THE PLACE OF MEMORY: REMEDIATION AND THE PERSONAL MOVING IMAGE ARCHIVE

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Abstract

This thesis interrogates the ways in which the formation of an archive of Super 8 film shot by the filmmaker-researcher creates a 'physical place' in which to encounter memory and trauma, alongside digitised versions, and investigates the ways in which filmmaking can provide an understanding of how memory and place interact through this intuitive creative practice.

The researcher developed a process-led methodology of 'remembering' through repeated engagement with digitised 8mm film material. This remediation explored the materiality of physical film in contrast to the more ephemeral 'presence' of both memories and digital material. The thesis presents five Key Practice Works: *One Second and Day* (2017) and *31 Days* (2017), split-screen works that fracture the normal flow of on-screen time. A wholly digital work, *Father-land* (2018), explores how an 'archive film' can be made where no rushes exist; here, a method of 'returning' was developed, filming on location then recording unrehearsed narration later at the same place. The production of two films, *Finborough Road* (2018) and *Returning to Dungeness* (2022), advanced the enquiry by visiting places filmed decades earlier on Super 8 to record narration in their profilmic spaces. Three Supplemental Practice Works provide additional insights and opportunities for reflective analysis into process and film materiality.

Situated as personal film within the field of artists' moving image practice, the study is informed by Jaimie Baron's concept of 'the archive effect' and draws on Dylan Trigg's writing on phenomenology, trauma and place. Conceptual anchors are provided regarding personal filmmaking by Alisa Lebow, Annette Kuhn and Vivian Sobchack, and on the archive and trauma through the scholarship of Cathy Caruth, Janet Walker and Laura Marks, along with Avery Gordon's notion of haunting and the ghostly. The research is contextualised by an analysis of the memory film practices of three artists' works: Chris Marker's *Sunless* (1983), Derek Jarman's *Glitterbug* (1994) and Sarah Turner's *Perestroika* (2010), in addition to film works by Jenni Olson, Milene Gierke and Nathaniel Dorsky.

This thesis provides a significant extension to insights into Jamie Baron's 'archive effect' through the detailed analysis of the author's personal Super 8 films, which are simultaneously an archive and a collection of rushes. An innovative method of narration, 'speaking in place', was evolved through the enquiry. The research contributes new knowledge to the debate and discussion surrounding essay film production and scholarship, particularly the dynamic interaction over time between filmic spaces and their filming locations. In so doing, the thesis demonstrates how the specificities of materiality and presentation manifest a place of memory.

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I would like to express my gratitude to my supervisory team at UWE: Professor Andrew Spicer, Professor Charlotte Crofts and Professor Terry Flaxton. I have benefited greatly from their support, encouragement and guidance.

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Introduction

The thesis comprises a written component, along with a collection of practice comprising short films and video and photographic documentation of experiments, which are listed on page 14, along with links to where they can be viewed. Extracts from my online research journal are included within the thesis along with web links. The online research journal in its entirety is available at: https://www.sundog.me.uk

This thesis interrogates how the formation of a personal archive of Super 8 film, shot by the filmmaker-researcher, creates a 'physical place' in which to encounter memory and investigates through creative practice the ways in which artists' filmmaking offers a way to understand how memory and place interact. The digitisation of the analogue film material provides an augmented experience of memory when the archive footage is reviewed in its remediated state. A length of exposed and processed Super 8 film is a tangible resource in contrast to its digital versions, which are intangible. We can understand that a storage device such as a USB stick must have been physically altered by storing video data, but the change to the device is imperceptible until it is revealed to us through suitable digital technology, such as a computer laptop. Although the original film material requires a specific technology – a Super 8 viewer, editing machine or projector to 'reanimate' the footage – this thesis argues it is the filmmaker's *knowledge* that the Super 8 archive exists in a 'physical place' as a physical artefact, a relic of the past, that is key to understanding and discussing its interrelationship with memory.

The digitisation provided ease of access to all parts of the archive – allowing me in effect freedom to roam around the archive, a mode of 'intuitive looking' akin to remembering, when one recollection leads to another, and another, as a kind of chain reaction. In addition, digitisation enabled a means of engaging with the archive and sharing process and outcomes without jeopardising the physical integrity of the celluloid footage.[1] It was through this 'roaming', that I developed a process-led method of repeated engagement with the digitised footage to stimulate memories triggered by the filmic content.

In the study, I approached the use of memory, personal cinema and the archive in two types of practice. First, I focused on my silent Super 8 analogue footage, which I had filmed over a period of approximately three decades. I worked with this archive footage in its digitised form and as

1. I use the term 'celluloid' to denote material film and practice, as distinct from analogue video or digital video.

celluloid material; some works include my spoken narration, recorded on return to the filming location. The other approach focused on the collaborative production of an entirely digital short essay film in Cyprus, which addressed memory as place, creating a memory work where there was no personal moving image archive to draw on.

All the practice components that form part of this thesis are authored by me, except for *Father-land* (Moore and Parker, 2018), which I made in collaboration with the artist and filmmaker, Kayla Parker. As Annette Bramley and Liz Ogilvie point out in *Research Collaboration: A Step-by-step Guide to Success*, which focuses on collaborative practice in research: "collaboration is, by definition, something you can't do on your own" (Bramley and Ogilvie, 2021, p.5). *Father-land* is a work in which collaboration was embedded from the outset, through all the production stages and in the dissemination of the film output to audiences. The collaborative process that underpins this work enabled me to extend my investigation into memory and place in relation to archival practice beyond what was possible in my solo engagement with my Super 8 material.

My thesis is situated in the field of artists' moving image practice, underpinned by my knowledge of pertinent histories and practices gained through my first-hand experience as a filmmaker and film curator over three decades. It is further informed by notable commentary from David Curtis (Curtis, 2007), Jackie Hatfield and Stephen Littman (Hatfield and Littman, 2006), Malcolm Le Grice (Le Grice, 2001), Chris Meigh-Andrews (Meigh-Andrews, 2013), Michael O'Pray (O'Pray, 1996) and Al Rees (Rees, 2011), and other sources. Kate Parker, an experienced film producer of a variety of artists' moving image projects, provides a useful definition of artists' moving image as "practices that draw from a history encompassing experimental film, video art, documentary, essay film, performance art, installation art and animation" (Parker, 2019, p.2). Analysis of the memory film practices of three artists' works contextualises the research: Chris Marker's *Sunless* (1983), Derek Jarman's *Glitterbug* (1994) and Sarah Turner's *Perestroika* (2010); works by Jenni Olson, Milena Gierke and Nathaniel Dorsky provide further contextualisation.

Jaimie Baron's concept of 'the archive effect' (Baron, 2014) provided insights relating to the remediation of my Super 8 material into 'new digital films'. I draw on Dylan Trigg's writing on phenomenology, trauma and place, with reference to Edward Relph's concepts of place and placeness. In addition, my thinking in this enquiry is informed by scholarship in 'memory

studies'[2] In relation to cinema. I was guided by the writings of Annette Kuhn and Susannah Radstone on film and memory, along with Vivian Sobchack and Alisa Lebow. Cathy Caruth, Laura Marks and Janet Walker assisted me with their insights on trauma and memory, with commentary from Jo Ann Kaplan; Avery Gordon guided my understanding of haunting and the ghostly in relation to my archival material.

The research generated insights into Baron's 'archive effect' by working with my personal Super 8 films, which are simultaneously an archive and a collection of rushes. In addition, the research contributes to discourses surrounding essay film production and scholarship, particularly the dynamic interaction over time between filmic spaces and their filming locations and shows how the specificities of materiality and presentation manifest a place of memory.

While I understand that the material in my archive is 'only' images, the ease with which I was able to view and work with the digital versions and this immersion in my past – and the memories it prompted – required me to take breaks from my research to regain my equilibrium. As Radstone points out in her chapter, 'Cinema and Memory' (Radstone, 2010), there is a 'perceptual paradox' between the memory's potential to create unease or disturb, especially in relation to trauma, and the feeling of 'safety' inherent in cinema spectatorship – because moving images are not 'real' (*Ibid.*, p.325). She highlights also the "relative permanence of the photographic and cinematic image with the mind's tendency to forget" – my Super 8 reels had stayed largely 'out of sight' in their box for many years and their contents did not 'trouble' my everyday existence (*Ibid.*). Radstone's theory of 'cinema/memory' comprises,

> a world constituted of images, sequences, and their associated affects. Situated within the mind, yet positioned between the personal and the cultural, cinema/memory melds images remembered from the cinema with the inner world's constitutive ''scenes'' or scenarios. (*Ibid.*, p.326)

However, in this enquiry, rather than images from cinema in general, I often found it was the memory of my own filmed sequences that supplanted the memories associated with the location of filming – in making Finborough Road, being in the place where I had been before, I remembered the filmed material rather than the memories I had sought to connect with.

It is my intention to open out discussion of my research themes through a close engagement through the practice rather than to 'close down' definitions and formulate irrefutable 'proofs'.

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2. Memory studies emerged as an interdisciplinary field in its own right towards the end of the 1990s (Till, 2006, p.326).

The films presented in this thesis, both my own and those made by others, exemplify aspects of the interrelationship between remembering and cinema identified by Radstone in three paradigms: first, that memory has been conceived as analogous with cinema,[3] the second that certain types of film can be considered "analogous with or even to *be* modes of memory" and the third that interconnections between memory and film are "more porous and more deeply interpenetrating" than accounted for (*Ibid.*, p.326, emphasis in original).

Research Questions

The questions that underpin this research are:

1. At what point does a filmmaker's collection of rushes become an archive?[4]

2. What registers of memory operate during the processes of creating a moving image artwork, from the point of capture through working with the remediated digital material to presentation?

3. Can archive film be conceived as a 'place' to which we can return?

3. Some of the visual terms used in cinema demonstrate the close relationship that has existed between cinema and memory – for example, 'fade', for a dissolve transition that 'joins together' a film narrative's past and present, and the 'flashback', as a cinematic strategy of interrupting a narrative flow with a short sequence from an earlier time – or to remind the audience of an event they have seen earlier in a film.

4. I consider this question in the section, Situating the Super 8 Archive on page 39.

Super 8 and Filmmaking Practice

The greater part of my project involves returning to Super 8 material from my collection/archive created in the 1980s and 1990s and its subsequent remediation through digitisation. When I started filming Super 8, I already had an 'archival impulse' through my work as a photographer, needing to preserve negatives for printing as required. The experiential quality of the whole process of Super 8 filmmaking appealed to me, such as the focussing of my attention through the camera, the anticipation of viewing the developed film and seeing the results. My filming recorded people, places and phenomena, sometimes with intention at other times through intuition: friends underwater and on motorbikes, a visit to Dungeness, storm waves crashing over the seafront, a submarine revealed by the fluttering of a neighbour's washing.

Research Journal

Archive Origins

A box of films, sat under a desk, gathering dust. Most are single rolls of Super 8, some still in their mailer envelopes – yellow for Kodak, white for Agfa. Where were they shot? Who is in there?

https://www.sundog.me.uk/archive-origins/

I kept the reels intact and did not cut and splice the sequences together.[5] I make a fleeting appearance in my archive – perhaps thirty seconds onscreen during thirty years of filming Super 8.[6] I discuss the cultural, technical and artistic specificities of Super 8 reversal film – particularly Kodachrome film stock – and the way it shaped my personal filmmaking practice in Chapter One. In the early days of my Super 8 filmmaking, I felt no compunction to take note of my reflective thoughts or 'theorising' my practice. I undertook an MA Contemporary Film Practice course at University of Plymouth in 2008 and began to incorporate the practice of 'writing down' reflective thoughts to include in presentations and scholarly writing and came to

5. The footage exhibits in-camera edits, the typical way to shoot Super 8.

6. I did not film myself reflected in a mirror nor my reflection in windows; my interest was in seeing the world through my camera and the aesthetic qualities of the Super 8 format.

recognise the value of this as part of the creative process.[7] The way I have used journaling in this enquiry is described below on page 12. Chapter Four focusses on my series of practice experiments that investigate the entanglement of place, memory, trauma and haunting that reside in the physical archive and in the immaterial digitised sound and image.

Methodology

Robin Nelson's edited volume, *Practice as Research in the Arts: Principles, Protocols, Pedagogies, Resistances* (Nelson, 2013), and his earlier chapter, 'Modes of Practice-as-Research Knowledge and Their Place in the Academy' (Nelson, 2009), inform the methodological approach that is pivotal for my practice-led research. In a Practice-as-Research (PaR) project, creative practice is the key method of enquiry and the practice outcomes (such as creative writing, a score or performance of dance or music, a theatre script or performance, an exhibition, a film or other cultural practices) are submitted as substantial evidence of the research enquiry (Nelson, 2013, pp.8 - 9). Nelson considers the practical 'knowing-in-doing' of creative practice to be central to a PaR methodology, which provides a model and protocols for generating knowledge in an artist's research enquiry, such as this PhD.

During my investigation, through my active engagement with university research culture and my reading of other commentators' perspectives, my application of Nelson's PaR methodological strategy and my understanding of the ways in which my creative practice functioned within my enquiry became more nuanced. I present a reflexive account of these modifications to my 'thinking through practice' in Chapter One Methodology: From Filmmaking to Practice Research, in the section, 'Practicing Research', with reference in the discussion to Desmond Bell and Warren Buckland. I include additional material from Rachel Hann along with input from the methodologist James Stake in relation to his theorisation of the case study.

Within the narrative of my thesis, I use a range of communication modes that evolved through my PaR methodological approach, which supports dynamic interaction between the different modes of knowledge production:

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7. My filmmaking practice is experimental and has developed outside of any tutored framework learned from within a film school or art college, apart from the MA. Both my personal filmmaking and professional work have never required the accompaniment of written material beyond a synopsis requested by a film festival or gallery to accompany a film's exhibition. Writing 'about' my film practice is required for funding applications – but these are films that are yet to be made.

- An online research journal, which is illustrated and documents reflexively the experiments and key moments.
- Audio recordings of my verbal responses to viewing Super 8 and video material; these appear as soundtrack elements in some practice works, such as *Cutting the Film.*
- Five key practice works, which embody propositions and new knowledge.[8]
- Critically reflective writing and discussion about contextual material and theoretical ideas, with analysis and evaluation.

These modes capture the thinking generated by the practice experiments and my readings of contextual work by other practitioners and theoretical writings. I integrate these within the analysis and evaluation to produce the central structural spine for the organisation and argument of the thesis.

Thesis Composition

To supplement the written exposition which follows the thesis Introduction, I include excerpts from my online research journal, as well as the practice itself which I outline in detail below.

Online Research Journal

My Super 8 filmmaking is a practice that is situated within my personal life, so it was important from the outset for me to root my doctoral study in my subjectivity. Using 'journaling' as a method fostered the development of my thinking in response to my Super 8 collection, its remediation, and the process and outcomes of my practice experiments. Journaling is "the practice of recording events, ideas and thoughts over a period of time, often with a particular purpose or project in mind" Coghlan and Brydon-Miller (Coghlan and Brydon-Miller, 2014). Journaling enabled me to evolve a reflective mode of writing as a way of engaging with 'my past' as it was manifested on Super 8 film and reconnecting with the memory of my lived experience at the time of filming. The reflective journal writing that emerged from these internal monologues enabled me to embed the personal and diaristic dimensions of my investigation within the doctoral investigation, and to make this accessible to the reader at key moments in the thesis narrative; in addition, the practice of reflective writing became a useful method of fostering interconnections between Nelson's three modalities.

8. There are three Supplemental Works included in Appendix 1.

The extract below is in the format that is repeated through the thesis – an image from the website, the clickable link to the whole entry, the journal page's title and a sample of the text.

Research Journal

https://www.sundog.me.uk/29-march/

29 March – the past dissolves

Grass caught in a fence on Dartmoor. We parked behind the Plume of Feathers pub in Princetown and walked towards South Hessary Tor. It was bitterly cold, Kayla carrying her heavy Bolex. I filmed with the weighty Canon 1014, using its lap-dissolve facility. The dried grass looked beautiful in the wind – it's molinia and a real nuisance on the moorland.

A reflective narrative embeds the subjective dimensions of the author's personal experience within the research project. It is a first-person account that draws on the author's lived experience, "an autobiographical genre of writing and research that displays multiple layers of consciousness, connecting the personal to the cultural" (Ellis and Bochner, 2000, p.379). The online research journal provided a place to tease out tacit knowledge gained through my filmmaking experience and to evolve a more synthesised written commentary that responded to the archival material.

This enquiry has prompted me to examine my practice as a filmmaker, to better understand where my work 'fits in' to artists' moving image. In this, I found keeping a research journal assisted me in developing a reflective practice, as Talulah Cartwright recommends:

> Keeping a journal greatly improves the chances of our remembering the experiences that are important to us, and it also gives us a place to reflect on them. The more we can reflect on how an experience or feeling connects with our values, our other experiences, and our priorities, for example, the more lessons we can draw from it. Reflection connects our experience and feelings to our intuitive senses so that those lessons are available to us when we have to make decisions without full information. (Cartwright and Scisco, 2004, p.11)

The Practice Works

The thesis includes a collection of practice, which is available online and linked to at relevant points in the research. The films that form part of this thesis are situated within the genre of artists' moving image, which embraces a wide range of filmmaking practices, aesthetics, styles and innovative techniques from beginning of end the of 19th century and the early cinema of the avant-garde, the experimental films of the underground film movement, personal and autobiographical cinema, to expanded cinema and performance, and including animation. This eclectic grouping of artists' work with moving images includes a range of celluloid film formats and gauges, from 8mm to 70mm (and beyond), in addition to analogue and digital video in an array of formats and hybrid combinations. In addition to artists' moving image, other terms are commonly used, such as David Curtis's 'artists' film' and 'artists' filmmaking' (Curtis, 2021) and 'artists' film and video' (Curtis, 2007), and are largely interchangeable – including 'experimental cinema' and 'experimental film and video'.[9] I prefer to use the term, 'artists' moving image' within the thesis as it is the one that I apply to my own practice and have used for the festivals of film and video work by artists that I have curated and presented for over twenty years.

The films I make as an artist respond to particular locations, such as the Plymouth waterfront in *Sea Front* (Moore, 2010) and Bantham on the South coast of Devon for *Zinn* (Moore, 2018c),[10] and evolve through my intuitive responses to 'place' using field work and desk-based research, mediated in film, video and sound through my tacit knowledge; some works incorporate material from archives, such as *Teign Spirit* (Moore, 2009b)[11] and *Cinematic City* (Moore, 2011).[12] Films I have made collaboratively about place include *Small World* (Moore, 2007)[13] and

9. 'Artists' moving image' is currently the preferred term for archival and cultural film organisations such as The British Film Institute (2023) and Film London (2023), whereas TATE (2023) refers to 'artists' moving image' in addition to 'artists working with moving images', 'artists' cinema', and 'artist film and video', and the *Moving Image Review and Art Journal* refers to 'artists' film and video' and 'media artworks' (MIRAJ, 2023); 'experimental' is the preferred term of the Moving Image Research Center in the United States (The Library of Congress, 2022).

10. 16mm, a *Deep Time* film commissioned by Mayes Creative for the *Dark Skies: Bright Stars* project.

11. Digital film made through a residency with Teignmouth and Shaldon Museum, this work blends 8mm home movie footage from the 1930s with 21st century views of Teignmouth on the Southwest coast. Commissioned by Animate Projects for Sea Change.

12. Digital film commissioned by Plymouth Arts Centre, a *Cinema City Artist's Moving Image* award funded by South West Screen and Arts Council England. The soundtrack is a montage of audio recordings selected from the 1980s Television South West (TSW) documentary series, *The Phoenix and the Leviathan*.

13. Practice research with Kayla Parker into the aesthetic and creative potential of the High Definition (HD) video format, commissioned for the *Definitive Stories* section of the National Review of Live Art (NRLA) screening programme at the Tramway Gallery, Glasgow; funded by the Arts and Humanities Research Council (AHRC).

The Other Side of Now (Moore, 2021).[14]

In Chapter One, I trace the shift in my practice – from filmmaking to 'practice research' – that occurred as a result of my undertaking this doctoral study. The practice included in this thesis is discussed in Chapter Four. These works of personal cinema are grounded in my subjectivity, are 'authored' by me and feature material from my personal Super 8 archive except for *Father-land* (2018),[15] which is a digital collaborative work.

The moving image works submitted for this thesis are viewable on Vimeo, the video hosting and sharing site, via web links.[16] Five Practice Works form the core submission, arranged in chronological order of creation.

Ideally, the works should be viewed on a large flatscreen monitor in a quiet darkened space with amplified sound or through headphones. The reader may choose to view the work now or watch each piece in its section of Chapter Four on pages 90-122, along with critical reflection on the work. Each film's section in Chapter Four begins with information and the Vimeo link. The films are available online individually via the links on the next page and as a collection linked here:

https://vimeo.com/showcase/6034001

Three Supplemental Practice Works – *Womad, Cutting the Film* and *Film of Dust* – are included in Appendix 1 on pages 144-144. While each piece of supplemental practice contributed insights, they are less central to the narrative of my research journey.

14. 16mm film poem made with David Sergeant and Kayla Parker, a Creative Associates commission from the Sustainable Earth Institute, University of Plymouth.

15. A Key Practice Work, which I discuss in detail in Chapter Four pp. 97-108.

16. The video works are available on UWE's repository at lower resolution, should the Vimeo links no longer work at the time of reading.

The Practice Works

One Second a Day (2016)

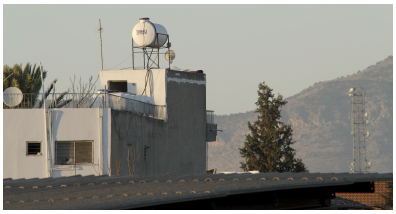
42sec, Super 8, colour stereo

https://vimeo.com/163988384

31 Days (2017)

4min 29sec, Super 8, colour stereo

https://vimeo.com/177039204



Father-land (2018)

20min, Digital 2K, colour stereo

https://vimeo.com/301493003

Finborough Road (2018)

1min, Super 8, colour stereo

https://vimeo.com/258532067

Returning to Dungeness (2022)

3min 23sec, Super 8, colour stereo

https://vimeo.com/339860641

Terms, Themes, Theorists

Place

As the influential geographer Edward ('Ted') Relph has observed, 'place' is a flexible word "that allows it to encompass a rich range of possibilities" (Relph, 2008, p.311). In this thesis, my understanding of the term aligns with Relph's, and I refer primarily to his seminal work *Place and Placelessness* (Relph, 1976), a phenomenological study of place first published in 1976. I discuss place and his concept of 'placeness' in Chapter Two on pages 58-59.

Memory and Trauma

As my research developed, I have come to regard this thesis as a 'memory work'.[17] Thomas Elsaesser asserts: "Cinema, after all, defies time by what I would like to call its *uncanny ontology*: simulacra of life at its most vivid, moving images always document what is not yet dead but neither quite alive"(Elsaesser, 2019, p.26, emphasis in original). It is a fact of life (and death) that as time passes a film archive will in all likelihood become more poignant as the people and places depicted within change and disappear. Consequently, viewing my archival material can be traumatic because it is personal in nature and contains the images of those who were once alive, who appear to be still 'living', and of places and events that stimulate memories. Bessel van der Kolk, the noted psychiatrist and authority on trauma experiences explains:

> Today it is generally accepted that the memory system is made up of networks of related information; activation of one aspect facilitates the retrieval of associated memories. Emotions and sensations seem to be the critical cues for the retrieval of information along these associative pathways. (van der Kolk, 2002)

I found that watching the footage triggered various registers of memory:

> These triggers are not necessarily intrinsically frightening; any affect or sensation related to a particular traumatic experience may serve as a cue for the retrieval of associated sensations... *(Ibid.)*

Working with my archive for this project, repeated viewings of material, especially during editing, took a toll. I had to take breaks as this process 'took me back' to the past by re-enegerising my memories and I needed to rebalance myself in the present before continuing

17. My understanding of the term 'memory work' is informed by Annette Kuhn's conceptualisation, which I discuss on page 37.

with my research.[18]

Cathy Caruth, a founding figure of trauma theory during the 1990s, is an important influence on screen studies (Radstone, 2007, p. 9) especially for amplifying Freud's work to reimagine the psychological concept of trauma, which Caruth defines as "a wound inflicted not upon the body but upon the mind […] a breach in the mind's experience of time, self, and the world" (Caruth, 1995, pp. 3-4). However, she notes that "there is no firm definition for *trauma*, which has been given various descriptions at various times and under different names" (Caruth, 1996, p.117, emphasis in original). In the Introduction to *Unclaimed Experience: Trauma, Narrative, and History* (*Ibid.*), she describes "the ways that the experience of a trauma repeats itself, exactly and unremittingly, through the unknowing acts of the survivor and against his very will" (*Ibid.*, p. 2) and places emphasis on the repetitive feature of trauma:

> In its most general definition, trauma describes an overwhelming experience of sudden or catastrophic events in which the response to the event occurs in the often delayed, uncontrolled repetitive appearance of hallucinations and other intrusive phenomena. (*Ibid.*, p. 11).

Caruth adds to our understanding of the paradoxical nature of trauma, and its relationship with memory, place and time with her observation that,

> [t]he historical power of trauma is not just that the experience is repeated after its forgetting, but that it is only in and through its inherent forgetting that its first experienced at all. And it is this inherent latency of the event that paradoxically explains the peculiar, temporal structure, the belatedness, of historical experience: since the traumatic event is not experienced as it occurs, it is fully evident only in connection with another place and in another time. (Caruth, 1995, p. 8)

Although the traumatic effect of watching my Super 8 films on me is not as extreme as Caruth describes, I recognise the surfacing of feelings that otherwise would remain undisturbed. For example, taking a few minutes of Super 8 footage, which was 'lost' in the archive, to make *Finborough Road*, returning to this location and 'speaking in place' not only stirred my memories but also ascribed to them a status as being 'important'. Subsequently, when viewing this film, I re-experience the reverberations and sadness of lost friendships. When this footage existed in my archive as a Super 8 reel, my memories were dormant. Digitisation reenergised the material and gave it a psychic charge, bringing my past to life in a way that intrudes on the present.

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18. Discussion of trauma as a subject can be found here – https://www.sundog.me.uk/memory-and-trauma/

Janet Walker uses the term, 'trauma cinema', to refer both to works that "deal with traumatic events in a non-realistic mode characterized by disturbance and fragmentation of the films' narrative and stylistic regimes", and films that portray "world shattering" events (Walker, 2005, p. 19). This feeling of 'out of placeness'[19] embodied in Maya Deren's *Meshes of the Afternoon* (Deren, 1943) can be recognised in the disembodied narrative voiceover in *Father-land*.

Walker considers audiovisual media have "certain intrinsic properties" (Walker, 2005, p. xix) that suit them for our "need to write histories of trauma and/or traumatic histories with regard to the relationships among experience, memory and fantasy" (*Ibid.*, p. xviii). She contends:

> [f]ilm and video texts are always already constructed through processes of selection and ordering, yet they can also reproduce, mechanically or electronically, an actual profilmic or provideographic event (occurring in front of the camera). (*Ibid.*, p. xix)

E. Ann Kaplan considers that cinema 'performs trauma' through its inherent capacity to convey "the visual, aura and non-linear fragmented phenomena of trauma – to performing it" (Kaplan, 2001, pp. 204-5). She also argues that,

> [t]he struggle to figure trauma's effects cinematically leads to means other than linearity or story fragments, hallucinations, flashbacks are the modes trauma cinema characteristically adopts (*Ibid.*, p. 204).

My film *31 Days*[20] was created in its entirely from intuitively selected archival footage. While I would not identify the work explicitly as 'trauma cinema', there is a sense of Kaplan's hallucinatory flashbacks in which the viewer's mind tries to connect the visual fragments of the past and make sense of the work.

Addressing how trauma in cinema 'marks' the viewer, Kaplan and Ban Wang observe that *Meshes of the Afternoon*,[21] which depicts the woman protagonist's 'stream of consciousness', positions the viewer as "witness" (Kaplan and Wang, 2004, p. 10). They argue that "the position of being a witness … may open up a space for transformation of the viewer for empathetic identification without vicarious traumatization" (*Ibid.*). *Father-land* touches the audience with its wistful recollections of lost childhood without creating a bridge to the traumas of the past.

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19. Relph refers to this as *existential outsideness* when people feel a separation between themselves the place they are in, a sense of strangeness and alienation (Relph, 1976: p.51).

20. *31 Days* demonstrates the effect that Kaplan describes more effectively than the earlier iteration, *One Second a Day*, as it complicates the progression of images moving from right to left onscreen; see page 95.

21. In addition, Kaplan and Wang cite Alain Resnais' *Night and Fog* (1955), *Hiroshima Mon Amour* (1959), directed by Resnais and written by Marguerite Duras, and Tracey Moffatt's *Night Cries: A Ritual Tragedy* (1990).

My Super 8 archive consists of recorded fragments of my past with almost no supporting metadata such as date and place of filming to pin down individual shots or rolls. At the time, I felt no urge to create a coherent narrative of my life on film, no sense of historicity nor any desire for 'completeness'. I filmed sporadically and while I can locate many of the profilmic events 'geographically', I often have little sense of their chronology when viewing the material decades later.

Walker's concept of "traumatic paradox" embodies the contradictions within the 'friability' of our memory's recall of traumatic events (Walker, 2005, p. 4) – our memory of trauma is a *mélange* of real and imagined occurrences, accurate and 'false' recollection, elisions and fantasies.

She sought to address the latency, the absences and the 'unreliability' of memory to provide an alternative to the question of 'Whose truth and memories are more 'accurate'? She comments, "the defiant fact that external trauma itself can produce the very modifications in remembered detail that cultural conventions invalidate in determinations of truth" (Walker, 1997, p.806).

It was through the process of making *Father-land* in Nicosia that I was able to contextualise my childhood. Being in "another place and in another time" (Caruth, 1995, p. 8) and through the framework and structured thinking of film production generated memories of childhood that were captured as audio recordings.[22]

In *The Skin of the Film: Intercultural Cinema, Embodiment, And The Senses* (2000), Laura U. Marks situates her study in what she terms, 'intercultural cinema', which is characterised by "experimental styles that attempt to represent the experience of living between two or more cultural regimes of knowledge, or living as a minority in the still majority white, Euro-American West" (Marks, 2000, p. 1). The ideas that Marks elucidates through her discussion of examples of these films were helpful in providing a thematic lens through which to extend my understanding in this research project. The Super 8 footage in my archive exhibits many of the qualities that Marks identifies as 'intercultural cinema'.

She observes that, for many such works, "the image is barely a beginning, and any extension into narrative must be hesitant, or suspicious. In these works, still or thin-looking images are ultimately the richest" (*Ibid.*, p. 42). She explains these "thin images" are what Deleuze referred

22. The memory capture process is described pp. 97-108.

to as “the absence of image”:[23] a screen that is black or white, under or over exposed, blurred, grainy, or ‘belonging to the past’ – bearing evidence of ‘trauma’ through the marks of its journey in the world, such as scratches, dust and other *débris*, colour changes and deteriorations – “to bring something new out of the ruins of the image … and call on the viewer to search for their hidden history” (*Ibid.*, pp.42-43). In her discussion of how trauma becomes encoded in the body, Marks reminds us that, “[t]he cinematic encounter takes place not only between my body and the film's body, but my sensorium and the film's sensorium.” (*Ibid.*, p. 153)

Drawing on Henri Bergson’s term, she explains ‘attentive recognition’,[24] as, “the way a perceiver oscillates between seeing the object, recalling virtual images that it brings to memory, and comparing the virtual object thus created with the one before us.” (*Ibid.*, p. 48). *31 Days* has an explicit ‘anti-narrative’ structure that demands the attentive recognition that Marks argues, “is often a traumatic process” because it is participatory: the thin image ‘calls on’ the viewer to bring their own memories into play and create meaning from what they are perceiving on the screen (*Ibid.*).

Marks observes that, for many works of intercultural cinema has its origins in the lacunae of recorded history. Minoritarian film-makers, therefore, have had to develop new modes of expression. Her theory of ‘haptic visuality’, which operates in a similar way to the sense of touch and triggers other sensory responses in the spectator, explains the novel ways in which intercultural film engages us in a *bodily* way to communicate a multi-sensory experience and embodiment of cultural memory (*Ibid.*).

My practice as an artist filmmaker shares some of the specificities of ‘intercultural cinema’ established by Marks. My personal Super 8 archive sits in between two cultural knowledge systems – on the one hand, that of cinematic technologies and practices, the cinematic apparatus, and on the other hand, the strictures and rigid controls of the institutional film archive. I make poetic use of ‘thin images’, favouring ‘haptic visuality’ over narrative coherence, and I present the marks of trauma on the surfaces of my 8mm archival images, my ‘memories’ embodied in celluloid, for the viewer to experience. I “call on the viewer to search for their hidden history” (*Ibid.*, p. 43) and respond with their own memories to create meaning.

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23. Here, Marks refers to Deleuze’s 1989 work, *Cinema 2: The Time-Image*, pp.200–201.
24. Marks refers to his 1911 work, *Matter and Memory* (Bergson, 1988: p.105).

Remediation

Within the parameters of my doctoral study, I use the term 'remediation' primarily to mean the representation or incorporation of the medium of Super 8 film within another – digital – medium. However, in my thesis I draw on ideas around remediation as a term within media theory to provide a critical framework for the practice-led exploration of remediation and the examination of the affect of 'material film' in a digitised format and to inform a critical appraisal of these outcomes and findings (Bolter and Grusin, 2000). I discuss this in more detail in Chapter One on pages 44-46.

Archives

In this thesis, I use the term 'archive', in the sense of a collection of artefacts that are kept together in a physical location and 'archive film', to describe a new piece of work sourced from that material. I describe my Super 8 archive as 'personal' because its content was created for my own interest rather than being commissioned or intended for public screening.[25]

The website of The New London Town Archives has a succinct guide to the role of the archivist, that includes these maxims:

> The Archivist has an obligation to ensure the preservation of valuable records, both past and present. In appraising records for retention or disposal, the Archivist acts as the agent of future generations and must be as diligent in disposing of records that have no significant or lasting value as in retaining those that do. (Archives, 2019)

These blunt directions would cause me problems were I to apply them to my personal archive – value-judging its contents on grounds of aesthetics or historicity and disposing of anything that fell short. Claire Raymond compares an archive to imagery uploaded to social media sites:

> The word archive derives from the Greek word, *ἀρχή*, meaning *ancient, of the origin, the first*. The archive is not in its essence the public documentation of events but rather the place marking the origins of events. The archive is not … a place where every image is held. One might say it is the depth material trace of the sociohistoric self. (Raymond, 2021, p.84)

Raymond suggests archives are haunted, whereas images on social media are not. She remembers a photograph of her deceased grandmother that was scanned and uploaded to Facebook and how it was quickly lost "in the flow of image-time that is social media practice"

25. Most of the contents of my archive predates the era of YouTube, a time when sharing work necessitated more time, effort and intention.

and controlled by Meta.[26] Her original print is the archive, stored in a drawer, "still too emotive to be framed and displayed." (*Ibid.*) My Super 8 archive is similar to Raymond's print – both have deep psychological meaning.

The archivist and film-maker, Bill Brand,[27] addresses the issue of preserving and archiving of artists' film and states, "that most avant-garde films, including my own, are kept in insecure collections of artists and estates rather than in archiving institutions … many of *my* own films remain unpreserved, and most are stored in less than ideal conditions" (Brand, 2012, p. 92, emphasis in original). Brand's words resonated powerfully with my experience of working with my personal films – the condition of my archive is revealed by the examination of the analogue material in *Film of Dust* on pages 148-150.

Jamie Baron notes in her essay, 'The Archive Effect, Archival Footage as an Experience of Reception', "In the past several decades, the archive as both a concept and an object has been undergoing a transformation" (Baron, 2012, p.102). She identifies the cause of these changes as the increased availability of "still and video cameras, analogue and then digital", which have led to "a proliferation of other kinds of audio-visual archives" (*Ibid.*). These 'other' archives include personal archives and online databases, which destabilise the authority of 'official' archives and question the notion of about what constitutes an 'archive'.

Baron focuses on the juxtaposition of 'old' and 'newer' footage, primarily in documentary filmmaking. In other words, for her, there is a difference – a contrast – between the footage types edited together that the audience recognises. I discuss Baron's theorisation of the affect of archive film and its relation to memory in the section, Archive Film and Effect, on pages 62-71.

My doctoral project differs from archival-based film research conducted by third parties on material created by others, rather than on their own personal films. It places my lived experience as a creative practitioner at the centre of the investigation. The personal nature of my Super 8 footage is fundamentally different from work generated by my parallel creative film work with and for other companies or practitioners. It is the 'insider knowledge' that establishes an understanding and reading of the material in its context that is different, deeper,

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26. Meta Platforms Inc. is the technology company that owns Facebook, WhatsApp, Instagram, Threads and other brands.

27. Brand is the owner–operator of BB Optics, an optical printing service specialising in 8mm blow-ups and archival preservation for independent filmmakers, archives, and museums.

than research that might be conducted by a third party. The filming was not intentionally diaristic or consciously autobiographic when it was being shot, but the research process brought my lived experience and memories into play as I rediscovered the films – celluloid memory objects – and made connections to my past.

In her introduction to *Ghosting: The Role of the Archive Within Contemporary Artists' Film and Video,* Jane Connarty comments on the way in which archives and archival practices have entered our daily lives, so that we preserve anything from our lived experience that we consider to be a 'memory object' – particularly photographs and videos that 'archive' our lived memory (Connarty, 2006, p.12). In addition to the widespread proliferation of these personal 'archives', the book responds also to the changes in institutional archives and the increased accessibility of their collections. Both types of contemporary archive come into being as a result of widespread advances in digital and online technologies, as Connarty affirms:

> [p]hotographic and film technologies have developed in parallel with notions of modernity, and the still and moving image have become central to perceptions of ourselves as individuals. Lens based media are critical to the construction of collective identities and shared histories, and our sense of the past, present and future. Concerns with the archival and with the historical are intrinsically bound up with an attempt to understand or make sense of the present. (*Ibid.*, p.10)

My Super 8 films are 'memory objects' both in their physical presence in my home and in the accessible digitised moving images they contain.

In *Archive Fever: A Freudian Impression* (1995), Jacques Derrida examines the concept of the term 'archive' with a meditation on archives and analysis of the notion of archiving (*Ibid.*, pp. 9-11). He rethinks the concept of 'archive' in response to the increasing use of digital communication technologies and digital storage. Etymologically, 'archive' has its origin in the ancient Greek word, *arkhē*, which means 'government' and 'beginning, origin, first place'. The collection of public records – the official and historical documents – was located in the house, the *arkheion*, of each *archon*, the nine governing magistrates who ruled ancient Athens (*Ibid.*). Thus, the archive is formed in a physical place that is *private* and domestic – a home – and *public*. Through its digitisation, my Super 8 archive has developed this duality through its publicly accessible online presence. The French title, 'Mal d' archive', as Carolyn Steedman observes, can be translated as 'archive fever', 'archive sickness' or 'archive evil' (Steedman, 2001, pp. 1162-1163). 'Mal d'archive' indicates a feverish desire or compulsion to possess the archive itself, rather than "enter it and use it". I already possess my archive and the gatekeepers

one would encounter with institutional archives are absent. It is a 'place' to which I can freely return, but I recognise that spending too much time dwelling there in the past may be unhealthy.

Thesis Structure with Chapter Outlines

Chapter One: Methodology: From Filmmaking to Practice Research

Chapter One presents a critical reflection on the modifications of Nelson's PaR I introduced into my practice during my enquiry, informed by a range of sources on research conducted through creative practice such as Bell, Buckland and Hann. In addition, the chapter references my decades-long journey from film practitioner – as both an artist filmmaker and a professional film and television technician – to practice researcher. I highlight the elements that make this research enquiry unique such as the 'forgotten' archive of silent Super 8 films and the tacit film and video knowledge that spans the transition from analogue to digital production.[28] Drawing on Kuhn, I situate my filmmaking as 'personal cinema', and, with concepts drawn from Lebow and Kuhn, identify the dynamics of self during my film production process.

Chapter Two: Trauma, Place, Memory, Archive

This chapter provides the conceptual framework pertinent to addressing my key themes of place, memory, trauma, film and archive and answering my research questions. I explore Trigg's phenomenological argument that the built environment 'contains memory' and consider Relph's notion of a place's identity. The registers of memory articulated by Tulving and through Baron's scholarship on archive film and its affects amplify this discussion. Tulving's writings examine the interconnected processes of memory and remembering, drawing on his concept of 'autonoetic' consciousness. Baron's critical concepts related to 'archive film' and the 'archive effect' ground my thesis in contemporary theories of archival filmmaking practices, film materiality and remediation.[29] The inclusion of the scholarly voices of Marks and Kuhn provide an expanded awareness of film materiality in relation to the spectator and 'memory work'. Gordon's concept of 'haunting' adds a pertinent perspective on archival material, in particular when this is related to the author's subjectivity.

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28. This chapter covers what Nelson refers to as the 'know how' modality, the filmmaking knowledge that I have acquired through experience.

29. Chapter Two concerns the second, 'know that', axis of Nelson's methodological structure.

Chapter Three: Contextualising the Practice

Chapter Three provides contextualisation of the practice research undertaken for this study through my reflexive responses to the 'memory practices' of artist filmmakers who create personal films within the field of artists' moving image. Several key texts are examined in this chapter, the principal ones being *Glitterbug* by Derek Jarman (1994), *Perestroika* by Sarah Turner (2009), and *Sunless* by Chris Marker (1983). In addition, I discuss Jenny Olson's *The Royal Road* (2015), which entangles the personal within the built environment, and include an account of my experience of silent screenings by Milena Gierke and Nathaniel Dorsky, which were instrumental in the development of my thinking about the 'camera originals' in my archive.[30]

Chapter Four: The Practice

This chapter is structured around the practice experiments undertaken during this investigation and demonstrates how the practice, methods and the reflective writing developed over time to address my research questions. The five Key Practice Works play an integral role in advancing the enquiry as they engage with and explore 'the place of memory', returning and remediation in the personal Super 8 archive, and develop methods of creating narration.[31]

The first film *One Second a Day* (Moore, 2016a) and its iterative development, *31 Days* (Moore, 2017) took my research in an unexpected direction and generated insights into the Super 8 archive, video editing and memory. *Father-land* (Moore and Parker, 2018) further demonstrates the value of practice research and the methodology followed in this research project. Working around the themes of memory and place was not limited to a focus on 'the box of films', rather the process fostered an evolutionary way of thinking which led to discovery, reporting back from the research experiment 'in process'. Alongside the 'memories' caught on film in my archive, there was a great deal in life that had gone unrecorded. As the son of an RAF serviceman, my life was punctuated by the relocations and absences which military life imposed on families. Having considered the memories which were energised by watching and working with my Super 8 films, my thoughts turned to my father's career away from home as he was deployed around the world during the Cold War. This in turn raised the question of whether one

30. In Chapter Three, I introduce and discuss the third mode, 'know what'.

31. The three Supplemental Practice Works are less central to the enquiry. These short films experimented with processes to generate useful insights and articulate part of the practice research journey.

could create an archive film where the 'archive' was just composed of memories. Recalling the undocumented past gave rise to a technique of improvised 'speaking in place'[32] as a method to create narration. *Father-land* was a creative leap from earlier work as it was a wholly digital film made from newly-generated footage, contained a narrated soundtrack and was made collaboratively. The discoveries made in *Father-land* informed the later film-based works *Finborough Road* (Moore, 2018b) and *Returning to Dungeness* (Moore, 2022), in which I return to speak in the places committed to celluloid decades earlier.

Chapter Five: Conclusion

Chapter Five completes the thesis narrative with a reflexive discussion of key findings, revisits the research questions and articulates the thesis narrative with reference to the interrelationship between memory, place, trauma and my Super 8 archive. I assert the knowledge contribution, address areas for further investigation that this doctoral research has generated and reflect on my research journey.

32. 'Speaking in place' is discussed on p.100.

Chapter 1.
Methodology: From Filmmaking to Practice Research

A box of films, sat under a desk, gathering dust. Most are single rolls of Super 8, some still in their mailer envelopes – yellow for Kodak, white for Agfa. Where were they shot? Who is in there?

Figure 1: My box of Super 8 films.

1.1 Chapter 1 Introduction

In order to position Nelson's PaR methodology within a wider and more nuanced context, in Practice as Research and Practicing Research, I refer to the writing of Bell (2004a; Bell, 2004b; Bell, 2011; Bell, 2019; Bell, 2021) and Buckland (2000; Buckland, 2016), with commentary from Elkins (Elkins, 2014), Hann (2015) and Stake (1995). This gave me a more critically informed understanding of practice and research. The section, Intuition, Memory, Experience, considers aspects of subjectivity, the role of intuition and the position of 'self' in the film work, in addition to Kuhn's exploration of the film as 'memory work'. Situating the Super 8 Archive provides a

grounding in the specificities of this small gauge celluloid format and its contexts, including home movies and its role as a witness to history. This is followed by Remediation: Approaching the Archive, an account of remediation in moving image with reference to Bolter and Grusin (2000) and the current 'archival turn' afforded by ubiquitous digital technologies. The final section, Approaching the Essay Film, maps the slippery terrain that is essay filmmaking to situate the Practice Works, *Father-land*, *Finborough Road* and *Returning to Dungeness*.

1.2 Practice As Research

In Nelson's methodological strategy of Practice-as-Research (PaR), I found a clear structure, within which I could conduct my doctoral study because I knew where I 'was' at every stage of the investigation. Nelson's PaR rubric provided me with a map that enabled me to navigate the stages of research and the different modes, such as practice- and desk-based, and identify where I was 'placed' within the project's parameters.

Designing my project using PaR enabled me to place my creative practice as a filmmaker and my subjectivities at its heart and to introduce methods within its parameters that responded to the process and outcomes of my research journey. It allowed me to evolve my methods through my creative practice as a filmmaker, to test ideas and to customise the design of my enquiry during the research process, and to relate practice with the 'other' axes.

The three modalities of Nelson's PaR explore and describe the interrelationships between the practice components and written elements of the doctoral thesis:

1. 'know how' (tacit or embodied knowledge gained through practical experience, including professional practice)

2. 'know what' (knowledge about the researcher's field of practice through critical reflection, which situates the research in a practice context)

3. 'know that' (scholarly knowledge, or conceptual knowledge, which provides the theoretical framework for my study)

Nelson constructs a framework that is useful for the practitioner and for others reviewing the research. Artists naturally produce new iterations of their work and so might claim it to be research by dint of it being new as in 'new knowledge' (Nelson, 2013, p.24), but the outputs are not necessarily *academic research*. PaR provides a structure that brings practice and theory

together. Nelson states that,

> One way in which creative practice becomes innovative is by being informed by theoretical perspectives, either new in themselves, or perhaps newly explored in a given medium. Insights might be articulated in a traditional academic mode such as a critical essay which may be written by the practitioner herself or by a collaborator colleague. (Nelson, 2009, p.128)

When my research led me in unexpected directions or on a circuitous journey, the PaR map, with its clearly identified tripartite system, provided the guidance I needed to 'stay on track'. When I followed an unexpected 'off road' path using my practice, led by my intuition and tacit knowledge, I was able to orientate myself in relation to the essential components of the enquiry by 'triangulating' my position.

Importantly, PaR provides an understanding of my own creative practice 'through the practice' itself – the "practical knowing-through-doing" – both as process and outcome (*Ibid.*, pp.112-130) as well as by writing about it. The relational encounters between the PaR modes which take place in this thesis generate an aggregate of praxis knowledge, in which theory is "imbricated within practice" and "articulated in *both* the product and *related* documentation" (*Ibid.*, p.128).

Reflective writing provides evidence in the thesis of how "Developments and breaches of established traditions and conventions in ways of working, otherwise concealed extended, might be made discernible" (*Ibid.*, p.127). For example, in the research experiment, *Cutting the Film* (Moore, 2018a), I used a film splicer to remove a single film frame from my *Womad* footage, then drew on my early science training as a microbiologist to examine the film material using electron microscopy. This microscopic examination – which requires a small sample be excised and covered in evaporated gold before putting it in a microscope – would not have been possible had the Super 8 material been under the conservatorship of a formal archive. This 'transgressive' process opened avenues of thought about the footage, its place in the world, and my relationship with it.[33]

In order to situate my 'foundational' PaR methodology within a wider context, I reviewed the work of key writers on research methodology, focusing on those addressing research conducted through, with or by the investigator's own creative or artistic practice and whose writings

33. This journal entry can be read here: https://www.sundog.me.uk/film-of-dust-to-the-lab/

resonated most clearly with my project.

Writing in 2004, drawing on 20 years' experience of teaching "communication, media and film studies" in university-level institutions in the United Kingdom and Ireland, Bell observed the "bifurcation between theory and practice" that existed in media, film and screen studies teaching programmes at the end of the 1980s (Bell, 2004b, p. 74). His essay, 'Practice Makes Perfect? Film and Media Studies and the Challenge of Creative Practice', explores "the role of creative practice teaching and research within film and media studies and identif[ies] some of the institutional impediments to establishing a more productive relationship between theory and practice within our subject area" (*Ibid.*, p. 737).

Bell asserts in his book, *Research in the Creative and Media Arts: Challenging Practice*, (Bell, 2019), that research is now integral to creative practice in taught programme of creative arts and media, to artists and 'media makers' in the pursuit of research within art and design, art history and visual culture. He maintains that,

> the creative arts and media, with their focus on 'ways of making and doing', have their own distinctive modes of apprehending and understanding the world. A film-maker, photographer or performance artist sees and moves within the world in distinctive ways. The knowledge they acquire is rooted in their creative encounters. Artistic research needs to start from this specificity. (*Ibid.*, p. 4)

It is my intention that this thesis articulates, through its communication modes, the distinctive 'ways of making and doing' that I practised in this research project, including those implicit in the practice elements.[34]

Bell gave a keynote presentation at the recent MPE/MeCCSA Practice symposium (Bell, 2021). Here, he makes a strong argument for the value of research conducted by artists, stating,

> the originality of such research resides in the creative work it facilitates. It is harnessed to the specific demands of what we might call 'informed creative production', rather than being concerned with abstract knowledge outcomes. (*Ibid.*) [35]

The novel contribution of my thesis has been generated through my practice research and the five films demonstrate the distinctiveness that Bell valorises.

To situate my filmmaking practice and enquiry in both my personal history and a wider socio-cultural context, the chapter then presents a series of reflective texts. In the section 'Situating

34. Introduced on p.11.
35. Quotation from keynote abstract.

the Super 8 Archive', I focus initially on my first research question in relation to my experience of working with my digitised archive and the materialities of Super 8mm film, including an account of the changes to cultural and filmmaking practices that have emerged this century as a result of digital and online technologies, then I consider my archive filmmaking practice in relation to artists' moving image, British experimental film practice and home movie-making. 'Approaching the Essay Film', the third section of this chapter provides insights into my practice research through a reflexive account of the evolution of the essay film, *Father-land*,[36] building on my deep engagement with my Super 8 archive and its 'silent memories'.

1.3 Practicing Research

Published works on the practice-based doctorate have proliferated and the variations of terms and concepts have added to the complexities. Nelson's methodology of 'Practice-as-Research', or PaR, provided a clear rubric for me throughout my doctoral study. I do not intend my account here to provide a comprehensive overview of the literature on practice research or the interrelationship between practice and research, which Elkins (2014) argues is no longer possible. In contradistinction, my aim is to offer a reflexive commentary on the deeper understanding of practice research I gained from those sources that resonated with my adoption of Nelson's PaR as a foundational methodological structure and enhanced my thinking about the research project I was engaged in.

My preferred term of 'practice research' for an artist's practice functioning as research aligns with the position advocated by Hann, who states that the term focuses on the wider issues related to how researchers share, apply and critique knowledge borne of practice" (Hann, 2015).[37] Hann was instrumental in refining my understanding of the ways in which my practice operated within my enquiry and how its processes and outcomes functioned *as research*.[38]

Citing Nelson's belief that "the complementary writing of artists might afford access to the

36. A Key Practice Work, which is discussed and analysed in Chapter Four.

37. Within the thesis I also use the term 'creative practice research' when I want to emphasise the creative aspects of practice research – and to avoid repeating 'practice research' too often.

38. In 2017, I and Claudia Pilsl, a fellow 3D3 PhD student, invited Rachel Hann to lead a seminar for "postgraduate practice-researchers transitioning to Early Career Researchers" that we were organising for the Digital Research, hosted by the 3D3 Centre for Doctoral Training, for the Digital Research in Humanities and Arts conference at University of Plymouth (DRHA2017: DATA ACHE, 10 to 13 September 2017).

complex process of making to non-specialists' (Nelson, 2013, pp. 36-37), Hann reports that,

> [we] argued our findings through practice and, most importantly, had these findings assessed through a combination of, what Robin Nelson describes as, 'complementary writing' and documentation of the practice. (Hann, 2015)

Hann promotes the presentation of the practice elements as a "portfolio of evidence", which "should be shared" (*Ibid.*). She states, "In sharing research we enable others to grow their own perspective and, ultimately, that of the discipline overall" (*Ibid.*). My enquiry used PaR as an underlying methodological structure, allowing me to 'move freely' with confidence between Nelson's three modes of knowledge production, but was informed by the perspectives of Bell, Buckland and Hann, which allowed me to me to adopt a more fluid and nuanced position on my practice research. Through my doctoral study, I have developed my creative practice as a filmmaker, but, importantly, I have generated knowledge that I hope will contribute to a greater understanding of filmmaking as a creative practice that is relevant not only to other artist filmmaker researchers, but which contributes more widely to film and screen studies scholarship.

As Nelson states, for a creative practice to 'be research' it must involve more than the practice itself. Buckland provided useful perspectives for me on filmmaking as both a practice and as a mode of knowledge production and dissemination. Buckland (2016) in his article, 'The Film Critic Between Theory and Practice; (Or: What Every Film Critic Needs to Know)', advocates filmmaking as a way of thinking through one's practice:

> To understand how a film is put together involves conceiving of filmmaking not just as a practice, but also as a practical way of *thinking*. This entails a broad meaning of 'making', one not limited to discussions of manual skill or mere technique—for skill and technique are manifestations of deep rational knowledge, or competence. (*Ibid.*, emphasis in original)

This augmented my understanding of the key role my tacit knowledge – the 'know how' I had acquired through my decades of professional experience in 'the industry' and as an artist filmmaker – played within my investigation and reinforced my decision to place my practice at the centre of my enquiry from the beginning.

The Case Study

The practice works in this thesis form a series of 'cases' to gain a holistic understanding of the dynamic interrelationships between memory, place and my Super 8 archive in both its digitised and analogue form. Each of the key and supplemental works is presented as a separate case

study and explores different research questions, revealing insights and findings that emerged during the process and through analysis of the practice outcomes.

In *The Art of Case Study Research* Stake set out a set of interpretive orientations towards case study which include "naturalistic, holistic, ethnographic, phenomenological, and biographic research methods" (Stake, 1995, p. xi). The case study is, for Stake, "both the process of learning about the case and the product of our learning" (*Ibid.*, p. 237). His work provided support for my personally-situated, intuitive and 'open' approach to the design of my research project, in which the moving image works are studied as both process and 'product' in order to gain knowledge.

I found a case study approach useful as it enabled me to gain insights into my practice as it evolved chronologically through the separate – yet-connected – research 'projects'. During the development and 'making' period of each of the key and supplemental works, I allowed my reading of theoretical material, and my contextual study of others' film works to inflect and inform the critically reflective material I was writing, drawing on my journal notes that captured my immediate subjective responses to the practice and the reflections and memories generated.

Stake's suggestion that early impressions are important data pertains to my enquiry:

> There is no particular moment when data gathering begins. It begins before there is commitment to do the study: back-grounding, acquaintance with other cases, first impressions. A considerable proportion of all data is impressionistic, picked up informally as the researcher first becomes acquainted with the case. Many of these early impressions will later be refined or replaced, but the pool of data includes the earliest of observations. (*Ibid.*, p. 49)

Sea Front was completed before this PhD began yet my 'returning' to its constituent footage when 'skimming the archive' in 2016 spoke to me of the fluid and indeterminate status of my archive, which stood in stark contrast to my 'professional' work where the rushes were whisked away, never to be seen again in their raw state.

Stake foregrounds flexibility of design for the case study method to enable the researcher to respond to data and findings as they arise and adapt the investigation, whilst responding to the initial questions that guide the research focus. His interpretive and investigative method of qualitative research enabled a deep understanding of my core research questions. He argues that qualitative study is appropriate when the goal of research is to explain a phenomenon in a 'real life' context by relying on the perception of a person's experience of the subject that is the

focus of the research (Stake, 2010, p. 66) – in the case of this investigation, my interrelationship with my personal Super 8 archive in its digitised version and the original analogue.

The research I undertook under the umbrella term 'skimming the archive' began with a simple yet intriguing notion that I could use intuition to select one second of archival footage each day for a month to build a short film.[39] Stake draws on Parlett and Hamilton's (Parlett and Hamilton, 1972) "progressive focusing" method, which builds on the position that "the course of the study cannot be charted in advance" (Stake, 1995, p. 9). This 'progressive focussing' led me to develop the process to encompass longer duration video clips on an editing timeline, which in turn generated more data and raised questions around spectator experience and memory.

Examination of the digitised archive of Super 8 film and the practice of 'working with the material' in both digitised and its original analogue form led to the stimulation of memories. These memories were linked to a sequence of film – or a single frame – and associated with the location in which I had filmed it. Thus, *when* I had filmed the sequence became intertwined with memories of *what* was going on in my 'everyday life' at that time – the personal context – in addition to remembering *where* I had filmed it. My perception of this experience of exploration, reconnection to the 'frames of the past' and memory recovery was captured in written notes – the reflective writing, presented in the online research journal, which directly informed the scholarly writing in this thesis. This method generated primary data that provided insights for contextual and theoretical analysis, which then led to new knowledge and understandings.

Stake defines analysis as "a matter of giving meaning to first impressions as well as to final compilations … "analysis essentially means taking ... our impressions, our observations apart" (*Ibid.*, p. 71). He gives priority to the researcher's impressions and intuition as the principal source of data and making sense of them as the analysis (*Ibid.*, p. 72) and states that "[e]ach researcher needs, through experience and reflection, to find the forms of analysis that work for him or her" (*Ibid.*, p. 77). My first impression of *One Second a Day,* which was initially a speculative exercise, was that it was an unexpected yet appealing way to engage with my Super 8 archive. Although I had no clear idea of the practice outcome of this experiment, I intuited that it would be fruitful to continue with the line of enquiry.

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39. Two films, *One Second a Day* and *31 Days*, are examined in Chapter Four in the section, 'Skimming the Archive, pp. 91-97.

Nelson provided a clear structural framework within which I could respond to the unexpected findings resulting from my personally-situated practice research, when unexpected discoveries and unforeseen complexities were revealed, and shift my focus to address these. For example, how could I reconcile the inclusion of *Father-land*, a wholly digital film, within my enquiry? I shifted my focus from the materiality of Super 8 to the exploration through filmmaking of key themes, such as archive, memory and trauma, and place, linked to Turner's *Perestroika* (2009) and critical commentary from writers such as Trigg and Gordon. These features of Nelson's PaR influenced by Bell, Buckland and Hann, together with Stake's 'case study' method incorporating 'progressive focusing', provided me with the guidance I needed during the investigation.

1.4 Intuition, Memory, Experience

As a filmmaker whose works are subjective – communicating my experience, feelings and perspectives and infused with my memories – my approach is intuitive and relates to documentary film practices rather than those of fiction. To explain intuition, the anthropologist Tim Ingold uses David G. Anderson's notion of *sentient ecology*[40] for the knowledge that people have when they are sensitive to and responsive to the environment in which they live "as beings *within* a world" (Ingold, 2000, p.20). This intuitive knowledge is allied to tacit knowledge and extends Nelson's PaR 'know how', by affording primacy to watching, feeling and listening, into what Ingold calls a "framework of … poetics" (*Ibid.*, p.26):

> It is knowledge not of a formal, authorised kind, transmissible in contexts outside those of its practical application. On the contrary, it is based in feeling, consisting in the skills, sensitivities and orientations that have developed through long experience of conducting one's life in a particular environment. (*Ibid.*, p.25)

My practice draws on my subjectivity but is not 'autobiographical film', exemplified by Ross McElwee's "first person nonfiction cinema" (MoMA, 2023). In his work, McElwee 'puts himself in the frame' and uses explicit examples from his personal history, including appearances from his family, to explore wider issues in the present-day United States. His 2012 film, *Photographic Memory*, retraces a visit to France made nearly forty years earlier, when he was in his early twenties, and is a meditation on the passing of time and his relationship with his son, incorporating material from his archive of family footage. I recognise affinities between my

40. Ingold refers to Anderson's study of Siberian reindeer herders, *Identity and Ecology in Arctic Siberia: The Number One Reindeer Brigade* (Anderson, 2000, pp.116-117).

work and McElwee's – for example, we both share a professional history in television production, use the camera as a primary tool for examining the world and author most aspects of making a film (McElwee, 2023). However, McElwee seeks to depict his own genealogy, "to explain not only the chronological development of [his] own family, but also, and more importantly, what the institution of the family stands for in cultural terms" (Rosas and Dittus, 2021, p.203) My intention is to create poetic films 'about place' through my subjective response and, in this enquiry, to the 'place of memory' in the frames of my Super 8 archive and the locations of filming. My films are not 'self-portraits' or 'autobiographies' – they do represent a 'sense of self', but 'my self' is implicit in the work rather than being explicit 'in the frame'. In my thesis, this position is demonstrated in three Key Practice Works that include my narration: *Finborough* Road, *Returning to Dungeness* and *Father-land*, which are featured in Chapter Four.

The film or video 'self-portrait' raises interesting points regarding the relationality between author and viewer. However, I do not appear in person *visually* in my archive, excepting fleetingly when a friend has picked up my camera and spontaneously filmed a few frames of me.[41] Therefore, there is no *mise-en-abyme*,[42] in which the spectator looks at my image as the subject of the film – as if 'through my eyes' (the camera's view). In my films there is no "metaphorical mirror", in which the viewer sees the filmmaker's (my) self confronting them and looking back at their self, rather than the reflection of their own image (as if the screen is a mirror) (West, 2004, p.165).[43] The spectator, rather, looks 'through my eyes' at what I have 'chosen to see' through my camera. The intersubjectivity enacted in self-portraiture using visual mediums is elided and the viewer's gaze becomes – is aligned with – my gaze so that we 'share the same vision'. Instead of placing the spectator 'in the abyss' within a repeating cycle of (self)reflection, the imagery in my films draws the viewer affectively into my subjective response to the world.[44]

In her article, 'Memory Texts and Memory Work: Performances of Memory in and with Visual

41. In *One Second a* Day, I appear for one second (25 frames), repeated three times – once in each pane of the triptych; in *31 Days*, I appear for 5 frames, repeated three times, and I make an appearance in *Womad*, where the camera observes me for 25 seconds while I am filming with a video camera. I discuss my encounter with these appearances of my past self in these films in the Conclusion to Chapter Four.

42. The term can be spelled *mise-en-abîme*. In cinema, it refers to the strategy of a 'double-mirroring' effect – depicting a copy of an image within itself, or a film within a film.

43. See Shearer West's discussion in the chapter on the self-portrait in her book, *Portraiture* (West, 2004).

44. The inclusion of unrehearsed narrative voice-over adds another dimension to the spectator's experience of my films, which I discuss in Chapter Four.

Media', Annette Kuhn identifies "personal experimental cinema" as a form that exploits specificities of fragmentary montage and "non-linear temporality" (Kuhn, 2010, p.5).[45] From Kuhn's discussion, I perceive that my filmmaking can be seen to belong within 'personal experimental cinema' – or 'personal cinema' – with *Finborough* Road, *Returning to Dungeness* and *Father-land* amplifying the 'personal' aspect through their use of the 'first person voice'.

While I have never set out to make a film about myself as a subject, the documentary filmmaker and scholar Alisa Lebow's analysis in the Introduction to her edited volume, *The Cinema of Me: The Self and Subjectivity in First Person Documentary* (Lebow, 2012), gave me insights into my entwined roles of filmmaker-researcher, author and spectator. Assisted by Lebow and Kuhn, and informed by others' perspectives, this enquiry has enabled me to identify the dynamics between the 'positions of self' at different stages within my filmmaking practice. Lebow explains that being "both subject and object of the gaze" enables the filmmaker to "reflect upon and represent the self" and "this makes first person filmmaking so complex, so co-implicated and … so compelling" (Lebow, 2012, pp.4-5). In the spectator position, I view the digitised Super 8 reels that I had filmed and reflect on this collection of subjective imagery that is representative 'of me'. I watch my films as both subject and object, with my own gaze as subject and with an external gaze that observes me (and the object of my viewing) from 'outside'. This spectatorial duality of looking and being looked at oscillates through the process of creating the practice works in the thesis, at times bringing into play another 'self', the filmmaker-researcher and author, an authoritative overview that synthesises the subject/object perspectives in this thesis. Lebow writes:

> The matter of knowing ourselves or coming to consciousness about our selves is not only a central ontological question, ultimately unknowable yet … also at the centre of the project of self-representation (*Ibid.*, p.4).

As Kuhn has observed in *Family Secrets: Acts of Memory and Imagination*, "a part of me … 'knows' that my experience – my memories, my feelings – are important because these things make me what I am, make me different from everyone else" (Kuhn, 2002). It is this experience that I communicate through affective subjectivity of my films, which 'represent my self'.

Although Lebow's focus in her essay is on first person films within the diverse landscape of documentary film practice, I found her writing helpful in thinking about my practice as being

45. She refers here to Catherine Russell's identification of "personal experimental cinema" (Russell, 1999: p.311).

first person films and works of self-representation. I have made documentary films professionally for clients but I choose to 'position' my personal films within artists' moving image[46] – this is where my practice evolved and it is where the artists whose work anchors my practice – and with whom I feel an affinity – 'sit'.[47] *Father-land*, as an essay film with a "first person mode of address" aligns with her conceptualisation of 'first person filmmaking', but she notes that the territory of "first person plural" is "fraught" as the films could be regarded as engaging "in a more circuitous route to self-representation" (Lebow, 2012, pp.7-8).

1.5 Situating the Super 8 Archive

The question of the status of my Super 8 collection initially motivated my research study. Are the reels of films – singly or collectively – rushes waiting to be edited? Are they 'works in progress', or an archive of sorts? Other questions then arose that related to memory, concerning the original Super 8 and the remediated versions. The remediation of the material by digitisation also raised the question of authenticity. Is working with the footage digitised into QuickTime files truly working 'in the archive'? After the Super 8 film has been transferred to digital video, the original footage is put away safely in storage and left. The physical act of leaving the film material while working with the digital copies suggests a duality that can be better described as working around, alongside, or about the archive. Writing in his 1936 essay, 'The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction',[48] Walter Benjamin defines 'aura' as, "a unique manifestation of a remoteness, however close it may be" (Benjamin, 2008, p.9).[49] Can the digital reproduction 'inherit' the celluloid's 'aura', as described by Benjamin? Does this consideration arise since I possess the physical source material – unlike a filmmaker or researcher working with digital artefacts from a commercial or institutional archive? Working with my Super 8 collection was a process of rediscovery, of 're-remembering'. There are multiple registers of memory at play: the photographic 'memories' inscribed on the film itself coming to half-life through a projector, remembering the acts of filming and the milieu around the camera when I pressed the trigger, recalling the times when I watched the material – the

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46. As I note earlier, 'artists' moving image' is an elastic assemblage and may be referred to in other terms.

47. I discuss the film work of other practitioners in Chapter Three.

48. The first edition was published in French translation, under the direction of Raymond Aron, in Zeitschrift für Sozialforschung Volume 5, No. 1. Subsequently, Benjamin rewrote the essay and, after editorial work by Theodore and Margarethe Adorno. It was published posthumously in his 1955 Schriften.

49. Benjamin wrote about 'aura' in an earlier essay, *Little History of Photography* (1931), in his examination of early portrait photography in the period before widespread reproduction, when the lengthy exposure required to achieve a photographic image meant that subjects had to remain motionless for a long period of time.

viewing experiences – and the knowledge that my collection of the physical Super 8 films exists, that the collection is 'somewhere': it has a location, a place.

Super 8 Specificities

Each 50 feet Super 8 reel lasts for approximately two and a half minutes, which fosters an economical style of filmmaking – typically short, single takes. These specificities contrast with moving image originated as digital video, which typically records sync sound and encourages longer and repeated takes. The materiality of the original Super 8 is visually evident in its digitised form. There is a textural quality present that survives its remediation and generates an affective experience for viewers. This ciné aesthetic is comprehensible to an audience through its widespread use in mainstream film and television to evoke the past. I explored this persistence of the 'filmic' through remediation – both medium specificities intrinsic to the Super 8 format and the footage's 'life marks' – to investigate the materiality of physical film in contrast to the more ephemeral 'presence' of both memories and digital material.[50]

My Super 8 film is silent. I recorded no sound during image capture. The absence of an accompanying soundscape or dialogue invited commentary as an internal monologue – a stream of consciousness – to fill the silence. When viewing the footage, I remembered the places on screen, the experience of filming and the occasions when I had reviewed the Super 8 sequences previously. I captured my internal monologues – remembering while watching the films – initially as notes in my online research journal.

I went beyond this method by returning to locations where I had filmed on Super 8 to perform and record verbal memory recollections in the profilmic space. This technique of entering the locations filmed years ago – verbalising memories, both of the Super 8 footage and the unalloyed memories sparked by the places that had been part of my past life – I call 'speaking in place'. I edited these recordings into short films using the relevant Super 8 footage from my archive, 'inserting myself' into the films shot many years earlier – 'returning' to the archive and its place of origin.

The growth of my Super 8 collection over an extended time frame, coupled with my untrammelled access to both the original film and digitised material, afforded a useful perspective. Owning the celluloid material has enabled a hands-on – literally – approach which

50. The continued use of celluloid film is discussed here – https://www.sundog.me.uk/celluloid-film/

would likely be forbidden by an institutional archive. Official archives enforce rigorous protocols to ensure the safe storage and preservation of film and restrict access to original material. While archives may enable the use of digitised versions of 'old film' in 'new works', it is highly unlikely that an archive would allow original physical film material to be touched by hand or sections to be excised for research and experimentation.[51]

The indexical link between photochemical film and the profilmic space is evident when examining a filmstrip. This is most obvious with reversal film, a 'camera original'. It is not a positive film print struck from a negative – the reversal film was present in the camera when I pressed the shutter release at the location. The photosensitive emulsion received the light reflected from the scene in front of the camera and was changed. My Super 8 collection is constituted entirely of reversal film, such as Kodachrome 40, in which each strip of film, even when seen with the naked eye, contains a string of tiny positive photographs that convey the scene in miniature when it was filmed at the location. The importance for this research enquiry rests not in whether the photographic 'truth claim' in the indexicality is diminished or even removed by the digitisation of the film, rather it is that the film was a fellow traveller that responded to the profilmic, just as I had.

In *Father-land*, I made a wholly digital essay film using narration recorded on location responding to childhood memories. This essay film tests the methods of 'spontaneous remembering' and 'speaking in place' without archive footage that 'anchors' the remembering process. This research also considers the paradox of digital filming in which the operator sees the effect of light falling on the palimpsestic digital sensor where the rendered scene is already (fractionally) in the past, compared with looking through the optical system of a film camera in the present. I consider the centrality of historicity in film in this digital/analogue context, informed by Philip Rosen's *Change Mummified* (Rosen, 2001) and *The Future is Now: The Virtual Life of Film* by D.N. Rodowick (Rodowick , 2007). Digital archives are now ubiquitous, an institution of memory that preserves the past, from a decaying physical relic to a digital memory system. My enquiry is practice-led and concerns filmmaking processes from the point of capture – recording images and/or sound – to incorporation in an archive and beyond. Besides addressing the processes of memory that operate for the maker, this research project

51. For an example of an archive's guidelines for viewing film materials, see the Library of Congress. Note that while a researcher may be allowed to view a physical film, she cannot touch the material itself – handling is undertaken by a member of the library staff: https://www.loc.gov/rr/mopic/mpguide.html

seeks to articulate the shifting status of the recorded material over time.

Testimony

Super 8 film has an inherent 'truth claim' arising from its 'amateur' status and conventional use in home movies. A roll will typically have recorded a pro-filmic event, followed by the next event, which interested the operator. These two events might be separated by seconds, minutes or even years, but the first recording is of an event which happened prior to the second and so on until the end of the cartridge.

The 'Skimming the Archive' research project, discussed on pages 91-97, considers the visual artefacts made easily visible with digitised film material. Video playback can be slowed to see tape edits where two rolls were joined ready to go on to the telecine machine, and the occasional times where a roll had been removed from the camera then reinserted, are evidenced by the appearance of flash frames in the middle of a filmstrip. The 'normal' way of filming, where a cartridge is loaded and its film exposed over several shots implies a continuity of ordered time, even if that timeline is discontinuous. The in-camera editing of Super 8 – an absence of editing disturbances such as flash frames and ramped exposures – creates a viewing experience similar to shots edited together in postproduction, smoothing the spectator's apprehension of passaging time. However, the ability to swap cartridges mid-roll creates a situation where the chronology of filmed time jumps from one reel to another. The first cartridge has 'Event A', flash frames, 'Event C' and the second roll has 'Event B' etc. When faced with a collection of Super 8 rolls, this expectation that the operator inserted each cartridge, used it up, removed it from the camera, then had it developed, must be approached with caution should the researcher be trying to construct a historically accurate chronology.

Just like the 8mm camera that Abraham Zapruder used to film Kennedy's assassination, each Super 8 camera's film gate will leave a unique 'fingerprint' on exposed film from the design of its film gate, and from any flaws or debris accreted in the film gate. In addition, Super 8 cartridges have by design a sharp turn in the film path on the unexposed film feed side that can cause a momentary defocussing that signals the gap in filming times between the two shots on the roll. This momentary visual quale – an arcane piece of metadata – gives a clue to the 'life' of a Super 8 cartridge in a camera. Forensic scrutiny of 8mm footage highlights the camera's propensity to create visual information. These 'imperfections' inherent in the Super 8 format, present in my archive, give clues to the material's historical timeline in the absence of detailed

filming diaries, and leads my memory back to my actions in the times of filming.

Naturally, what is inscribed photographically inside the Super 8 frame is more immediately meaningful. Most of my film archive has a 'sketchbook' feel, a poetic montage of shots, rather than being structured for continuity editing to tell a story that is coherent in both time and place. The documentarist, Michael Rabiger, states that what is recorded on film shows "an authorial consciousness at work even as events unfold" (Rabiger, 2009, p.15). There is an authorial 'voice' evident in my Super 8 reels, but it is poetic rather than didactic. Digitisation of my archive has allowed me to read the footage more closely than would be possible than viewing with a film projector, contemplating its contents 'forensically'.

The Age of Film

The materiality of celluloid means that the film reels occupy physical space, they have a presence, a place. My Super 8 material has been kept at home in less-than-ideal storage conditions and this 'history' has marked the footage as 'physical memory'. I also have memory of its 'life' as we have aged together.

Roland Barthes remarkably addresses the physical photographic object and its 'life marks' from the world before describing its photographic image of his mother as a young girl.

> The photograph was very old, the corners were blunted from having been pasted in an album, the sepia print had faded, and the picture just managed to show two children standing together at the end of a little wooden bridge in a glassed-in conservatory, what was called a Winter Garden in those days. (Barthes, Roland, 1984, p.67)

He describes the image and its referent as being laminated, inseparable without being destroyed in the process (*Ibid.*, p.6). He gives the simile of "the windowpane and the landscape" – this is mirrored by the Super 8 frame (pane) and the image (landscape) within projected outwards, just as the camera is the polar opposite of the projector. *Ciné* film can be subject also to fading, scratches and fingerprints analogous to the blunted corners of Barthes' print – each piece of damage is a testimony to the different ways the film has been used or abused.

While the photographic print's physicality might speak of its meaning to its owner – a worn picture of a child in a parent's wallet, a print torn to excise an ex-lover from a holiday snap – the patination of age with ciné film is more incidental. Indeed, the 'experience' of watching Super 8 projected as film includes the preamble of lacing the reel into the projector, the dim and dusty

semi-opaque leader passing in front of the lamp as the machine whirrs, the splice connecting the leader to the camera original, the racking of the projector lens focus until the grain is sharp on screen, even if the image is not itself in focus. These markers of materiality invite the audience to focus on the artefacts that differentiate film from pristine digital projection until the end of the reel is marked by bright light on the screen and the flicking on the film's tail on the take-up spool.

Remediation: Approaching the Archive

This section explores ideas about remediation, the term within media theory that relates in this thesis to the representation or incorporation of the medium of Super 8 film within another – digital – medium (Bolter and Grusin, 2000). Remediation of the material by digitisation raised the question of authenticity and whether I am 'working with the archive' in its digitised form. This section also considers remediation as the action of 'remedying something', of arresting environmental damage in connection with the preservation of original film material within my archive, and whether the digital doppelgängers can possess 'aura', as described by Walter Benjamin (Benjamin, 2008).

Bolter and Grusin define remediation through two concepts, 'immediacy' and 'hypermediacy'. Using the metaphor of a 'window', they relate immediacy to 'looking through' and hypermediacy to the experience of 'looking at' a multiplicity of visual media panes. These modes, experienced together, create a simultaneous 'mediated experience': in the former, the viewer's attention is focused on the media content 'within the screen' and is largely unaware of the transparent 'window' interface; in the latter, the viewer's attention is drawn to multiple representations of information "inside the window" (Bolter and Grusin, 2000, pp.31-32).[52]

Immediacy is underpinned by Alberti's window, a scientific model of optical perspective used by Renaissance artists by which a viewer 'looks beyond' the picture frame to access the representation of perspectival reality depicted in the painting. The Italian humanist Leon Battista Alberti's theorisation of perspective, set out in his highly influential treatise, *On Painting* (*De pictura*) (Alberti, 2005), written in 1435 and published in 1450. His principles were rapidly adopted by Italian Renaissance artists, including Fra Angelico, and later by Leonardo da Vinci. Our modes of seeing the world and theories of vision have changed over time, yet Alberti's

52. There is some peripheral awareness of the surroundings – the viewer is not transported 'elsewhere' by the unconscious, as in a dream.

paradigm of seeing images through an invisible aperture retains its potency today – for example, in the use of the term 'window' in digital and online technologies, from accessing data to Microsoft's Windows software. As Bolter and Grusin observe, nothing remediated and refashioned by digitisation is new (Bolter and Grusin, 2000, p.45).

Immediacy removes the viewer's sense of the digital technologies producing the effect, namely drawing the viewer 'inside the frame' to focus on the media content within and generating an affective response. In hypermediacy, digital technologies are harnessed to provide a multiplicity of mediated 'realties'. To engage with hypermediacy, the viewer's attention must shift 'within the frame' of the media experience and engage with the various panes offered. Effectively, hypermediacy supplies a proliferation of Alberti's windows and the viewer's perspective – and attention – is fragmented: "multiplying mediation so as to create a feeling of fullness, a satiety of experience, which can be taken as reality" (*Ibid.*, p.53).

Viewing un-remediated Super 8 by projection gives an interesting angle on this distinction between immediacy and hypermediacy from an 'analogue' perspective. A single screen projection suggests the viewer would experience immediacy, looking through the projected 'window', but the whirring mechanical projector, flickering light and the movement of the spools maintain awareness of the apparatus' presence. The multi-paned digital work *31 Days* (page 95) demonstrates the possibilities afforded by remediation, creating a complicated experience as the eye is drawn to look at individual panes, then to look at the three panes moving as a whole.

My short film, *Sea Front* (Moore, 2010), was the first 'new' practice created from the process of 're-discovering' and 're-remembering' my Super 8 films following their digitisation. This remediation simultaneously created an accessible archive and digital rushes – raw material for experimentation. James Mackay's transformation of Jarman's Super 8 collection into an archive after the filmmaker's death, in Chapter Three on pages 74-77, provides contextualisation.

Isaac Julien's *Derek Jarman: Brutal Beauty* exhibition at the Serpentine Gallery in 2008 presented a selection of Jarman's work, including a multi-screen projection of silent Super 8 loops.[53] I cover Jarman's Super 8 films and their importance and influence on my filmmaking in Chapter Three starting at page 74. I reflected on the experience ten years later in the journal

53. A brief introduction to multi-screen editing – https://www.sundog.me.uk/31-days-vs-the-news/

entry below.

Research Journal

https://www.sundog.me.uk/derek-jarman-brutal-beauty/

Derek Jarman: Brutal Beauty

The looped Super 8 in the gallery was a particular experience, perhaps not wholly satisfying. The screens were at different heights and sizes and for me the overall experience was engaging rather than anything more profound.

The meditative experience of *Blue* (Jarman, 1993) in the adjacent gallery contrasted the presentation of the loops. People reclined on bean bags bathed in the pure blue light reflected from the projection screen and immersed in the narrational soundscape for the film's 79 minutes running time.

Figure 2: Multi-screen editing

1.6 Approaching the Essay Film

From the outset I intended to make an essay film during this PhD research. I was attracted to the essay film form as it allowed me to interweave personal and social histories with subjective and intellectual perspectives situated in contemporary experience. The elasticity and self-reflexivity of the essay film enables a creative approach to the dissemination of research findings, which appealed to me. Conceived as a new type of film-making in the 1920s by the German avant-garde filmmaker, Hans Richter, the 'essay film' combines artistic or experimental film with documentary. In his 1940 essay, 'Der Filmessay, Eine neue Form des Dokumentarfilms', Richter writes that the essay film allows the filmmaker to transgress the rules and parameters of the traditional documentary practice:

> The essay film, in its attempt to make the invisible world of the imagination, thoughts, and ideas visible, can draw from an incomparably larger reservoir of expressive means than can pure documentary film. Since in the essay film the filmmaker is not bound by the depiction of external phenomena and the constraints of chronological sequences, but, on the contrary, has to enlist material from everywhere, the filmmaker can bounce around freely in space and time. (Richter, 2017, p.91)

As an audio-visual artwork, the essay film allows a synthesis of imaginative, reflexive and critical thinking through moving images and sound that documents process and integrates critical findings within an accessible, mediatised practice-as-research form.

As an experimental filmmaker whose work evolves through the process of making, I was drawn to the producer and director Joram ten Brink's understanding of the essay film as a form that:

> follows Montaigne's, Vertov's and Astruc's steps in 'writing' fragments as they occur to the writer, or the filmmaker. These fragments are in turn edited together associatively, relying on poetic metaphor and juxtaposition. (ten Brink, 1999, p.9)

The hybridity of the essay film form blurs traditional boundaries of documentary and fiction and, in Nora Alter's words, it "disrespects traditional boundaries, [and] is transgressive both structurally and conceptually" (Alter, 1996, p.171). As Edgar Morin asserts, the essay film gives me the freedom to, "debate a problem by using all the means that the cinema affords, all the registers and all the expedients" (Morin, 2008, p.39).

Kieron Corless, *Sight and Sound's* Deputy Editor, in his introduction to Burch and Sekula's epic video essay about globalisation and the shipping industry, *The Forgotten Space* (Burch and Sekula, 2010), describes the essay film as "a notoriously slippery and hard-to-define category, in

spite of the long overdue scrutiny and debate it's been generating of late" (Corless, 2015). Filmmaker and critic, Kevin B. Lee asserts "an essay film explicitly reflects on the materials it presents, to actualise the thinking process itself" (Lee, 2016).

I rarely appear in my Super 8 films, but I am a presence directing the camera's gaze, choosing that which is included, and that which is not. Through a process of re-watching and reflecting, I began to think of the Super 8 rolls as proto-essay films. Where is the parallel narration which arguably denotes the admittedly loosely defined essay film genre? On reflection, that narration was an inner monologue – the stream of images sparked memories of both what was visible on-screen but also what events were happening concurrently in the filming locations off-camera, and more broadly in my life. The connections are intrinsic to the maker but to an outsider would have to be conjured through extra-textual research or by their own creative imaginings – what an audience brings to a viewing, as described by Hans Robert Jauss's "horizons of expectations" that mediate "between the private inception and the public reception" of the work (Jauss, 1982, p.xiii).

My essay film, *Father-land*, was developed without rigid preconceptions about what the outcome would be. This allowed my subjectivity, memories and experience throughout the filmmaking process to determine the final creative and technical form of the work. An inspirational encounter in 2017 with the French-American filmmaker Babette Mangolte inspired the development of a working method that intentionally separated the time of narration recording from the period of filming. The practice outcomes *Father-land*, *Finborough Road* and *Returning to Dungeness* use the technique of 'speaking in place' to 'think through film' and coalesce memory and place.

As my research progressed, the developing scholarship around the essay film played an important role. The Super 8 material in my collection is all 'silent' – I shot none of it with intentionally synchronised sound.[54] This 'silence' created a space that demanded to be filled with thoughts – an internalised narration – in response to the stream of images as I viewed sections of the archive. I began to perceive these short first-person sequences as 'proto-essay films'.

I intended to make an essay film from new material as part of the PhD research and the

54. There are two instances where audio was recorded at the same time as the picture – see *Returning to Dungeness* (2022) on pages 112-117 and *Womad* (2016) on pages 145-147.

successful application for a residency in Cyprus gave direction to this aspiration. I made *Father-land* (Moore and Parker, 2018) collaboratively during a month-long residency in Nicosia during 2016 with artist-filmmaker Kayla Parker, who spent part of her childhood as an RAF child in Cyprus, an island where my father was 'posted' intermittently as an RAF radio technician.[55] The project proposal asked how one could make an 'archive film' where the only material available was memories.[56] I recorded unrehearsed narration on location – which I describe as 'speaking in place' – 18 months later on a second visit to the island, drawing on our memories of our childhoods, the previous visit and the video footage we had filmed.

The insights acquired creating *Father-land* fed into the experiments in which I return to the profilmic spaces of films shot decades earlier to 'speak in place' in *Finborough Road* (Moore, 2018b) and *Returning to Dungeness* (Moore, 2022). These works take the essay film narration away from the controlled environment of a voiceover studio – part of the conventional postproduction process – to more unpredictable and experimental territories.

1.7 Chapter 1 Conclusion

In this chapter, I established the origins of my Super 8 filmmaking in relation to my professional work in the film and television industry to highlight the range of my practice experience, including collaboration. I created a more nuanced and critically grounded practice research methodology, using PaR as a foundational structure, informed by the writings of expert scholars of research using creative practice. A consideration of subjectivity, intuition and the 'self' in film provided an enhanced vantage point on my practice in addition to my understanding of my Key Practice films as 'memory work'. I clarified the polysemic nature of my Super 8 archive, in which the footage can 'speak' as home movie, historical document and creative practice, both as celluloid and remediated to digital files. I established the status of the Key Practice Works, *Father-land*, *Finborough Road* and *Returning to Dungeness* as essay films. In addition, I advanced my thinking through the realisation – while viewing the silent Super 8 footage – that the combination of my internal monologue and the moving image created ephemeral 'proto-essay films'.

55. The RAF termed personnel deployments as 'postings'.
56. Appendix 1 – *Father-land* project proposal.

Chapter 2.
Trauma, Place, Memory, Archive

> Time moves in one direction, memory in another. We are that strange species that constructs artifacts intended to counter the natural flow of forgetting. William Gibson (Gibson, 2012).

2.1 Introduction

In the first section, Ruined Memory, I undertake a reflective reading of Dylan Trigg's essay, 'The Place of Trauma: Memory, Hauntings, and the Temporality of Ruins' (Trigg, 2009), to establish an understanding of sites of memory and trauma in relation to my Super 8 archive that is grounded in my lived experience.[57] Trauma in the Archive then expands this thinking by drawing on Marks' proposition that we have an embodied relationship with the screen (Marks, 2002), with Kuhn's conceptualisation of 'memory work' where identity is shaped as much by "what is left out" as by what is revealed (Kuhn, 2002, p.2). In Haunted Reels, Gordon's assertion that 'ghosts' are not spectres, rather, they are unfinished business from the past that demand action in the present led me to the understanding that 'stirring the archive' in my enquiry will cause perturbation (Gordon, 2008). Then, I consider the current shifting, post-phenomenological framework of place-experience and the interactions between memory and place informed by Trigg's innovative interventions in the interdisciplinary field of 'place studies' (Trigg, 2012; Trigg, 2018) and draw on Relph's conceptualisations of 'place' and 'placeness' to provide an understanding of place and human-place connections (Relph, 1976). The next section, Registers of Memory, provides a conceptual lens through which to understand the multi-modal operations of memory in my archival filmmaking practice, from the initial impetus, image capture and developing, watching the footage and the telecine process, to editing and the viewing experience. Initially, I explain what is understood by the term 'memory' within the field of neuropsychology. After outlining the stages of memory, encoding, storage, and retrieval, I draw on the pioneering research of psychologist and cognitive neuroscientist Endel Tulving (Tulving, 1995; Tulving, 2002a; Tulving, 2002b; Tulving and Craik, 2005) to explain how the operative mechanism of memory functions through the interrelation of multiple subsystems and describe the key role of anoetic consciousness – the phenomenology of remembering. In

57. I discuss memory and trauma in the thesis Introduction on pages 17-21.

the final section, Archive Film and Effect, to situate memory within the wider context of photography and cinematography, I discuss aspects of the viewing experience and examine the 'archive effect' that Baron (Baron, 2014) argues, results from the viewer's recognition of the historical material incorporated within a 'new' moving image work. I also consider the affective power of small-gauge *ciné* film and the disparate intentions that the viewer perceives in the archive material – placed in the past – and its (re)contextualisation in the present.

2.2 Ruined Memory

In his essay, 'The Place of Trauma: Memory, Hauntings, and the Temporality of Ruins', Dylan Trigg writes about ruins and the role of sites of memory in understanding trauma rather than through the more usual perspective gained through oral testimony. He raises two central questions:

> First, insofar as the built environment is able to contain memory, how does the place of trauma testify to history? Second, if ruins are by their nature contingent and dynamic, how can the past be spatially preserved without creating a false unity between time and the event? (Trigg, 2009)

Trigg intends to "make a foray into this convergence between place and trauma through undertaking a phenomenological investigation of the testimonial attributes of ruins" whose appearance "allows us to approach the spatio-temporality of trauma in terms of a logic of hauntings and voids." Trigg clarifies his use of the term 'ruins' as that which "designates location of memory, in which trauma took place and continues to be inextricably bound with that location in both an affective and evidential manner" (*Ibid.*, p.88).

For Trigg, the built environment 'contains memory'. It features environmental cues that inform our cognitive mapping of place, an internal model of spatial structures. These visual cues are points of reference, landmarks and signage that we refer to while moving through a city. Sorrows and Hirtle define landmark as a prominent object used as a reference point to help us memorise and recognise routes in addition to locating ourselves in terms of our destination (Sorrows and Hirtle, 1999). A landmark – a distinctive feature of the environment – is represented in a person's 'mental map' in response to its distinctiveness and social significance, patterns of activity, and perceptual data. In addition, Afrooz, White and Neuman emphasise that way-finding – 'finding our way' – "is a behavior that involves many cognitive processes: The traveller must know where they are, know where their destination is, follow the best route to

their destination, recognize the destination, and finally find their way back to the origin" (Afrooz et al., 2014).

When a built structure is abandoned or neglected, it gradually falls into ruin. Buildings can also become ruined because of environmental factors such as floods and hurricanes or military conflict. A landmark structure in Plymouth is Charles Church, a building in a state of 'suspended ruination' since incendiary bombs burned it out.

This ruined church, close to where I live in Plymouth, is a prominent landmark and a useful navigational aid on a key route into the city centre. Built and consecrated over a seventy-year period, from 1634 to 1708, the church was 'destroyed' by intense incendiary bombing by German planes during the night of the 20th and 21st of March 1941. After the Second World War, Charles Church was preserved in its ruined state as a memorial to the civilian deaths during the air raids – "a symbolic ruin and war memorial" (England, 2022).[58] Even knowing nothing about its past or history, a visitor to the city can recognise the shattered architecture as a church – the walls, unglazed windows and tower with a tall spire remain – and that authorities consider it to be of sufficient importance to preserve in its ruined state as a memorial to trauma rather than razing it to the ground and building a new structure in this prime commercial location. While the ruin of Charles Church has no voice, it communicates a complex set of sensory stimuli – the environmental cues needed to orientate oneself within the urban terrain and the affective prompts that indicate a site in which a disaster has occurred. In Trigg's schema, it is a 'place of memory' whose preserved ruination provides material and affective evidence of the traumatic events that occurred at this location over eighty years ago. I was born in Plymouth but spent my childhood in many other places around the world during which the city changed enormously. During this nomadic life of a forces' child, I spent periods back in Plymouth where my parents kept a family home, lived in and looked after by my maternal grandparents. The ruined church served as a recognisable feature in the ever-changing cityscape, an un-homely marker of 'being home', back in Plymouth. The image of the church spire with its weathervane called out to me when 'skimming the archive', reviving links through time to the church's continuing landmark presence in my memory and to the time of filming

58. Historical information is provided on commemorative plaque number 157 sited north of the busy dual carriage roundabout constructed around the church: https://web.plymouth.gov.uk/plymouthplaques/notice102.html

from a now-demolished, brutalist car park.

Two older people I knew told me about their personal experiences of the conflagration when they were children – 50 years earlier – how they were terrified by the bombing, which was intense that night. Bill Dawe, an electrician, recounted seeing the church on fire and how he and his mother collected the copper nails from the church's collapsed roof into a pram and sold them to a scrap metal yard a few days later. My neighbour June, whose newly washed towels seen momentarily with a submarine in the distance in *One Second a Day* (2016), spoke of the neighbourhood of narrow terraced streets in which she had lived as a child around the church that were demolished – by city planners rather than the Luftwaffe – to build an Art College, a Police Station, main road and a multi-storey carpark.

Research Journal

https://www.sundog.me.uk/22-march/

22 March – Gilded Vane

I drove to the top of the spiral car park and set up a tripod beside the thick concrete wall, facing the roundabout which has surrounded the church for decades. The sun caught the weathervane as it turned with the wind. The traffic circulated below, marooning the church on an island in a stream of traffic.

The Super 8 films in my collection are mute 'unspeaking things' – they, like Trigg's ruins, cannot verbalise the past. The scenes recorded on film operate like Bill's recollections of the church, memories that can be rejuvenated by returning to the physical source, frozen in time. June's memory of the now non-existent neighbourhood feels like the unrecorded places outside of the film frame, remembered but not present. The silent Super 8 reversal footage is 'placed' – geographically and in time – by its exposure to the profilmic. The celluloid constitutes a place which in some sense is ersatz, yet a place nonetheless, and is a node of memory as Radstone identified.[59]

59. Discussed in the Introduction on page 9.

2.3 Trauma in the Archive

An archive of personal films can evoke trauma for its creator as the 'celluloid memories' of the collection depict people and pets that have aged and died, and places which have fallen into ruin or been lost to time or distance. The film material has its own 'existential ruination' inscribed on the emulsion in a manner quite different to digital moving image. Photochemical film leaves its manufacturer in a pristine state, sealed in an air- and light-proof package, and protected inside a sturdy cardboard or plastic container. Its subsequent life in the world is subject to physical trauma through exposure to heat, humidity, and physical abrasion, and physical handling via human touch. The gelatine emulsion that supports the photosensitive chemicals is organic and can be affected by microorganisms, chemicals and the adhesion of particulate matter. This 'life' of celluloid was discussed in the previous chapter and Marks adds that as analogue film and video media[60] deteriorate over time their visibility diminishes "their images are, quite simply, hard to see […] so that to watch a film or video is to witness its slow death" (Marks, 2002: p.168).[61]

In contrast, a piece of digital filming has the potential to remain unchanged – an intangible, placeless immortality – beyond the lifetime of its creator and can be duplicated to produce clones. Superficially identical copies can 'exist' on Vimeo or YouTube's servers and be shared to film festivals that might delete their copy or keep the material for their own purposes such as for an online video library or to include in later programmes.[62] Yet, while digital films are not subject to corporeal degradation over the years, they can disappear in an instant: accidentally deleted, lost on a malfunctioning hard drive, locked away by an infringed hosting policy or ransomware, stolen inside a laptop or encoded with a now-obsolete codec. Being subliminal before playback, a digital film might have already vanished, awaiting the discovery of its absence when sought in the archive. If physical film is a place, a specific node in time and space, digital film is a memory: intangible, ephemeral and placeless.

Following Vivian Sobchack's phenomenological approach to film in *The Address of the Eye: A Phenomenology of Film Experience* (Sobchack, 1992), Marks proposes that we have an

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60. Writing at the end of the 1990s, Marks refers here to videotape.

61. Based on an essay, 'Loving a Disappearing Image', written before *The Skin of the Film*, published in *Cinémas* (Fall 1997) pp.93-112.

62. Video hosting services often re-encode footage to reduce storage space and optimise playback over the Internet, sometimes to the detriment of quality.

embodied relationship with the screen, and, when we watch the deterioration of a film or video and their eroding images on the screen, "we may respond with a sense of our own disappearance" (Marks, 2002, p. 169).

Before digital and online technologies were widely available and affordable, people may have created family albums with the photographic prints or 35mm transparencies they and other family members had captured of holidays and celebratory events, such as birthdays; others may have kept a collection of home movies, shot on video or small gauge celluloid film.

The cultural theorist Annette Kuhn writes:

> Telling stories about the past, our past, is a key moment in the making of our selves. To the extent that memory provides their raw material, such narratives of identity are shaped as much by what is left out of the account – whether forgotten or repressed – as by what is actually told. (Kuhn, 2002, p.2).

Originally published in 1995, Kuhn's 'memory work', *Family Secrets: Acts of Memory and Imagination* (*Ibid.*), is a personal yet scholarly reflection on the private 'family album' photographs from her own childhood and public representations of the past in film, news photographs and painting. She makes a comparison with the work of a detective or archaeologist in her "searching for clues, deciphering signs and traces, making deductions, patching together reconstructions out of fragments of evidence" (*Ibid.*, p. 4).

Through Kuhn's work, I can comprehend my doctoral enquiry as a form of 'memory work', in relation to her definition as "an active practice of remembering that takes an inquiring attitude towards the past and the activity of its (re)construction through memory" (*Ibid.*, p.186). In contrast to Kuhn's practice in *Family Secrets*, most of the memory work presented in this thesis concerns a collection of short 8mm reels, which I filmed, and, although these are personal cinema in nature where the camera is my companion in everyday life, they do not document the private moments of my family.

It is through the process of 'remembering' – what Kuhn refers to as "performances of memory" (Kuhn, 2010, p.1)[63] – within my research narrative, that I have been able to interconnect my personal and private archival film practice with the public and socio-cultural realm. As Kuhn

63. "It is impossible to overstate the significance of *narrative* in cultural memory – in the sense not just of the (continuously negotiated) contents of shared/collective memory-stories, but also of the activity of recounting or telling memory-stories, in both private and public contexts – in other words, of *performances of memory*" (Kuhn, 2010: p.1, emphasis in original).

affirms, “memory is a process, an activity, a construct; and that memory has social and cultural, as well as personal, resonance” (*Ibid.*, p. 1).

2.4 Haunted Reels

As I worked with my archive, I reflected on what registers of memory came into play and began to identify some process at work beyond simply remembering the time of filming, the footage generated and the experience of reviewing the moving image sequences. In her book, *Ghostly Matters: Haunting and the Sociological Imagination* (Gordon, 2008), first published in 1997, Avery Gordon distinguishes haunting from trauma and suggests it offers an alternative to trauma. For her, haunting is distinctive because it indicates that something needs to be done. Through my research in this enquiry, my understanding of trauma is that it is triggered through a sensory encounter – as a result of something seen, heard, felt, or touched – perhaps from a dream, or an experience that replicates in some way the event that caused the original trauma. As I have discussed earlier, trauma can be activated through one’s ‘close encounters’ with moving image, focused in this enquiry through the memory work with my personal archive, which involves repeated viewing of the digitised footage, examining the Super 8 material itself, the process of making the films and watching them.

In relation to this enquiry – and specifically my practice within the thesis – what interests me most are Gordon’s ideas that concern what is missing from everyday consciousness, which is the haunting shape of the past in ghostly form that emanates from the films presented in this thesis, permeates the viewer’s perception and affects the meaning they construct from their experience.

She defines the term, ‘haunting’, as:

> An animated state in which a repressed or unresolved social violence is making itself known, sometimes directly, sometimes not. Haunting raises spectres and it alters the experience of being in linear time, the way we separate the past, present and the future. (Gordon et al., 2020, p.339)

Returning to Dungeness,[64] both as a film and my experience as the maker, illustrates Gordon’s ‘haunting’. Newer narration mixes with location audio from the past, both creating an aural ‘present’ that only exists during its playback**.** The old Super 8 footage brought into a newer

64. Discussed on pages 112–117.

digital existence, now slides into the past together with its soundtrack.

Haunting is something long forgotten, something that now feels 'out of place', which re-appears to disturb the lived experience and the chronological order of past, present and future. Gordon uses the term, 'haunting', "to describe those singular yet repetitive instances when home becomes unfamiliar, when your bearings on the world lose direction, when the over-and-done-with comes alive, when what's been in your blind spot comes into view" (Gordon, 2008, p.xvi). She offers a means of understanding trauma *as haunting*, acknowledging its presence as "a something to be done" (Gordon et al., 2020, p.339).

> These spectres or ghosts appear when the trouble they represent and symptomize is no longer contained or repressed or blocked from view. The ghost, as I understand it, is not the invisible or some ineffable excess. The whole essence … of a ghost is that it has a real presence and demands its due, your attention. (Gordon, 2008, p.xvi)

The original Super 8 film material is 'repressed' by the technicalities needed to view it and consequently has lain at rest in a cardboard box. The footage, freed by digitisation, allows the 'over-and-done' to spring to life at the click of a mouse button.

In chapter two of *Ghostly Matters*, Gordon uses her encounter with a photograph to think through the process of research (*Ibid.*, p.32). She reflects on the absence of the Russian paediatrician and a pioneer of psychoanalysis, Sabina Spielrein, who should have been present when the photograph of a meeting was taken but did not appear – and is therefore 'not in the picture'. My Super 8 films act as an external memory, where I am an 'absent presence' – or 'present absence' – as the person who 'was there' when my Super 8 films were shot, but also 'not there', as my image is not depicted within the frames. As I replay the footage, I have a 'maker's memory' that pervades the experience. As Gordon observes, Spielrein is a ghost who haunts the photograph – she was not in the place where she was expected to be, yet she inhabits that space despite not being visible in the image through her absence. In a similar way, I 'haunt' my films as their cinematographer and director. Like Gordon, 'the researcher', in 'encountering' (viewing) my films, I oscillate between the roles of 'witness' – the researcher and archivist who is looking at the past – and 'ghostly presence' from the past who appears to haunt my enquiry in the present. This past presence is made explicit in *Finborough Road* and *Returning to Dungeness* – covered in the section Framing the Return[65] – as I insert my voice into

65. See pages 108-117.

the scenes filmed decades earlier.

2.5 Place and Placeness

The geographer Edward Relph's ideas provide a useful framework for mapping my experience of film's interrelationship to place and memory in this investigation. He refers to the identity of a place as being determined by its qualities of "sameness and unity" that allow it to be differentiated from other places (Relph, 1976, p. 45). The visual, tactile and experiential qualities of my Super 8 footage set it apart from analogue and digital video that I have recorded – the celluloid has 'placeness'.

For Relph, the three elements that determine a place's identity are its physical setting, the activities that occur, and the meanings created through individual and group experiences in relation to the place. These three markers of place map beautifully to my Super 8 practice: the film collection has a physical presence, the time spent in the filmed location is memorialised by the repeated actions of filmmaking in the past, and now re-viewing, reusing and screening of the digitised versions creates shared experiences.

In addition, Relph recognised places are "significant centres of our immediate experiences of the world" (*Ibid.*, p.141), and proposed that one's identity with a particular place depends on how deeply 'inside' that place a person feels – Relph's concept of 'insideness' being the strength of someone's belonging, attachment, involvement and care for a particular place.

During this investigation, the continual 'returning' to my Super 8 archive has been difficult at times. Visiting the archive has forced me to engage for prolonged periods with my past. It is not only that some people whom I captured on film are dead or not part of my life anymore. Rather, by inspecting and reanimating these 'spectres', I have had to relive memories associated with the time of filming – returning to a past that appears to be 'alive' through the illusion of moving image but is out of reach and unchangeable. This has sometimes been unbearable and has required me to have lengthy periods away from this 'travelling back to' the past and then 'living in' the past with my archival material.

Trigg argues that "the ruin's capacity to haunt the viewer effectively undercuts a claim of temporal continuity and, instead, offers a counter-narrative in which testimony becomes guided by voids rather than points of presence" (Trigg, 2009, p.89). My Super 8 material covers a tiny

fraction of the time elapsed since I first pressed the shutter release of a Super 8 camera in 1987. Over a period of almost four decades, my archive captures only a few hours from the thousands that have elapsed. My archive holds a few remnants from my life. Most of my lived experience is absent. Reconnecting with my archive through this project reminded me of the absences that were not represented in the films. The spectral places, events and movements of the camera captured on film are more like hauntings than documentation. Trigg contrasts the ruin to Gaston Bachelard's 'homely' domestic architecture:

> we discover that the ruin is both polymorphous and temporally dynamic. That is, unlike the 'felicitous' space that characterizes Bachelard's domestic enclosure, allowing time and place to coincide as unitary phenomenon, the formal features of the ruin are situated in an ambiguous zone, whereby what remains is defined by what is absent. (*Ibid.*)

The fragments of my lived experience that my archive contains are like the ruined remains of a once-familiar city. I can recognise my past in the partial structures of buildings that remain. My memory can fill in the gaps – another viewer could not do this or would construct their own version of the city. In this metaphorical world of my past, there is a fundamental foundational absence – there is no film material relating to my childhood. There are temporal gaps between the filmed events, but these are as nothing compared to the lacuna of my formative years in the archive.

2.6 Registers of Memory

This section provides insights and observations to aid a critical understanding of the interconnected processes of memory and remembering at play within my archival filmmaking practice, which is discussed later in Chapter Four. The section informs critical examination of the research question, 'What registers of memory operate during the processes of creating a moving image artwork, from the point of capture through working with the remediated digital material to presentation?'.

My doctoral study is embedded in the interrelationship between my Super 8 archive and my 'sense of self' – my subjective awareness or 'self-consciousness', understood by Joel Smith, whose research specialises in the philosophy of mind and phenomenology, as "an awareness of oneself" (Smith, 2020). However, as Smith continues,

> a self-conscious subject is not just aware of something that merely happens to be themselves, as one is if one sees an old photograph without realising that it is of

> oneself. Rather a self-conscious subject is aware of themselves *as themselves*; it is manifest to them that they themselves are the object of awareness. Self-consciousness is a form of consciousness that is paradigmatically expressed in English by the words 'I', 'me', and 'my', terms that each of us uses to refer to ourselves *as such*. (*Ibid.*, emphasis in original)

In the present moment, I am mindful of what is happening in the 'here and now', aware of my emotions and what I am feeling in my body. This complex and dynamic embodied state determines my sense of who, what, and where 'I' am. For me to perceive the 'now', my body uses the information it has 'encoded, stored and retrieved' from previous experiences – the faculty known as 'memory'. In this investigation, my understanding of 'memory' aligns with that of Larry Squire, a leading investigator of memory and neuroscience: a faculty of encoding, storing and retrieving information (Squire, 2009). As the researchers Zlotnik and Vansintjan explain in their article, 'Memory: An Extended Definition', the definition of memory is being extended to account for recent scientific developments. Advances in molecular biology have demonstrated that "memory is largely a neuro-chemical process, which includes conditioning and any form of stored experience" (Zlotnik and Vansintjan, 2019, p.1). In parallel, progress in information technology have led to claims that, "cognition is also extended, that is, memory may be stored outside of the brain" (*Ibid.*). As Zlotnik and Vansintjan stress, memory "requires *incorporation* ... It is a relationship – where one biological or chemical process is incorporated into another, and changes both in a permanent way" (*Ibid.*). These processes are demonstrated in the thesis through the *incorporation* of my reflexive thinking, captured in the online research journal, which developed from the memories and internal monologues generated during the process of engagement with my Super 8 collection. This is the core element of the 'know how' mode of Nelson's PaR in my thesis. Following Zlotnik and Vansintjan, I have a set of experiences, remembered through practice and retrieved when I engage as a filmmaker-researcher with my Super 8 archive:

> When we accumulate knowledge, information, and techniques, then the accumulation of those separate processes constitute experience. This experience involves retrieval of information, conversely, being experienced is the process of retrieving memory. (*Ibid.*, p.3)

Zlotnik and Vansintjan point out that, "[m]emory seems to exist everywhere, from an *Aplysia*'s ganglion to DNA to a hard drive" (*Ibid.*, p.3, emphasis in original). My memories, when they remain internalised as thoughts and feelings, are not accessible to others, and at times, they are not accessible to me. They exist only in an embodied state. They can seem nebulous and are

subject to 'being forgotten', as problems can occur at any stage in the memory process:

> Distraction can prevent us from encoding information initially; information might not be stored properly, or might not move from short-term to long-term storage; and/or we might not be able to retrieve the information once it's stored. (Learning, 2022)

My research journal is, perhaps, an example of embodied memories that have been 'fixed', made 'permanent', by their encoding in a digital form to enable access to others.[66] My memory, as Zlotnik and Vansintjan describe, is not a fixed thing that is stored in my brain, it is, rather, "a chemical process between neurons, which is not static" (Zlotnik and Vansintjan, 2019, p.2). The research journal has facilitated the retrieval of my own memories, a largely neuro-chemical process that is dynamic and subject to being lost, or 'forgotten'.

Cognition refers to the mental processes that relate to the input and storage of information and how that information is used to guide behaviour. Essentially, it is "the ability to perceive and react, process and understand, store and retrieve information, make decisions and produce appropriate responses" (Cognition, 2022). Zlotnik and Vansintjan expand on this definition to assert that,

> cognition is a process of incorporation between the environment and the body/ brain/mind. To be clear, cognition is not incorporated in the surroundings, only the corpus can incorporate, and thus cognition (or what we call "mind") is a product of the interaction between the brain, the body, and the environment. (Zlotnik and Vansintjan, 2019, p.3)

The Super 8 archive is both a place that the body and mind interact with, and an 'external memory'.

Zlotnik and Vansintjan outline the three key memory categories, widely accepted within the scientific community today, as sensory, which is not consciously controlled, short-term, holding a limited amount of information, and long-term memory that can hold an indefinite amount of information (*Ibid.*). Implicit and explicit memories are two different types of long-term memory: implicit memories are of sensory and automatised behaviours, and explicit memories are of information, episodes, or events.

The pioneering psychologist and cognitive neuroscientist, Endel Tulving, is an important figure

66. However, in this thesis, it is broad operative capacities of human memory – in particular, my own with respect to my archival filmmaking praxis – that I am interested in exploring and it is beyond the parameters of this project to consider technological and externally transmitted memory in detail.

in contemporary cognitive neuroscience and has made significant contributions about memory and consciousness in this field. From his initial publication in 1972 onwards, Tulving has developed and then evolved key concepts, such as the distinction between the interdependence of episodic and semantic memory. He showed that these formed the basis of normal memory function and organisation: episodic memory is the ability to recall events from our timeline of experience whereas semantic memory concerns general knowledge, ideas and concepts that are not drawn from experience – remembering that such and such is the case (1995; 2002; 2005).

Tulving's later work centred on the importance of subjective experience, which he proposed was core to human remembering, and on explaining and understanding this phenomenon. While memory is associated with recalling past occurrences, through his extensive research, Tulving argued that memory also enables us to travel mentally forwards in time. Tulving devised the concept of 'autonoetic' consciousness to explain how people can project themselves either back or forwards in time, a facility that, he argued, is a feature of episodic memory. He referred to this capacity as 'chronesthesia', which may be understood as 'mental time travel', referring to the form of consciousness that enables human beings to think subjectively about the time in which they live and to 'mentally travel' within that time (Tulving, 2002b). Smith (Smith, 2020) identifies episodic memory as a marker of self-consciousness, a view informed by Tulving's comment that to remember episodically is "to consciously re-experience past experiences" (Tulving, 2002b, p.6).

Autonoetic consciousness is the phenomenology of remembering. It is important to the formation of my 'self-identity'. Further, within this thesis it provides a framework for me to explore the choreography of memory enacted in my engagement with my Super 8 collection, the digitised versions, and my unseen presence in the films themselves when the audience 'sees through my eyes' and is prompted to retrieve from their own episodic memory in response to their experience of the moving image they are viewing on the screen.

2.7 Archive Film and Effect

This section focuses on the critical concepts related to 'archive film' and the 'archive effect' – discussed in the Introduction on page 22 – to ground my thesis in contemporary theories of archival filmmaking practices and inform the examination of my third question, 'Can archive film

be conceived as a 'place' to which we can return?'.[67] This section also provides information relevant to addressing my first question, 'At what point does a filmmaker's collection of rushes become an archive?'.

The digital works I created from my Super 8 archival material have generated positive responses from varied audiences – from screenings and awards at film festivals to 'likes' on Instagram. Something of the original celluloid material survives its trans-mediation to digital and has clearly has some affective power, an 'archive affect' that Baron discusses in her book, *The Archive Effect: Found Footage and the Audiovisual Experience of History* (Baron, 2014). She contends that audiences respond to archive material in sometimes difficult to define yet recognisable ways. Baron offers two modes for the effect – temporal disparity and intentional disparity. Briefly, these effects are responses to material displaced through time, that is, 'old' film material incorporated into a present-day piece of work, and material that seems to be 'personal' appearing in a public work. This reaction in a viewer, this frisson, is the archive effect. Clearly, moving image material is mostly viewed by people other than those who created it, and that is the focus of Baron's book. The PhD project gave me the opportunity to explore how these ideas mapped on to my Super 8 film collection as the person who shot the material decades earlier and who 'rediscovered' the work and then incorporated it into new digital moving image works for public viewing.

I recognise – as does Baron – that there are numerous ways to engage with archival film and many motivations for so doing. Examples include scholarly archival research, filmmakers who work imaginatively with archive footage, makers of historical compilation films, artists who incorporate third party archival material within a practice-based personal investigation film project, such as Miranda Pennell's *The Host* (Pennell, 2016). However, this thesis builds on Baron's conceptualisation of the archive effect because I ground the investigation in a description and analysis of my personal experience as a filmmaker-researcher. It provides insights into my remediated Super 8 filmmaking practice based on my personal archive, which informs perspectives on, and understanding of, the wider social and cultural aspects of my project.

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67. In the thesis Introduction, I establish a definition of the term 'archive' and 'archive film' on page 22 and explain what is meant by 'archival practices' which cover the various uses and remediations of material shot prior to its incorporation within a new moving image work.

Baron analyses how meanings of archival moving image are transformed when they are placed in new texts or contexts and explores what she terms 'the archive effect' in different film genres (Baron, 2014). Some of Baron's ideas suggested fruitful lines of enquiry for me, such as the reception of 'home movies' as having a particular power through their provenance and attachment to their original author – and the intended audience – which she describes as "archival voyeurism" (*Ibid.*, pp. 81-109). Baron asserts that appropriation of 'home movie' footage generates the archive effect by its intentional disparity – when the film was shot, there was likely no intention or expectation that it would be screened publicly or incorporated into other film works. In *Dust*, her work on historiography, Carolyn Steedman has observed that archival material is "an unintended, purloined letter" which we are not really supposed to be reading (Steedman, 2002, p.75). The audience's experience as 'archival voyeur' is therefore one of looking in upon another's personal past.

Baron cautions that "the archive effect does not suggest the naïve return to the intentional fallacy, in which a single author (or filmmaker) is positioned 'behind' the work and is the arbiter of its meaning" (Baron, 2014, p.24). Indeed, esteemed documentary maker Errol Morris in his blog 'The Case of the Inappropriate Alarm Clock' observes that,

> We read correctly or incorrectly a photographer's intentions into every photograph we see. We also imagine the intentions of the people in a photograph. We see intentions everywhere. We even see them in the blind patterns of nature. (Morris, 2009)

I suggest that the same can be said of factual film texts, particularly with archive material. When archive footage is remediated into new works, the viewer experiences what Baron refers to as 'the archive effect', whilst accepting that audience experience will vary according to context and the individual viewer's extratextual knowledge. Her discussion of found footage and archival footage, and the uses to which others' material is put, and the consequent effect on the viewer, is a useful conceptual framework to explore in relation to the digitisation and reconfiguration of my collection of films. Baron tells us that, compared to material produced for a specific film, the decontextualisation of archive material by the 'appropriation filmmaker' into another text carries with it traces of the material's original intended purpose, but warns that "in all the appropriation films the production of both temporal and intentional disparity – and hence, the archive effect – depends, at least to some extent on the viewer's own extratextual knowledge" (Baron, 2014, p.28).

As Baron explains, archive film is complicated to categorise and open to interpretation. She distinguishes the commercial use of archive material compiled into documentaries, which she calls 'compilation films', from the artistic use of found footage:

> In general, the terms "archival footage" and "compilation film" have been associated with documentaries that are believed to convey "history" through their use of and primary dependence upon appropriated documents. Conversely, the terms "found footage" and "found footage film" have been associated with experimental films that, rather than presenting "reality" or "history" and using the footage they appropriate as historical "evidence," problematize the construction of "facts" through a reflexive interrogation of media images. (*Ibid.*)

An example of a 'compilation film' is *Dog Town and Z-Boys*, the documentary film directed by Stacy Peralta (Peralta, 2001). It tells the story of the birth of skateboarding as a sport and a cultural phenomenon in California through the lens of the professional Zephyr Skateboard Team centred on a Los Angeles skate shop. It is an archetypal archive-led film, in which the viewer differentiates between the material generated by the filmmaker and the appropriated film sequences that were assembled for the project. Peralta – who was himself a Zephyr team member, known as Z-Boys – interleaves action archival footage of skateboarding shot in the 1970s with sit-down interviews filmed with the Z-Boys themselves two decades later. The audience can distinguish the two temporalities by the contrast between the formal interviews conducted in the present and the archive footage – both moving image and creatively filmed rostrum sequences of photographs and contemporary magazine layouts. *Dog Town and Z-Boys* is an exemplar of the archive film powered by the popular music of the seventies.

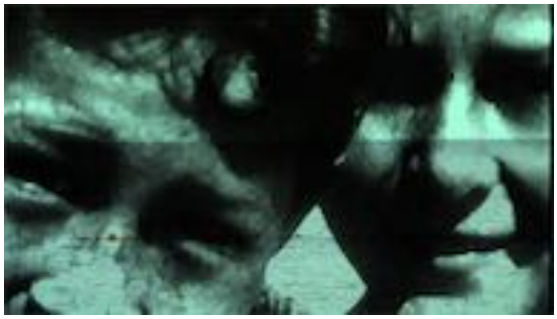
Baron makes a distinction between compilation films and experimental works she classifies as 'found footage films' (Baron, 2014). My film, *Teign Spirit* (2009)[68], commissioned by Animate Projects for CABE's[69] Sea Change initiative, is an example of an 'archival film' that uses 'found footage'. During an artist residency with Teignmouth and Shaldon Museum on the south Devon coast, I discovered a collection of home movies donated by a family who had holidayed in Teignmouth in the years leading up to the Second World War. I layered the 8mm black and white footage of the family's antecedents enjoying themselves at the seaside attractions of the

68. *Teign Spirit* is available: https://vimeo.com/66335070

69. CABE, the Commission for Architecture and the Built Environment, was a non-departmental public body responsible for advising the UK government on architecture and urban design. CABE's Sea Change scheme was a regeneration initiative that provided funding for cultural projects promoting new forms of cultural engagement. For more information, see https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/commission-for-architecture-and-the-built-environment-cabe. Animate Projects commissioned three 2-minute films, which it distributed under the title of 'Coastcards': https://animateprojectsarchive.org/films/by_project/group_commissions/cards

popular holiday destination during the 1930s with digital video footage shot on location over the summer of 2009 to create *Teign Spirit* – pronounced teen spirit.

Research Journal



https://www.sundog.me.uk/ghost-vessels/

Ghost Vessels

At the moment the sea off Torbay and Teignmouth is filled with cruise ships parked up waiting for Covid to pass. These ghost ships are manned by skeleton crews, behemoths at anchor on the horizon.

The 8mm footage is an archive of home movies intended only for viewing by the family which made and appear in them, which Baron refers to in *The Archive Effect* as 'intentional disparity', one of the two constitutive experiences that make up the 'archive effect'. *Teign Spirit* brings together the 'past' of the black and white 8mm film and the 'present' of the digital footage in the same text, creating 'temporal disparity'. There was no desire to tell the family's story or the history of the town in the style of a compilation film, leaving space for the audience to make connections between the old and new footage layered on screen and create meaning. As Baron explains:

> I suggest that certain appropriation films engage directly with the fragmentary nature of the archive to produce a sense of the "presence" of history rather than its meaning. Indeed, by deploying archival documents as metonymic fragments without fully explaining them or fitting them into a coherent, causal narrative, these films evoke our desire for an affective encounter with the past that cannot be reduced to a desire for its meaning. (*Ibid.*, p.12)

Bill Morrison's feature-length film, *Decasia* (Morrison, 2002), presents itself unmistakably as an archival film, indicated both by the montage of film sequences from different sources and reinforced by the clear deterioration of the images. Morrison mined the rescued remains of discarded feature films and newsreels from the 1920s. The material was in such a poor condition that it could not be preserved by the holding archives. These films would typically have had a musical accompaniment in movie theatres and Morrison picture-edited *Decasia* to a music score by the composer Michael Gordon. These films present themselves as 'archival' both in their imagery and the physical decay of the nitrate film stock (Eagan, 2015). In rescuing and remediating the ruined footage, Morrison turned the hazardous nitrate stock – which tends to

combust spontaneously – into a cinematic celebration of passing time and decay. The filmmaker comments in an interview, "Somehow they've managed to be viewed in the 21st century, whereas almost everything else from the silent era is lost" (*Ibid.*). Morrison reveals he had a unique relationship with the management of the Library of Congress. He recalls that the Nitrate Film Vault Manager, George R. Willeman, whose role is to remove decaying nitrate film, would set aside material for him to peruse, which would otherwise be destroyed:

> He's going through stuff, and some of it he's just going to throw away," Morrison says. "He's not going to re-can it, he's not going to put it back on the shelf. But there's still something there. And he knows that the only person in the world who would still be interested in that is me. (*Ibid.*)

Morrison made a virtue of the film damage rather than 'restoring it', resulting in an almost hallucinatory experience as figures appear to melt and the buckled materiality of the photochemical film judders and dances across the screen.

A filmmaker 'finds' and presents 'new meaning' for the 'found footage' by re-purposing material from the past within a new production. Found footage may have been discarded by its owner and later sourced from eBay or a skip, but it can also be 'discovered' within institutional collections and film archives. I consider the archival home movie filming I used in *Teign Spirit* as found footage because it was part of the museum's stored collection, along with broken Airfix models of airplanes, a bosun's whistle and other ephemera that had been donated by private individuals. The material that Bill Morrison used for *Decasia* was destined to be destroyed by the film archives due to its unstable condition, but also its lack of 'archival value' – this was found footage that had been 'lost' in an official archive. The key point for me is that the archival material is used out of its creator's context, whether or not it originates in a film archive.

Baron discusses the difficulties in categorising films that include archival material. She comments:

> However, the boundaries between compilation film and found footage film and between archival footage and found footage are often nebulous. Indeed, one of the problems theorists have encountered stems from the attempt to classify films that appropriate preexisting documents as a genre on the basis of what "kinds" of sounds and images are used, of the method or strategies by which these sounds and images are put together, and/or of the particular "objective" characteristics of the finished film. (Baron, 2014, p.8)

The British film and television director Michael Apted looked back in time to see his subjects in earlier iterations of his *Up* series, which followed the lives of fourteen children from the time

when they were seven years old, from 1964 until 56 years later in 2019. Apted created nine programmes, shooting one episode in the series every seven years based on Aristotle's assertion, 'Give me a child until he is seven and I will show you the man' (Godwin, 2021). A section of the audience of each episode would recognise the subjects from their earlier appearances. Apted's inclusion of material from previous programmes – presenting as archival footage – reinforces this familiarity. Although the series was conceived as a long-term continual project, the temporal disparity renders it as archive material both in terms of the ageing participants and the technological aesthetic changes: from black and white to colour, film to analogue video and mono to stereo sound. Baron comments:

> Although Apted (or his crew) shot all of the footage, the footage from the earlier films is nevertheless experienced as "archival" in the context of each subsequent film. That is, Apted himself has created an archive of documents that he must return to each time he makes a new Up film so as to "find" footage that produces historical effects as it stands in contrast to documents of his subjects at the present moment of his newest instalment in the series. (Baron, 2014, p.32)

Richard Linklater's feature film, *Boyhood* (Linklater, 2014), tells the story of a child growing up – it was an extended project in which he filmed the same actor, Ellar Coltrane, over a twelve-year period in which he matures in front of the audience's eyes from a boy of six years old to adulthood (Clark, 2016). While in one sense this film is a standard piece of scripted narrative cinema, the documentation of the actor physically maturing presents a documentary thread running in parallel. I would not consider this to be an archival film despite the 'historical' representation of Coltrane on screen as a child, when the film was released with the now adult actor. The audience smooths over any temporal disparity by having seen the child mature on the screen as part of the story arc, and unlike Apted's series, the technical quality of the filming remained constant over the years.

Linklater's and Apted's projects illustrate Baron's contention that reading a work as an 'archival film' depends on an audience's recognition of historical material incorporated within a 'new' moving image work and how they interpret the material from the past in the new work. In *Boyhood*, the narrative thrust smooths over the ageing of the protagonist, which would be apparent if the footage from different years was scrutinised outside the context of the feature film. The power of the *Up* series comes from revisiting its cast in the present – 'archival sections' from earlier iterations are included for contextual reasons and to provide pathos. Both works show the 'fuzziness' inherent in the term 'archive effect'.

Reading Baron's Terms

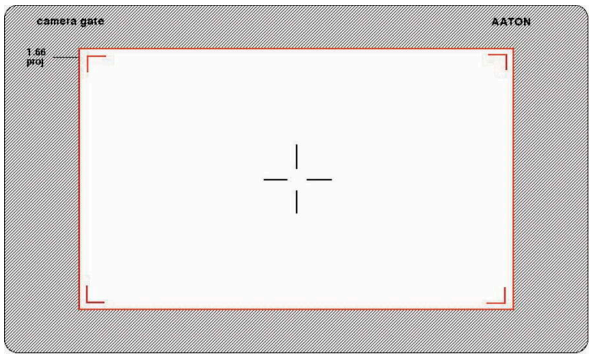
I attended the Birkbeck Essay Film Festival in March 2016[70] to acquire insights into the essay film and to further my understanding of current academic perspectives of this 'genre' of filmmaking, which I use to frame my research findings. Although the festival featured numerous examples of the audiovisual essay – a video lecture incorporating illustrative moving image extracts – the *Festival of (In)Appropriation* programme of experimental works created from appropriated archive footage resonated with my approach and interests. This "showcase of contemporary, short audiovisual works that repurpose existing film, video, or other media in inventive ways" (Essay Film Festival, 2016) curated by Jaimie Baron proved to be a breakthrough. The works in the programme were exploratory and experimental in form, in contrast to audiovisual essays that functioned as self-contained pedagogic packages for audience consumption. For me, as a filmmaker, the essential difference is that the author of the audiovisual essay occupies a position 'outside' their subject, whereas the essay film author speaks from a position of practice from within the work.

Recent exhibitions of the first practice outputs generated through my research investigation have suggested useful insights into the original footage and their digital remediation for me as a creator of both. I have shifted from a position of 'maker', whilst viewing my archive footage as rushes, to that of 'maker-viewer' when engaging with the remediated artworks. I ground my insider practitioner perspective in this research project in the specific relationship I have with my own material that is quite different to the case studies in Baron's book, in which archival footage is appropriated by a third party. I note that Baron includes Apted's use of earlier 'archival' sequences within later iterations of his *Up* series for Granada Television, as discussed earlier in this chapter.

Todd Haynes' shot his feature *Carol* (Haynes, 2015) on film using Super 16 format cameras rather than the more normal – if shooting celluloid on any format could still be thus described – 35mm system. *Carol* is a drama set in the 1950s with appropriate set and costume design. The grainy 16mm complements the period feel.

70. Held at Birkbeck Cinema, University of London, from 17 to 24 March 2016.

Research Journal



Seeing Carol

I wonder whether shooting on a Super 16 crop of a digital sensor and using the same lenses to match the ARRI 416 film camera, then adding grain in postproduction would produce a discernible difference?

https://www.sundog.me.uk/seeing-carol/

Baron's archive effect centres on the viewer's perception of the archive material that is 'placed' in the past and its (re)contextualisation in the present (Baron, 2014). She states: "However, for the *archive effect* to occur, there must be a gap between the 'then' of the document and the 'now' of the appropriation film's production made evident *within* the film" (*Ibid.*, p.37). Baron continues,

> The archive effect—and, hence, the recognition of a document as archival—is a function of the relationship between *different elements* of the *same text*, between a document placed within a new *textual* context and not of the relationship between a text and the *extratextual* context in which it is shown. (*Ibid.*, p.38)

Carol's design and cinematography intentionally places its story in the past, but it does not evoke the archive effect for the reasons described above. There is no 'now' in the narrative contrasting with the 'then' of the 1950s. However, the choice of recording medium is playing on the same audience sensibilities to produce an 'archive affect', an affective encounter.

Baron describes this 'archive affect' as a form of nostalgia that can be:

> [A] "reactionary" nostalgia that seeks to restore an idealized past that never existed or a "reflective" nostalgia – a self-conscious awareness of the longing that points to the gaps in the archive and informs the relationship between past and present. (*Ibid*., p.13)

The Super 8 material in my archive has engendered an 'archive affect' response in audiences ranging from comments that the footage shot in 2006 looked "really old" to the observation that a person had "seen their childhood on screen", provoked by the Super 8 grain and colour palette. These medium specific qualia (the experience of the projected grain images) are an example of 'haptic visuality' – a method of sensory analysis, which is located in the viewer's body, although it does not depend on the presence of literal touch, smell, taste or hearing. It is

a concept of embodied spectatorship that situates the phenomenology of cinematic experience as synaesthetic and interactive – an exchange between two bodies.

Film critic Richard Brody compares the sensory affects of viewing *Carol*, once from the rear of the auditorium then a second time close enough to the screen in the cinema to experience visually the grain structure of the image. About the latter he observed:

> They're not effects of the actors' skin but of its appearance on the second skin of the film stock (the French word for "film" is "pellicule," meaning little skin) which lends the actors' theatricalized immobility an illusion of shivers. (Brody, 2015)

Having read Brody's article, I booked to watch the film in a small arts cinema matinée, where, as luck would have it, the only seat available was on the front row. Sitting a few metres from the screen, I too experienced the almost hypnotic dance of grain on the actors' faces as they filled the screen. The emulsion holding the photographic image together is made of gelatine that is a hydrolysed form of collagen, the same protein which gives shape to our human skin.

2.8 Chapter 2 Conclusion

This chapter centred on the interrelationship between place, memory and film, which is integral to the investigation. Marks connects human corporeality to film's materiality, which led me to a greater understanding of the interrelationship between cinema – in particular celluloid film – and the spectator's body. Through Kuhn's concept of 'memory work', I was able to form a more nuanced relationship to presence and absence in my archive and a way of positioning this thesis as a 'work of memory', with the concomitant risk of stirring Gordon's archival 'ghosts'. Through reflexive discussion of the concepts that underpin my study, the chapter created a critical lens for the enquiry and the new insights acquired in connection to the research questions. It enabled me, as a filmmaker-researcher, to 'think' about the theoretical and critical implications of the practical work created for this enquiry through reflective practice. Importantly, it informed an understanding of my filmmaking praxis as personal cinema, centred on my remediated Super 8 archive and conducted through the practice itself, to establish a clear research narrative and support my claim to knowledge.

Memory and remembering are nebulous and complex phenomena. Trigg's identification of the built environment and its ruins as the locus of memory and trauma prompted me to apply his phenomenological observations to 'remembering' material in my Super 8 archive. Relph's concepts of placeness and insideness revealed an equivalence between his three markers of

place identity and my Super 8 practice and archive. The knowledge I gained from Tulving's phenomenological understanding of consciousness led to insights about the operative registers of memory between film and archive. His concept of 'autonoeis' – a state of 'self-knowing' – was helpful in understanding the conscious recollection of personal happenings. For Tulving, remembering is a feature of autonoetic consciousness, the subjective experience of remembering, that enables the memory retrieval process. The encoding of episodic memory, a long-term personally situated memory based on the personal experience of the person at a particular time and place. This generated the insights that film is a form of 'external memory', and, while memory is activated by my engagement with the material archive and its remediated form, the memory related to the digital versions is indeterminate but the physical collection of Super 8 provides a 'place' for memory.

Finally, I situate memory within the wider context of photography and cinematography. Here, I addressed audience experience to examine the 'archive effect', which Baron argues, results from the viewer's recognition of the historical material incorporated within a 'new' work. Here, I examined the affective power of 8mm film and the different intentions that the audience identifies in the archival material – placed in the past – and its (re)contextualisation in the present. In addition, I provided information pertinent to my first research question and the realisation that the boundary between what archival material is and what is rushes is fluid and dependent on context – once the footage is digitised, the films become simultaneously a collection of rushes and an archive.

Chapter 3.
Contextualising the Practice

> He could completely recall every single frame of film. As we went through the transfer he would tell us where and when it was filmed, who was in it, which images were coming up next. If you think about it, there were 82 films, plus the diary films – that's a lot to remember. James Mackay in interview with Beatrix Ruf (Mackay, 2014).

3.1 Introduction

In practice research, the author's creative practice forms an integral part of the PaR methodology. In Chapter Three, I situate the practice in its relevant field and in relation to practitioners pertinent to the research project and analyse the dialogic exchange that evolved between the contextual material and my own films and consider the approaches taken by artist filmmakers who have informed my filmmaking research during this investigation. Central to this dialogue are the films, *Glitterbug* by Derek Jarman (Jarman, 1994), *Perestroika* by Sarah Turner (Turner, 2009) and *Sunless* (Marker, 1983) by Chris Marker. These are discussed to examine how these artists embed memory and remembering at the core of their 'personal' filmmaking.[71] I examine Jenni Olson's cinematic strategies in *The Royal Road* (2015) to gain a perspective on using film to preserve a personal version of the past. I include a reflective account of my viewing experiences of silent works by Milena Gierke and Nathaniel Dorsky, projected from celluloid in cinema auditoriums, which gave me valuable perspectives on the reception of film projection in contrast to screenings of remediated, digital versions. All these contextual works exhibit 'placeness', Relph's term that embraces "everything to do with the diverse qualities, interpretations, uses and experiences of place, from place cells in the hippocampus to a global sense of place" (Relph, 2023).[72]

71. *Sunless* – with its English narration – is better known as *Sans Soleil* which is the version with the voiceover in French.

72. Place and 'placeness' were discussed in the previous chapter on pages 62-71.

3.2 *Glitterbug* and the Personal Super 8 Cinema of Derek Jarman

> Leaving the bright spring afternoon of Kensington Gardens, we entered the Serpentine Gallery and passed Jarman's paintings. We entered the darkened gallery space with multiple looped films projected like a mosaic on the curved gallery wall. To one side was a doorway through to another darker space, where shadowy figures reclined on beanbags bathed in the Yves Klein International light of *Blue* (Jarman, 1993), the sonorous voice of Jarman drifting through to us. Each looped clip was quite small, glowing like jewels caught in sunlight. Stuart Moore, extract from research journal.[73]

The Super 8 films of Derek Jarman have a lightness that is absent from or subsumed by the more conventional demands of his narrative feature films. They feel quite spontaneous and free of the constraints that are required in the planning and production stages of film production intended for mainstream cinema. My still photography practice predates my work as a filmmaker, perhaps explaining why my first viewing of the slowed-down footage of Derek Jarman's *Gerald's Film* (Jarman, 1976) resonated so strongly.

Research Journal

https://www.sundog.me.uk/geralds-film/

Gerald's Film

The camera focused on this beautiful man's face, inside the boathouse. The golden light and the faltering, yet very intimate, gaze. Its dreamlike quality shimmered in a space between still and moving image, the unstoppable present of cinema subverted by the readability of individual successive frames.

In an interview for TateShots,[74] Jarman's producer, James Mackay, states:

> a prime example of this way of working is *Gerald's Film*. It's filmed at six frames a second and then projected at a slower speed, around about three or four frames a second. And it gives a kind of very soft, moving, slightly blurring step-motion kind of photography. (Mackay, 2007)

Jarman's early Super 8 work is a personal cinema – a poetic documentation of his life. This

73. https://www.sundog.me.uk/derek-jarman-brutal-beauty/

74. Launched in 2007, Bloomberg TateShots was a monthly art programme available online that featured highlights from collections, exhibitions, public events and performances. The interview with Mackay includes a transcription. https://www.tate.org.uk/art/artists/derek-jarman-2327/derek-jarman-super-8

technique of manipulating time both distances the viewer from a naturalistic rendition of the profilmic space, but paradoxically creates a closer, more personal and human experience. In her essay, 'Happy Accidents Sketchbook Filming' the filmmaker, Sarah Turner, writes,

> in *Gerald's Film* there is movement through the barn, then finding the lover's face: it seems like it's shot at three or four frames a second and then stretched out, from a continuous take for the whole reel. That film is an absolute portrait of love, and it's always searching for the frame. (Turner, 2014, p.85)

Jarman originated numerous films on Super 8 that were optically blown up to 16mm or 35mm, such as *Imagining October* (Jarman, 1984). Having the films available on larger gauges made projection more straightforward in a wider range of 'art cinema' venues that commonly would have 16mm projection facilities alongside the cinema standard 35mm equipment. This made Jarman's 'personal cinema' films easier to distribute and include within curated programmes, expanding the audience for his work. Blowing up the films also preserved the original Super 8 material, which was getting worn from repeated projections (Mackay, 2014).

Jarman bequeathed his collection of 92[75] Super 8 films to Mackay, who, since the filmmaker's death in 1994, has worked with the LUMA Foundation to archive, restore and preserve the collection of Jarman's small-gauge works and ensure they are more widely available. Mackay's work on his Jarman archive includes the digitisation of the original Super 8 for high quality 2K digital projection:

> I see it as a complete archive of work accessible to viewers, artists, students, curators, and writers. It can be shown to the public in different ways. The important thing is that now every single frame is accessible, which I think is unique in an artist's film work. (*Ibid.*, p.19)

Glitterbug was the start of Mackay's archiving process. Jarman intended this film to form a companion piece to *Blue* (Jarman, 1993), which was released four months before his death. *Blue* features an unchanging field of blue, with a complex, interwoven soundtrack of voices, effects and music. The narration includes material from Jarman's diaries whilst he was in hospital being treated for an AIDS related illness and was temporarily blind. In contrast, *Glitterbug* was to be full of images from his Super 8 films.

It is important to note that *Glitterbug* is a compilation of selected Super 8 material shot by Jarman on his Braun Nizo camera. We can find the sequences in standalone works, such as

75. 82 individual Super 8 films and 10 Super 8 diary films.

Journey to Avebury (Jarman, 1973). Although the compilation film *Glitterbug* was not presented in the *Derek Jarman: Brutal Beauty* exhibition at the Serpentine Gallery, visitors would recognise the individual sequences they might have seen in *Glitterbug* playing in loops in the darkened space of the gallery, as projections on to the walls and in an array of monitors.[76]

Commissioned by Nigel Finch and BBC Television for the *Arena* arts programme series, preproduction required the professional transfer of Jarman's Super 8 material to broadcast standard video. Mackay recalls Jarman had an extraordinary visual memory. Despite Jarman being seriously ill and visually impaired, Mackay observed that the bright video screens of the telecine process had enabled the filmmaker to see his filmed images clearly and to remember the succession of shots, places and people in the footage.

Mackay telecined as much Super 8 material as he could. He recruited the video editor David Lewis and the musician Brian Eno to create the film for the BBC. Jarman's health was deteriorating, and this impacted his participation as his condition varied from day to day. Although he remained enthusiastic and involved, the editing progressed collaboratively amongst the other members of the *Glitterbug* team. The editor would take updates on VHS tape for approval and comment to Jarman in hospital, so he remained central to the evolution of the final film. Finch, the programme's editor, trusted the *Glitterbug* team to deliver and gave them editorial freedom, except for requiring on-screen captions to identify locations and that *Glitterbug* be a television hour in length (54 minutes).

The editor, Lewis, interviewed for the Blu-ray collection, *Jarman Volume Two: 1987-1994* (Jarman, 2019), recalls that he and Mackay disagreed on what material should be digitised. Mackay insisted it should be only the more personal, diaristic footage, whereas Lewis felt they should include other material that Jarman has created for specific projects, such as material filmed at Corfe Castle of a woman dancing in exotic costume. As the production of *Glitterbug* progressed, the editor concluded Mackay was correct – as Jarman's long-time collaborator – in his selection, guided by his sensibilities and knowledge of the footage.

Arts cinemas have embraced digital projection, with many no longer having the ability to project film, so digitisation has allowed Jarman's shorts to be seen more freely – both individually and compiled into *Glitterbug* – in digital-only venues, on Blu-ray and online. The

76. 23 February to 13 April 2008.

Serpentine Gallery exhibition showed me how silent film material could work with an eclectic soundtrack. Jarman mused on his life in *Blue*, accompanied by Simon Fisher Turner's score, in the adjacent gallery space, the audio weaving into my viewing experience. Sarah Turner found it hard to describe how her work was influenced by Jarman, but found his experiments with the "playful, lusty landscape of Super 8" to be inspirational (Turner, 2014). Like her, I have found the "happy accidents" inherent in the format to be liberating in contrast to more measured digital filming, with Jarman's work a touchstone. While Jarman carried his projector and box of films to small screenings in London, Super 8 projection was a private viewing experience for me. Jarman's and my Super 8 filming had in common that they were a form of personal cinema that documented life, but outside the mainstream documentary tradition – handheld small gauge camera, auto-exposure, without sync sound. I could identify with the poetic materiality of his Super 8 filmmaking, which allowed me to situate my practice within artists' moving image rather than as 'home movies', a label that was often attached to the small gauge. Through Jarman's early personal cinema, I could recognise the value of my own creative film work. Brian Hoyle has referred to Jarman as a "radical traditionalist", in that he chose to work with what was regarded as an amateur film format and because his "highly personal body of work is too experimental to be considered mainstream; yet his work is also ironically viewed as being too artistically conservative and conventional to be wholly accepted by the avant-garde". (Hoyle, 2007, n.p.)

3.3 *Perestroika*: a Filmmaker's Journey to the Past

Sarah Turner's *Perestroika* (Turner, 2009) touches on themes of memory, self, identity, and autobiography in an emotional reconstruction of two journeys on the Trans-Siberian Express from Moscow to Irkutsk. The film intercuts Hi-8 video footage filmed out of the train window from her journey across the Soviet Union at the end of 1987 and beginning of 1988, with material shot 20 years later at the same time of year and following the same train journey in the contemporary Russian Federation.[77]

I had heard Turner deliver an artist's talk at the Unfolding Narrative (Middles, Beginnings, and Endless Loops) symposium at the University of Plymouth in 2013, during which she screened

77. Hi8 is a standard definition videotape format developed by Sony Inc.

extracts of *Perestroika*, but it was difficult to subsequently view the entire film until it was released on DVD in 2014. LUX, the film's London distributor describes it:

> Perestroika is an autobiographical documentary, a fiction that's also an essay and an extended poetic meditation on the ability of the image to represent experience. Sarah Turner's film is a ghost story that explores what we forget and how we remember. (LUX, 2022)

'Perestroika' in Russian means 'restructuring' and was applied to Mikhail Gorbachev's policy to modernise the Soviet Union from the mid-1980s. Turner's essay film draws on the term 'perestroika' as a metaphor for reconstruction, to reclaim or rebuild a connection to herself as a young woman and two close friends who were on that earlier train journey with her, and who had since died. Speaking in an interview with Animate Projects ahead of *Perestroika*'s premiere at the London Film Festival, Turner commented that,

> Sian Thomas, whose voice we hear extensively, who actually facilitated that trip for me. She was killed in a cycling accident in Siberia in 1993. And Pat Finn, who I became close friends with on that trip, because we were the only young single women. We were travelling for four weeks, and Pat and I developed a very intense bond, and became, very, very close friends. Pat died just before Christmas in 2000 of breast cancer. [...] The autobiographical trigger was that I'd made this journey as a very young woman, I was 20, and I became 21 – I was a second-year student at St Martin's, and it was the first time I'd properly used a video camera. I shot out the window. I'd never done anything at all with this footage from 20 years ago. (APEngine, 2009)

Several aspects drew me to this film. Turner had left unedited the footage shot in the 1980s; she imposed on herself a time-delay between shooting and commenting on the new footage; the languorous, long take filming; and the multi-layered narration that leaves meaning open to interpretation. After two decades of lying fallow, Turner returned to the collection of rushes as she planned the production of her new film. She did not permit herself to review the new rushes until the following day. This allowed memories to form in the temporal gap between shooting and viewing the footage, travelling across Russia, filming video and time-lapse sequences every day on the second train journey. This use of memory subjected to a formal methodological constraint, contrasts with the more common documentary tendency to comment directly while the scene is filmed, or to construct a voiceover in postproduction.

The separation of the time of capture from the time of reflection on the filmed material feels similar to shooting Super 8 film then reviewing it later, and also the restriction I imposed on myself when making *31 Days* (Moore, 2017), adding to the edit each day but not reviewing the

cumulating result.

The durational feeling of the filming is almost a 'phantom ride', as the landscape flows past the train window.[78] Turner is doing more than just documenting a pilgrimage, she is using film as a devotional tool. This brought to mind my five-hour film *Missing Derek* (Moore, 2009a), discussed on page 113, in which I filmed the recreation of a remembered drive in the early 1990s from Plymouth to Kent to film the Dungeness nuclear power stations.

The *Guardian* film critic, Peter Bradshaw, remarked perceptively that the 'difference' between the two timeframes in Turner's *Perestroika* lies in what the audience hears, rather than the visuals of passing through the snowy landscape with glimpses of Turner's ghost-like face reflected in the glass:

> Before, there is the cheerful ambient chatter of Turner's mates. Now, there is just Turner's agonised monologue, muttered like an exceptionally lucid sleeptalker, and sometimes as if through clenched teeth or an appalling migraine. (Bradshaw, 2010)

The improvised narration in *Father-land*, although a dialogue, has something of the 'sleep talk' quality of Turner's film.

Turner herself observes in an interview with APEngine:

> What I became fascinated in is an idea about the relationship between photography and death, which an awful lot has been written about. But very little has been written about the relationship of sound, in terms of technologies of memory, if you like, which is how I started thinking around this. I was much more compelled by sound, and I can't explain it, but it's the voice that continues to echo and reverberate, because we hear it now, right? (APEngine, 2009)

She continues,

> We can look at a photograph of someone who's dead and it's..the 'index', the indexical experience, the trace of that moment, and the trace of that person, and it's very Roland Barthes. It really is that moment of death. But in sound, we don't have that separation, because we're re-experiencing it – now. (*Ibid.*)

Death permeates *Father-land* through the absence of the deceased fathers, and in the ruined landscape of the Nicosia Buffer Zone, with its reminder of the bloody conflict that took place here. While the connection between the brief photographic 'moment' and death is evident in each frame of *Father-land*, the audience experiences the narration in the present.

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78. In early cinema of spectacle, a camera was attached, for example, to the font of a train to produce the phantom ride.

3.4 Jenni Olson's *Royal Road*

Jenni Olson refers to *The Royal Road* (Olson, 2015) as a "cinematic essay" in the promotional materials for the film. The film can be described as a landscape film as Olson uses an often-unmoving camera to frame the city.

> I've been filming the landscapes of San Francisco since just a few years after I arrived here. In capturing these images on film, I'm engaged in a completely impossible, and yet partially successful effort to stop time. I now own the landscapes that I love. I preserve them in the amber of celluloid so that I might re-experience these visions of dappled sunlight, the calm of a warm afternoon, and the framing of an alley as it recedes into the distance. These images serve as a reminder of what once was, and as a prompt to appreciate what now is. (Transcribed from the film narration by the author.)

In his essay, 'Cinematic Landscapes' (2005), the cultural geographer Chris Lukinbeal suggests that:

> [l]andscape and film are both social constructions that rely primarily on vision and perception for their very definition. Vision links and distances us from cinema and landscape; it makes it easier for us to be disengaged through the act of viewing. Yet there is an intimate bond in this disengagement, where the viewer must reach out and establish some sense of place whether it is through a windshield, on a movie screen, or standing in the middle of a scape. (Lukinbeal, 2005, p.3)

In *Father-land*, the static framing of the camera positions the viewer as dispassionate observer of the landscape of the Nicosia Buffer Zone. The cityscape acts as canvas upon which the unseen narrators 'paint their pasts', their unrehearsed and fragmented 'conversation' personalises the viewing experience. Olson layers her "first-person monologue" over "somewhat general, mundane urban landscapes" (Gottlieb, 2016, n.p.). Her candour encouraged me to record my personal recollections for *Returning to Dungeness*, although my voiceover was unscripted – unlike Olson's – as my focus was on 'speaking in place', seeking an intuitive response to being present at a location; charged' with personal history.[79] Olson shoots on 16mm film with a cinematographer and 'frames out' visual elements that identify the cityscape of the 21st century so the viewer is not accosted the by elements that stand out from "the way the city might have looked 50 years ago" (*Ibid.*). As places, both Dungeness and Nicosia's Buffer Zone are 'suspended in time'. Olson's use of 16mm and my Super 8 further

79. See 'Slapton Recording' 7 December 2020 in online critical journal: https://www.sundog.me.uk/slapton-recording/

occlude the viewer's understanding of the time depicted in the diegesis in *The Royal Road* and *Returning to Dungeness*. As a digital work, *Father-land* could be read by the viewer as contemporary, but the long-takes speak of time passing and the visual entropy of the cityscape onscreen. Olson blends her monologue with her cityscapes, guided by her written script, and "it comes together in the editing room, but in ways that I don't completely know before we start laying down the picture" (*Ibid.*). Although *Father-land* was not scripted, my editing process is similar, but the absence of a script required an experimental, intuition-led layering of voice and picture to 'find what worked'.[80]

Along with historical information about the 'Royal Road' through California, Olson unguardedly speaks – in an apparent stream of consciousness – about people, places, and infatuations in her life which may or may not be true. She also weaves in cinematic memories of the San Franciscan locations filmed in Hitchcock's *Vertigo* (Hitchcock, 1958), and its character Madeleine Elster (Kim Novak) who loses herself in the city. "In some kind of poetic cinematic justice, as the city possessed Madeleine, I possess it in return" (Olson, 2015). Olson's nostalgia seems to be embedded in the 16mm colour negative film stock she uses, with its amber cast. It is a physical entity she can possess, which in turn holds memories of the ever-changing cityscape.

Research Journal

The Royal Road

I sat in the back of our new van in Bristol watching Jenni Olson's "cinematic essay" The Royal Road (2015), while the two sisters chatted under the conker trees during their mother's last days.

https://www.sundog.me.uk/the-royal-road/

Olson includes a cameo from the American playwright Tony Kushner who rails against (her) nostalgia:

> Everything new is better than everything old. The bad new things instead of the good old things, wrote that great dialectical playwright and theorist Berthold

80. Discussion of audio editing in *Father-land* can be found on pages 104-105

> Brecht. I love the rigour of that challenge to be able to risk the Satanic temptation in the retreat backwards towards was easy familiar, in safety to the remembered past, always misremembered, to always be on guard against nostalgia, to be able to see the future in the bad new things. (*Ibid.*)

Following Kushner's polemic, Olson continues her monologue:

> In the same way that outdoorsy people experience feelings of calm and wholeness from spending time in nature there also those of us who discover a profound serenity in a man-made environment of yesterday. All this is not simple nostalgia, not that Proust and the madeleine are not an escapist Luddite rejection of forward movement into the future. But rather, it is an attempt at mindfulness and a strategy in this exceptionally digital age for staying connected to the physical analog world in which we live. By reconnecting us to our humanity I believe nostalgia could be the very thing that saves us. (*Ibid.*)

Proust recounted being transported back to his childhood by the act of eating a madeleine in *In Search of Lost Time* (Proust, 2003). My Super 8 collection links me to an earlier time through touch, in a way that digital cannot. Although I am not nostalgic for my younger life, the fragments captured on film do hold a charge for me. The roll of Super 8 that forms the film, *Finborough Road*, was present at the time of filming and has aged, as I have. It feels like we are fellow travellers through life, connected through our shared celluloid and human memories. Like Olson, I connect with place as a key player in a film rather than a backdrop for narrative, whether it is to situate the unseen narrators in *Father-land* or the locus of recollection in *Returning to Dungeness*.

3.5 Milena Gierke: The Purist

German filmmaker Milena Gierke films with a hand-held Super 8 camera and, until recently, only exhibited by projecting her silent camera masters. Her filming of the quotidian resonates with my archive and her presence with the film projector at screenings creates an interesting hybrid experience of a home movie viewing, a school instructional film screening and a performance art/expanded cinema event. The Movie Database entry reads: "Milena Gierke projects her films inside the screening room itself. The sound of the running projector becomes its own rhythm, becomes the musical accompaniment" (TMDB, 2022).

The digitisation of my archive created footage that could be played in absolute silence, without the 'music' of the projector that had been the beating heart of the reanimated Super 8 memories In *One Second a Day* and *31 Days*, I recorded projector in action and brought this

sound back to the edited footage.

Norwich's Aurora Film Festival in 2009 selected Gierke's work for screening. The festival programme describes her practice as,

> Working exclusively with Super 8 film, editing in-camera and even projecting all films herself, Gierke's almost ascetic artistic process produces a direct and celebratory vision which might otherwise be lost or submerged. (Pugh, 2009)

The fragility and uniqueness of the films – being positive camera originals with attached leader – required an onerous set of preparations for the festival organisers. The filmmaker specified that a powerful professional-grade Elmo GS1200 projector with a xenon lamp be used to produce an acceptably bright image in the sizeable auditorium. A suitable machine was located in Belgium and then driven from Ghent to Norwich by two cineastes. An expert film projectionist, Graham Hogge, travelled across the country from The Cube Cinema in Bristol especially for the screening. The festival audience watched the soundless films in silence, with just background noises from the projector and themselves to accompany the moving images on the screen.

Research Journal

https://www.sundog.me.uk/traces-of-experience/

Traces of Experience

Gierke introduced her film selection - she chose reels of Super 8 from her collection to share with the Aurora audience - and spoke about their filming context. My recollection of those films is hazy, some images remain [-] although the experiential memories are at least as strong.

I felt an affinity with Gierke's films and their "loving gaze on details through the camera and by the organic rhythm of images, which originate in her in-camera editing. Thus in the viewer's perception, arrays of details come together and fall into place" (Directors Lounge, 2012). Does the projection of analogue film material have an intrinsic power, or is it a gatekeeping strategy of its creator? In Gierke's practice where the camera original films have no duplicates and are occasionally projected, being unique as they are, possess 'aura' as described by Benjamin in

'The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction'. Benjamin describes this aura of genuineness as "the quintessence of everything about it since its creation that can be handed down, from its material duration to the historical witness it bears" (Benjamin, 2008, p.7). Would the work be even more precious if it were never screened at all?

The transfer of moving images from her films to the audience's memory leaves an experience of the places she filmed but with no physical or digital record to refer to, short of attending another screening in the future – an ersatz return to the profilmic spaces. This is different from Gierke's own experience because she was present at the filming events. The films' projection can transport her back both to earlier viewings of the material, but also to the time and place when the film was exposed. When I watch the footage included in *31 Days*, I experience not only the memory of filming of it and subsequent projections in my studio. Other registers of memory have accreted – the intuitive process of editing and attending the film's public exhibitions in Plymouth, London and Bristol.

Gierke's practice has added resonance for me as a film practitioner because cinema projection has inherent risks of scratching, film jams, burns and so on. The Aurora screening with a xenon lamped projector concentrated a powerful amount of light on each tiny rectangle of Gierke's Super 8 frames. D.N. Rodowick recounts Paolo Churchi Usai's assertion that cinema is 'autodestructive':

> Every art suffers the ravages of time, of course. But structural impermanence is the very condition of cinema's existence. Each passage of frames through a projector—the very machine that gives filmophanic/projected life to the moving image—advances a process of erosion that will eventually reduce the image to nothing. Moreover, what Cherchi Usai calls the "matrix," or the chemical substrate, of film is perhaps the most impermanent and variable substance for the registration of images yet found in the history of art-making: what doesn't explode in flames (nitrate) will slowly dissolve (vinegar syndrome). (Rodowick , 2007, p.19)

When looking back to the Aurora film festival online, there is little left, just a few traces on the Internet Archive's Wayback Machine, giving lie to the notion that the Internet never forgets. To contradict Churhci Usai, even my first Super 8 reel is still viewable although many people and places in my archive are no more.

3.6 Chris Marker's *Sunless*[81]

Chris Marker's *Sunless (Sans Soleil)* (1983), an exemplar of the essay film mode in which, "the cameraman wonders … about the meaning of [cinematic] representation of the world in which he is the instrument, and about the role of the memory he helps create" (*Sunless*: DVD notes).

I discovered the film on a DVD along with Marker's science fiction film *La Jetée* (Marker, 1962) which I screened for an undergraduate module on experimental filmmaking. I was more familiar with the 'straightforward' voice-overs of documentary films and factual television and was fascinated by *Sunless*'s narration. Also, I was intrigued by Marker's positioning of his practice as the creation of home movies. In relation to *Sunless,* he comments:

> On a more matter-of-fact level, I could tell you that the film intended to be, and is nothing more than a home movie. I really think that my main talent has been to find people to pay for my home movies. Were I born rich, I guess I would have made more or less the same films, at least the traveling [sic] kind, but nobody would have heard of them except my friends and visitors. (Marker, 2020)

Home movies are often made by just one person, and Marker disguised his multi-role participation in the film by inventing names for the cameraman and music composer – the brothers Sandor and Michel Krasna – and the video artist Hayao Yamaneko. He concocted a back-story where the collaborators met the "amateur filmmaker" Chris Marker and started the project. This conceit was partly so that Marker didn't have multiple credits at the end of the film and partly "to use some degree of fiction to add a layer of poetry to the "factuality" of the so-called documentary" (*Ibid.*). Marker shot on 16mm with sound recorded separately, and explained:

> Camera was a little 16mm Beaulieu with 100 feet reels, silent (which means noisy) – the sound was made separately on one of the first small cassette recorders (not yet the Walkman), there isn't one synch take in *Sans Soleil*. I was naturally alone from beginning to end, but with some exceptions that's my usual way to work. (*Ibid.*)

This strategy was pragmatic because of the particular camera used, but it also adds another layer to the construction of the narrative, taking a step away from a conventional documentary which may use sync sound for both talking heads and naturalistic depiction of recorded scenes. I used a similar strategy to Marker for my film *Sea Front* (Moore, 2010), filming with a silent *ciné*

81. The more recognisable title of Marker's film – *Sans Soleil* – should be reserved for the version with French voiceover.

camera, a Canon 1014, and returning with a portable DAT audio recorder the following day.

Marker further distanced *Sunless* from a conventional travelogue by arranging the scenes 'musically' rather than following a functional itinerary around the globe that the viewer might re-enact, often accompanied by an animated map in mainstream documentaries. Marker was an accomplished sound designer and engineered complex, dreamlike audio compositions for his films. He created the music for *Sunless* as the fictional composer, Michel Krasna, and years later responded to musician Naomi Yang who had requested his visual response to one of her songs – And You Are There (Yang, 2011) – by sending an image with along with the note:

> Dunno if it fits your pretty Proustian melancholy, but I thought it could... And thanks for linking me to music, the only real art for me as you know (cinema? you kiddin'...). (Wire, 2011)[82]

In his analysis of *Sunless*, the phenomenologist Jarmo Valcola observes,

> As with musical structure, the film has to be grasped intuitively as a whole, rather than sequentially part-by-part or note-by-note. Furthermore, Marker stated his aim of weaving the various filmic elements of Sans soleil [sic] into 'the fashion of a musical composition, with recurrent themes, counterpoints and mirror like fugues'. (Valkola, 2012, p.305)

Most of the moving imagery in *Sunless* was shot by Marker in earlier years, primarily during the 1970s. He also incorporated stock material and sequences by other cameramen. The composition evolved through Marker's editing process. He responded intuitively to the footage, using a 'free association' montage technique to convey a cinematic message. For example, approximately three minutes from the start of *Sunless*, a shot of an African heron wandering in a pool of water cuts to an emu in the Île-de-France, to a young African woman who self-consciously smiles under the camera's gaze, then to a line of Japanese votive ceramic cats in a temple. Other images of eyes recur throughout the film.

Marker created the narration, positioned as an unnamed woman re-reading letters from 'the cameraman', a fictitious character named Sandor Krasna, and commenting on them. The letters are written from a variety of places around the world, Japan, Guinea-Bissau, Cape Verde, Iceland, Paris, and San Francisco, visited by Krasna, Marker's pseudonym. The lucidity of the woman narrator compounds the strangeness of *Sunless*. For me, the voice leads rather than reacting to the images, as if the unknown woman is conjuring these images, or memories, that

82. The music video with Marker's image is available here: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=id-uNRxKGcU Accessed 11/03/22

we have never had, but which we experience as if in a dream. Valcola observes:

> Marker recreates the vertigo of time. In each moment there is struggle: we try to preserve the experiences we have had, storing them in the fragile warehouse of our memory. However, the recordings we have fade too fast, losing their poignancy under the corrosion of time. (*Ibid.*, p.303)

Sunless features segments from Alfred Hitchcock's film, *Vertigo* (Hitchcock, 1958) and Marker's shots in San Francisco include locations used in this film. The narration includes a direct reference to *Vertigo* in the line, "He wrote me that only one film had been possible of portraying impossible memory, insane memory: Alfred Hitchcock's *Vertigo*" (Marker, 1983). In his 1994 essay, 'A Free Replay (Notes on *Vertigo*)', Marker writes that, "the vertigo the film deals with isn't to do with space and falling; it is a clear, understandable and spectacular metaphor for yet another kind of vertigo, much more difficult to represent – the vertigo of time" (Marker, 2022).

The American experimental filmmaker Nathaniel Dorsky creates films that are shot and projected at 18 fps, the speed of silent film. He contends that this pace creates an experience of 'more darkness' for the viewer because the projector shutter spends more time closed, giving greater power to the projected-light image. Although in my practice I digitise the Super 8 material, the motion cadence of 18 fps is preserved.

3.7 Dorsky: Film as Place

Dorsky's films, such as the two-hour long seven-film *Arboretum Cycle* (2017), have no accompanying soundtrack – is intended to be a visual experience. He contends, "Silence in cinema is undoubtedly an acquired taste, but the delicacy and intimacy it reveals has many rich rewards" (Dorsky, 2022).

Like Gierke,[83] Dorsky has restricted the availability of his films to analogue projection. LightCone in Paris distributes his prints accompanied by strict guidelines for the screening that his silent films must be projected at the 'silent speed' of 18 fps, specify the brightness of the auditorium, that the leaders must be left intact when the individual films are made up into larger reels by the projectionist, and so on.

83. Gierke's work was discussed on page 82.

Research Journal

https://www.sundog.me.uk/arboretum-cycle/

Arboretum Cycle

As the film filled the eyes the dislocated sounds of east London permeated the building. The thrum of a police helicopter overhead merged with shots of Californian sky glimpsed through the canopy of leaves. A washing machine somewhere above us in the building proceeded with its own cycles, strangely complementing the on-screen meditation.

My Super 8 archive has no audio accompaniment that was contemporaneously recorded. When I engage with the digitised material, it is 'silent'.[84]

3.8 Chapter 3 Conclusion

The film works discussed in this chapter have been influential in informing my filmmaking practice in this enquiry. Jarman's poetic Super 8 *oeuvre* is a personal cinema, as is my own. My engagement with *Glitterbug* reinforced my commitment to creating intuitive work that is embedded in my lived experience and that can be understood as an artistic work rather than home movies. In *Perestroika*, Turner weaves her recollections into the fabric of a journey to her past. Her observation that audio always lives in the present inflected my thinking as I developed the spoken memories of the Key Practice Works, *Father-land*, *Finborough Road* and *Returning to Dungeness*.[85] In addition, the strategy of 'returning' – revisiting the site of earlier filming – is integral to the production of these essay films and the evolution of my innovative method of 'speaking in place'. The experience of Gierke projecting her 'camera originals' and Dorsky's *Arboretum Cycle* focused my thinking onto the materiality of *ciné* film, and what sets it apart from digital video. Gierke and Dorsky's use of silence in the cinema led me to recognise this

84. *Returning to Dungeness* discussed in Chapter Four and *Womad* in Appendix 1 include fleeting examples of 'accidental' sync sound recording.

85. These films are discussed in the next chapter.

method of focussing the viewer's attention on the screen to increase affective impact. *The Royal Road* by Olson provided useful insights by weaving her personal narration into the built environment. While my narration is unscripted, her technique is more 'knowing' and creates a screen persona that inhabits her static frames. Marker's narrative strategy for me was a gateway to the potential of the essay film. His auteurship as a filmmaker is unique. Despite framing his own films as home movies, these were not for the exclusive consumption by himself and his friends and were distributed and screened widely to audiences. Marker said that if he were "born rich" he would have made the same films.[86] The use of intuition in his work gave me the same confidence when initiating and realising *Father-land*. Together these works enable me to orientate my Super 8 filmmaking in relation to personal film within artists' moving image, fulfilling Nelson's requirement that, to 'be' research, one's practice must be framed within an apposite field of practice.

86. See quotation on page 85.

Chapter 4.

The Practice

> Walked down to the beach in the moonlight. The tide was far out, the sea almost inaudible; a wide band of silver across the wet sands. Today has been warm and dry. Diary entry by Derek Jarman, during filming of *The Garden* (Jarman, 1992).

Figure 3: Rolls of Kodachrome 40 Super 8

4.1 Introduction

Chapter Four discusses the practice research undertaken for the thesis in response to the research questions that drive this investigation: five Key Practice Works and three Supplemental Practice Works. It illuminates the process-led method of 'remembering' that I developed by through repeated engagement with my collection of digitised 8mm film and examines how the formation of a Super 8 archive creates a 'physical place' in which to encounter memory, alongside the digitised versions. Through discussing the experimental work conducted in my practice, the chapter explores the material 'essence' of physical Super 8 film in relation to the

ephemeral ‘presence’ of the digital versions. Further, it argues that filmmaking can be a way to understand how memory and place interact.

This is followed by consideration of five Key Practice Works. In the section, Skimming the Archive, I present the triptych *One Second a Day* and its iteration, *31 Days*, for which I developed an innovative strategy for selecting archive footage using an intuitive method of ‘skimming’. The selected clips are presented across three panes – the temporal triptych – alluding to past, present and future. Next, I consider *Father-land*, the only Key Practice Work originated using a digital camera. This collaborative work deployed a technique of ‘speaking in place’ through the process of returning to the place of filming. *Finborough Road* took this novel method of recording narration on location back to the archive and allowed me to unpick the schism between the time and place of filming and the memory held within the Super 8. In *Returning to Dungeness*, I sought to examine the interplay of memory in a more sophisticated way than *Finborough Road*.

These moving image works, which are both outcomes and a record of process, can be viewed on Vimeo via the web links provided at the start of each film’s section, and together on page 16. I embed extracts of my reflective writing from the research journal at relevant points as additional contextualisation. The films and reflective writing, along with contextual stills, map the observations and insights generated through the practice.

4.2 Skimming the Archive

This section covers the split-screen Key Practice Works, *One Second a Day* (2016) and its subsequent iteration, *31 Days* (2017), and details how I applied a formal schema to the selection and editing of digitised footage. This method intentionally prevented the conscious sequencing and juxtaposing of scenes to develop narrative – the video editor’s stock in trade.

These two short films reflect their digital video editing ‘heritage’ in the method of clip selection, the non-destructive editing and in the way three streams of moving images were composited together on-screen.[87] Alongside the digital video editing, I added each day’s selection to the online research journal as a still image accompanied by a piece of reflective writing. This daily return to the archive took the project from being an interesting technical editing exercise into the realm of a ‘memory work’, where the Super 8 footage sparked recollections of the past

87. In Final Cut Pro a ‘clip’ is a section of video selected for inclusion in an editing timeline.

beyond the scenes captured within the cinematic frame, but also formed an experimental investigation into what footage would demand to be included.

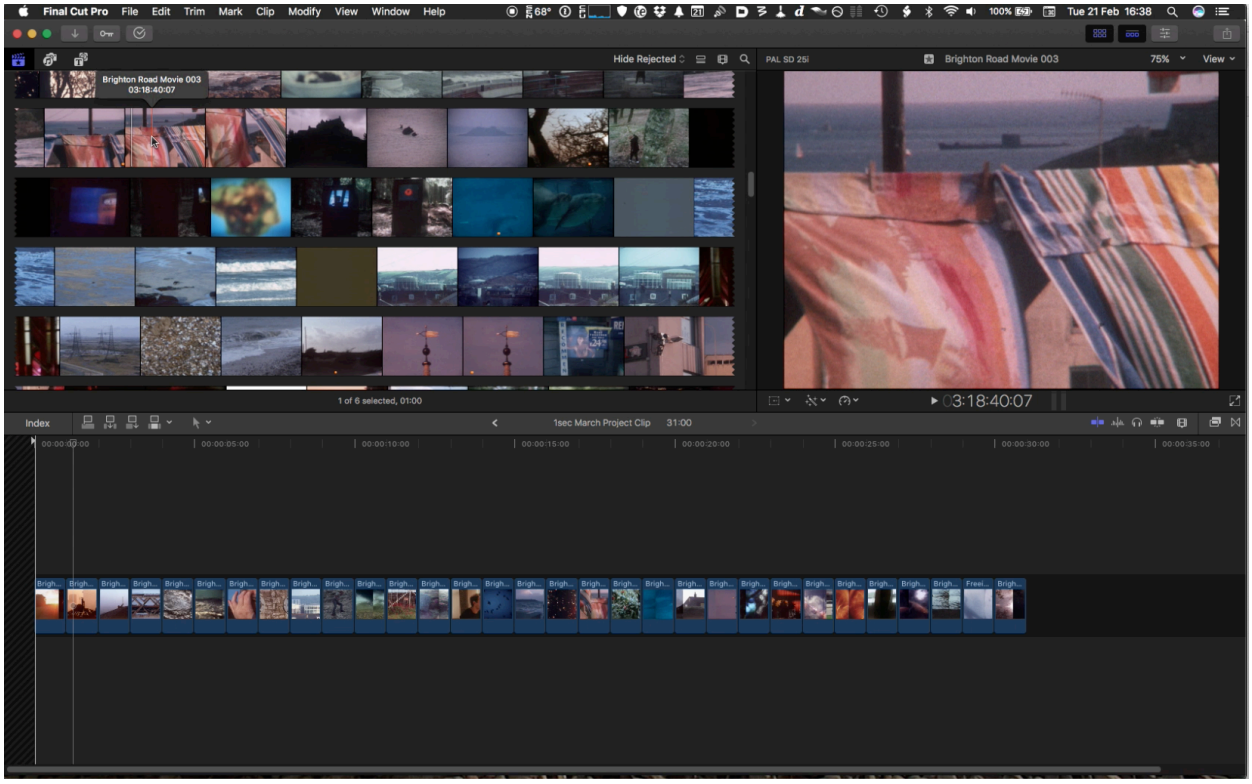

Figure 4: FCPX screenshot – source material top left and the 31 clips on the timeline.

The editing program I used, Final Cut Pro (FCPX), has numerous innovations, but it is skimming which is important for this piece of research. Babette Mangolte contrasts the experience of editing physical film to the disrupting workflow of the older-style NLEs – Avid Media Composer in her case – where the editor chooses a clip by its name, double-clicks it to open in a viewer, then selects a section to edit into the timeline. She describes the problem:

> There is no way to identify by the feel, the length of the film clip neatly wound on a core. Furthermore, because you read first and see second, there are few unexpected rediscoveries of a forgotten shot suddenly brought back to your attention because of its proximity on the roll to what you are looking for. The computer retrieval system prevents the unexpected collapse and collusion of shots. (Mangolte, 2003, p.268)

These 'unexpected rediscoveries' are fundamental to the creation of *One Second a Day*. I added all the digitised footage to an FCPX library that allowed me to have almost instant random access to hours of material. I was metaphorically wandering through the city of my past, connecting with the places memorialised on film, making subconscious connections that would

become clearer as my research progressed. Just as Trigg[88] describes using environmental cues to orient oneself in a city, some shots shone out like navigation beacons. I had not sorted and ordered the Super 8 before digitisation, so although I recognised places, it was akin to navigating through a city after a long absence. Each day as I skimmed over the collection of Super 8 footage, occasionally an image would catch my eye, hailing me from my past. Roland Barthes (Barthes, Roland, 1984) developed the concepts of studium and punctum in photography. When skimming the footage, the stream of visual information overwhelmed the studium – the interpretation of the image – yet occasionally a punctum – a touching or wounding connection – would emerge and prick me. Pausing on the affecting image, I would then select the following second of video for inclusion on the editing timeline.

I tried to avoid overtly creating meaning or a sense of narrative by not reviewing the sequence as it progressed, allowing serendipity to play its part. The process was paradoxical – remembering old footage by skimming the library and forgetting the sequence of clips on the timeline.

One Second a Day

Figure 5: *One Second a Day*

One Second a Day (2016) 42sec Super 8, colour stereo - https://vimeo.com/163988384

88. See discussion on page 51.

This editing method was a novel way of constructing a film for me because the choosing, placing, reviewing and trimming of clips is central to my usual video editing process. By the end of March, I had a 31 second sequence in Super 8's 4:3 aspect ratio in standard definition's 768 x 576 pixels and considered how it would integrate into a group compilation that would be presented in the 1920 x 1080-pixel size, 16:9 aspect ratio of HDTV. My solution was to composite successive frames across three panes – see Figure 5 above.[89] Each one-second clip appears on the right pane, then the centre pane and finally the left pane, followed by the subsequent clips. The experimental editing process described above 'toyed' with my remembering, while the finished film challenged the viewer to make sense of the staccato stream of constantly repeating yet changing images. Each one-second clip can be registered as it moves from right to left. One of the clips contains an in-camera edit that provides a small disruption to the rhythmic progression. The footage used in *One Second a Day* is silent. To create a soundtrack, I recorded a Super 8 film projector being started and running, syncing this audio to the moving images making an auditory connection to the performance of film projection.

89. A fuller account of the editing process is available here: https://www.sundog.me.uk/the-making-of-31-days/

31 Days

Figure 6: *One Second a Day* – three Super 8 frames across an HD screen.

31 Days (2017) 4min 29sec, Super 8, colour stereo https://vimeo.com/177039204

Just as *One Second a Day* owed its form to fitting standard definition Super 8 on to an HD screen, the next iteration of this practice research, *31 Days*, practical considerations shaped the outcome and in turn generated insights into the Super 8 material.

31 seconds running time is brief even in the arena of 'short film' where festivals often define 'short' as being up to 20 minutes, with some even stipulating 40 minutes maximum duration. Consequently, I sought a way to extend the film in a manner that stayed true to its concept while creating a film with a longer time on screen. Extending each clip to include seven seconds gave a running time of around three and a half minutes (31 x 7 = 217 seconds, i.e., 3 min 37 sec).

The editing strategy of taking the first frame and extending each one-second shot to seven seconds, often revealed in-camera edits so the longer film has many more than the 32 shots in *One Second a Day*. Following the initial one-second of footage could be another similar shot filmed immediately after the first (or indeed a continuation of the same shot) or sequences from another time and location, whether edited in-camera, or later with a splicer.

These temporal and geographical/locational shifts in the film evoke the experience of remembering, where a memory of one event sparks others. The spectatorial experience is

complicated by the change of image in many of the edited seven second clips, and these changes then repeat across the three panes.

Paned Viewing

Figure 7: Skimming the Archive at Radiant Gallery, Plymouth. Image Credit: Alex Nevill

One Second a Day plays with the viewer's attention as the eye jumps from pane to pane, sometimes following a clip from right to left, sometimes resting on the centre pane. The regularity of the one-second cadence (apart from a single in-camera edit) aids the film's comprehensibility. *31 Days* complicates the viewing experience as the individual clip selections are longer and thereby introduce in-camera edits that propagate across the three panes, disrupting the rhythmic change of image seen in *One Second a Day*.

Hollis Frampton's *(nostalgia)* (1971) is a useful contextual reference that deals with cinematic temporality and the manifestation of memory in the present as part of the experience of moving image. In Frampton's work, a temporal disjuncture occurs between sound and picture as a succession of 13 photos slowly burn on a hotplate. The narrator, Michael Snow, speaks about the next photograph that is not yet seen. The audience engages with the 'past' and 'present' moments as presented within the film but finds it difficult to synthesise the audio-visual elements – the spoken word and the offset image it describes.

Short-term memory lasts for a brief time and can only hold seven (plus or minus two) pieces of information at once (Learning, 2022). *One Second a Day* and *31 Days* demonstrate this natural

process of forgetting as the arrival, repetition and disappearance of images across the panes can overwhelm. I call the paned arrangement 'the temporal triptych'. The hypermediated temporal triptych draws attention to the act of seeing within the illusion of a unified screen-space while rupturing the operational capacity for remembering.

4.3 *Father-land*

Figure 8: *Father-land* film still. Image Credit: Sundog Media.

Father-land (Moore and Parker, 2018) 20min Digital 2K, colour stereo - https://vimeo.com/301493003

The Key Practice Work *Father-land* is a twenty-minute single-channel colour film with stereo sound, made on location in Nicosia, the capital city of the Republic of Cyprus. This practice research project is a collaboration with Kayla Parker, developed through an artist residency that was facilitated and funded jointly by the Nicosia Municipal Arts Centre (NiMAC) and the research group for Land/Water and the Visual Arts, School of Art, Design and Architecture, University of Plymouth.

Prior to this enquiry, I have collaborated on several joint film projects with the artist and filmmaker Kayla Parker, who has described our process of collaboration as follows:

> I think for this type of close and very free collaboration to take place one has to respect and trust the other person utterly – you have to be open and allow creativity to flow back and forth. (Hanna, 2008, pp.36-37)

In planning the month-long residency, we formulated a 'collaborative code' as a guiding

framework.[90] In earlier creative collaborations with Parker, the film was the primary output and there was no requirement to position these projects as practice research. It was important that the myriad interactions of this experimental essay film production be formalised. This fed back into my PhD research through the formulation of the term, 'intra-production memory', which we used to refer to our lived experience on location entangled with our memories of making the film, in acknowledgement of the enfolding of our subjectivities within the essay film itself. The *Father-land* project fulfilled the five features of a successful research collaboration identified by Bramley and Ogilvie: a clear focus and goal, with strong motivations; an established relationship between the collaborators, which is based on previous collaborative projects with successful outcomes; trust and openness to share views, even when they diverge from the initial project goal; an ability to play to collaborators' strengths; the individual collaborators achieve "outputs and impacts that couldn't have been achieved by the collaborators working on their own" (Bramley and Ogilvie, 2021, pp.4-5). The *Father-land* project was a collaboration between equal partners from its germination[91] through to its gallery exhibition and subsequent film screenings.

We spent four weeks as resident artists at NiMAC in November 2016, followed by an additional week of residency during spring 2018. The principal output of the *Father-land* project is an essay film that investigates notions of home and (dis)placement in the divided island of Cyprus through the makers' memories and encounters with the material traces of the urban landscape along the southern edge of the UN Buffer Zone in Nicosia. Political and social histories, the legacies of colonialism, occupation, and the Cold War, resonate culturally and biographically for Parker and me, as we both had childhood links with Cyprus through fathers stationed there with the Royal Air Force. We exhibited *Father-land* in the auditorium of NiMAC as a large-scale gallery projection from 19 October 2018 to 12 January 2019, in the *Layers of Visibility* exhibition curated by Liz Wells and Yiannis Toumazis, close to where we made the film.

The essay film, *Father-land*, is an entirely digital work, which forms a counterpoint in this enquiry to the film-based practice that centres on my personal Super 8 archive, in that in this film the 'archive' exists only in the filmmakers' memories and the sites of filmmaking. It scrutinises how an 'archive film' can be made, where no rushes exist, through embedding

90. See the Collaborative Code entry in the online critical journal https://www.sundog.me.uk/collaborative-code/
91. The *Father-land* proposal can be read in Appendix 2 on page 151.

memory and place within the production process from concept to presentation. In this film, we developed a method of 'returning' and 'speaking in place', that is, filming on location then recording unrehearsed narration at the same site over a year later.

I set out to find the answer to questions – to 'solve problems' – using my technical skills and competencies as an 'expert practitioner' in filmmaking. *Father-land* presented the dilemma of how to film in an area where filming is prohibited. The technical solution was to film from an elevated position using a telephoto lens – 'standing back' and focusing in on the scene from above – in effect, to 'fly over' the Buffer Zone and reveal the occupied land beyond. This method of filmmaking generated a wistful affect, which then became infused within the film itself.

We chose the self-reflective and self-reflexive hybridity of the essay film for *Father-land* because it "disrespects traditional boundaries, is transgressive both structurally and conceptually" (Alter, 1996, p.171). It allowed us to interweave personal and social histories with subjective and intellectual perspectives situated in contemporary experience. It was important for us not to make a conventional documentary about our fathers' part in Cyprus' troubled past (and contemporary) history. The form blurs traditional boundaries of documentary and fiction, which felt apt as much of what our fathers worked on in Cyprus during the Cold War, is unknown to us.

The 3D3 Student Development Fund supported my participation in the residency, and the film, *Father-land*, with its research statement, won of the BAFTSS Practice Research Award. Category: Essay/Experimental film (British Association of Film, Television and Screen Studies Best Practice Research Portfolio 2020). The judges commented:

> This is a really haunting and also very timely film, with a very strong research statement, which interweaves memory, archive and voiceover to explore the liminal spaces between present and past and the borders between cultures and nations. An original idea around collaborative work as method: both filmmakers have a relationship to Cyprus via their father's [sic] military work, and the film interrogates and unpacks the patriarchal and colonial legacies not only of their personal narratives, but also the story of Nicosia itself, as the only divided capital in Europe. A moving depiction of recollections of childhood, the film questions the concept of home; the 'here' and 'there', reflecting on images of conflict and bringing together the personal and the political. It feels very apposite in our post-Brexit times. (BAFTSS, 2020)

It was gratifying to have the film recognised in this way as it was a risky endeavour for Parker

and me, being both the first film in which we had spoken, and because of the nature of our improvised narration recorded in the Buffer Zone that would be later edited into the film. We needed to sense a 'liminal presence' in the cityscape, to see what was not there. For Gordon, the ghost directs attention to, among other things, "what appears dead, but is nevertheless powerfully alive" (Gordon, 2008, p.42). In *Father-land*, our lost fathers and childhoods appear not as spectres in the depictions of Nicosia but are sensed as rustling 'ghosts' guiding us as we made the film.

Speaking in Place

The *Father-land* project moved the practice-research of Skimming the Archive (page 91) forwards from my internal 'vocalisation' while reviewing Super 8 archive material to the development of a strategy of 'speaking in place' – creating a voiceover immersed in its space – both geographical and filmic.

In the production of *Father-land*, we rejected the common essay film method of overlaying the visual material with studio-based recordings of narration. We felt it was important to record our conversational exchanges on location to infuse the words with the genius loci of the zone – both in terms of the audio ambience captured and so that our words are inflected by being spoken 'in place'. We posit that the act of 'speaking in place' infuses the dialogue with resonances of (the) place. In this, a vibration is generated between our embodied subjectivities as filmmakers and the environment of the Nicosia Buffer Zone, which the audience experiences as an aural uncanny. Our voices are 'in the picture' but are not visibly located on screen. Through this process, we aimed to bring a sensory *unheimlich* into the film by displacing the familiar authoritative commentary of the mainstream documentary. We used a small, high-quality microphone plugged into an iPhone to record our spoken words in a 'public space' without attracting too much attention. The official signage along the southern edge of the Buffer Zone prohibited photography and filming. Although they did not specifically proscribe making audio recordings, the act of commentating in the zone's vicinity felt transgressive – another aspect of 'speaking in place' is an awareness of the sensitivities of the site and its histories.

Collaboration, Conversation and the Autoethnographic

We had recorded ourselves in conversation on location about a film project that was in development a few years earlier. I edited this unrehearsed audio-only discussion for brevity. The recorded discussion was primarily intended for use by a researcher looking into creative

collaborations, but it was later selected for broadcast by Soundart Radio in Devon, UK, in a programme compiled of contributions from sound artists. The positive feedback from the radio show gave us confidence in the audio foundations of the *Father-land* project.

In *Father-land*, the filmmakers' experiences, feelings and reflections are prioritised and there is a shift from personal experimental cinema to the autoethnographic that fulfils the criteria for Tony Adams' category of "creative, performative, and evocative autoethnographies that offer accessible, concrete, emotional, and embodied accounts of personal and cultural experience" (Adams, 2017, p.63).[92] The subjectivities – the 'auto' – of the filmmakers are embodied within the film and situated within the complex 'ethnography' of the socio-cultural realm, the political context of British postcolonialism and the histories of the violent struggles that led to the separation of Cyprus. *Father-land* fulfils the core component of ethnography "that pushes us outside of and beyond ourselves" identified by Adams and his colleague, Andrew Herrmann (Adams and Herrmann, 2023, p.3). The 'graphy' is fulfilled by the essay film itself. This is evident through the narration, which recounts the filmmakers' memories of childhood mixed with reflective observations on their experiences of filming the Nicosia Buffer Zone and the place itself. As Adams and Andrew Herrmann affirm, in their article, 'Good Autoethnography', "autoethnography is focused on one event or experience, or several experiences around the same topic or theme" (*Ibid.*, p.2). The personal context of this work is rendered explicit through these voices, which speak in the immediacy of the present but are located in the timeframes of the distant and the recent past. The two narrators talking in the first person connect 'biography' to 'ethnography' and subjectivity to wider cultural experience through the counterpoint developed through the montage of our spoken words. The voices are independent of one another, separate strands that are contrasting yet rhythmic, which are heard by the viewer who is witness to the fractured yet enduring urban landscape with its scars of past conflict.

The audio from the iPhone was edited to remove false-takes, intrusive location sound (such as a loud passing car) and long pauses. It was then transcribed, noting which narrator was speaking and the transcript helped the selection process during editing. The audio files were labelled to allow visual identification in the video editing program. These clips were laid out in the timeline and moved around to create a sense of interplay where the narrators' words played off each

92. Adams here draws on the work of influential autoethnographic scholars, Bochner and Ellis (2016); and Pelias (2016).

other, rather than attempting to create a continuous conversation. The narration 'suggested' video footage which was placed into the edit so the audio and the visual came into dialogue with one another.

Focusing on oral narratives of personal experience, Caroline Kohler Riessman asserts that sharing "stories of personal experience, organised around the life world" of the person speaking is "a process of co-construction, where teller and listener create meaning collaboratively" (Riessman, 2005: p.4). In her book, *Narrative Methods for the Human Sciences* (Riessman, 2008) she draws on sociolinguist, Anna De Fina (De Fina, 2003), to assert that oral narratives do not need to be sequential and ordered, but that they can include "some kind of rupture or disturbance in the normal course of events, some kind of unexpected kind of unexpected action that provokes a reaction and/or adjustment" (in Riessman, 2008: p.6).[93]

Research Journal

https://www.sundog.me.uk/watching-the-listeners/

Watching the Listeners

We attracted some unwanted attention from a group of Greek Cypriot border guards as we were walking back to the flat. They might just have been curious but it's hard to tell when they're in army uniform and carrying automatic weapons. A few turns down the labyrinthine streets and we'd lost them.

Discussing the City

The dialogic screenwriting strategy of *Father-land*, which intertwines cultural and biographical registers with political and social histories, draws on the legacy of the French-American cinematographer and filmmaker Babette Mangolte's reflexive explorations of place and home, and her practice of "circling around the terrain" (Mangolte, 2004) and 'putting words in place', as exemplified in her film, *Visible Cities* (Mangolte, 1991), to generate and record improvised

93. Reissman quotes here from *Identity in Narrative: A Study of Immigrant Discourse* by sociolinguist, Anna De Fina, which provides an analysis of the ways in which identities are constructed, represented and negotiated in narrative (De Fina, 2003: p.13).

conversational exchanges in the field.

The innovative dialogical methodology used in *Father-land* centred on how talk between collaborators is produced and performed interactively as narrative. Close reading of the urban landscape within and adjacent to the UN Buffer Zone in Nicosia inflected the development of the 'screen play', the evolution of the audiovisual narratives and the interplay between image and sound. In this dialogic approach, the researcher is an active presence, and the resulting material is regarded as being co-produced through the dialogic exchange (Riessman, 2008, p.31). Methodological rigour was strengthened through conference papers presented during the production process, allowing peer review to shape and inform the work.

In *Father-land*, we formally integrated passaging time into the making of the film rather than alluding to in the finished work. We adopted a 'temporal lapse' into the production period, a strategy pursued by Mangolte in the making of *Visible Cities*. As discussed in Chapter Three (pages 77-79), Turner's feature, *Perestroika* (Turner, 2009), provides an additional contextual anchor: her film is a poetic essay about the capacity for moving image to embody memory and loss that (re)constructs a journey taken almost twenty years earlier. In our *Father-land* project, we experimented with allowing the filming to 'go into the past' before commenting on the footage, allowing time for reflection. We then formally adopted this strategy within our film-making process. Through *Father-land*, we moved into a previously unexplored territory for us as practice researchers, where the dialogic exchanges between us – which have always played a key part in our collaborative ventures – are embedded within the film itself. The reflexive intersubjectivity of our dialogic process, and its exploratory and contingent nature, enabled a new methodological approach to emerge through the course of filmmaking, rather than pursuing preconceived outcomes. This integrated and innovative research approach foregrounds reflexivity and fosters the interweaving of polymorphous voices in the moving image project, along with multiple timeframes and genealogies operating in relation to place, identity, and memory.

In the film I speak about a pencil case that my father brought me back from Cyprus. It was red with a map of the island screen-printed on its front. I have a strong episodic memory of the pencil case, which I speculate was from viewing it repeatedly as I sat in class, back in Plymouth. This small element has been remarked on by people who have seen the film – perhaps pencil cases act like Proust's madeleines? As my pencil case is lost, I wondered whether I could find

one online or in a second-hand shop. Many Cypriot friends knew precisely the artefact I was describing, as they were common in tourist shops. I found this to be jolting, as this obvious reality had not occurred to me earlier. The pencil case was linked to my father in my memory, it was quite personal.

Sound Focus

Walter Murch, the renowned film and audio editor, developed a technique to situate audio in the mis-en-scene of a Hollywood film:

> And then we took a tape of that radio show into different sonic environments, out in the real world, and played it back and captured what we heard on a second tape recorder. It was a process I nicknamed, for obvious reasons, "worldizing." (Ondaatje, 2012, p.226)

Although this is a specific sound treatment by Murch to 'worldize' a radio show in *American Graffiti* (Lucas, 1973), the intention is like *Father-land*'s use of 'spoken in place' audio in Nicosia's Buffer Zone. It situates the soundtrack and conveys the embodied experience of place through the soundscape of the narration. Murch's strategy has a logic in that the radio programme would be heard through different devices in varying environments so the rerecording would embed these differences in the audio. Murch had created the 'radio show' in the first place, so could deploy this 'clean' version or the 'dirtied' re-recording in the sound design. The film had no score written for it but uses pop music of its era to set the mood, permeating each scene along with sound effects. The 'worldizing' technique seems less remarkable now with the convenience of portable digital players, recorders and sophisticated postproduction, but *American Graffiti* premiered in 1973, when the industry practice was to reconstruct a film's sonic world in the studio.

The unrehearsed faltering conversation in *Father-land* mirrors the 'sketchy' experience of inhabiting the contested space in a way which would not be possible with scripted dialogue performed to picture in postproduction. Murch took his clean audio out into the world, and analogises it to controlling photographic depth of field, where the misty worldized audio would wrap around the characters like the *bokeh*[94] of a background in a shallow depth-of-field photographic portrait. The intention for *Father-land* was to create a sonic depth and build that in through the production process.

94. *Bokeh* is the term used for the manner in which lenses render the out-of-focus background of a shot.

The sound design of *Father-land* comprises ambient audio recorded in sync with the pictures, field recordings which underscore certain visual sequences, and the voices of two narrators, spoken by the authors, who are never seen by the audience. Robert Bresson tells us that "the ear goes towards the within, the eye towards the outer: Image and sound must not support each other, but must work each in turn through a sort of relay" (Bresson, 1977, p.62). The dialogic exchanges add a reflexive dimension to the film. Recording our voices without filming allowed us to 'be in the zone', rather than describing the camera's view. As Mangolte advises, "[o]nce your mind is solely focused on sounds, you are much freer to find associative moments and interactions with the image than if you are recording image and sound together" (Mangolte, 2003, p.271).

Place of Memory

Dylan Trigg, whose book *Memory of Place: a Phenomenology of the Uncanny* (Trigg, 2012) was introduced in Chapter Two,[95] proposes there are three 'places of memory'. He locates memory as an embodied experience of place, which "allows a heightened interplay between the bodily self and the material world" (Ralón, 2012).[96] In making *Father-land*, we drew on Trigg's second memory category, that is, the 'place of memory'. The physical manifestations of the Buffer Zone correspond to sites that he characterises as "sites of trauma, and ruins that portend to events outside the memory of the living subject" (*Ibid.*). Trigg's observation that "[t]his transition from the memory of place to the place of memory mirrors a shift from a phenomenological focus on lived experience to a hermeneutic analysis of the environment" (*Ibid.*). This parallels the interplay between the episodic memories we have of our past and our reflexive engagement with the landscape of the Buffer Zone in Nicosia during our residency. The film *Father-land* creates a digital memorial. Although immaterial, it is nonetheless an artefact of the place of memory.

The filming experience of *Father-land* with the digital cinema camera was different from using a Super 8 or 16mm camera. We shot much of the footage looking over the Buffer Zone using telephoto lenses with the camera on a fully extended tripod to get as much height as possible for the best vista. This required stepping away from the apparatus while recording occurred.

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95. See pages 51-53.

96. Trigg speaking in an interview with Laureano Ralón, 1 September 2012. Ralón, Laureano (2012). "Interview with Dylan Trigg," *Figure/Ground*. 24 September 2012. Available: https://web.archive.org/web/20200216183752/https://figureground.org/interview-with-dylan-trigg/ Accessed 27/11/23

Any slight vibration from touching the camera and tripod – or merely moving from foot-to-foot when on the rooftop – would be amplified by the long lens and ruin the shot. The camera had a shotgun mic attached to record ambience, so silence was also required, leaving me as a mute, motionless co-observer alongside the camera. For a typical shot from the roof, I would stretch up to the camera to frame the shot, check focus and adjust exposure before pressing the 'record' button and stepping away and remaining silent and still while the camera recorded several minutes of video. The locked-off camera was operating independently, like so many of the CCTV cameras around the Buffer Zone. Alongside it, I was experiencing the periods of motionless observation surely familiar to the soldiers on watch, guarding the opposing borders.

This way of working created some disconnection from the feeling of presence of the pro-filmic space when recording. Not only was the camera looking at distant scenes with its impassive gaze – places that were harder to see with the naked eye – but I was often observing the camera rather than the rendition of the scene on the viewfinder monitor. This diversion of my attention was paradoxical; shifting from the filmed scene – the raison d'être of what I was doing at those moments – to the visually unremarkable writing of data to a flash memory card by the camera. The red tally-light and the counting timecode on the camera's screen were the only signs that anything was being filmed. My focus shifted from the 'place of memory' to the process of 'creating memory' through my presence in the world with the camera.

The focus generated when looking directly through the optical viewfinder of a film camera is quite different for me. The framing of the scene by the camera, restricting the awareness of the wider world intruding through peripheral vision, sharpened the sense that I am observing significant life in the present. This 'tunnel vision' of attention through the camera brings the scene to the eye, but also has the effect of the mind reaching out into the world. Holding down the shutter release to expose the film to light is a coming together of the mind and the physical act of filming in the present. This presence in the present is momentarily divorced from the outcomes of the filming, which will only become known in the future. It is an act of faith, accentuated by the knowledge that there is a precious and finite amount of film in the camera.

Exhibition in Place

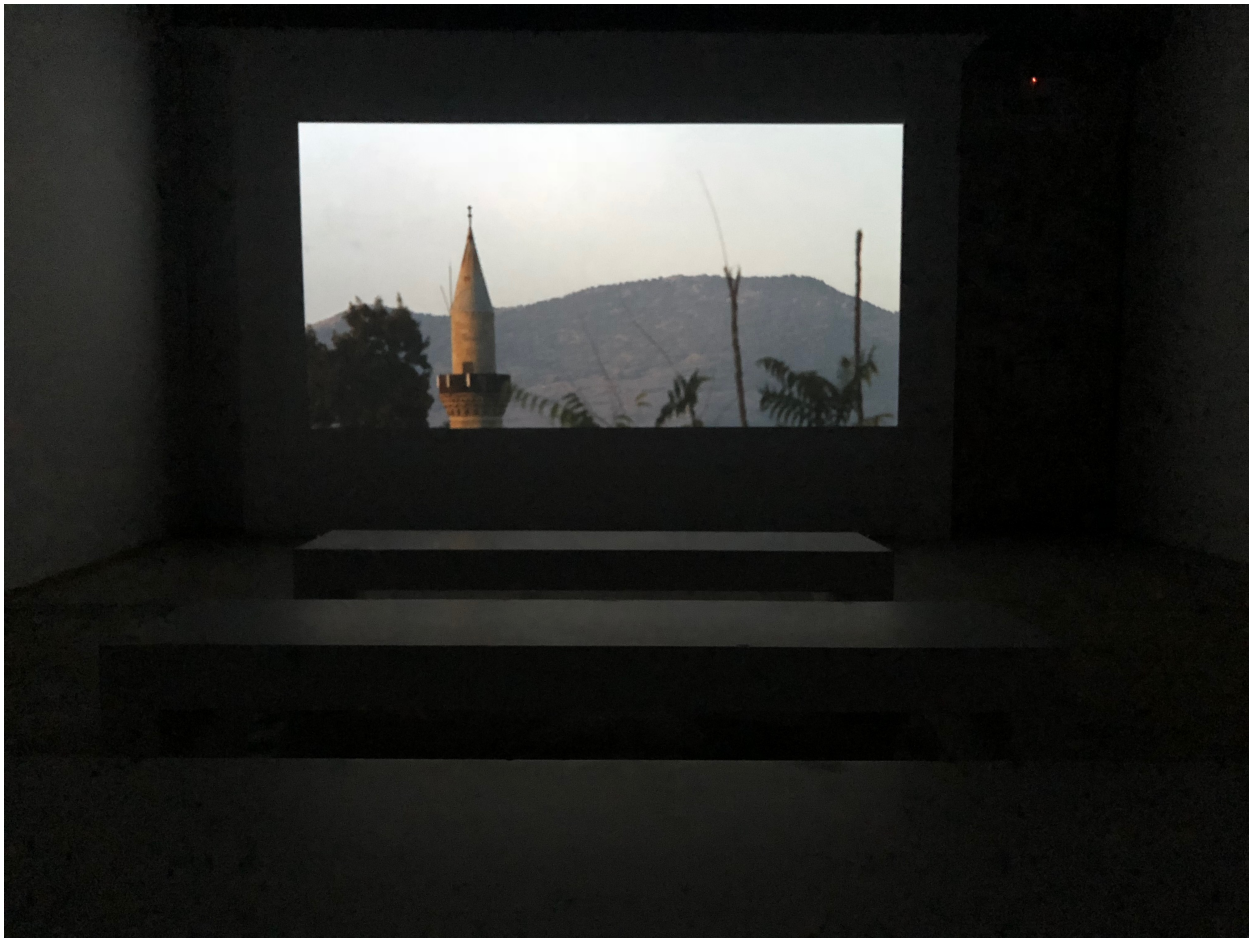

Figure 9: Father-land projected in NiMAC auditorium. Image credit: Sundog Media

The film, *Father-land*, is not just a personal reflection on childhood memories that could be realised anywhere; it is placed in Nicosia, the capital of Cyprus. It is a site-specific work – the film is infused with the place. The profilmic events recorded are important to the meaning of the film, as is the interiority of the filmmaking itself. As filmmakers, we do not deny the importance of the scene that is recorded as poetic documentation, but we suggest that the affect of the place and our experiences whilst working within it are equally important ingredients in the production process.

Screening the film in an auditorium just metres from where I had placed the camera to observe the Buffer Zone generated a frisson of otherworldliness. Filming in this politically charged location and exhibiting the work there, collapsed the pro-filmic space and the afilmic reality. The sound design of the film blended with the city soundscape beyond the Gallery. Audience members would have passed through the landscape on their way to NiMAC that they were now

watching on the screen. In fact, the screen was in a sense a window to the cityscape beyond.[97]

In discussing the relationship between memory and history, in her chapter, ‘‘The Vicissitudes of Traumatic Memory and the Postmodern History Film’, Walker argues that in order to be politically effective, a film dealing with traumatic historical memory needs to portray a traumatic past as meaningful yet fragmentary and imbued with imaginary configurations (Walker, 2004, pp. 123-144). For Walker, the most important features of traumatised memory are “amnesia, embellishment, and mistakes (*Ibid.*, pp. 134-135); also, they may be “partial, patchy, missing where they might be expected to exist, shot through with fantasy constructions” (*Ibid.*, p. 136).

Father-land makes connections between the registers of objectivity – for example, the fixed-camera views of the seemingly unchanging urban landscape shot from a high vantage point – and those of personal experience, exemplified by the hand-held camera moving within the locale close to or within the Buffer Zone and the dislocated ‘conversation’ between the narrators’ voices. In Walker’s words, the film brings “the subjective elements of personal memory into the light of historical certainty and public memory” (*Ibid.*, p. 140). As Caruth comments, “history, like trauma, is never simply one’s own, that history is precisely the way we are implicated in each other’s traumas” (Caruth, 1996, p. 24).

4.4 Framing the Return

Both the Key Practice Works in this section, *Finborough Road* (Moore, 2018b) and *Returning to Dungeness* (Moore, 2022), revisit places I filmed on Super 8 decades earlier to record improvised reflective narration in their profilmic spaces. This advanced the enquiry by using the technique, developed in *Father-land,* of ‘speaking in place’ but applying this method to investigate the interrelationship between the material memory (the Super 8 footage), the author’s memory of the act of filming and the re-energisation of memory through his experience of returning the original filming locations.

97. Nicosian Responses to Father-land can be found in Appendix 3 on p. 151.

Finborough Road

Figure 10: *Finborough Road* film still

Finborough Road (2018) 1min Super 8, colour stereo- https://vimeo.com/258532067

This short film uses part of my first roll of Super 8 silent film. I had travelled to London for a weekend with group of my friends from the southwest, staying at a friend's flat in Finborough Road, Chelsea. Looking down from the flat's windows on the top floor of the substantial terraced Victorian house, I filmed the scene below, then at street-level, before returning to the bird's-eye viewpoint. The sequences seem to be filmed in over a single period, with the main subject being the motorcycle repair, along with other shots such as the anti-EU (or EEC/ Common Market as it was then) posters in a window and a priest walking along the opposite pavement. In the third sequence we see the loading of a toolbox and luggage into the old pickup truck before it departs, followed by a distant view of the now-redeveloped London Underground power station on Lots Road beside the River Thames to the south.

The re-engagement with my collection of Super 8 films through the creation of digital versions – that I could view with ease on a phone, laptop or tablet – in effect 'reconnected' me with my past. As I viewed the footage of these past events, which sometimes were almost forgotten and at other times not recalled, the invisible fumes of memory permeated my consciousness.

Haunting the Streets

I made a planned stop in Finborough Road with a gun mic and digital recorder to record

voiceover in the style developed for *Father-land*. Imposing terraces flank both sides of the road, and at first' I had to walk up and down trying to remember any identifying features of the house containing the flat. I knew it was on the east side, that is the right-hand side for the one-way traffic flow and recollected that the house was a few doors down from a street that crossed Finborough Road where our host Sarah parked her small Honda which is seen being repaired in the Super 8 footage. Unfortunately, this only narrowed the location slightly as the area's roads are laid out in a grid with repeating terraces. On the crisp dark January evening, I stood and visualised the Super 8 film and recalled a zebra crossing that is seen filmed from above. Now able to locate the section of road seen in the film, I entered the profilmic space and started recording. The session created five audio files of approximately nine minutes' total duration. Later, I layered the audio on to the digitised Super 8 footage to create a one-minute film.

Recording felt quite awkward on the busy London road. When planning the session, I had avoided 'scriptwriting' what I would say, but I expected memories would appear on cue. As a young man from the far southwest my time spent in London was exciting. The journey up on a powerful motorcycle was a full-body experience of noise, wind-pressure, temperature and vision. On arrival, the flat was an oasis of calm, reached by climbing countless carpeted flights of stairs. Exiting the building on to the street gave an immediate charge of energy as the never-ending traffic headed north away from The Embankment along the one-way multi-carriageway of Finborough Road like a racetrack controlled by the start-stop traffic lights on the Fulham Road junction.

The resulting narration feels little different to what might have resulted by recording my responses directly to playback of the film footage, albeit with the acoustics and ambient sounds of the urban street adding sonic texture. When I stood on Finborough Road, my remembering seemed to be focussed by the Super 8 sequences rather than the location itself – that the strongest memories were 'placed' in the archive.

As I reflect on the recording of the audio in 2018 then making the short film, and think back to the time of filming in 1987 and more generally about that time in my life, I am reminded of the observations of Canadian filmmaker Guy Maddin discussing old films:

> Well, film is often described as the most haunted medium for the simple reason that as soon as the people and things that are photographed on some motion picture recording device — whether it's film or video — as soon as they're captured, they start drifting apart in time. The subject shot or the subject screened are aging at different rates and in different ways. Whenever you behold

> someone or something on the screen it's no longer as you see it, a ghost in other words. (Maddin, 2015)

I have lost touch with the people I knew then; the people in the film do appear like ghosts. One person seen in *Finborough Road*, who was a very close friend, has 'ghosted' me for the last 20 years, making separation somehow official. Maddin imagines a snapshot of friends left behind in a house, discovered by some new occupants:

> [T]he people that buy your house would be more haunted by the sight of the interior of the house not knowing or caring much about the people in the photograph. They would be thrilled maybe to discover what the house looked like before they were born and the value of things keeps shifting eternally in artifacts, even the elements that make up the artifacts shift values over the years: emotional values, educational values, historical values. (*Ibid.*)

An inquisitive person researching their area of Chelsea in the future might stumble across my short film online and be similarly 'haunted' by what has been lost and what remains, and perhaps try to date the footage by the 1971-2 K-registered pickup truck or the "Common Sense not Common Market" posters on display in a window, observing that both already looked decrepit when they were recorded on film. The film material itself exhibits signs of ageing – dirt, scratches, and spidering of the emulsion caused by fungal growth, yet the celluloid artefact from has survived, as have the looming Victorian terraces of west London.

I left the celluloid artefact at home during the (re)visit, but it reached out through time and space to a cold, dark London road. I was geographically situated in the capital, but part of my consciousness had travelled back to the archive. When I reflected on the voiceover collected for *Finborough Road*, I was interested that that the monologue I had recorded on the street that evening reflected the small narrative framed by the Super 8 footage, rather than recollections of the personally pivotal time of my life, in which Chelsea was a particular locus. The film itself had become the 'place' of my memory rather than those memories residing in the location itself.

The footage evokes Gordon's interpretation of haunting, which occurs "when things are not in their assigned places, when the cracks and rigging are exposed, when the people who are meant to be invisible show up without any sign of leaving" (Gordon, 2008, p.xvi).The people in the film are all 'lost' to me, remote, invisible, except in the film. There they are again, should I try to reconnect?

Returning to Dungeness

Figure 11: Pylons at Dungeness, Super 8 frame 2009

Returning to Dungeness (2022) 3min 23sec, Super 8, colour stereo
https://vimeo.com/339860641

The Super 8 footage used in the Key Practice Work, *Returning to Dungeness*, was shot in 2009 after I had driven from Plymouth to Dungeness while videoing the journey on a digital tapeless camera fixed to the car dashboard. This driving footage became the film *Missing Derek* (Moore, 2009a). At journey's end, I turned off the digital camera as it framed the power station, seen from a car park in Figure 12. Leaving the car, I spent some time filming with my Super 8 camera and capturing audio with a digital recorder. These are the archive materials which I used as the starting point for *Returning to Dungeness* (Moore, 2022). The fate of the digital and film material generated by the 2009 summer excursion to Dungeness followed what I have come to recognise as a pattern. I used the five-and-a-half-hour digital 'phantom ride' to create *Missing Derek*, in autumn 2009 while the Super 8 footage was viewed then stored in the archive.

Figure 12: Last frame of *Missing Derek* showing Dungeness power stations

Missing Derek documents the 300-mile journey from my home in southwest England to Dungeness: part re-enactment, part pilgrimage, and part meditation on remembering. The film is a durational piece – a five and a half hour long single shot created 20 years after my first visit.[98] It is a 'slow television' work recorded digitally through a car windscreen capturing the trip from Plymouth to Kent.

Research Journal

https://www.sundog.me.uk/missing-derek/

Missing Derek in The Scott Building

The experience of motorway driving is similar to cinema, in that you have a fixed frame within which there is action – or the lack of it – but the sensorial experience is largely visual, as you are separated from the 'outside' within the vehicle, and the environment is perceived through the pane as images – like watching a film.

The viewer experiences the ever-changing yet constant vista of the diesel-powered, high-speed

98. *Missing Derek* is available: https://youtu.be/HKzAlLvtT6U

phantom ride where the car's windscreen framed the action for the driver. Sean Cubitt described the similar passing landscape observed through the frame of a train window as protocinema (Cubitt, 2004, p.6) and this is repeated by the cinema screen for the audience. In the years since my first visit to Dungeness in 1989, a great deal had changed and, sadly, Jarman had died.

Returning in 2009

I shot the 2009 Super 8 footage at 18 fps during a circular walk from the Dungeness carpark. There are shots in the disused lighthouse, which was open to the public, some views on the shingle banks with their distinctive flora, Jarman's home Prospect Cottage with its now-famous garden and a travelling shot from the car's passenger side as we left Dungeness. I filmed most of the Super 8 material, but some was shot by Parker – who joined me on the journey as camera assistant – when I switched to recording audio, and she filmed through the passenger window as we drove away at the end of the day. The sound was captured using a stereo microphone rig in a large furry windshield on a boom pole, powered by a broadcast four-channel audio mixer and its output fed to a small Marantz digital recorder. The mixer was a substantial piece of kit which was worn over the shoulder with a strap, with cables connecting the mic and the headphones. This necessitated handing over the camera and gave rise to a rare piece of sync-sound in my archive. A few words are exchanged by the two of us then the characteristic click and whirr of the Canon 1014 camera as Parker filmed some ground vegetation. This coming-together of the two distinct memory experiences is profound, collapsing the experiential distance between picture and sound. In an interview about *Perestroika*, Sarah Turner describes photography as feeling dead whereas audio feels alive as we hear sound recordings in the present (APEngine, 2009). We can pause the digitised film footage to scrutinise a frame but to hear the audio we must let it 'live again'.

No Going Back

My intention was to return to Dungeness to 'speak in place' to develop the practice started with *Father-land* and *Finborough Road.* However, in 2020-21, the ever-changing and often ambiguous Covid restrictions on work and travel made this difficult. Also, when researching the possibility of making a trip to Kent I discovered that the Dungeness Estate owners now require a £300 per day fee for student filming (discounted from a commercial rate of £1,500 per day), booked in advance, risk-assessed, with £5M public liability insurance certified by the student's

university – a marked change from the wild and free days when Jarman filmed *The Garden* (Jarman, 1990) around the peninsula.[99]

Organising the trip under these restrictions led me to plan an alternative recording location, namely Slapton Sands in south Devon which, despite its name, is like Dungeness formed from a steep shingle bank open to the waves of the English Channel. I knew the area well from an underwater filming production for the BBC's Natural History Unit in the 1990s on which I was camera-assistant to a local natural history filmmaker, diving in Start Bay – of which Slapton Sands is a part – and around the coves of Devon and Cornwall. The beach was also the site of a music festival I attended with a dear friend, now dead, who was the brother of the flat owner in *Finborough Road* – so many layers of memory rolling in like waves on the shingle! Historic shingle extraction for use as railway ballast shaped the landscape of Dungeness, and its distinctive buildings made from train carriages bear witness to the earlier industrial exploitation. Slapton's shingle was taken to build Devonport Dockyard, leaving the nearby village of Hallsands unprotected from a terrible easterly storm which led to its destruction.

Trigg uses Derrida's concept of hauntology and applies this to the place of ruin:

> Outside of time, in the ruin, we are simultaneously aware of the foundation of time 'mutating.' The ruin haunts and is haunted. The residue of violence in the ruin, made possible because of the dynamic silence that encircles the cessation of activity, throws a distorted light on what ordered space conceals. (Trigg, 2006, p. 136)

The ruins of Hallsands and the now-derelict nuclear power stations haunt their respective coastlines, and both Slapton Sands and Dungeness are now nature reserves under pressure from climate change. Despite the frustration of not being able to return to Dungeness, the beach at Slapton seemed to be a suitable stand-in both in terms of the open ambience for recording my speaking and providing an opportunity to reflect on the meaning invested in the film by 'returning' to an area with a similar affective aura.

On a bitter December day in 2020, I drove for an hour along the country roads 28 miles east from Plymouth, through the South Hams that shaped my formative years. I took the same microphone rig as in 2009, now plugged directly into a multi-track digital recorder, with headphones worn over a woolly hat. Leaving the car in the council car park, I trudged down the shingle over which I had helped haul the small inflatable boat we used for underwater filming

99. http://dungenesstrust.co.uk

25 years earlier.

Research Journal

Slapton recording, December 2020

Slapton Sands standing in for Dungeness to record voiceover. A bitterly cold day for sound recording in south Devon in December 2020, using a Sennheiser MS stereo pair in a Rycote windshield recording on a Zoom F4.

https://www.sundog.me.uk/slapton-recording/

I recorded the rhythmic breakers on the shore that faces southeast, just like the beach in Dungeness, where I recorded eleven years earlier hundreds of miles to the east along the English Channel. After settling into the space, I recorded some walking sounds, then turned the microphone on myself and focussed on my research method of speaking in place and directed myself to unpick the registers of memory at play as I verbalised.[100]

My mind travelled to the Dungeness of my Super 8 footage, animated yet fixed in the amber of celluloid, to the audio recordings from my visit in 2009 springing back to life as they played and to the cloud of memories stretching back to my first visit in 1989 entangled with the strange shingle headland in Kent. I also needed to travel to the future and imagine the weaving of these elements in postproduction. I reflected on the themes of discovery, distance and return, the people I worked with filming the nuclear power station, returning to document the Channel Tunnel construction after having seen Dungeness in a cinema painted as a Super 8 dreamworld in *The Garden*, and later visits. Jarman still seemed to inhabit the place as the place inhabits his film.

Back in my studio, I transcribed and edited the voice recordings from Slapton, then combined them with the location recordings from Dungeness and the Super 8 footage. The narrational voice is in the past tense until a 'live' conversation is heard, energising the sequence by bringing

100.Chronesthesia is discussed on p. 62.

sound and picture back together in sync 13 years after they were recorded.

4.5 Chapter 4 Conclusion

In this chapter, the five Key Practice Works together with reflective writing, extracts from my research journal and the contextual stills, map the process-led method of 'remembering' that I developed through repeated engagement with my collection of digitised 8mm film.

Situating my practice in small gauge British experimental film, exemplified by the personal cinema of Jarman, within the field of artists' moving image, I have provided an overview of the histories and specificities of Super 8 film and technologies and discussed how the now-obsolete Kodachrome film stock, which makes up a large part of my Super 8 collection and the way this emulsion renders colour has come to embody a nostalgic representation of the past. The observations and insights generated through the practice inform my argument that filmmaking can be a way to understand how memory and place interact and the formation of a personal Super 8 archive creates a 'physical place' in which to encounter memory.

Through engaging with the Super 8 material and my reflection on the processes and outcomes, I came to understand that the research question "At what point does a filmmaker's collection of rushes become an archive?" had been resolved in relation to my own collection. Before undertaking this research journey, my Super 8 rushes had been a 'secret garden' of which I was the sole visitor. Unlike Jarman, I did not project the reels to an audience. Perhaps I had subconsciously protected my Super 8 rushes from others' view, so they did not become mixed up with my professional work? Once the Super 8 material was digitised, a degree of distance was established that 'allowed' me to use the footage in edited films that were intended for dissemination. The digital versions were like postcards, memories of the place, my Super 8 archive was the place.

When I watch the footage from my Super 8 archive, I feel pensive – deep in thought, reflecting on the memories that these images prompt, becoming aware of the temporal distance between the 'then' of the time of filming and the 'now' of viewing. In this, there is the paradox of the excitement of remembering, reconstituting, or recovering the memories of events in my life contemporaneous to the film images, and a sense of melancholy as the events captured in the tiny frames, marked with their passage in the world over time, have long passed and I know

that can never return to that place again, except in my mind.

I make a connection here to Marks's remarks about cinema history. It seems to me that my archive, which contains Super 8 film shot by me during the 1980s and more recent footage from this century, resonates with the history of cinema, which for Marks, "is a melancholic act from the start, for even in the presence of the fullness of the image one is aware that it is disappearing before our eyes. The cinematic object is gradually transformed from what the image represents to the complex histories of its destruction" (Marks, 2002, p. 170).

My practice work within this thesis may be seen to manifest what Marks describes as "a certain quietism" in their images, a characteristic of intercultural cinema: "a reluctance to swing easily into narrative. This reluctance results from the fact that images are not neutral reflections, but representations made from an interested point of view" (Marks, 2000, p. 41). She draws on Henri Bergson's proposition that perception "is always partial and interested, since it is located in a specific perceiver; it is necessarily embodied, located and contingent" (*Ibid.*, pp. 41–42).[101] Next, she refers to Gilles Deleuze to assert that perception is "*subtractive* insofar as it means a thing is not perceived in its fullness but only in those aspects that interest the perceiver" and recalls Deleuze's argument to make the point that cinema "pulls the viewer between objective and subjective poles, between accepting and reflecting upon a given image" (*Ibid.*, p. 42, emphasis in original).[102]

When watching *Father-land*, the viewer stands back from the passage of traumatic time, coolly looking across the contested cityscape to the hills beyond, while the personal dialogue draws the audience in as it recounts disjointed childhoods shaped by conflict. Baron's archive effect is at work too as the narration floats in like snatches of conversation overheard while looking out from a vantage point – there is 'intentional disparity' as it feels like we are eavesdropping.

In personally difficult times, such as following my elderly mother's death in 2018, when I cleared out the family home where she had lived alone since my father's death, I could not 'escape' into my practice research because viewing the archival images took me back to the past. At the time of filming, I had no awareness of what was to come in my life, or of the unexpected traumas I was to experience in the future, such as when friends and family

101. This relates to Chapter One in Bergson's 1911 work, *Matter and Memory* (Bergson, 1988).
102. See Deleuze's *Cinema 1: The Movement-Image*, 1986, pages 63–64.

members died. Watching these 'thin images'[103] on a screen, the 50 feet of footage on a Super 8 reel seemed to exist in their own time – outside chronological time, yet linking the irretrievable past to my present, which is nevertheless always moving forwards into the future, further away from the moments the films were exposed.

One Second a Day and its iteration, *31 Days*, align with several key characteristics of Kuhn's 'memory text':

> In memory texts, time rarely comes across as continuous or sequential: for example, events may have a repetitive or cyclical quality ('we used to ...'), or may telescope or merge into one another in the telling so that a single recounted memory might fuse together a series of possibly separate events, or follow no obviously logical or temporal sequence. The memory text is typically a montage of vignettes, anecdotes, fragments, 'snapshots' and flashes that can generate a feeling of synchrony: remembered events seem to be outside any linear time frame or may refuse to be easily anchored to 'historical' time. In the memory text, events often appear to have been plucked at random from a paradigm of memories and assembled in a mode of narration in which causality is not, if apparent at all, a prominent feature. (Kuhn, 2010, p. 2).

The works are poetic and correspond to the "metaphoric quality" assigned by Kuhn to the memory text: "the foregrounding of formal devices, the tendency to rapid shifts of setting or point of view all feed into the characteristically collagist, fragmentary, timeless, even the 'musical' quality of the memory text, which by and large possesses an imagistic quality that aligns it more closely to unconscious productions like dreams and fantasies than to, say, written stories" (*Ibid.*).[104]

Three practice works fulfil more of Kuhn's specificities of the memory text: *Finborough Road*, with its reflective commentary spoken and recorded at the location where the Super 8 was filmed, *Returning to Dungeness* that interweaves audio from the time of filming with commentary separated by time and distance, and the wistful, dislocated narration of the essay film *Father-land*.

As previously mentioned, I appear only fleetingly in my Super 8 archive footage. In the practice elements of this thesis, my image is included onscreen in *One Second a Day*, its iteration, *31 Days*, and the supplemental work *Womad*. In her chapter, ''Me, Myself, and I': On the Uncanny in Home Movies', Vivian Sobchack examines the psychologist Jean-Pierre Meunier's theorisation

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103. Laura U. Marks' concept of the 'thin image' is introduced on page 20.

104. Kuhn here refers to chapter eight, 'From Home and Nation', in her earlier work, *Family Secrets,* (2002) pp. 147-169.

of the filmic spectator in relation to home movies (Sobchack, 2019). I do not regard my archive as a collection of home movies.[105] While there are shared specificities, such as the small gauge *ciné* film and the recording of my 'everyday' lived experience; I rarely shot footage inside the home or of celebratory or family occasions. I found Sobchack's writing about the 'epistemological uncanny'[106] a useful guide in thinking through the moments when I as a viewer in the present encounter the past image of myself as the subject on the screen. She writes:

> Indeed, our existential knowledge of their physical absence and temporal distance there and then is outweighed by our desire to be with them here and now as they were. (*Ibid.*, p.205)

Of course, it is impossible for me to 'be' or 'be with' the person I see on the screen – my "past image-self" – for time has moved on and I am cognisant of the temporal gulf of that exists between the now of my viewing – my "off-screen 'I'" – and the 'then' of my being – my "on-screen 'me'" – when I was captured in the frame (*Ibid.*, p.209). Sobchack identifies what she terms as an 'epistemological uncanny' in the encounter:

> Although the viewer feels an initial *frisson* of estrangement from their home-movie image-self, this modality of the uncanny is dominated by a desire not to flee the image-self but to recognize it – that is, to learn and 'comprehend' it so as to regain the sense of self-possession. (*Ibid.*, p.212, emphasis in original)

Sobchack notes the primary identification with 'home' in these "home-movies" calls up the notion of the 'uncanny', as being the opposite to the German word, *Heimlich*, "translated literally as 'unhomely.' Designating an experience in which what is familiar is suddenly turned disturbingly strange and secretive" (*Ibid.*, p.207). Sobchack's argument rests on the presumption that people see their past selves in home movie footage shot by another:

> who come upon themselves in home movies and experience not 'self-representation' but a disconcerting 'representation of one's self,' the latter filmed – and filtered – through someone else's agency and cinematographic perception (even if of a close friend or family member). (Sobchack, 2019: p.8)(*Ibid.*, p.8)

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105. Further discussion of my archive in relation to 'home movies' – https://www.sundog.me.uk/home-movies/

106. In her "phenomenological variation" to Meunier, (Sobchack, 2019: p.206), Sobchack identifies three modalities of engagement with one's film image when viewing home movies. The first is the 'axiological uncanny', which arises "as a crisis of self-perception in relation to the representation of one's self"; 'epistemological uncanny' is the second, and the third is the 'ontological uncanny', "an existential crisis of self-identity" (Sobchack, 2019: p.208). I followed her second 'phenomenological variation' as this resonated with my experience as a spectator – I have a different position in relation to Sobchack's home movie viewer as I am also the 'author', filmmaker and archivist – and because of the large temporal gap that existed between filming the footage and viewing it for this investigation.

When reviewing *One Second a Day*, *31 Days* and *Womad* as part of this enquiry, I feel a fascination for my transient 'past image-selves' that is different to my engagement with the past images of other people and places – although 'I' was present as the unseen/off-screen filmmaker. Sobchack states that the epistemological uncanny is more likely to emerge the longer the temporal gap between filming and viewing and that, "the viewer's attention literally expands from judgmental scrutiny of the smallest details and perceived aesthetic defects of the image-self to its comportment, gestures, and overall behavior in a broader context" (*Ibid.*, p.212). I recognise my own responses in her statement that,

> the viewer is still intent on the screen in the present moment, but also actively engaged in the retention of past screen information – albeit still not concerned with some projected future. Thus, learning more about the self one thought one already knew becomes a cumulative process that has no necessary teleology. (*Ibid.*)

I experience no desire to collapse the "existential distance" and "integrate" with my "past image-self"; these encounters serve as a conduit for critical reflection on my archive, and an opportunity to learn more *about* myself – as Sobchack observes from her own experience, this viewing of one's past image-self in 'home-movie' footage adds "specificity to the general knowledge of one's comportment and behavior in a given context […] to acquire more 'objective' knowledge of 'myself'", which aligns more with engaging with documentary film (*Ibid.*, pp.213-214).

In *Womad*, I observe my 'past image-self' filming the scene around me as festival-goers pass by. I am focused on my actions as a filmmaker, operating a video camera on its tripod in response to the action of the crowd, and seem fully engaged with the act of filming. I was aware that my friend standing nearby is filming me with my Super 8 camera. Now, many years later, because of this enquiry, my viewing enfolds multiple positions of 'selves': as archivist, as the filmmaker-researcher and the 'author' of the film, *Womad*. I recognised myself in this shot and chose to include the sequence of me 'in action', which lasts for less than half a minute, within the documentation of an event, of which I was/am a part.[107]

In contrast, my appearance in *One Second a Day* and *31 Days* was selected 'intuitively' by 'skimming' through my archive – for a moment, my eyes rested on an image, this was relayed to my brain and my fingers paused the flow of images to select the second of film that included a

107.All the Super 8 footage filmed at the festival was included in *Womad*, except for some underexposed material filmed indoors in the concert arena.

few frames of my ‘past image-self’. In these films, I stand out from the rest of the constitutive images as a person facing the camera. My engagement with this brief sequence of my ‘past image-self’ differs from that in *Womad*, in that I look directly into the camera and at the friend who films me at home one evening; I seem relaxed and contemplative. When I watch these two films, I feel the *frisson* as the eyes of my ‘past image-self’ meet mine, and, through repeated viewings during the editing process I have come to “to learn and ‘comprehend’ it so as to regain the sense of self-possession” identified by Sobchack (*Ibid.*, p.212, emphasis in original). I feel connected to this ‘past image-self’ and the memories that accrete to the time and place depicted in these frames of Super 8 film. In these films, my ‘past image-self’ is a constitutive element of the flow of moving image – the ‘memories’ that spool from right to left across the panes on the screen before ‘disappearing into the past’.

Chapter 5.

Conclusion

> As we watch a film, the continuous act of recognition in which we are involved is like a strip of memory unrolling beneath the images of the film itself, to form an invisible underlayer of an implicit double exposure.(Deren, 1960)

5.1 Knowledge in the Place of Memory

In this thesis, the five Key Practice Works, *One Second a Day*, *31 Days*, *Father-land*, *Finborough Road* and *Returning to Dungeness*, along with three Supplemental Practice Works, *Womad*, *Cutting the Film*, and *Film of Dust*, demonstrate a comprehensive and detailed engagement with my key themes of film, memory, place, the archive and archival practices in addition to addressing film materiality and trauma through a practice-led investigation which is embedded in my personal history and the interrelationship between my Super 8 film archive and my memories. The three questions that underpinned this research are:

1. At what point does a filmmaker's collection of rushes become an archive?

2. What registers of memory operate during the processes of creating a moving image artwork, from the point of capture through working with the remediated digital material to presentation?

3. Can archive film be conceived as a 'place' to which we can return?

I interrogated these research questions as an artist filmmaker using process-based methods informed by Nelson's PaR methodological tripartite structure. My expert professional practice as a cinematographer and sound recordist working in film and television constituted the 'implicit knowledge' that is one axis of PaR methodology, inflected by knowledge and insights gained through 'know that' (theories and concepts), and 'know what' (context and the field of practice). The PaR 'road map' provided the clear infrastructure to reorientate myself and keep my research 'on track' when my intuitive practice led me along an unexpected path. In addition, I expanded my reading and embedded methodological perspectives within my PaR foundational methodology from other theorists focused on research directed by the author's own creative practice, including Bell (Bell, 2004a; Bell, 2004b; Bell, 2011; Bell, 2019; Bell, 2021), Buckland (Buckland, 2000; Buckland, 2016), with commentary from Hann (Hann, 2015) and Stake (Stake,

1995).

Throughout the reflective writing and discussion, I have included extracts from my illustrated research journal as a series of way markers, which are placed strategically to ensure that a reflexive personal voice is present throughout my thesis. These journal entries helped me to unpick the interrelationship between memory, place, remediation, trauma and my Super 8 archive. The accretion of further thoughts and sensory ideation connected to – but not integral to – the footage, created the personal archive by changing my relationship to it.

As detailed in the thesis Introduction, situating my enquiry in relation to memory studies has broadened my thinking about my practice research. Key anchors were Radstone's work on film and memory, the 'memory work' of Kuhn, and Caruth's and Walker's perspectives on trauma and memory, in addition to Kaplan.

In Chapter One, I established a framework for thinking around the deceptively simple notion of an archive constituted as a box of Super 8 films and refined my understanding of practice research. This enabled me to interrogate my research questions and advance the enquiry as new routes to knowledge revealed themselves. From Kuhn's discussion, I was able to situate my filmmaking as 'personal cinema' – *Finborough* Road, *Returning to Dungeness* and *Father-land* amplify the 'personal' aspect via the first person narration in these films, and in addition, *Father-land* could be understood as an autoethnographic work.[108] Drawing on the work of Lebow and Kuhn, I was able to identify in my practice the dynamics between the 'positions of self' at different stages of the production process, in Lebow's explanation, to be "both subject and object of the gaze"(Lebow, 2012, pp.4-5).

The scholarly research discussed in Chapter Two, created a critical framework for my enquiry by addressing key themes of place, memory, trauma, film and archive through Trigg's thinking around place and trauma, the registers of memory articulated by Tulving and Baron's scholarship on archive film and its affects. Marks led me to conclude that if physical film is a place, digital film is a memory: intangible, ephemeral and placeless; also, that celluloid's physical corruption mirrors the viewer's inevitable corporeal decline. Through my engagement with Kuhn's conceptualisation, I came to see my enquiry as a form of 'memory work', "an active practice of remembering that takes an inquiring attitude towards the past and the activity of its

108. Situating *Father-land* as an autoethnographic work pp.100-102

(re)construction through memory" (Kuhn, 2002, p.186). Gordon's insight that the past's 'ghosts' emanating from the films presented in this thesis signal that something 'needs to be done', which permeates the viewer's perception and affects their construction of meaning – this 'haunting' is distinct from trauma. Baron's thinking about archival footage and its hard to define but often experienced 'archive effect' created a pathway into a new understanding of my archive.

Chapter Three analysed personal works by artists and filmmakers, which embed memory and place. Through my close engagement with these works, I gained valuable insights into my research. Their practice acted as a lens through which to view my own work and understand my place in the genre of artists' moving image. The chapter illustrates the diverse range of practices of artists working with film in modes that are oppositional in some way to mainstream narrative and documentary cinema. Jarman's *Glitterbug*, his final moving image work completed after his death, is a graceful montage of Super 8 footage shot by the artist in the 1970s and 80s. This resonated for me with *Womad*, recalling lost summers, youth and the unstoppable passage of time – and film's 'life after death'. In *Perestroika*, an essayistic autobiographical documentary, Turner rises to the challenge and returns to the archive and exorcise its ghosts. Her memory work and reflective monologue resonated focused my attention on ways of speaking to and from the past, which informed *Father-land*, *Finborough Road* and *Returning to Dungeness*, all of which feature retracing the past, as Turner did to Siberia. Jenny Olson's *The Royal Road*, a 16mm cinematic essay with personal voiceover, dared to posit nostalgia as a humanising element in her hybrid documentaries. Her cinematic strategy of fixed frame, excluding 'modern' features of the city, spoke to me of the power of celluloid to present a timeless place as a stage for her affective monologue. The grainy small gauge images of *Returning to Dungeness* renders a landscape cut adrift from time, where my unanchored monologue washes against the shoreline. My encounter with German artist Milena Gierke self-projecting her Super 8 film reels without accompanying sound, generated thinking around the camera original's 'aura' and its presence at the profilmic event, in addition to the viewer's interior monologue being amplified by the absent soundtrack. *Sunless*, Chris Marker's essayistic cinematic autobiography on memory and film images, was a masterclass in constructing an engaging experience for the viewer from footage shot with a single silent camera. Marker's genius lay in the confabulation of the narrative through the epistolary device. In a sense, *Father-land*'s improvised narration with its short recollections, 'reads' like postcards from the past. My experience of the experimental

filmmaker Nathaniel Dorsky's *Arboretum Cycle*, a cinematic elegy depicting a year of light and plant growth in a garden, it reinforced the value I place on analogue film, with its aesthetic specificities, the unique cadence of filming and projecting at 18 frames per second, so far removed from valorisation of spectacle in contemporary natural history filming. Dorsky's immersion in the arboretum is transposed to the cinema in which for two hours the film 'becomes place' for the silent audience.

As detailed in Chapter Four, the practice research developed in response to the interrelationship between sound and image, providing an understanding of my research project's development through the works themselves. In the five Key Practice Works, audio strategies ranged from *One Second a Day* and *31 Days*, with their soundtracks alluding to the playback apparatus of the Super 8 projector – this reminds the viewer that the progression of the imagery within the screen triptych is allied to the materiality and the mechanical apparatus – the motors, cogs, belts and sprockets – of film projection. Among the Supplemental Practice Works, the 'naturalistic' soundtrack of *Womad* brought audio to the silent archive footage using contemporaneous archive sound. I realised that the 'silent' footage engendered an internal monologue as I viewed 'my past' on film. *Cutting the Film*, filmed digitally, presented an opportunity to 'think out loud', allowing the viewer access to my inner thoughts. *Film of Dust* brought together macro footage of material film, documentation of microscopy and electron micrographs, over which I spoke as the edited footage played back – in a DIY version of traditional documentary voice-over. The Key Practice Works, *Father-land*, *Finborough Road* and *Returning to Dungeness*, develop an innovative approach to essay film narration through their 'speaking in place' first-person narration. By returning to the location of filming and performing and recording voice-over, these films enable the viewer to experience my subjectivity as the filmmaker through the affective impact of my unrehearsed narration. In all three films, I aim to communicate the layered experience of remembering: the time and place of filming and the viewing of that footage some period later, along with memories that the footage had reenergised. In the finished works, the images and the narration combine to provide an experience more fluid than 'explanatory' – as in documentary films' authorial guidance – suggesting recollections of the past that viewers can engage with and recognise.

Through these works, I came to understand that the film material within my Super 8 archive operates as an external memory, whereas speaking in place captures my 'internal memory'. *Cutting the Film* and *Film of Dust* addressed film materiality and challenged my reluctance to

interfere physically with the Super 8 footage. If film is the place of memory, cutting it up felt like defacing a memorial.

In *One Second a Day* and *31 Days*, I developed a mode of presentation imbricated with an editing strategy where each shot appears in a partial right-hand pane, then in a full pane in the centre of the screen, and finally in a partial left-hand pane. This alludes to past, present, and future temporalities. The simultaneous presence of three fleeting images, arranged similarly to a digital video editing timeline, challenges the viewer's attention while exercising short term memory. The first iteration of this was *One Second a Day*. I created a novel method of editing, where I selected a shot daily by 'skimming the archive', stopping on an image then appending the following shot to the end of the timeline without reference to earlier choices. This created an edited sequence intuitively rather than by consciously determined arrangement that is the conventional editor's stock in trade. This technique combines the subjective experience of *remembering* as the archive is navigated at the same time as 'forgetting' the previous days' images. During the period of compilation, the expanding edit timeline should not be reviewed! This montage was then arranged across the three panes of the temporal triptych. In this way, the thesis demonstrates that the completed film work can reveal unexpected synergies that seem to have been determined by unconscious processes, while the tri-paned form resists conscious analysis by the audience – perhaps emulating the experience of selection.

Through the detailed analysis of my personal Super 8 films, which are simultaneously an archive and a collection of rushes, this investigation has significantly advanced the concept of 'archive effect' articulated by Baron. When the viewer watches *Returning to Dungeness*, the 'old' footage is incorporated in a 'new' digital film. Baron conceptualises the frisson the viewer experiences as the archive effect – this temporal disparity is generated by old archive footage appearing within, for example, a contemporary television documentary. Most archive research and archival filmmaking involves working with other people's material. Baron's monograph (2014) reflects this reality. Through my practice-led investigation, I have identified particular affects that have been produced through being the creator of both the old and new works. I have a unique relationship with my archive films both as material artefacts and moving image sequences. In *Finborough Road*, I can hold the roll of film, watch it on a hand-operated viewer, but also engage with its digital form on Vimeo. As the author of the original Super 8 and of the 'new' digital film, I experience an archive effect – that frisson of the old permeating the new. I experienced Baron's 'intentional disparity' when I saw myself as a young man in a few frames

on a roll of Kodachrome projected on the cinema screen at the ICA as the digital work, *31 Days*. Baron's paradigm deals with the viewer as a third party, both to the contemporary film work and the archive material embedded within it. My research extends Baron's thinking by providing insights informed by practice in which the filmmaker through their first-hand knowledge of the archive footage and its generation, in addition to their authorial role in the new work, experiences an archive effect as the viewer in the present. This is despite my authorial knowledge and is particularly acute when I watch *31 Days,* as each glimpsed fragment of my past acts as a visual hook. It is not possible for me to experience *31 Days* as a new work because the past demands that it be acknowledged, shot by shot. In contrast to Baron's theorisation, *31 Days* does not juxtapose 'old footage with new' – all the footage is archival. The contrast between its novel screen presentation and Super 8's traditional aesthetic produces a granularity where each shot interpellates me with my past. My enquiry demonstrates that the Baron's archive effect can be experienced in artists' personal archive film where its manifestations may be subtle.

The research contributes new knowledge to the debate and discussion surrounding essay film production and scholarship, particularly the dynamic interaction over time between filmic spaces and their filming locations. A central concern of the thesis was to demonstrate how the specificities of materiality and presentation manifest a place of memory. It showed how speaking in place is the creation of an essay film narration by returning to the filming location after a lapse of time, performing unrehearsed reflexive commentary that is a 'remembering' of both the footage shot in that place and the experience of filming at the site. The intention was to capture 'authentic' narration that is independent of, yet complementary, to the filmed rushes. This method of returning to the location of filming, inserting yourself audibly back in the place, vocalising and recording the thoughts that come forth in response to the experience of revisiting a site of memory and 'speaking in place' is a method puts that places the reflexive process on an equal footing with the filmed and edited visuals. As shown, it is possible to engage with and be affected by digital moving image. Through watching *Father-land*, Nicosia can be remembered, but remembered through digital film, which is ephemeral, like human memory. In contrast, the materiality of personal Super 8 film generates an 'anchoring' effect that locates memory in a 'place'. The filmmaker can return to the source material in a physical location and touch it. There *is* somewhere to return to: the place of memory.

Filmmaker-researchers may find the methods I have evolved through this investigation useful in

their own projects, and the concepts explored in this thesis are relevant to artists and filmmakers who have an archival film practice and/or a personally situated collection of celluloid-based film material. Post doctorate, I am keen to advance the research further in the following ways. The first avenue for further investigation – and a productive area of enquiry for future practice-based research – would be a more comprehensive address of audience reception and experience of the works. The second area relates to the remediation of the filmmaker's archive. Digitising a celluloid archive, comprising the filmmaker's own personally significant collection of footage, allows free-ranging associations with the filmmaker's past. The digitised versions enable the filmmaker to 'skim the archive' in its digital form, which is not possible in its original celluloid state because of the physical requirements of selecting and projecting individual reels of film – and the potential damage that may be caused to the original material. Of course, this method can also be applied to digitised video and digital filming. New knowledge can be produced by the filmmaker skimming his or her personal archive, selecting clips intuitively each day over a period of a month, and adding these to an editing timeline without reviewing the montage. In this way, the filmmaker can reflect on the choices made and the underlying meaning that is revealed. This is proposed as a novel technique that allows filmmakers to interrogate their archive intuitively.

The innovative methods of 'speaking in place' and 'intra-production memory' I developed through this enquiry to create essay film narration are key elements of new knowledge that I intend to advance in future practice research. This will contribute further to the debate and discussion surrounding essay film production and scholarship.

The fourth path for further research would be to bring together speaking in place with the paned viewing experience of the temporal triptych in a new work. I have provisionally titled this specific project *Not Really There*. It will adopt the visual format of *31 Days* with its paned display of past-present-future being displayed simultaneously on-screen and develop the concept by incorporating unrehearsed speaking in place narration.

5.2 Haunted Voices

Gordon's book, *Ghostly Matters* (2008), traces the process by which the capitalism of Western culture in the United States (USA), and its foundational structures built on slavery and racism, is entangled with a person's private domain and deeply held concepts of individualism. She

reveals the history of loss and repression that is the legacy of these social forces and reveals the ways in which they control people's lives at the intersectional junctions of race, gender, and class. While Gordon is concerned with the socio-economic system of the USA and the deep-rooted effects of the enslavement and 'white privilege', she addresses state-sponsored terrorism in Argentina and her argument can be extended to postcolonial Britain of the 21st century and the pervading absence in sociological narratives of the oppressive and dominating practices of race, class and gender that were – and continue to be – enacted by those in power.[109]

Gordon points out that all people, even those "who live in the most dire circumstances possess a complex and oftentimes contradictory humanity and subjectivity", and uses the term, "complex personhood", to mean the rich, complex and often contradictory quality of 'humanness', which we all share, irrespective of our ethnicity, race, class, gender, sexual orientation and situation in life (*Ibid.*, pp.4–5). It is clear that we need to elicit and embrace a widespread range of life narratives in order to create a rich and diverse understanding of the society of which we are a part.

In the summer of 2018, as I was reviewing the *Father-land* footage and audio recordings and editing the film for its exhibition in Cyprus that autumn, I reflected on my childhood when my late father was on active service in the RAF, my mother's recent death adding a poignancy to my contemplation. Watching the images of the broken landscape of the Nicosia Buffer Zone and listening to the voices speaking in place, witnesses to the traumas enacted there many years before, I became more cognisant of my experiences as a child. The film, *Father-land*, implicitly identifies the unique nature of military childhood and the unique set of complex challenges children experienced growing up in a military family with the stresses of a mobile lifestyle, multiple school moves, the effects of parental absence and exposure to a politically unstable environment where violence could erupt at any time.

109.It is beyond the scope of this thesis to include further discussion about this 'blindness', as manifested within British society, but an example may be found in a recent investigation by *The Independent* newspaper uncovering the use of a racial slur in official British government documents. Kim Johnson, a Labour member of Parliament and a member of the all-party parliamentary group on race, is quoted as saying, "It's astounding that it has taken this long for this to surface. If evidence was needed that the British state is structurally and endemically racist, we have it here in black and white … The use of the n-word by governmental departments in the 21st century shows how Black people are still treated as second-class citizens. Yet this government still chooses to deny the existence of institutional racism." See the article, 'New n-word slur found on government website', by Kate Devlin, Nadine White, and Adam Forrest in *The Independent* (7 July 2023): https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/home-news/racist-slur-nword-government-parliament-b2371165.html Accessed 31/01/24

Prior to the report, *The Overlooked Causalities of Conflict* (Fund, 2009), commissioned by The Royal Navy and Royal Marines Children's Fund,[110] "very little was known about children in military families in the UK"; this comprehensive report was instrumental in drawing attention to the experiences and challenges faced by military children (Godier-McBard et al., 2021, p.9). A new report, *The Impact of Service Life on the Military Child: The Overlooked Causalities of Conflict* (*Ibid.*), highlights separation or parental absence as "one of the most significant challenges associated with having a serving parent, due to the unpredictable and disruptive nature of deployment, with different impacts on children of different ages" (Ritchie, 2021). Its findings indicate that "children of mobile service personnel can often experience a lack of geographical 'roots', and therefore a loss of identity and sense of belonging" (*Ibid.*). Since the publication of *The Overlooked Causalities of Conflict* in 2009, there have been many studies into the impacts on the children of serving military personnel. The then Children's Commissioner for England, Anne Longfield, published her report, *Kin and Country: Growing Up as an Armed Forces Child* (Longfield, 2018), into the impacts on children whose parents were active members of the British Armed Forces, particularly those serving overseas.[111] Longfield concludes that, "belonging to a military family [is] central to … identity and sense of self" (*Ibid.*, p.2). Her study was based on first-hand views and experiences of forty children aged eight to fifteen years old; their voices resonate with what is 'unsaid' in *Father-land*. A key finding from *Growing Up in the RAF: The Wellbeing of Children and Young People who have Serving Parents*, the first in-depth study into the effects on wellbeing of children who have parents serving in the RAF reported "a change in children's emotional well-being associated with deployment", with RAF children and young people identifying "increased stress, sadness and upset associated with missing the serving parent during their absence" (Fund, 2021).

While the findings from these reports chime in part with my experience and form a counterpoint to *Father-land*, there is a paucity of research into the effects in adulthood resulting from the experiences during childhood on those whose parents were serving military personnel, and I feel this is an area where more knowledge would be welcome. *Father-land* contributes to this body of work in a small way. In relation to Cyprus, I suggest that what is needed also is the augmentation of "complex personhood" through many more Cypriot voices,

110. Now known as the Naval Children's Charity (NCC).

111. The research does not address the impact on Forces children of their experience of a hostile environment or one of conflict while accompanying their parents on an overseas posting.

from the north, the south and the diasporic communities, into the effects of military service, colonialism, occupation, postcolonial conflict and displacement among other 'hauntings' – aspects of our lives that "modern history has rendered ghostly", as if these things did not exist (Gordon, 2008, p.208). Gordon writes, "haunting is one way in which abusive systems of power make themselves known and their impacts felt in everyday life, especially when they are supposedly over and done with [...] or when their oppressive nature is denied" (p.xvi). Haunting is a matter of seeing the 'ghosts' that have been removed from our socio-cultural consciousness, such as the recognition of the force of the British colonial past that reverberates in the present and its refusal to acknowledge those affected – as Gordon asserts, attending to these ghosts is a "necessarily collective undertaking [which] belongs to everyone" (*Ibid.*). Gordon asks, "How do we reckon with what modern history has rendered ghostly? How do we develop a critical language to describe and analyze the affective, historical, and mnemonic structures of such hauntings?" (*Ibid.*, p.18).

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Zinn (2018) [16mm, 35mm] Directed by Stuart Moore. UK: Sundog Media

Father-land (2018) [Digital] Directed by Stuart Moore and Kayla Parker. UK: Sundog Media

The Other Side of Now (2021) [16mm, Digital] Directed by Kayla Parker and Stuart Moore, with David Sergeant. UK: Sundog Media

Returning to Dungeness (2022) [Super 8, Digital] Directed by Stuart Moore. UK: Sundog Media

Appendices

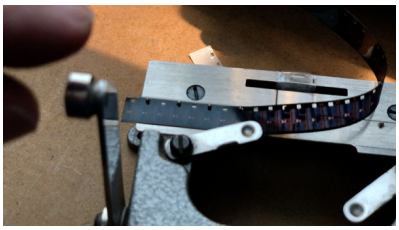
Appendix 1

Supplemental Practice Works

Womad (2016)

9min 38sec, Super 8, colour stereo

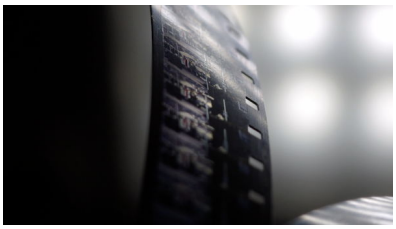
https://vimeo.com/164217753



Cutting the Film (2018)

4min 15sec, HD video, colour stereo

https://vimeo.com/258531319



Film of Dust (2018)

4min, HD video, colour stereo

https://vimeo.com/255800156

In this appendix I present three Supplemental Practice Works listed above. *Womad* combined Super 8 footage from a 1987 music festival with audio sourced from video footage recorded at the same event. The celluloid had deteriorated over the intervening years, giving an elegiac poignancy to the work as the people depicted have also aged over the decades. *Cutting the Film* is a documentation of the transgressive excision of a frame of Super 8 from the Womad reel, with reflexive voiceover recorded during the traumatic act of cutting. *Film of Dust* follows this extracted single frame to a microscopy centre where, along with other film samples, the surface was subjected to detailed examination for traces of its 'life marks'. This experiment considered the film topographically – a landscape of the past rather than a window to it.

These practice experiments explore and advance my thinking in relation to the Super 8 film material within my archive. I investigate physical Super 8 film and its parallel life in the

'geological' records of its existence – that is, the chronology of its ageing presence in the real world after its creation in the factory.

Womad

Figure 13: The author filming with a VHS camera. Image Credit: Sundog Media

Womad (2016) 9min 31sec Super 8, colour stereo - https://vimeo.com/164217753

This section concerns the digital moving image artwork, *Womad*, comprising remediated silent Super 8 filmed at the World of Music, Arts and Dance (Womad) music festival in 1987.[112] The footage was telecined at Deluxe Soho in 2011. I interweaved the digitised record of the silent film footage with contemporaneous sound selected from recordings on VHS video tape made around the festival site.[113]

Womad (Moore, 2016b) comprises two-and-a-half rolls of Super 8 reversal filmed at Carlyon Bay in Cornwall when it hosted the Womad festival 1987. I travelled down from Plymouth with

112. See Womad 1987 in online critical journal here: https://www.sundog.me.uk/womad-1987/

113.VHS is a standard definition video recording and playback format using 1/2-inch magnetic tape. Portable VHS equipment was used for low-end video acquisition although the format was primarily used in domestic settings.

assistant Rob Congdon to film the children's workshops on video, taking along a Canon 814 silent Super 8 camera. The audio is taken from the VHS recordings.

The filming undertaken in 1987 at Womad had two separate threads – video recording on to VHS tape with sync-sound commissioned by the festival organisers, and mute Super 8 undertaken for my own purposes. When editing in 2016, I digitised the audio from the VHS and used it to create a soundtrack to accompany the edited digital transfer of the Super 8 footage. Although pictures and sound were largely recorded at separate times during the weekend festival, on one occasion my assistant filmed me on Super 8 while I was operating the video camera with its built-in audio recording. The two enterprises unintentionally overlap/fuse with a striking 'mode change' for the Super 8 – the soundtrack and picture-stream meld into a coherent unity, distinct from the authentic-sounding ambience constructed elsewhere in the film. Figure 13 above shows a Super 8 frame from this 'coming together' of film and audio.

Although the image sequences and the audio come from my personal archive and were generated during the same weekend in 1987, the film is presented as new work. As the maker-viewer, I experience an archive effect at play because of temporal disparity – the work is recognisably 'old' and 'new' at the same time – and I have created both the original archival material and the remediated film. If another viewer discovered it online, they might just see an 'old' film, or if researching, for example, Womad festivals over the years, they might consider it archival.

In addition, when viewing *Womad*, I recognise that the past it depicts is irretrievable, even as its indexical traces animate on screen. I feel the sense of loss associated with what Baron describes as an 'archive affect' because I know that the children in the footage are now middle-aged adults and many of the people will have passed away. (Baron, 2014, p.21) The festival location at Carlyon Bay, Cornwall is now scarcely recognisable from the depictions caught on Super 8. Developers demolished the Cornwall Coliseum concert hall where Womad's music was performed to develop expensive waterside residences. We have lost the place, except on film.

> *The ghost*'s appearance signals to us that *something is missing*; it represents "a loss, sometimes of life, sometimes of a path not taken. From a certain vantage point the ghost also simultaneously represents a future possibility, a hope" (Gordon, 2008, p.64).

I spliced together the rolls of Agfa Moviechrome shot all those years ago, wound them onto a 200 feet reel and stored it in a case – out of sight, but not forgotten. The digitisation of the footage brought that period of my life back into my consciousness. The addition of sounds from

the festival site added an affective charge, with audio always playing, as Turner suggests, in the present.

Cutting the Film

Figure 14: A single Super 8 frame about to be cut from the reel in *Cutting the Film*.

Cutting the Film (2018) 4min 38sec HD video, colour stereo - https://vimeo.com/258531319

My Super 8 films remained largely physically intact, uncut, in the collection. Most remained on the 50ft spools on which they were returned from processing with a length of white leader spliced to the camera-original film. The only physical intervention came when I joined multiple films together to speed the process of telecine.

Cutting the Film (2018) documents the transgressive act of excising a single frame of Super 8 using a tape splicer's guillotine blade from the '*Womad* rushes' shot in Carlyon Bay in 1987. The video captures my reflective commentary as I perform the act of cutting, the removal of a frame and resplicing the cut reel along with the diegetic sounds of my actions.

I was interested to see what had happened to the emulsion over its life, and to return to the scientific practice I studied as an undergraduate. The single frame amounted to only 1/18th of second of the Womad festival filming but damaging the artefact that had been part of my life for 35 years felt transgressive – I found it to be an emotional experience – and sufficiently important to be recorded. The two parts of the film strip were re-joined with a splice that is

visible in the editor viewer, as the splicing tape covers two adjacent frames.

The Super 8 reels that were used for *Womad*[114] are Agfa Moviechrome, a film stock that does not have Kodachrome's reputation for longevity. The colour has lasted well but inspection of the digital transfer shows spidering in the emulsion, a dancing patina of fine lines. I decided to inspect this microscopically which required the excision of a single film frame to provide a sample for examination.

Film of Dust

Figure 15: *Film of Dust* – macro image of 8mm filmstrip

Film of Dust (2018) 3min HD video, colour stereo - https://vimeo.com/255800156

This short video explores the life of the celluloid material in the physical world, collecting dust, fingerprints, scratches and debris whilst the organic photosensitive emulsion is affected by mould and microscopic organisms – essentially telling the films' own 'life stories'.

Film of Dust (2018) examines film surfaces using macrophotography and some film samples coated in gold to prepare for scrutiny using a scanning electron microscope. The video ends with a montage of electron micrographs of the film surface, fungal growth and other accretions on the gelatine emulsion.

In 'professional' film-making, every stage of production is as dust-free as possible. However, in

114. See page 145.

Super 8 filmmaking, dust infiltrates throughout the process of production and beyond. In *Dust: The Archive and Cultural History*, Carolyn Steedman argues the past is always present in an archive, which is the repository of 'that which will not go away' – suggesting just like dust, the 'matter of history' can never go away or be erased (Steedman, 2002).

Film of Dust uses macro cinematography to inspect the film surface, revealing the physical scars of its life. As ciné film has become 'othered' in our digital age, the flaws of 8mm have come to be part of an aesthetic marker of authenticity. Super 8 has such a small picture area that all 'imperfections' are greatly magnified by projection or scanning, tiny specks become landmarks on the celluloid terrain.

Figure 16: The contoured landscape of Kodachrome's emulsion

Elsaesser coined the term "historical topographies" to describe the layering or sedimentation of the past in cinema, trapped in amber:

> It is therefore no more than following in the footsteps of André Bazin's "change mummified"[115] – who incidentally paid as much attention to the cinema as trace, as he did to cinema as window –

115.Elsaesser here refers to Bazin's essay, 'The Ontology of the Photographic Image' (Bazin, 1960)

> if one were to argue that barnacles, bogs, and glaciers are the natural “media” of historical topographies, of which photography and film would be the cultural technologies, in contrast to the usual genealogies of celluloid that start with wax tablets, clay cylinders, scrolls and paper: symbolic notations rather than the preserved imprint of the objects themselves.(Elsaesser, 2019, p.29)

The uniquely complicated construction and processing steps of Kodachrome film creates a ‘topography’ in the emulsion, visible in Figure 16. While most processed colour reversal film stocks have a smooth emulsion containing the dye clouds that form the image, Kodachrome becomes its own landscape with valleys and ridges formed at areas of contrast in the image.

The second part of *Film of Dust* documents the processes undertaken for electron microscopy. The film samples, including the tai chi practitioner frame from *Womad*, were attached to a cylindrical stage before being coated in gold by evaporation. The electron microscope scanned the gold surface with a beam of electrons, producing black and white digital images. The magnification, as seem in the video, can be reduced to see larger elements such as an entire sprocket hole, then increased to reveal fungal hyphae criss-crossing the film right up to the ‘lunar’ surface of the organic gelatine emulsion which appears perfectly smooth to the eye.

Microscopy revealed the material film’s existence in the world. Pollen grains, tiny fibres from a carpet, mould that grew in the damp southwest climate, and of course dust. Returning to Plymouth University was also a journey back in time to my biology studies there as an undergraduate.

Appendix 2

2016 Plymouth-Nicosia Artist-Residency Application

Autumn 2016

Proposal: Father-land: (re)visiting the past (working title)
Kayla Parker and Stuart Moore

Aim
This project provides the opportunity to develop a new collaborative work, a poetic essay film, through practice-based research on location in Cyprus, where both our late fathers were stationed with the Royal Air Force during 'The Troubles'. Using digital and film-based technologies we will explore our relationship to place and 'lost fathers', drawing on memories of a militarised nomadic childhood and located the context of an island whose turbulent human histories extend to the Neolithic.
The self-reflective and self-reflexive hybridity of the essay film "disrespects traditional boundaries, is transgressive both structurally and conceptually" (Alter, 1996: 171). It allows us to interweave personal and social histories with subjective and intellectual perspectives, situated in contemporary experience. The essay film form blurs traditional boundaries of documentary and fiction; we can "debate a problem by using all the means that the cinema affords, all the registers and all the expedients" (Morin in Rascaroli, 2008: 39).

Relationship to practice
Our collaboration forms an important strand of practice and has produced distinctive moving image artworks such as: *Teign Spirit* (2009) an Animate Projects commission for Sea Change, the 360 artists' moving image festival *Welcome to the Treasuredome* (2012) for the Cultural Olympiad, in addition to *Reach* (2014), commissioned by The River Tamar Project. The four weeks residency will allow us to venture into unexplored regions of our shared but separate histories and create a work of complexity and depth.

Technical details
The residency will output digital audiovisual work/s including an essay film. We have lightweight cameras, sound gear and portable editing equipment, which we will bring with us. Access to a pair of loudspeakers would be helpful for sound, and a small secure space to charge batteries and set up editing kit.

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Appendix 3

Nicosian Responses to *Father-land*

Outside the overlapping academic fields of artists' moving image and essay film, the *Father-land* project contributes to wider discourses around, and understanding of, the independent, post-colonial Cypriot culture currently being established on the island.

Parker and I have given three joint presentations about *Father-land* in Cyprus. The first, during the NiMAC residency period in November 2016, was to introduce our project as 'work-in progress' to documentary photography undergraduate students and their lecturer at the Communications Department, University of Nicosia. These students invited us to join them at the inter-communal demonstration that evening inside the UN controlled Buffer Zone near the Ledra Palace Hotel. Thousands of participants gathered from the TRNC[116] in the north and the Republic in the south. United by Hope, United for Peace called for the unification of the island. People were empowered to photograph and film this event, facilitated by the United Nations, in contrast to the 'normal' everyday ban on recording in the vicinity of the Buffer Zone.

The second presentation in October 2018 was for undergraduate and master's photography and media students and staff at Frederick University, Nicosia, that is itself situated a few hundred metres from the Buffer Zone. Here we projected the completed film, *Father-land*. This event generated a great interest in exploring the zone by the students, inspiring them to pursue their own projects in this 'forbidden place'.

The final presentation was at the International Conference of Photography and Theory (ICPT) held in Nicosia in 2018, which included the *Layers of Visibility* exhibition.[117]

The film was seen widely by Cypriot audiences over a 3-month period while it was exhibited at NiMAC, a prominent artistic venue. The following review raises interesting points concerning the creative processes at play during the making of the film, and its interpretation by Cypriots, for whom the filmed landscape was both familiar and strange:

116.TNRC – the Turkish Republic of North Cyprus is the part of the island occupied by Turkey since the 1974 invasion. TRNC is only recognised as a country by Turkey.

117.Details of the 2018 International Conference of Photography and Theory are available here: https://www.photographyandtheory.com/conferences/icpt-2018

> Whilst in Cyprus we usually talk about the mother country, Stuart Moore and Kayla Parker created the film called 'Father-land' since their fathers had served in Cyprus as members of Royal Air Force RAF in British Bases. One of the artists lived in Limassol as a child. Returning now as adults they form links between their childhood experiences as children of English officers and their impressions of the Dead Zone. They narrate their relationships with their fathers, their constant moving from one country to another, and they refer to the consequences that the presence of a military force, set in a different state from its base, may have. The ability of a pigeon to fly across these metal barriers, a crane used to build outposts at the Green Line on the other side have all been used to symbolise things which for us have become very ordinary. However, when looking at these aspects in a film, they spark new thoughts in our minds which help us awaken to see the reality which we so blindly had become accustomed to and disregarded. (ΦΙΛGOOD, 2018, p.17)[118]

The outsider's perspective can be a double-edged sword, possibly bringing the clarity of a 'fresh pair of eyes' observing a familiar landscape, but it risks a uniformed reading of a complex and highly charged political situation.

My experience as an 'RAF kid' was that of being subjected to regulation by a military force, and this life being normalised with the presence in other countries accepted as a good and 'natural' thing. Just as the reviewer above gained insights through our film into their quotidian accommodation of the signs of the violent past, so I reassess the ruptures in my past echoed in the tear of the Green Line. The static framing and gentle pace of the film creates a space for memory, particularly when experienced in the cool darkness of an art gallery space where audience attention is culturally codified. For me, viewing the finished work evoked changing and fluid memories of the month's residency, the experience of filming, reviewing and editing the footage at home, travelling to London and flying to Cyprus, recording voiceover, and the childhood memories in the narration. This polysemic memorialisation had somewhat changed when I returned to Cyprus towards the end of the three-month exhibition to present about the work at the ICPT Conference, knowing that the 'memory space' generated in the gallery had existed in my absence. The co-curator of the exhibition Yiannis Toumazis noted in the exhibition catalogue:

> [*Father-land*] challenges a patriarchal, colonial aspect of an island where the dependence on the motherlands, Greece and Turkey, and also the desired annexation to the latter, constituted a key argument for both sides for a series of

118.*Layers of Visibility* exhibition review, translated from the original Greek.

> violent and bloody incidents, climaxing in the Turkish invasion of July 1974 and the continuing division of Cyprus. (Toumazis, 2018, p.76)

Screening the film in an auditorium just metres from where I had placed the camera to observe the Buffer Zone generated a frisson of otherworldliness. Filming in this politically charged location and exhibiting the work there, collapsed the pro-filmic space and the afilmic reality. The sound design of the film blended with the city soundscape beyond the Gallery. Audience members would have passed through the landscape on their way to NiMAC that they were now watching on the screen. In fact, the screen was in a sense a window to the cityscape beyond.