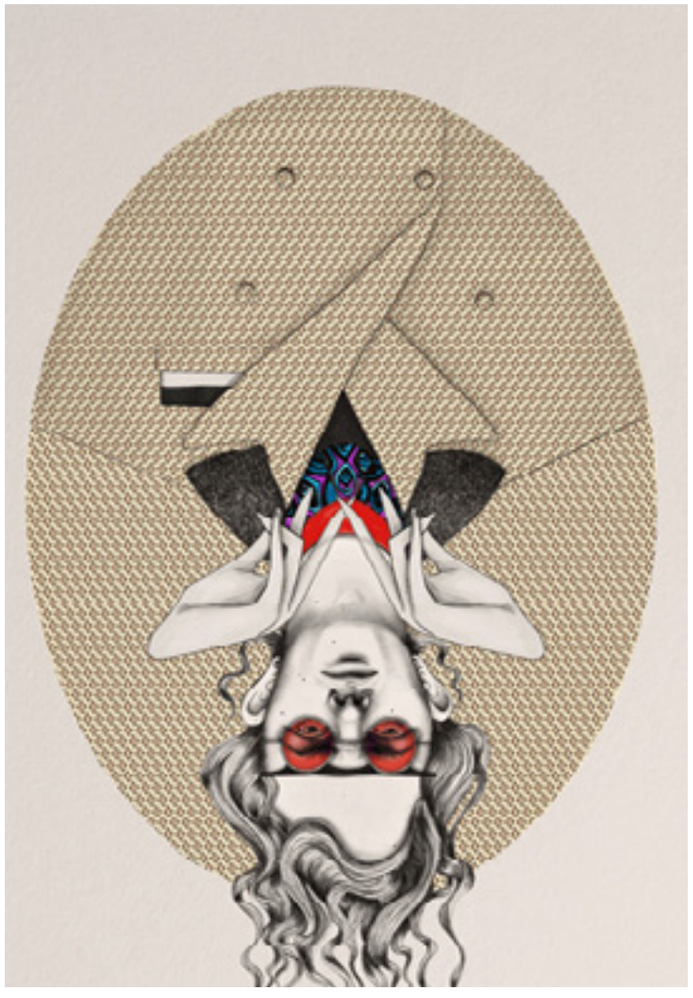
Illustration for the Internet Space



Tara Dougans. *Labour of Love,* 2012

> ‘A lot of Illustration sits very awkwardly alongside the contemporary digital typography scene. It can look naive, almost folksy’. *Dan Fern, Eye Magazine 83*

It was in 2001 that the book *Pen & Mouse: Commercial Art and Digital Illustration* by Angus Hyland set out to survey how illustration had come to terms with the digital medium. The many books published subsequently are testament to how popular Illustration has become. It is now a vibrant profession that has moved well beyond discussions about the digital, analogue, or craft. The advent of greater accessibility to screen-print technology and risograph machines has even led to a resurgence of print for illustrators, evidenced by the popularities of contemporary graphic art fairs such as *Pick Me Up* at Somerset House. The thriving area of self-publishing for Illustrators has enabled many to self-author edition books, graphic novels, magazines, or zines, thus empowering illustrators through an entrepreneurial spirit to provoke commissions. In tandem with this resurgence of analogue technology however there should be a parallel exploration of the space offered by the Internet.

With the advent of new digital platforms such as the Kindle or iPad, the need for visual content to support text will increase. As more illustration moves online the potential for work existing within a timeline allows for a greater exploration of narrative through small movement. With a blink of an eye, the change of day to night, the introduction of sound to the illustration, the image can now convey a greater sense of drama, meaning, atmosphere, emotion, and humour than ever before. Sequence and narratives are inherent within Illustration and these opportunities need to be embraced by Illustrators to provoke future commissions.

One of the strongest memories of the opening ceremony at the London 2012 Olympics was of the unabashed use of digital technology transforming the interior of the stadium with pixilated light pads to render messages & images.

The next day I went along for another look at the Julian Opie exhibition at the Lisson Gallery. This time I had a little more space to fully absorb the subtlety of the work on display. What I found most significant about the show is the potential for illustration. Across various media Julian Opie plays with ideas whilst still retaining his graphic sensibility/visual language. The computer-animated pictures are very playful in their subtle use of movement. A rural landscape at night punctuated by the headlights of a car passing in the distance. Looking up at the gently swaying flowers whilst in the sky vapour trials majestically

criss-cross. These pictures sit somewhere in between static images and animation. The economical use of movement allows the work to retain its pictorial narrative without being fully animated.

In previous animated work Opie draws the figure of a woman in his recognizably thick black line, but she moves with all of the subtlety of a real woman, the gentle swaying hips bring these drawings to life on a continuous loop.

Marshall Arisman, Chair of the MFA Illustration as Visual Essay Department at the School of Visual Arts in New York, has said that all students should be learning technology for new forms of authorial work – especially exploring the area of animation and what that can facilitate. Whilst still acknowledging the importance of print self-publishing, it is within the moving image, the digital realm, that there is great potential for Illustration students to create a market for their work.

To clarify I would say that this is animation within Illustration practice, rather than as a separate academic discipline. Moving image should be a natural part of Illustration practice, with a pressing need for students to be familiar with current digital software.

Jake Evans, a graduate of the Illustration course at the University of Brighton, memorably coined the term as 'the laptop TV generation' during a discussion about contemporary studio practice at the university. Identifying the phenomenon of the desktop being the pin board or sketchbook for a newer generation of student grown up with the accessibility of YouTube, of communicating across multiple platforms, social networks, instant exposure to the public, and of the many distractions available at your fingertips.

The Chilean film maker Alejandro Jodorowsky has stated that 'We are in an age beyond definitions' – when aligning his artistic practice with that of the mobile phone, which is at once a telephone, something you text with, check your emails on, photograph and film with. Illustration needs to be multidisciplinary to maintain relevance.

> '…Professional life has changed for everyone… once you'd learn something at college and there would be a career waiting for you in that particular area – all of that's blown wide open as you know.'
> *Dan Fern, Eye Magazine 83*

The global popularity of Illustration driven by its accessibility on the internet has opened many more opportunities for the profession, but has also flooded the market, speeded up the tolerance for consuming images. It is now far easier to gain attention via the Internet, but difficult to retain when you are only a click away from distraction, or the next new thing?

The New York Times are seemingly at the forefront of this use of online editorial illustration. Former Designer for the *Sunday Magazine,* Hilary Greenbaum explained that the digital had changed everything about how they commission – reflecting the culture of searching for inspiration, rather than the passive reliance upon illustration agents to offer a wallpaper of choice. So they look towards *It's Nice That* & other blogs to survey a curated overview of work with contemporary currency. Once again self-authorship was mentioned, especially within the context of digital/online arena – A means of further developing a visual world, language beyond the still image. Also available to a global audience almost immediately – exposing work to comment, debate, interaction, & 'like' – truly democratic?

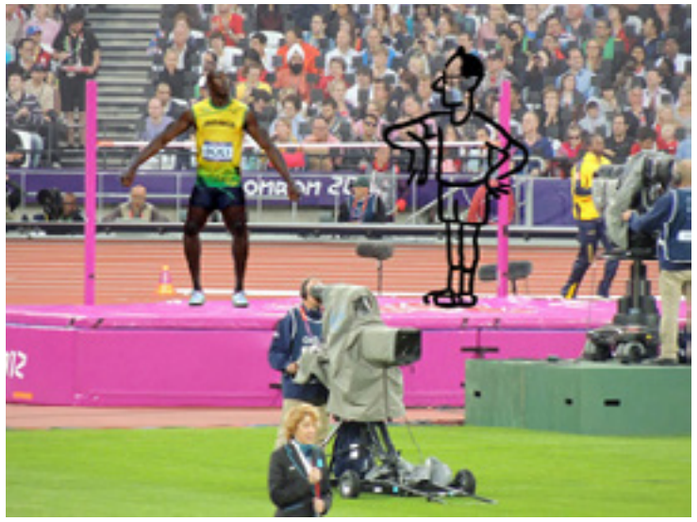
An illustration of a store front, silent, almost reminiscent of Edward Hopper, but with the gentle swaying of the store sign and the walk/don't walk indicator of the pedestrian crossing brings the scene alive, offering a sense of life or narrative by these simple movements - *The New York*

Times opinion pages Rebecca Mock - Main Street's Landlord.

A look at the interactive observations of the London 2012 Olympics, by illustrator Christoph Niemann for *The New York Times* suggest the playfulness possible on the emerging digital platforms. The daily observations during the summer on the online journal *Abstract Sunday* allowed the viewer to play with the drawings, thereby engaging the audience with Christoph's humour, and maybe reflective of how the general public embraced the games and made them their own? – Perhaps a direction for Illustrators to use motion or interactivity to communicate personal viewpoint, a sense of place/location, humour, narrative/storytelling, a visual world…

For these pieces Christoph needed to learn a basic element of coding language to aid his collaboration with the programmers who made the reactive movements work. So perhaps it is necessary for the Illustrator to engage further with the digital and learn to collaborate with others? To help shape possible streams of work by demonstrating what can be done with such technology and take ownership of this territory?

The digital needs to be embraced for what it can add to Illustration rather than a retreat into a faux naïve folk



All images: Christoph Niemann. *Abstract Sunday* The New York Times

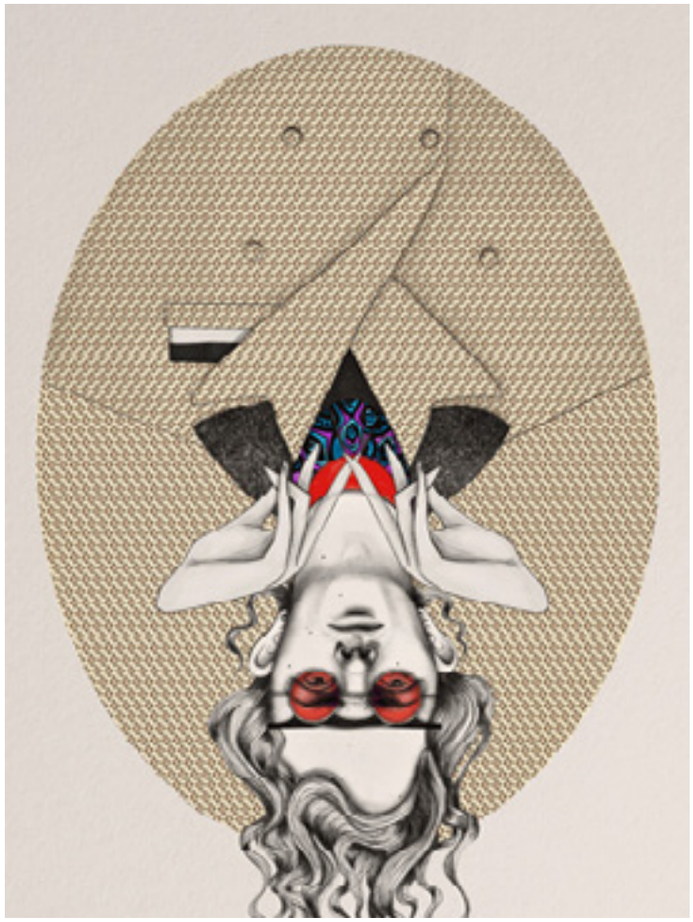
aesthetic whilst the low-fi zine, *Print, Art Fair Culture* is vibrant and culturally enriching, for a sustained career as an illustrator there has to be an acceptance of the changing landscape for Illustration as a discipline, both economically and technologically.

> '... The digital gives us the opportunity to really twist things & to give it an additional layer.' *Tara Dougans - speaking at the Varoom event 'Taste' at Foyles Bookshop in 2012*

Creative Review recently called 2012 the year of the .gif – An indication of the proliferation of this animation form that Illustrators are beginning to exploit and subvert. Within Photoshop software this tool allows simple loops in a timeline and the effect of animation simply by switching layers on and off. Viewed within a browser they allow work to exist in time.

In 2012 Brighton Illustration graduate Jonathan Taylor produced a series of works that purely existed on the Internet – 'The Internet Makes Me Tired' was living Illustration, permanently there, a figure curled up and hiding from the world.

Jonathan Taylor, *The Internet Makes Me Tired,* 2012



Tara Dougans. *Labour of Love,* 2012

Tara Dougans. *Labour of Love*, 2012

Tara Dougans, a fashion illustrator and art director based in Amsterdam, is one of many illustrators working within the fashion world to produce 20 second narratives for designers and manufacturers. The .gifs allow Tara to further her visual world, by introducing small moments of motion, that are hypnotic in their simplicity - they lengthen our attention span, engage the audience with delight and wonder. The ease with which someone can make a .gif within Photoshop shows how Adobe software will eventually merge – the step from Photoshop into AfterEffects will be short & become a natural translation of the drawing into motion? For the next generation of illustrators it will be a seamless step and open up many opportunities.

As internet commerce grows, the drive to retain visitors on websites, or ‘dwell time’ is increasingly becoming necessary for retailers, for whom a possible customer is only a click away from leaving the virtual shop. The need for an equal balance to form and functionality of websites will increase as digital platforms multiply.

As Greg Burns, a director of Big Active Creative Agency indicates it is the fashion world that is leading the development of this short form of film-making. The space between the still image and animation – documentary, authorial, issues based, personal viewpoints/beliefs,

Quentin Jones, Stills from *Quentin Jones: Naked with Paint*, 2012

content and opinion. Motion requires greater content beyond a 'look' or 'style', and in an age of distraction and an illustrator on every street corner the need to stand out and offer something unique in what you say will be essential.

Visual Graphics Artist Kevin Burg & Photographer Jamie Beck combined to experiment with the .gif format to bring moments of life to photographs of the New York Fashion Week. They term these as 'living moments', and bring a sense of the theatre of a catwalk collection. Is this not true of Illustration that has always been about the creation of a visual world?

Quentin Jones is one of these Illustrators exploiting this area of the 20 second narrative – producing short films for brands such as Chanel. It is a territory not exactly mapped out, but something undoubtedly important - having huge potential for Illustrators to extend their visual world beyond the static printed page. Providing a drawing with additional personality, to give it a sound? Fashion brands are investing quite a lot of money within this area – to extend the visual identity of their brands, & being reactive to an ever-changing market economy.

Print is by no means dead, and the emerging digital platforms are not to be feared, illustrators should see

them as further means of articulating ideas and telling stories, a corner stone of what Illustration has always been good at. To take ownership of new technology and encourage art directors and designers see how illustration can be used across both print and the online environment.

The use by Julian Opie of multiple mediums I would argue shows that illustrators can retain their visual language across platforms without losing their identity, or signature look, but it is important that they understand how their work should exist within these mediums, to take command of how their work should move or sound - an extension of the visual world created by illustrators.

We are at a time of much change within the Graphic Design industry, and Illustration with such a broad breadth of definition has an inherent flexibility to convey messages and narratives across many mediums.

A possible Future Space for Illustration?

Quentin Jones, Stills from *Quentin Jones: Naked with Paint*, 2012

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Chloé Regan

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The Set

Chloé Regan, *A Mark in Search of a Meaning,* 2013, Sketchbook and Pencil, The Set

Setting the Scene

> ‘She sat at the table in the sparse kitchen. It had belonged to her grandmother, and her mother before her.’ (Regan, 2012)

This quote is taken from the illustrated book I have created ‘The Set.’ I chose to open my paper with it because it is significant in introducing what I discovered about space. Space is not physical and universal. It is personal and formed in the mind.

‘The Set’ explores a woman and the spaces she inhabits. I visualise and try to make sense of this by drawing. George Perec’s notions of space are reflective of my sense of space and the character’s in my narrative. I have created an illustrated book ‘The Set’ that explores the intangibility of space and my quest to make sense of space.

> ‘Space is a doubt: I have constantly to mark it, to designate it. It’s never mine, never given to me, I have to conquer it.’ (Perec, 1974)

As an illustrator I reflect on human behaviour and the psychological effects of space through drawing. I use people I have met and whose lives intrigue me.

Taking a woman I know, I observe and draw. I chose a specific friend because she spends most of her time in two spaces, her flat and the city. These spaces are both reflective and evocative of her psychological state and inform her patterns of existence. I wonder why she acts differently in the flat and the city? How can space affect our behaviour? How significantly do our associations with spaces, our thoughts and memories in response to spaces inform how we perceive them? The title ‘The Set’ was decided on because my protagonist uses the city and her flat as two different film sets and she responds to each differently. She is also passionate about Italian film.

The woman has lived in the same flat for forty years. She arrived from London with her husband and now lives with her partner of many years. She demonstrates a repetitive nature of rituals informed by the flat and the city. I have never been to the flat but have heard much about it. It is sparse. In fact it is almost empty although everything in it has significance. Her persona in the city is a contrast. She is glamorous, citing film as an inspiration for a way of dressing and urban existence.

Psychogeography is a relevant context for my narrative; particularly with reference to Walter Benjamin’s ‘Arcade Project’ and Charles Baudelaire’s ‘flâneur’ which both examine personal and human responses to spaces.

Chloé Regan, *The Woman I Know Looking Into The Space Beyond For Us,* 2012, Sketchbook and Pencil, The Set

Space continues to be explored through my process of drawing. The use of space on the drawing page and manipulation of composition are significant. I also collage to create illustrated montages, again experimenting with the physical space of the page. I have built a three-dimensional model of the flat from factual information. I continue to make drawings and take photographs from multi-perspectives to evoke and communicate. John O'Reilly's 'A Phenomenology of the Sketch' proves a significant context.

> '7/ The sketch as a mark in search of a meaning. The sketch of two doorways, side-by-side, indistinct figures inside the door frames, onlookers parked on the opposite page of the sketchbook looking in, participating in the sketch for us, noting, looking. The sketch as posing the question of 'readability', of how to read notes, jottings, scrambled messages, as an open-ended question.' (O'Reilly, 2011)

I use modest materials; paper, pencils, photocopies, photographs, card and pins. The freedom of the blank piece of paper, the immediacy of using pencils and the medium of drawing are the most effective for making visible what is in the mind of my character and my thoughts in action. 'The Set' is a personal project that is self-initiated. I do not digitally alter my drawings. I chose to form the illustrations I made into a book, a three-dimensional object, that allowed me to explore an additional sense of space.

In my paper I will explore the documentation of spaces and the psychological effects of space on the character within my narrative. I will also consider the effect space has as I draw on location and how this impacts my use of space on the page. The spaces I drew from are those that surround us everyday, the personal, domestic and accessible as opposed to grand and intimidating. I hope the themes of 'The Set' are of relevance to readers and inspire them to appreciate how they view spaces using their personal associations and imagination.

My protagonist appears to respond differently to the private domestic space and the public urban space. She also responds differently to a third space, the stairway to her flat, which bridges the flat and the city.

The Flat

> "Her collection of ceramics from her travels sat on the shelves by the window." (The Set, 2012)

The woman's flat is minimal and each piece of furniture, each object and picture on the wall is thoughtfully considered. The make up on her dressing table describes her rituals. Her use of space appears to be defined by rituals. Her patterns of behaviour are evident in the ashtrays in specific places around the flat, her use of the kitchen in the day and sitting room in the evening. Her rituals celebrate the simple aspects of life. The flat is surprisingly bear expect for a wardrobe full of elegant clothes. Italian films inspire her dress and urban existence, even down to the way she moves. As I gather information and reflect on her, I realise that film, particularly Italian film, fuels her imagination. She has visited Italy many times over the years.

Merleau-Ponty's reflection on place inspired my drawing 'The Set' because of the significance he attaches to human beings and their space. In *Senses of Place* Edward Casey looks to Merleau-Ponty to support his definition of space. His writing on this subject leads me to imagine infinite potential narratives.

> 'A place is generative and regenerative on its own schedule. From it experiences are born and to it human beings (and other organisms) return for empowerment, much like Antaeus touching the earth for renewed strength. Place is the generatrix for the collection, as well as the recollection, of all that occurs in the lives of sentient beings, and even for the trajectories of inanimate things. Its power consists in gathering these lives and things, each with its own space and time, into one arena of common engagement.'
> (Merleau-Ponty, 1996)

The City

The city acts as a film set on which the woman projects a character and way of life. She demonstrates a repetitive nature of rituals informed by the city, similarly as she does in her flat. She visits the same cafe, shops at the same places and meets with the same people. She appears to be one of the happiest women I know. I wonder if she has learnt to be who she wants to be by mimicking film actors from films she adores?

The films my protagonist watches are set in the city, a public space where she appears aware of people observing her. Charles Baudelaire's figure, the flâneur proves a relevant context for my illustrations. Baudelaire's description of the flâneur and his personal and imaginative response to the expanse of space in the city, helped me to recognise that our perception of a space, even a sprawling and chaotic public space, is limited to

Chloé Regan, *Her Shoes and Clothes,* 2013, Pencils, The Set

Chloé Regan, 2013, *Film Stills from Amarcord, Her Favourite Film* Sketchbook and Pencils, The Set

our individual sense of that space and the thoughts in our head.

> '…it is an immense joy to set up house in the heart of the multitude, amid the ebb and flow of movement, in the midst of the fugitive and the infinite... He is looking for that quality which you must allow me to call 'modernity': for I know of no better word to express the idea... By 'modernity' I mean the ephemeral, the fugitive, the contingent, the half of art whose other half is the eternal and the immutable.' (Baudelaire, 1995)

City and Flat, Flat and City Become One

Psychogeography became an increasingly relevant context for my narrative as I began to make sense of how the woman's sense of space was formed by what was in her mind. Walter Benjamin's concept of 'modernity' and his development of montage as a literary structure in the 'Arcades Project' is one I have found evocative of the layers of senses, thoughts and memories that inform my character's perception of space. Benjamin's 'Arcade Project' did not only document but responded imaginatively to space. The Arcades were spaces in the city where one could physically walk through buildings, intimately passing by domestic spaces and catching

Chloé Regan, 2013*, Now a Landscape, Now a Room,* Sketchbook and Pencils, The Set

glimpses of conversations, belongings and people in their homes. One can observe interiors and exteriors as the private and public merge. The woman in my book has been formed from a variety of perspectives. These include my observations, conversations we have had, over heard conversations, things I have been told and my imagination. I collated information through drawing in several sketchbooks, a similar process to note taking, reminiscent of Benjamin's noted collective thoughts. Drawing in a range of sketchbooks allowed me to draw as and when I needed to, so that I was not limited to working in a studio. Benjamin analyses the significance of this process of working.

> 'For everything that matters is to be found in the card box of the researcher who wrote it, and the scholar studying it assimilates it into its own card index.' (Benjamin, 2007)

Sketching

Illustration is an appropriate medium for observing, reflecting and communicating themes concerning the human condition. From sketching my thoughts and information with immediacy, it became clear over time that a sense of space was not a physical entity. Instead space was created from her memories and imagination and formed from previous experience.

‘What is at drawing’s centre? No one thing, for certain. Its inclusivity is too great for that to be true- what cannot be represented by a drawing? But its inexhaustible capacity for invention and change must, I feel, be attributable to its two-dimensional format and narrow range of materials. Put another way: drawing’s value has a lot to do with this inclusivity, with the range of content that it can deal with, and not so much to do with material experimentation.’ (Ginsborg, 2003)

My speculation about a person can be ruminated on the page and it is the note like and loose marks that I make in response to my observations and thoughts that are more reflective of a human existence, in flux and unstructured. John O’Reilly’s *A Phenomenology of the Sketch* evocatively describes the sketch.

> ‘The sketch as dysfunctionality, as dysfunctional craft, not finessed, unpolished...’ (O’Reilly, 2011)

My sketch like drawing is unmediated and autonomous. I use drawing as a form of visual thinking. My methodology is to make drawings with no intended or predestined outcome. Surrealist automatic drawing is a relevant

Chloé Regan, 2012, *Conquering a Space,* Sketchbook and Pencil, The Set

context for the sketch and the style and process of drawing I use. When drawing I become engrossed in drawing on action. John Berger writes in *On Drawing*:

> '....where are we when we draw? The question seems to be expecting a spatial answer, but mightn't it be a temporal one? Isn't the act of drawing, as well as the drawing itself, about becoming rather than being? Isn't a drawing the polar opposite of a photo? The latter stops time, arrests it; whereas a drawing flows with it. Could we think of drawings as eddies on the surface of the stream of time? You used the idea of an electric current, but whether it's electricity or in water, it's a flowing. And going with it means losing ourselves...being carried away.' (Berger, 2007)

Making the Book

The sketches in the book have not been edited or refined. They are the instantaneous drawings I made on location. I do not refine them in order to maintain my sense of discovery and to evocatively capture the atmosphere of the spaces I draw.

> '...there is an imagination kept "in flux" by a continuously unfolding practice of drawing unmoored from the making of a finished work of art....' (Naginski, 2003)

'The Set' is a book within books. A book made from drawing in many books. Drawings form their own meanings and their combination and relationships form newer meanings. Working in several different sketchbooks, combined with the variety of drawing styles, materials, methods and scales, allows me to explore the concept of piecing together a narrative in parts to make a whole. Again I look to Walter Benjamin's literary structure and the process of montage in 'The Arcades Project.' I made the decision to show glimpses of the protagonist and I avoided detailed drawings of her physical appearance at the start of making my narrative because I felt this heightened the intrigue, and mirrored the concept of not knowing, piecing the woman together as you turn each page of the book. Roderick Mills reflected in the *The Wondering Line* catalogue on illustrators' manipulating the unassuming aesthetic of the sketch, to draw without an outcome in mind, to use its inherent searching qualities in an attempt to discover. My method for making *The Set* began with my drawing prolifically in this way. I created a large series of disparate drawings.

Chloé Regan, *The Stairway Bridging the Two Spaces,* 2012, Sketchbook, Pencils and Felt Tips, The Set

> ‘The real point is to sustain the movement of personalised languages of the trace as they migrate from page to page, notebook to notebook, surface to surface.’ (Naginski, 2003)

The disparate drawings I made are evocative of my sense of questioning. However, as I began to make sense of how the woman perceived space my drawings became more organized. Drawings of the physical space became more precise, and to depict her imagination I began to experiment with collage and codes of colour.

The concept of the open-ended illustrated narrative allows space for subjective perception and experience to inform the meaning of my drawings. Raymond Pettibon’s disparate drawings have proven a particular inspiration for ‘The Set’ because of their filmic qualities, and significantly, his exploration of ambiguously associated fragments of text and image from a range of sources. On seeing Pettibon’s exhibition in November 2012 at the Sadie Coles Gallery, London, I reflected on the associations I made to his drawings from personal experiences and memories. Pettibon allows for reflective space in his drawings through using ambiguous imagery and captions of text.

> ‘It’s a kind of shorthand for me. I make pieces of the story, other people put them together in their heads how they want to. I give just enough context to spark interest.’ (McSweeney’s 2009)

I was concerned with the communication and legibility of my book. The intention of my book is for it to be enjoyable and functional, but not necessarily instantaneously legible. I presented the book in progress to an audience. The narrative consists of a large number of inconclusive and ephemeral like imagery, which inspired readers. I presented it before incorporating text to aid reading. It was clear that each reader enjoyed bringing their own perceptions, experiences and interests to interpreting my illustrations. In *The Wondering Line* catalogue Andrzej Klimowski comments on INK Illustration’s approach to conveying narrative:

> ‘Not everything is spelt out, viewers are given the freedom to read into the compositions using their imagination.’ (Klimowski, 2011)

The concept of psychogeography is a significant context not only in exploring my character but also its effects on me as I draw. I have drawn on several relevant locations; the part of the city in which she lives, in spaces that are similar to and evocative of the atmosphere of her flat, and the places she would visit. Working on location imbues my drawings with an evocative sense of place, both descriptive and atmospheric. Working on location allows the concept of psychogeography to inform my drawings. Subconsciously the space in which I draw informs my handling of the space of the page and the use of mark making. Working on location forces me to work directly in response to my subject, I trace lines and make confident marks. I use the space of the sketchbook page intuitively and with less reserve. I drew using a range of methods including; working on location, from film, from photographs I had taken and found imagery. This range of sources has informed the diversity of my drawings.

Psychogeography not only informs how I draw but also spaces I leave. The blank pages, negative space within a drawing and sketchy unfinished process of drawing, allow me to further explore the story’s concepts. For example, spaces are left to indicate the changing sense of space at the start of the book between the protagonist in her flat and the city.

Joseph Beuys’ reference below to the significance of sense and imagination when experiencing an object or place as we draw helped me to see how the intangible, the memory, the feeling, inspires my character’s formation of space.

Chloé Regan, *An Exotic Memory,* 2012, Sketchbook and Pencil, The Set

‘Drawing is...the first visible thing of the form of the thought, the changing point from the invisible powers to the visible thing...It is not only a description of the thought...you have also incorporated the senses...the sense of balance, the sense of vision, the sense of audition, the sense of touch.’
(Petherbridge, 2010)

I began my drawings considering space as a physical entity. Space had formed backgrounds and sets for my illustrations of the everyday subject matter that intrigues me: people, places, events and objects. However my perception of space changed as I researched and drew. I realised how the individual’s perception of space is highly unique and is created in the mind, formed by associations, memories and imagination.

At the start of my project the specificity of space interested me; the intimate, domestic, public, ordered, chaotic, familiar, modern... How do different types of places effect how we feel and in turn our behaviour? In my book the character of the woman initially appeared to respond differently to the three spaces: her flat, the stairway leading to her flat and the city. I became interested in the realisation that each space became defined by her thoughts not necessarily the physical character of the space.

> ‘The crowd is the veil through which the familiar city beckons to the flâneur as phantasmagoria- now a landscape, now a room.’ (Benjamin, 2002)

As my character perceived space, I drew my new perception of space on the drawing page experimenting with ideas of physical space and the psychological internal space.

‘The Set’ has provided me with an opportunity to draw and examine themes, narrative structures and approaches to drawing with a critical and playful mindset. Space has developed from a physical place to a highly imaginative and personal theme, and one that will inspire future bodies of work.

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VAROOM! LAB

online journal - issue two

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