

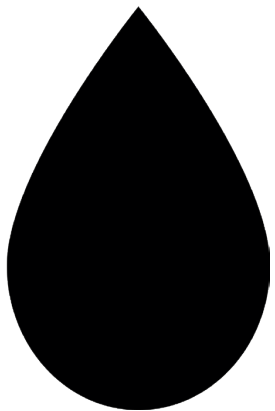
WATER
HEAVY

Heavy Water is an artist collective that draws from archives and collections to create artworks that reclaim narratives in a contemporary context. The project manifests through research collaborations, exhibitions and public programme with specific archives, collections, museums and galleries both nationally and internationally. The Heavy Water Collective comprises Maud Haya-Baviera, Victoria Lucas and Joanna Whittle.

The three of us began working together in 2020, developing the exhibition Heavy Water at Site Gallery in Sheffield as part of the Freelands Artist Programme. Since this important exhibition, we have undertaken research and production residencies with the support of organisations such as g39, Special Collections at Cardiff University, Künstlerhaus Dortmund and the Sheffield General Cemetery Trust; with funding from the Four National International Fund and the University of Central Lancashire.

The aim of the project is to generate an archive of artefacts that are currently situated at different sites, in addition to an accumulation of decolonial practice. For example, during our research residency at G39 in 2022 we first engaged with a selection of artefacts held in the Special Collections at Cardiff University, before working from the G39 Library developing visual responses to the objects found. Artefacts relating to witchcraft, religion, childbirth, war and cartography became important themes in relation to critiquing aspects of colonial capitalism. In 2023 we took our findings to Künstlerhaus Dortmund, who are hosting an event to conclude the partnership.

In 2022, we undertook an artist residency at Sheffield General Cemetery, supported by the Place and Communities Research Group at the University of Central Lancashire. During this residency, we focussed on Victorian symbols of cultural appropriation, rituals of mourning and the capitalist shift from commerce to industry. We have also been successful in securing research funding to develop an evolving online publication to house the project, so that artefacts and documents studied from different sites generate a new collection of objects and artworks in a way that reveals histories and speculative futures.





Heavy Water, Site Gallery Installation. 2021



Victoria Lucas



Joanna Whittle



Joanna Whittle



Maud Haya-Baviera



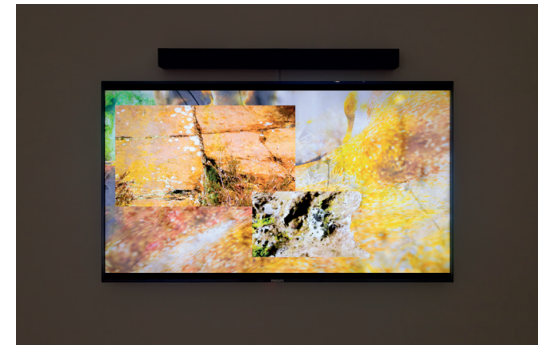
Victoria Lucas



Maud Haya-Baviera



Joanna Whittle



Victoria Lucas

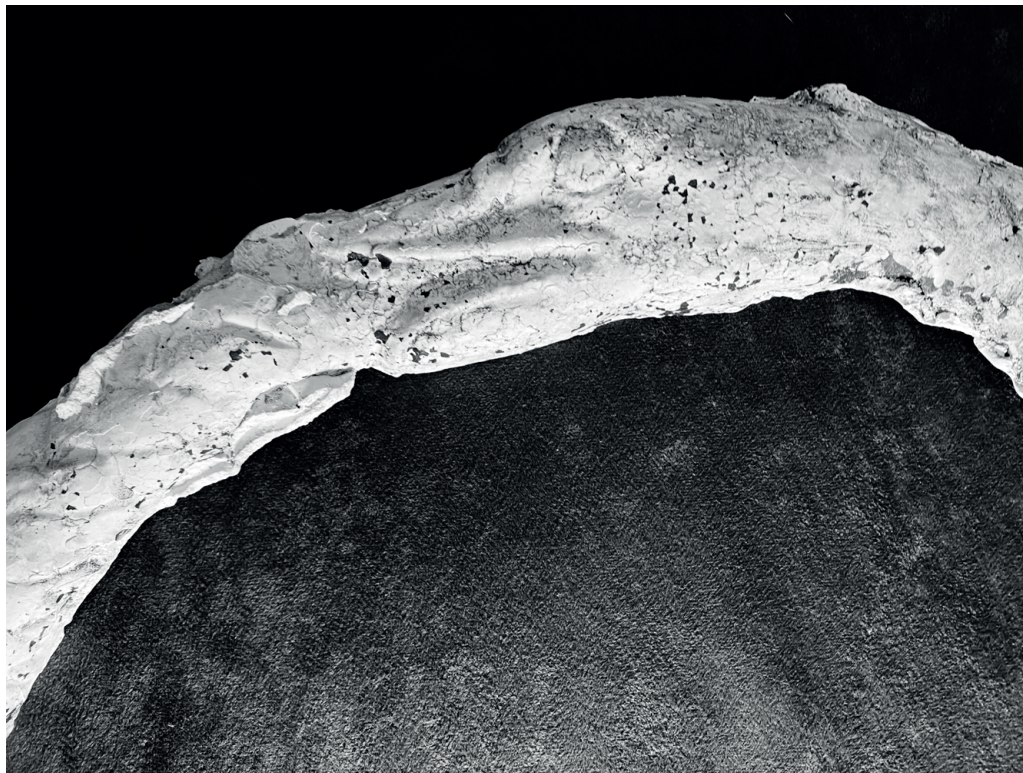
HEAVY WATER

Heavy Water is an evolving research project and collective that explores the reclamation of narratives in response to remnants associated with human activity. It manifests through research collaborations, exhibitions and public programme. The project takes its name from a form of water with a unique atomic structure often used for the stabilisation of volatile matter. Its materiality is mystical, permeating organic bodies, calming violent creations, grounding and giving weight to something fluid and intangible. It is representative of the processes of investigation and methods of making developed in response to shared subject matter.

The first iteration of the project was a group exhibition exploring humanity, transience and the lure of the natural world; from rituals of mourning to the secrets of matriarchal moss colonies and the historic migration of humans across lands in the search of peace or freedom. It was first shown at Site Gallery in Sheffield in 2021. Through this subsequent research project, the artists seek to further investigate the interwoven themes present in their respective practices, while developing new ways of working in collaboration with each other through researching archives, collections and artefacts. Through their respective artistic research, they focus on the reclamation of narratives in response to the gathered remnants associated with human activity.

Contemporary rituals are created from imagined past rites, symbiotic sorrows are conjured as a way to resist colonial capitalism, cultural artefacts are reformulated to reveal brutal truths. Accepting that there is no comfort of truth to be found in history and its past rituals, their work explores the creation of new histories as a way to address the reality of what humanity has wrought upon the world, while openly confronting our new environment and our responsibility for future history. This can only come with the contagion of history - the dark matter that precedes this reemergence.

The project generates a digital archive of artifacts from a variety of geographical locations. The Heavy Water Collective are working to form new networks and partnerships with specific archives, collections, museums and galleries, both nationally and internationally, in order to unearth new ways of being-in-the-world through the objects encountered. Respective interests are tied to the materiality of the land and humans' engagement with it culturally, economically, politically, socially and spiritually. Interpretations of specific archives and collections through creative research projects and subsequent exhibitions will generate new insights that seek to create stability and stillness amidst the turbulence of global uncertainty.

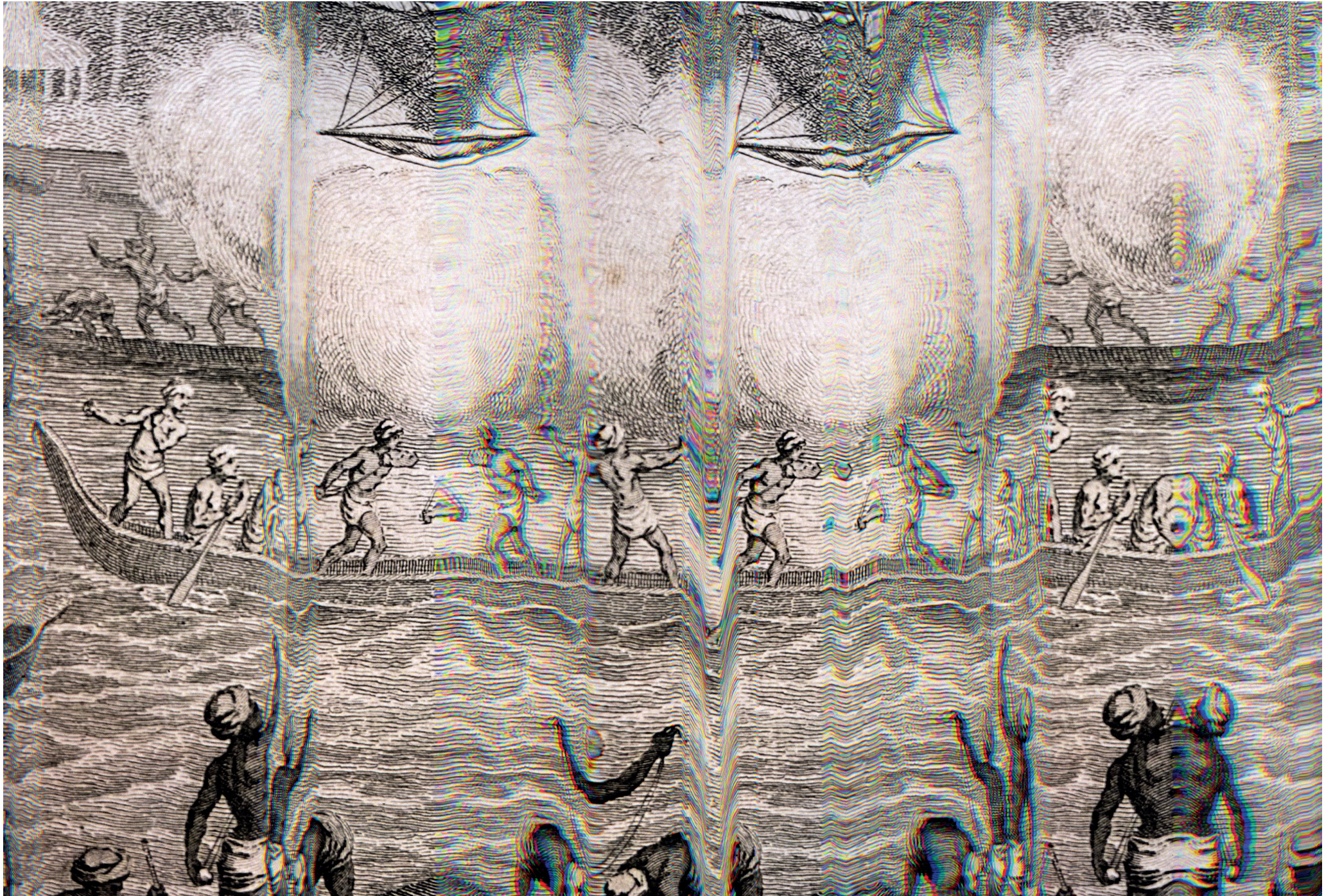


Victoria Lucas



Research and Events during residencies at g39 and Sheffield General Cemetery.





Partners:

<https://g39.org/>

g39 is home to Wales' largest artist-run gallery and creative community for the visual arts. Established in Cardiff, g39 became a charity in 2019 and works as a bridge between communities, the public and artists. Artists are at the heart of g39's activities.

<https://www.cardiff.ac.uk/special-collections>

Special Collections and Archives was set up in 2005 to build, safeguard, and promote engagement with Cardiff University's vast collection of unique and distinctive resources. They hold rare books dating back to the 15th century.

<https://www.kh-do.de/>

Künstlerhaus Dortmund has been run by artists since 1983 as a studio and exhibition space for contemporary and experimental art. It is part of a vibrant art scene and has for years been a highly valued cultural stakeholder within the Ruhr area of Germany.

Partners:

<https://www.sitegallery.org/>

Site Gallery is Sheffield's international contemporary art space, specialising in moving image, new media and performance.

<https://freelandsfoundation.co.uk/>

The Foundation's mission is to support artists and cultural institutions, to broaden access to art education and the visual arts across the UK.

<https://www.creativescotland.com/>

The Four Nations International Fund supports individuals and organisations in developing international partnerships and co-creation projects.

<https://www.uclan.ac.uk/>

The University of Central Lancashire offers a vibrant and world-class research environment, matched by excellent facilities, comprehensive research support and award-winning training opportunities.

Partners:

<https://www.sheffieldmuseums.org.uk/>

In 2021, the Graves Gallery began a five-year programme of redisplay generously supported by the Ampersand Foundation. Each year, 40% of the displays are rehung, allowing visitors to enjoy even more of the city's collection.

<https://gencem.org/>

Opened in 1836 and with the last burial in 1978, the cemetery is now preserved as a valuable green space in the heart of Sheffield.

<https://www.aw-ar.studio/>

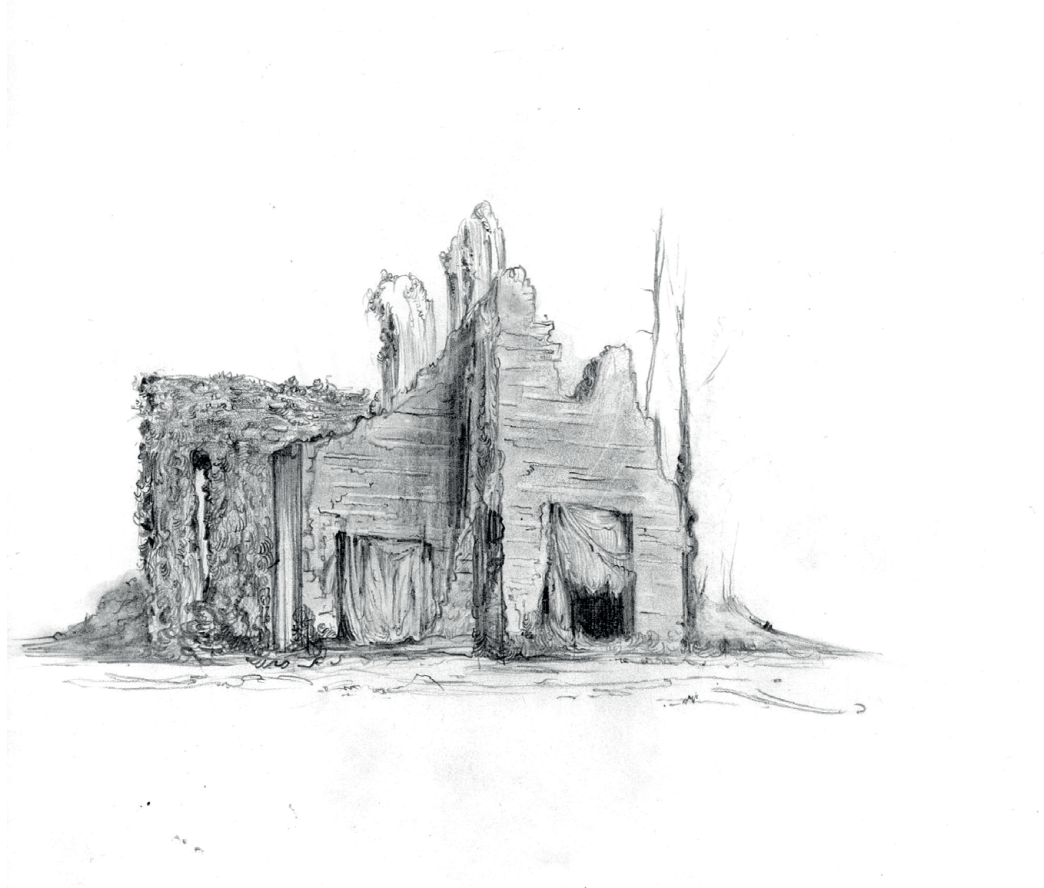
Studio AW—AR is a multi-disciplinary design studio, founded by Alexandra Watson and Andrew Robinson.

<https://www.blocstudios.co.uk/>

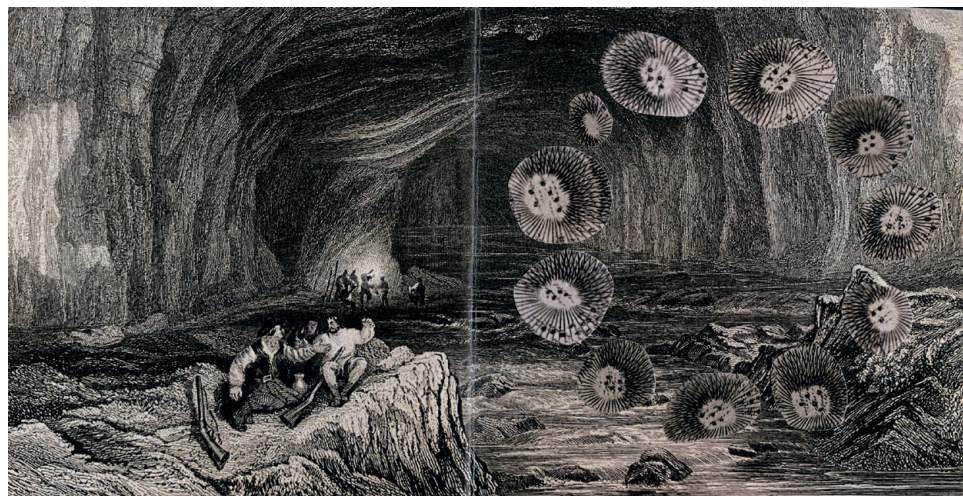
Bloc Studios was founded in 1996 by four art graduates and remains an artist led initiative to this day.



Victoria Lucas

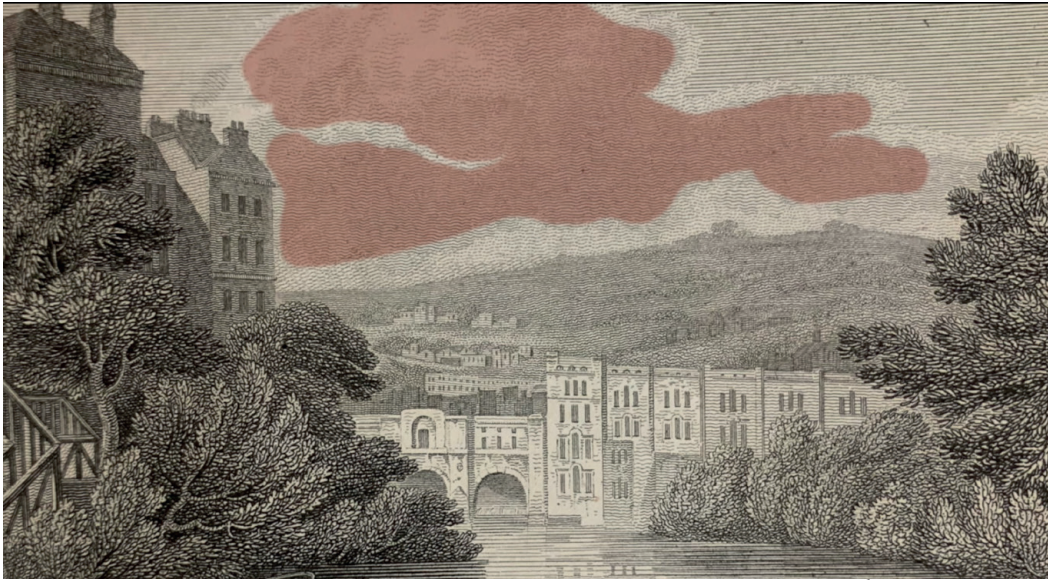


Joanna Whittle



Victoria Lucas

Artworks and Research Developed at g39,
in Response to Cardiff University's Special
Collections.



Maud Haya-Baviera



Maud Haya-Baviera



Joanna Whittle

In Maud Haya-Baviera's practice, cultural artefacts become a catalyst for change. An extraction of history takes place, as narratives, places and images are mined, cut and reformed. Constructed sounds wail out from its history, squeezed through time and flattened out into a dissociated and unsettling other narrative. These works form a paradox of an archival record of these now-times, as we sift through what has been to find answers, solutions and new ways of being among the ruins of colonialism.

Haya-Baviera has exhibited her work in a solo capacity and in group shows nationally and internationally and has received a number of awards in relation to international projects and towards the production of new works. Recent exhibitions include Brewers Towner International, Towner Gallery, Eastbourne (2022/2023), Things Fall Apart, Haarlem Artspace, Wirksworth (solo exhibition) (2022), Stories, Bankley Gallery, Manchester (2022), Aggregate, Freelands Foundation, London (2022), Heavy Water, Site gallery, Sheffield (2021), Big Screen Southend, Focal Point Gallery, Southend on Sea (2021), Talking Sense, The Portico Library, Manchester (2020), Some Palaces, Künstlerhaus Dortmund, Germany (solo exhibition) (2019), SALTO Verbindt, Amsterdam, The Netherlands (2019), Doc/Fest, Global Citizens Strand screenings, Sheffield (2019), In Common, The University of Derby, UK (2019), Anonyme Zeichner, Galerie im Körnerpark, Berlin, Germany (2018), Moving Image Festival, Balaclafa Carn, Caernarfon, Wales (2018), Traverse Vidéo, Institut Supérieur d'Arts, Toulouse, France (2017), Objets Singuliers, 34th Festival International De Court Métrage, Aix-en-Provence, France (2016), Contemporary Art Ruhr, Directors Lounge, Essen Zollverein, Germany (2016). Recent commissions include a public artwork for ARTHOUSES LOCALwifi, displayed in the coastal town of Whitley Bay (2021) and a podcast for Montez Press Radio, archived and broadcasted in Sheffield, UK, New York, USA and Berlin, Germany (2022). Haya-Baviera is also preparing a solo show at Haarlem Artspace, Wirksworth, which will open next year. Haya-Baviera has recently completed a two-year artist residency programme at Site Gallery, as part of Platform20 and the Freelands Artist Programme, and she is currently a Lecturer and Researcher at Sheffield Hallam University. Her work has appeared in various publications and has been written about by Zoe Sawyer (Curator at Eastside Project), Lauren Velvick (Director at Corridor 8) and Angelica Sule (Programme Director at Site Gallery).



Maud Haya-Baviera, *Things Fall Apart*, 4K video, 5' 25", 2020.



Victoria Lucas, *Coalesce*, oval video projection, 2021 & *Aggregated Form*, Large Scale Photograph on Fabric and plaster cast, 2020.

Victoria Lucas' work is a process of unearthing and reforming, so that entangled matter solidifies the absence that burgeons with the present. Colonies of moss cover quarried scars in the earth, softening and quieting wounds. Her technologically-led explorations present something that is both new and ancient, generating a ritualistic way of describing topographies in a way that we are able to lay down in them. Verdant moss covers dry maps, folded in drawers, with long dried ink fading into water-brown. The work itself becomes an artefact of this new describing. These visual methods of remapping speak of a posthuman re-connection with non-human bodies, as a process of reclamation.

Victoria Lucas has shown extensively in group and solo exhibitions. She is a Senior Lecturer in Fine Art at the University of Central Lancashire, where she successfully submitted a double weighted output to the Research Excellence Framework in 2021, and has recently been awarded a Research Sabbatical to develop research outputs with the Heavy Water Collective. Lucas is currently undertaking a practice-led PhD at Sheffield Hallam University, entitled *Reclamation Ground: Reconstituting Place and Female Subjectivities through Artistic Practice*, and explores how the materiality of post-industrial landscapes may be used to deconstruct and reconstitute female subjectivity. Her artistic research has been shown most recently in Aggregate, Freelands Foundation, London (2022), The Strata of Things at Threshold Sculpture, Leeds (2021), Heavy Water at Site Gallery, Sheffield (2021), Where Rock and Hard Place Meet at Haarlem Artspace, Wirksworth (2018) and The Search at The Hepworth, Wakefield (2021). Commissions include *Tessellate*, a body of site-responsive work for Iodeposito, Italy (2022) and *Conflict*, a video artwork for the National Portrait Gallery, London (2014). Lucas also curates projects, and is currently working towards a curatorial commission at Graves Art Gallery in Sheffield which will open in Spring 2023. She won the SOLO award™ in 2016 and has artworks in both public and private collections. She has presented her artistic research at the Art and the Rural Imagination Conference, programmed by More than Ponies, in 2020, and at the Overwhelming Imaginations Conference at the SiShang Art Museum, Beijing, in 2016.

These seductively detailed and miniature paintings draw the viewer into an uneasy, unpeopled world. The temporary structures depicted sink into motile, flooded land, acting as fragile ruins of the recent past with the unsettling sense of a recently departed presence. Makeshift shrines are depicted in dark forests, evidencing the human trace in accumulated acts of mourning. Throughout her work Whittle explores themes of ungroundedness and loss; of shifting perspectives and hidden activities and their fragile residue in the landscape. In both practices she presents the intangible as credible and explores different methods of display to authenticate this uncertainty.

Whittle is a member of the Contemporary British Painting Society, winning the prize in 2019 and selecting for it in 2021. She has undertaken numerous solo projects and has shown extensively in group exhibitions. In 2020 she was awarded Arts Council funding to work with the Portland Collection exploring the construction of narratives through artefact creation and display and more recently has been awarded an ACE Project Grant for her current research project with the National Fairground and Circus Archive at Sheffield University, exploring themes of ungroundedness in fairground architecture and the landscapes surrounding them. This will culminate in a solo exhibition in 2023. Earlier this year she displayed a new collection of works at Millenium Gallery, Sheffield, following a period of research collaboration with Sheffield University archaeologist Dr Elizabeth Craig-Atkins, exploring themes of mourning in the landscape and material culture. She is a member of the Landscape Research Group focused on exploring landscape in relation to its history and contemporary issues. She is also a member of the Guild of St George who are keepers of the Ruskin Collection held at Sheffield Museum, collaborating with academics and artists globally to explore issues facing society and the environment today. She is currently exhibiting her work in a solo exhibition at the Whitaker Museum alongside artefacts from their permanent collection. Later this year her work will be appearing in *Entwined: Plants in Contemporary Panting* at Huddersfield Art Gallery in association with the Contemporary British Painting Society, Kirklees Council and Kew Gardens. She will also be exhibiting at High Lines public gallery in Drogheda, Ireland, in an exhibition bringing Irish and British artists together. Her work has been written about by Griselda Pollock, Albert Godetzky (Courtauld institute) & Lauren Velvick (Corridor 8).



Joanna Whittle, *Sorrowing Cloth*, oil on copper. 10 x 15cm, 2020.



Heavy Water, Site Gallery Installation. 2021

HEAVY WATER

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Instagram

[@maud_haya](#) // [@victoria_lucas_gallery](#) // [@jowhittleart](#)

heavywater.info

HEAVY WATER

Research Outputs

Artist Pages

BECCA + CLARE
BROWN&BRI
JANE BUTLER
JAMES CLARKSON
MITCH CONLON
FREYA DOOLEY
REBECCA GOULD
MAUD HAYA-BAVIERA
JENNY HOGARTH
RHIANNON LOWE
VICTORIA LUCAS
JASMIN MÄRKER
WILL ROBERTS
CONOR ROGERS
SARAH ROSE
RAE-YEN SONG
EOTHEN STEARN
NEASA TERRY
THOMAS WELLS
JOANNA WHITTLE
MONA YOO

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WILL ROBERTS
CONOR ROGERS
SARAH ROSE
RAE-YEN SONG
EOTHEN STEARN
NEASA TERRY
THOMAS WELLS
JOANNA WHITTLE
MONA YOO

Freelands Foundation



Aggregate Publication 2022

Aggregate 2022 is a publication that reflects upon two years of activity from the second cohort of artists participating in the Freelands Artist Programme (2019-21). Its relevance to this research lies in the section regarding my work, which is written by Freelands Foundation curator Meghan Goodeve, and details the works developed for the Heavy Water exhibition at Site Gallery in 2021.

Launched in 2018, Freelands Artist Programme is a landmark initiative to support emerging artists across the UK. Its aim is to nurture emerging artists' practices by fostering long-term relationships and collaborations with arts organisations, helping to bolster regional arts ecosystems. Four organisations across the UK – g39, Cardiff; PS2, Belfast; Site Gallery, Sheffield; and Talbot Rice Gallery, Edinburgh – care for five artists each, working with them for two years.

Published alongside the exhibition taking place in Freelands Foundation London gallery space, Aggregate 2022 brings together the practices of 21 artists, with a breadth of ideas and approaches. Each artist was invited to put forward an author to write about their distinctive practices, and the book carries a multiplicity of voices: artists, activists academics, curators and writers.

<https://freelandsfoundation.co.uk/publication/aggregate-2022>

VICTORIA LUCAS

Site Gallery, Sheffield

I AM THE ROCK, I AM THE MOSS, I AM THE LANDSCAPE

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Meghan Goodeve

A forest of *Polytrichum commune* moss covers the central space of the quarry bottom. The colony stand tall, a small thriving forest of vibrant, illuminous green. She populates a wound inflicted on the land by the hands of men – protecting the raw cut of the rock with a film of living matter. Photosynthesis is palpable, the whole space feels alive – electric – and the longer I stay the more I become part of it. My senses heighten, my pupils dilate. I become animal – I am an animal – and she holds me in her wisdom.¹

A disembodied voice narrates a virtual 3D model of a disused quarry as the visuals spin over the surface of the screen in layers. Your eye is taken through the forms of the rock, exploring the scars caused by excavation of the gritstone, then softening into the texture of the moss. Victoria Lucas first came across this landscape in 2018 during an art residency in Wirksworth, Derbyshire. This encounter has led to a deep connection to this land and a body of work exhibited at Site Gallery's *Platform 20: Heavy Water* exhibition (2021). *Aggregated Form* (2020), *Coalesce* (2021), *Entanglement* (2021) and *Formations* (2020) each explore an alternative reality created by Lucas through the technological manipulation of matter, taking form through her imagined possibilities for the strata and flora of this site.

The video *Entanglement* sits quietly in the corner of the gallery. A reserved screen-based work, which asks you to stop and take notice. There is a fluidity between Lucas and the landscape; she recognises herself, her ancestors and her future offspring in this quarry, as she comments on her experience with this site:

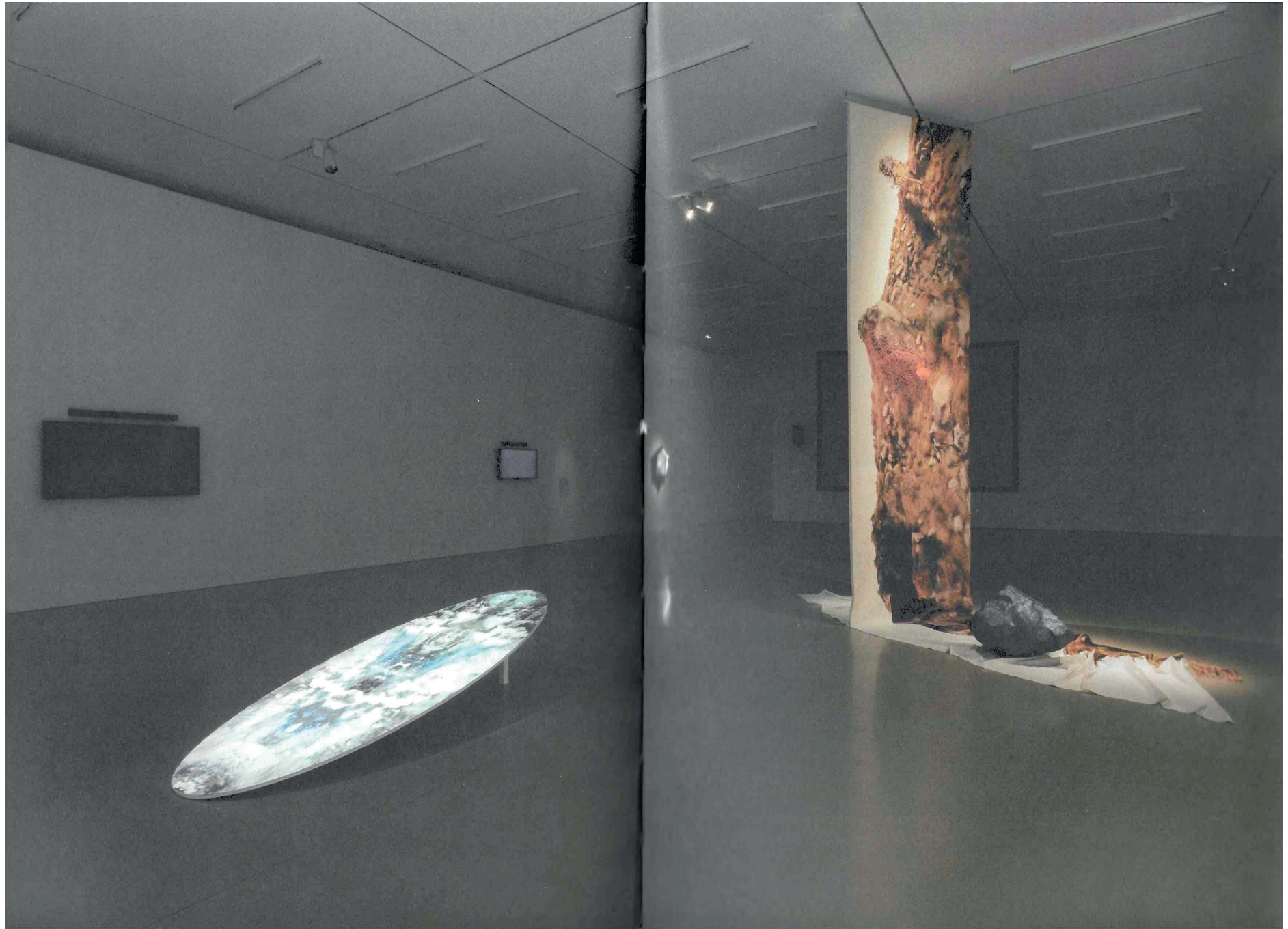
I thought about my dead mother, about my Northern working-class heritage and what that now means to me as I approach the age my mother was when she died. I thought about survival and endurance. I wanted to truly connect to this part of myself, so that I could learn about my own subjectivity in relation to the land.²

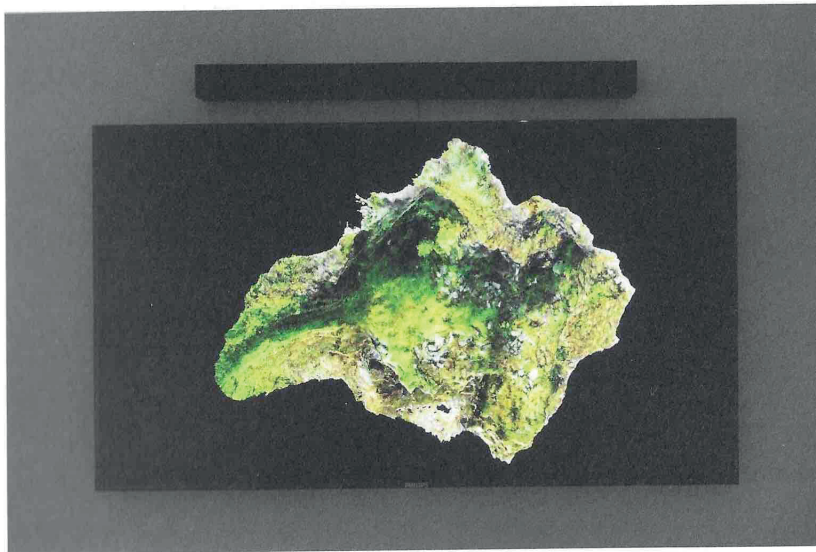
Lucas's relationship to the land doesn't end with her own personal history, but addresses pressing political and environmental issues impacting us on a global level. *Formations* is a series of seven photographs taken by Lucas where the quarry landscape is printed onto fabric, forming a blanket. In each, she folds the fabric around her, enveloping herself and masking her own form. You cannot be certain where her body stops and the landscape begins.

Lucas understands her own connection to landscape as a way of opposing extractive capitalism. For centuries, humans profited from the land through quarry mining, valuing the ability to turn the earth's resources into income over the value of nature itself. Lucas sees this in direct relation to how the structure of capitalism enables humans with capital to exploit the bodies of those with less. This relationship between body and nature, human and non-human, is at the core of her thinking and through her work she addresses this by foregrounding our resilience, survival and regeneration within a broader context of environmental catastrophe and advanced capitalism. She imagines alternative narratives for her connection to the land, understanding her body as nature and not as 'human'.

For Lucas, this stance is resoundingly feminist.







To return once more to *Entanglement*:

The moss is magnificently hormonal. Radiating the essence of their matriarchal powers, their daughters thrive out of the violence that ravaged the earth. Their skill and resilience is powerfully silent ... their quiet knowing fills the quarry. I unwittingly lay upon a bed of radical feminists, and I can feel their power on my skin, in my lungs, in my blood. Here, I melt into her presence silently and all that I am is reclaimed by her.³

When visiting the quarry for the first time Lucas was surprised to find this plant flourishing. She understands this as an activist gesture, an example of how nature can use the geological disturbances inflicted on the land to its advantage. She adopts nature's tenacity to survive to imagine a radical feminist future, drawing a connection between the moss and women both past and future.

In the video projection *Coalesce*, Lucas's own documentary imagery sits alongside found footage and a virtual model of the quarry. The film starts with the low grumble of explosions on the earth's surface, exposing the brutal means of extraction. The quarry scan pulsates, giving way to birdsong and images of moss which begin to populate the screen. The artist's voice chants and hums, almost in a meditative trance. Images of moss are manipulated through reflection and repetition, creating abstract forms that move across the film; at times these forms relate to the body, resulting in moments where you can see female shapes emerging. Though these images surfaced unexpectedly in the editing process, they remind us of the blurring boundaries between the body and the geological landscape.

In *Aggregated Form* it appears that nature has reclaimed the human body entirely. A long length of fabric hangs from the ceiling, draping and gathering at the bottom. Where the fabric runs along the gallery floor, a plaster cast taken from the quarry sits on top, pinning it in place. Geological forms are printed across the fabric's surface, created using a photogrammetric method traditionally used

for creating 3D virtual models. Standing 5m high, the work reminds us of the monumental force of nature and our own humility.

These four works bring together years of research and experimentation that chime with urgent and global conversations today. Lucas creates a world in which we can all imagine an alternative future for ourselves. She reminds us that we don't own the earth, we belong to it.

Victoria Lucas is an artist who combines photogrammetry and 3D modelling with sculptural, video and photographic processes.

Meghan Goodeve is Freelands Artist Programme Leader.

- 1 Victoria Lucas, *Entanglement*, video transcript, 2021.
- 2 Victoria Lucas, 'Posthuman Entanglements: Reclaiming Female Subjectivity in the Skin of Nature', lecture, Konstfack, Sweden, 12 May 2021.
- 3 Victoria Lucas, *Entanglement*, video transcript, 2021.

List of Works

- p.165 top: Victoria Lucas, *Formations 1-7*, A2 digital prints, installation view, *Platform 20: Heavy Water*, Site Gallery, Sheffield, 2021. Photo: Jules Lister
- bottom left: Victoria Lucas, *Formations 2*, A2 digital print, 59 × 42 cm, 2020
- bottom right: Victoria Lucas, *Formations 6*, A2 digital print, 59 × 42 cm, 2020
- pp.166-167 left: Victoria Lucas, *Platform 20: Heavy Water*, installation view, *Coalesce*, 2021, Site Gallery, Sheffield, 2021. Photo: Jules Lister
- right: Victoria Lucas, *Platform 20: Heavy Water*, installation view, *Aggregated Form*, 2020, Site Gallery, Sheffield, 2021. Photo: Jules Lister
- p.168 top: Victoria Lucas, *Entanglement*, digital video, 9 min, installation view, *Platform 20: Heavy Water*, Site Gallery, Sheffield, 2021. Photo: Jules Lister
- bottom: Victoria Lucas, *Entanglement*, digital video (still), 9 min, 2021





Aggregate 2022

An exhibition bringing together the work of 21 artists working across the UK in the Freelands Artist Programme

This exhibition brought together the work of 21 artists working across the UK, including artists based in Cardiff, Belfast, Edinburgh and Sheffield. Sculpture, sound works, textiles, print, written word, film and installation, painting and site-specific interventions were installed throughout Freelands Foundation's London building, offering an insight into new approaches to making and the most urgent topics being considered by artists today. Interspersed with artworks that invited moments of contemplation, this exhibition encouraged a re-examination of our own positions within contemporary cities and systems.

Conversations unfolded between works that addressed the individual concerns of each artist by re-imagining the world we live in, including works that interrogate our current conditions and construct alternative spaces to occupy – from a never-to-make-it noise band to an imagined matriarchal moss colony. In other works, stories were woven together, treading the line between fiction and reality, drawing on mythology, histories and archives that range from Robinson Crusoe to a compendium of fourteenth century mythical biographies.

<https://freelandsfoundation.co.uk/exhibition/aggregate-2022>



Victoria Lucas, *Entanglement*, Freelands Foundation Installation. 2021



Victoria Lucas, *Entanglement*, Freelands Foundation Installation. 2021

Platform 20: Victoria Lucas



Commissioned Text by Lauren Velvick, Site Gallery Website. 2021

When we consider human influence on the land, how far back should we go? And, in the knowledge that what we are experiencing now is the product of interlinked networks of exchange and influence, how can we comprehend our place in it? For Victoria Lucas, a close relationship with one particular site has provided the ground for a much wider artistic investigation that approaches these questions. Spanning geological time, the history of human civilisation and her own family history, Lucas's current work touches on ideas from across the fields of geography, sociology and philosophy from a position of radical subjectivity. Amassing influences and references as aggregate, Lucas is also exploring her subjectivity as a woman within the agriculturally and industrially altered landscape. This is manifested by parallel explorations into the site; an abandoned and undesignated quarry in the North of England, and the artist's own personhood and personal history. As such, instead of text or data driven displays conveying factual information about geology, it is from tactile manifestations of softness interrupting and enveloping jagged edges that we can glean Lucas's intentions.

This impulse towards mending and softening – the dressing of wounds – is an inherent part of the process that created the works on show as part of *Heavy Water*, as well as being part of the artist's practice-based PhD. Employing a system of 'method testing' to find pathways towards new knowledge, Lucas tries out many possible actions and processes, and with this in mind it makes sense that her recent work seems to consist of incrementally evolving experiments. As well as cloaking and draping, other aesthetic mechanisms include mirroring and multiplication, conveying a sense of abundance and endlessness that serves to counteract the inherent devastation wrought by extraction. Material or bodily experiments are trialed, and then either discarded or carried onwards to crop up again. In *Heavy Water* Lucas shows a selection of the outcomes of these processes and experiments in different mediums, offering a variety of ways around her interests for the viewer, with the works also conversing with and reflecting each other.

While the site of Lucas's research is the quarry, it's fulcrum is the moss which has colonised this man-made rockface, and as she learnt more about the prehistoric lifeform it's poignancy and influence came to the fore. Citing texts such as *Gathering Moss* by Robin Wall Kimmerer (2003), *A Billion Black Anthropocenes or None* by Kathryn Yusoff (2019) and *Caliban and The Witch* by Silvia Federici (1998) Lucas has played out different ways of being in, of and with the landscape. The body of work on show at Site Gallery variously enfold the artist and the viewer within the material of the site; the rock of the quarry and the vegetation which has overtaken it. Being absorbed by the landscape also serves to obscure the artist's image, which is a further aspect of her aesthetic experimentation deserving of attention, and constitutes part of her investigations into female subjectivity. The difficulty of depicting a woman's body or face, especially within 'nature', without playing into a host of unsought connotations is dealt with by Lucas here through direct concealment and foregrounding of voice.

In *Formations* (2020) the artist herself is enclosed within an image of the quarry's green banks, reproduced as a blanket made from unnaturally soft and warm synthetic fibre. Whereas in *Entanglement* (2021) a digital rendering of the site is composed of many individual images through photogrammetry, and the viewer is drawn within the rock of the quarry as though through a glitch in the fabric of reality. This sense of things as fabric that can then be draped, ripped and reconstituted is present throughout, most obviously in *Aggregated Form* (2020) whereby a curtain on a scale similar to that of the quarry is printed with a tumble of rock and vegetation, presented vertically as though a horizon seen sideways. Nearby in *Coalesce* (2021), an oval shaped screen is positioned diagonally at an angle to the floor, and displays the aforementioned doubling and mirroring of the intricately textured surfaces of moss banks. With these works the viewer is brought into Lucas's research method and implicated as a body in proximity to images which variously hover, hang and flicker around us, enacting various flawed but hopeful possibilities for becoming with the landscape.

Words by Lauren Velvick

Lauren is a writer, curator and artist based in the North of England.

Header image: *Aggregated Form*, Large scale photograph on fabric, plaster cast, 2020.

Image 1: *Entanglement*, Artist Video, 2021, 09:00.

Image 2: *Coalesce*, Video Projection, 2021, 10:00.

Image 3: *Formations I – VII*, Limited Edition Photographic Series (1/30), 2020, 420 x 594mm.

About Platform 20:

Platform 20 took place in August 2021 and is part of the Platform artist development programme. The multi-site exhibition took place across Site Gallery Yorkshire Artspace and Bloc Projects, and featured new work from James Clarkson, Conor Rogers, Maud Haya-Baviera, Victoria Lucas and Joanna Whittle. Platform is an established artistic development programme at Site Gallery which allows artists to explore new ideas in a public space, testing new thinking and research with engaged audiences.

Platform is funded by The Freelands Foundation through the The Freelands Artists Programme. The Freelands Foundation was created to support artists and cultural institutions, to broaden audiences for the visual arts; and to enable all young people to engage actively with the creation and enjoyment of art.

Programme partners: [Site Gallery](#), [Bloc Projects](#), [Museums Sheffield](#), [S1 Artspace](#), and [Yorkshire Artspace](#).

Heavy Water Exhibition Programme, Site Gallery

As established, The Heavy Water Exhibition at Site Gallery was the beginning of this long-term research collaboration. The exhibition was also part of my PhD submission, which is why it is not listed as an output as part of this document. There were accompanying events that took place as part of the parallel programme, including an In-Conversation Event with curator Angelica Sule and the Heavy Water Collective, and a workshop entitled Journeys in to the Moss, which I developed alongside researcher Jamie Allan.

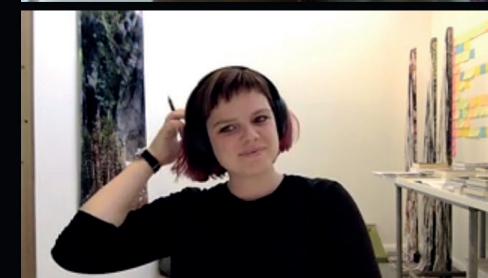
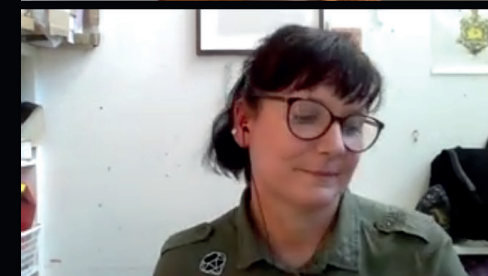
The in-conversation can be viewed here: <https://vimeo.com/784993257>

Since this exhibition and the accompanying events, the Heavy Water Collective have worked with Site Gallery to develop a Touring Pack, which has so far been circulated to Arnolfini (Bristol), Firstsite (Colchester), MIMA (Middlesbrough) and Newlyn (Cornwall) by Site Gallery. This is an ongoing partnership, and we hope that the touring show will grow over the coming years.

Recording... **LIVE** on Otter.ai (click here to open live transcript) ▾

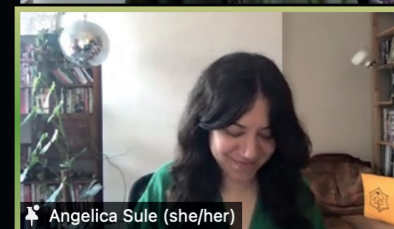
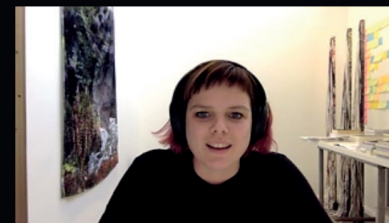
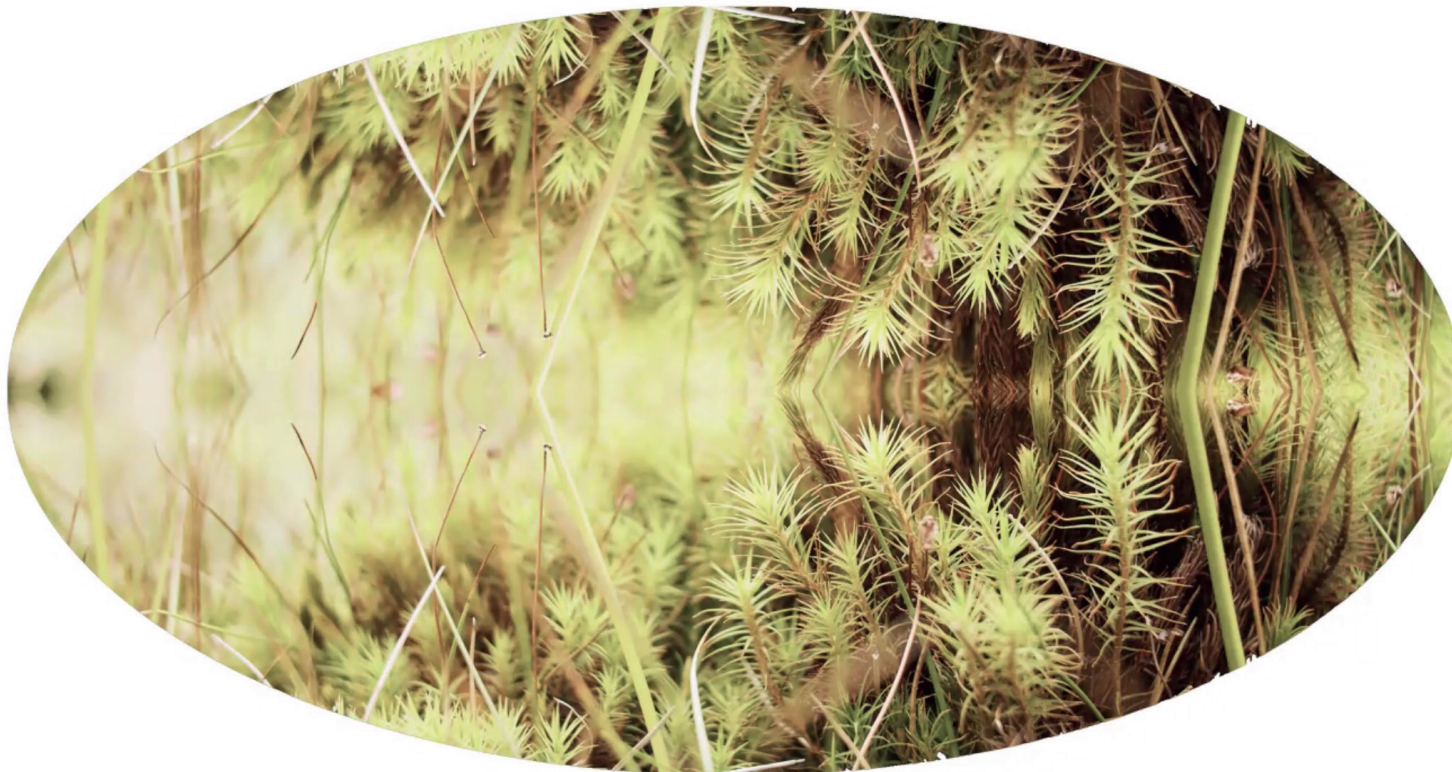


📌 Angelica Sule (she/her)



LIVE on Otter.ai (click here to open live transcript) ▾

Simon Le Ruez entered the waiting room [Admit](#) ✕



Journeys in to the Moss Workshop

19/08/2021

Mosses were the first plants to emerge from the waters, some 470 million years ago. Beside us on the pavement; resting above us on roofs; hugging rocks and trees – mosses are our omnipresent and often ignored ancestors. What might these living fossils teach us? What stories do they hold?

Taking references from scientific study and the radical space opened up when we shift from a human-centred perspective, this workshop is a collective journey through life at other scales.

Facilitated by Jamie Allan, and held in the main gallery at Site, the workshop began with a reading, followed by a guided imagination exercise. The session built towards a collective storytelling encounter, inspired by mosses and other small organisms. Participants were welcomed to share their impressions or to listen to others.

This workshop worked in dialogue with the work of Victoria Lucas in the Platform 20: Heavy Water exhibition.

Jamie Allan is an artist, filmmaker and curator with a background in documentary filmmaking and community cinema. His recent work revolves around the ecological reverberations of human histories, with a specific focus on the relations between animals and human border zones. He has a Masters in Documentary Film from the Doc-Nomads itinerant film school, and is currently a researcher with the Collective Practices Post-Master at the Royal Institute of Art, Stockholm.



Research Residency

G39, Cardiff

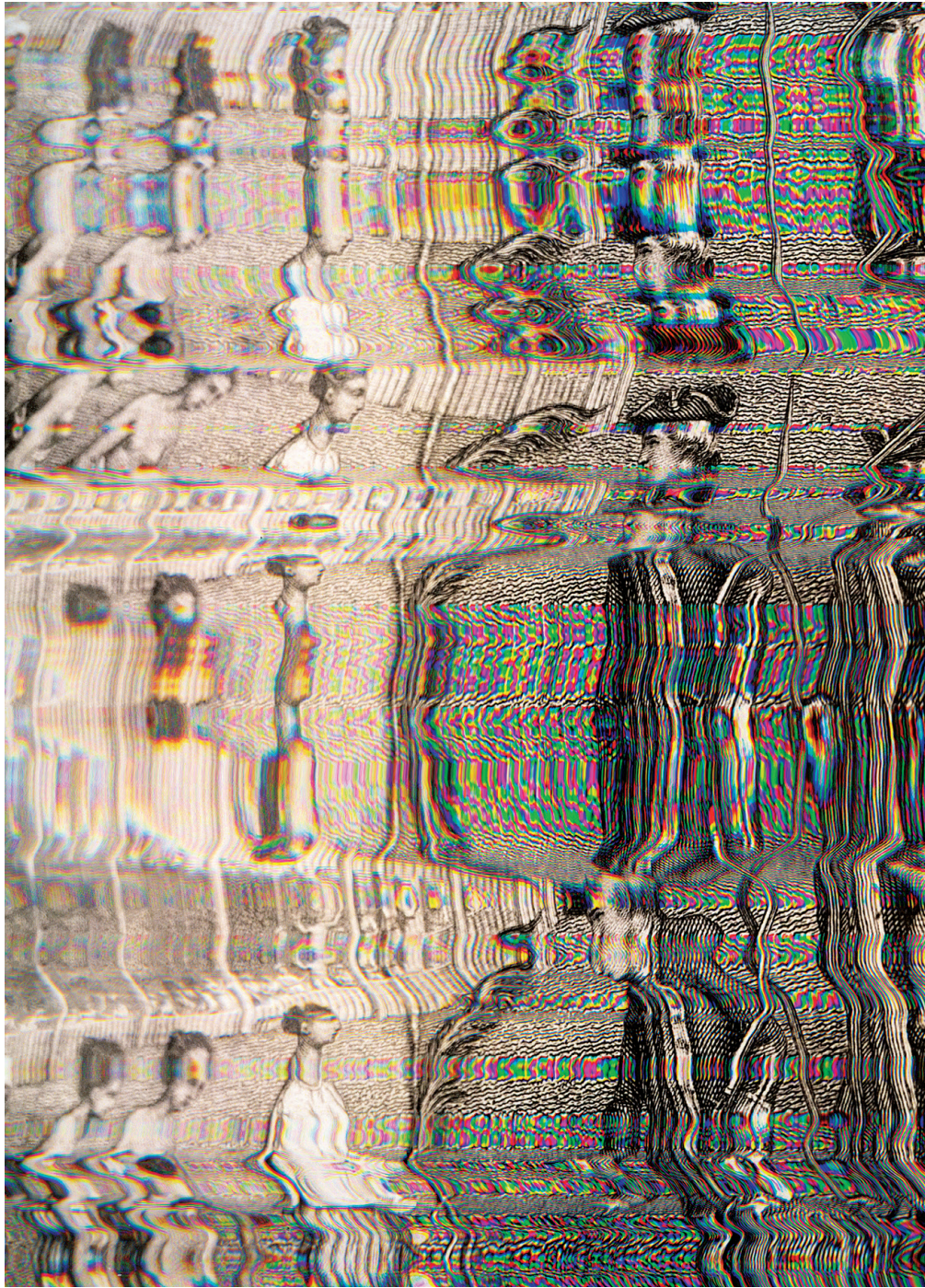
4th July - 9th July 2022

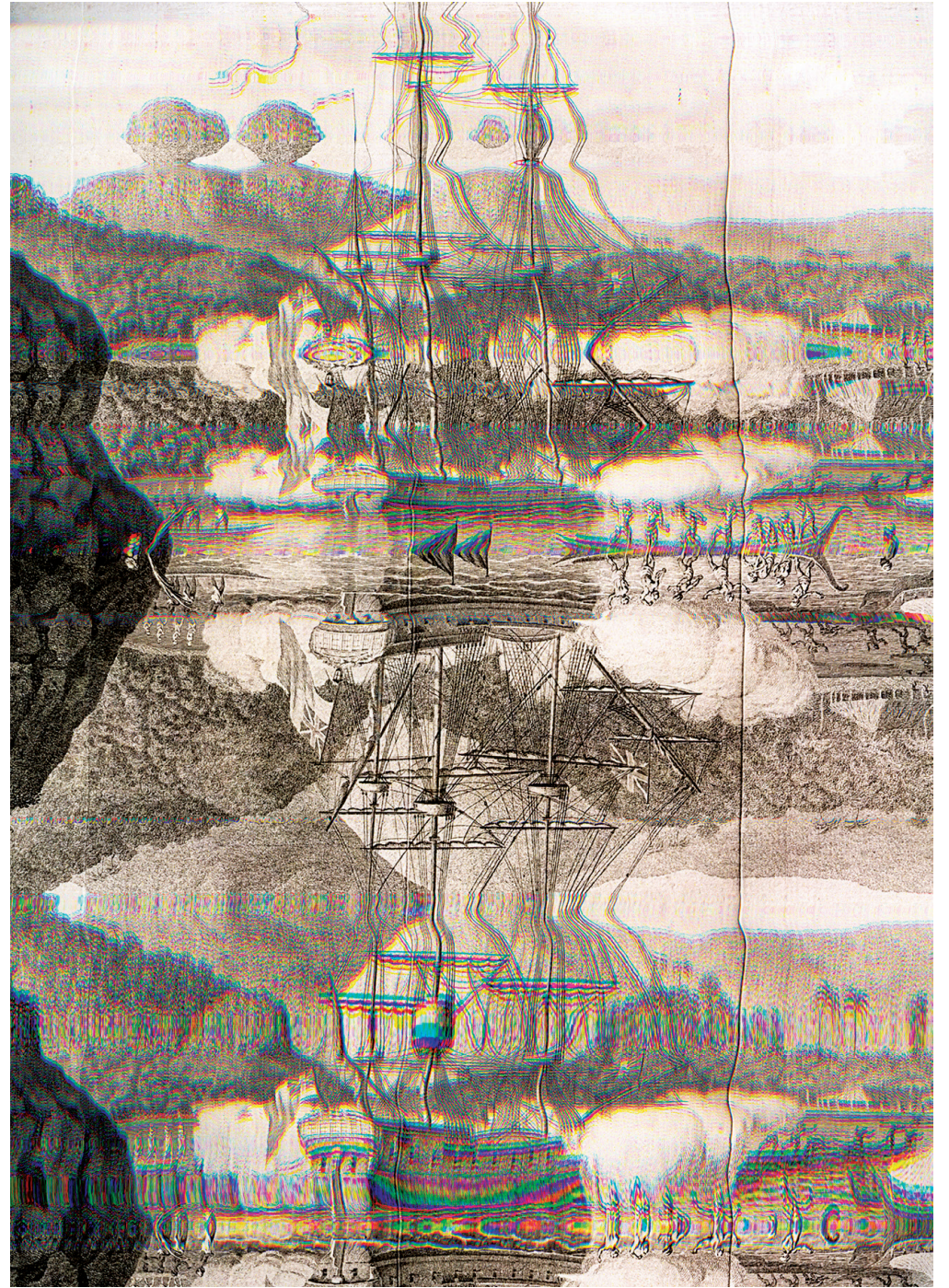
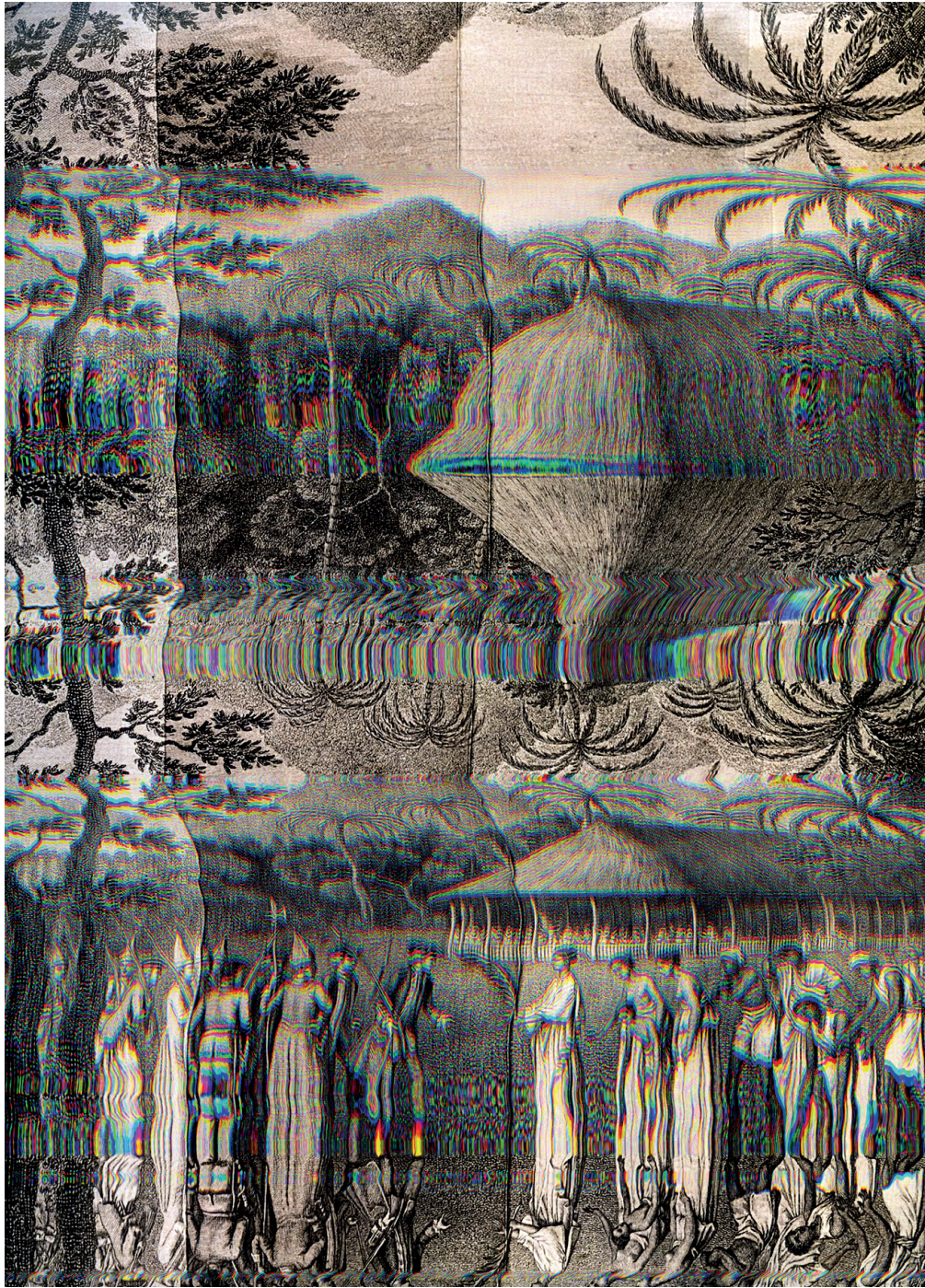
For their research Project at G39, the Heavy Water Collective engaged with a selection of artefacts held in the Special Collections at Cardiff University. Artefacts relating to witchcraft, religion, childbirth, colonialism, war and cartography have been central to the collectives' artistic research. The residency ended with an event, in which the Heavy Water Collective presented their findings (pictured).

Maud Haya-Baviera focusses on war correspondence and other historical materials that are able to convey a sense of narrative or self-narrative. She has started drawing relationships between past and current events, particularly those relating to propaganda and war-time. Through her research, she has found enticing visual material able to support a narrative thread, and which will become part of a new video work. Victoria Lucas has developed a constellation of images that bring together 18th Century bodies and landscapes in a way that confronts colonial practices and capitalist power. Ovaries sit alongside charted islands, depictions of colonisers are deconstructed and presented as brutally articulated forms, material traces are subverted and used as feminist amulets to ward off evil. Joanna Whittle examines texts that describe these times of chaos, where the devil walks the earth and the fires of hell openly burn in the unstable ground into which blasphemers plummet. Her drawings depict ruins constructed from theses layered and makeshift shrines, erected over and around them, and imagines the objects and talismans concealed in the pockets of shrouds.

This project has been generously supported by the Four Nations International Fund. The project will conclude with an in-conversation hosted by Künstlerhaus Dortmund in January 2023.









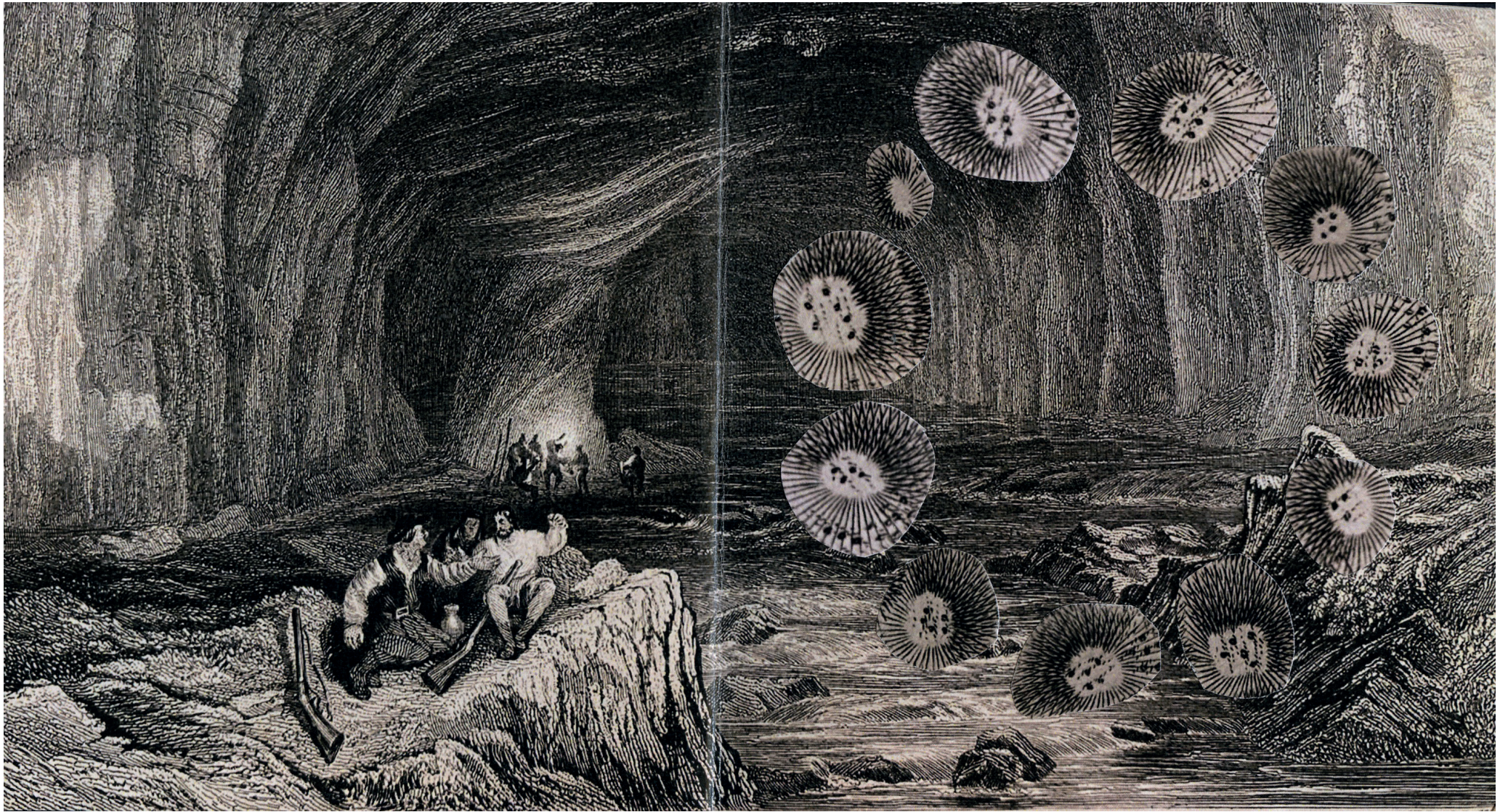
Artwork Examples:

Rupture I - V
2022

Framed Digital Print

In this series of images, Victoria Lucas has worked with digital technology to create a rupture in the fabric of these illustrations, which have been extracted from a 1773 account of the British colonisation of the Southern Hemisphere.

British depictions of their encounters with indigenous communities are torn apart through the glitch of the scanning process, creating space in-between the pixels for new narratives, perspectives, and becomings to emerge.



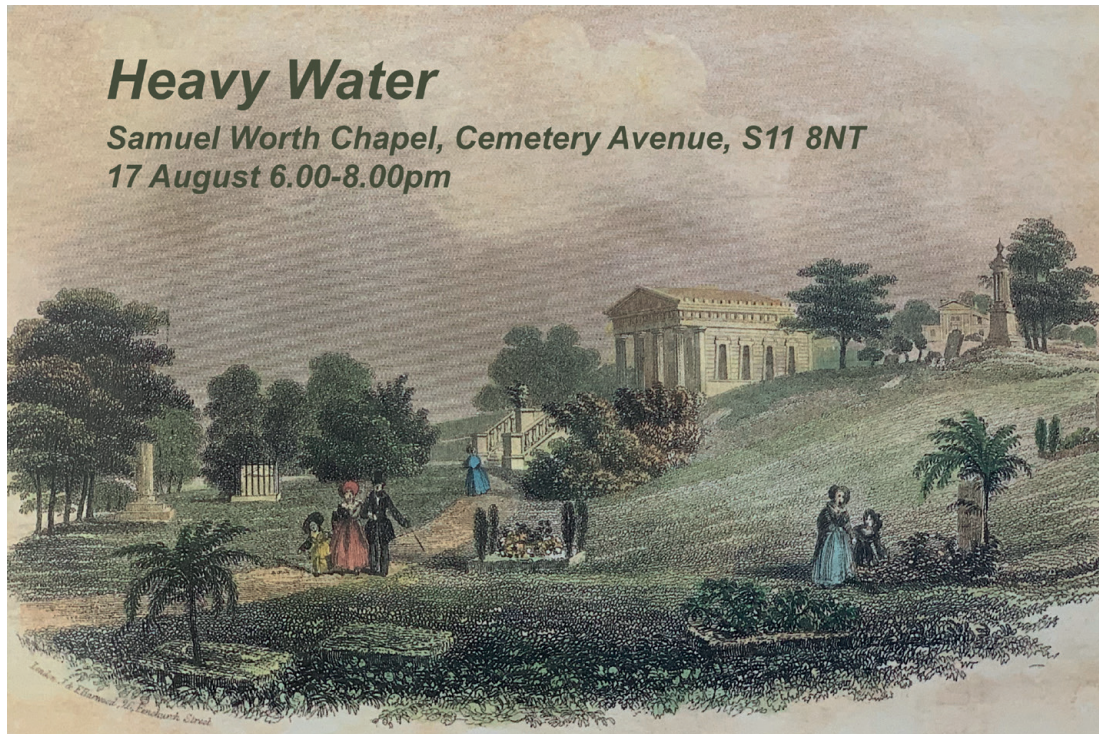
Victoria Lucas, Work-in-Progress, Collage in g39 Sketchbook, 2021



Research Residency: Sheffield General Cemetery

The Samuel Worth Chapel is situated in the Sheffield General Cemetery on Cemetery Road, and is the site of a Heavy Water research residency that interrogates historical narratives through the botanical, geological, mythological and architectural materialities encountered.

The Heavy Water Collective hosted an event that began with an informal talk, followed by refreshments and a chance to look at the research artefacts developed as part of this long term collaborative project.



Online Publication

The Heavy Water digital publication output consolidates and disseminates this research to a public audience. We seek to establish new knowledge in relation to underresearched collections and artefacts hidden in archives. The output seeks to unearth histories and contribute to an understanding of collective heritage through a reconstruction of geo-political terrains.

The publication will form a new multifaceted archive that connects objects across sites, with underlying themes of landscape, environment and cultural histories, to develop new insights that address societal issues faced today. Creating a rhizomatic depository, this output maps out new research that reframes engrained colonial, capitalist and humanist structures as a way to contribute to the discourse that confronts cultural, environmental and societal issues.

Link: The publication will be officially launched in March 2023

The following screen shots give an example of the website design, which has been developed in partnership with Studio AW-AR.

This Digital Publication has been funded by the University of Central Lancashire, and can be found here:

www.heavywater.info.

HEAVY
WATER

RESEARCH

WORKS

EXHIBITIONS



CONTACT@HEAVYWATER.INFO

ABOUT

VICTORIA LUCAS

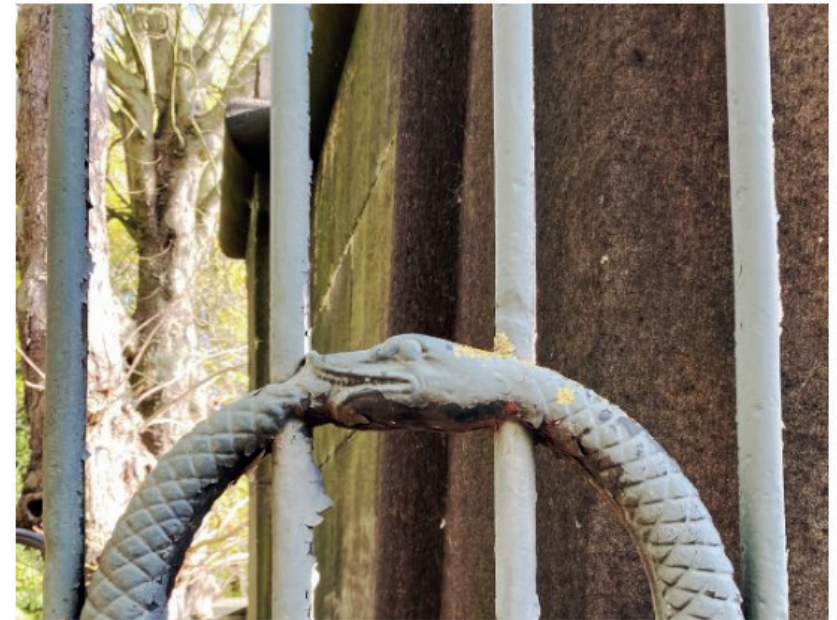
APPROPRIATED GESTURES, SYMBOLIC APPARITIONS

CONTACT@HEAVYWATER.INFO

The 'Egyptian Gate', situated at the top entrance to the non-conformist half of the Sheffield General Cemetery, appropriates iconography from a variety of belief systems; but most predominantly the influence is Egyptian. This style is a result of Napoleon's decision to include scholars in the invasion of Egypt as a part of his 1798 campaign. ¹ Their subsequent studies of this ancient culture became the foundation of Egyptology, and Egyptian-inspired design and symbol-

APPROPRIATED GESTURES, SYMBOLIC APPARITIONS

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The oldest-known ouroboros appeared on a golden shrine in the tomb of Tutankhamen – ‘King Tut’ – in Egypt in the 13th Century BC, after a brief lull in traditional religion brought about by his predecessor, Akhenaten. According to leading Egyptologist Jan Assmann, the symbol “refers to the mystery of cyclical time, which flows back into itself”. The ancient Egyptians understood time as a series of repetitive cycles, instead of something linear and constantly evolving; and central to this idea was the flooding of the Nile and the journey of the sun.

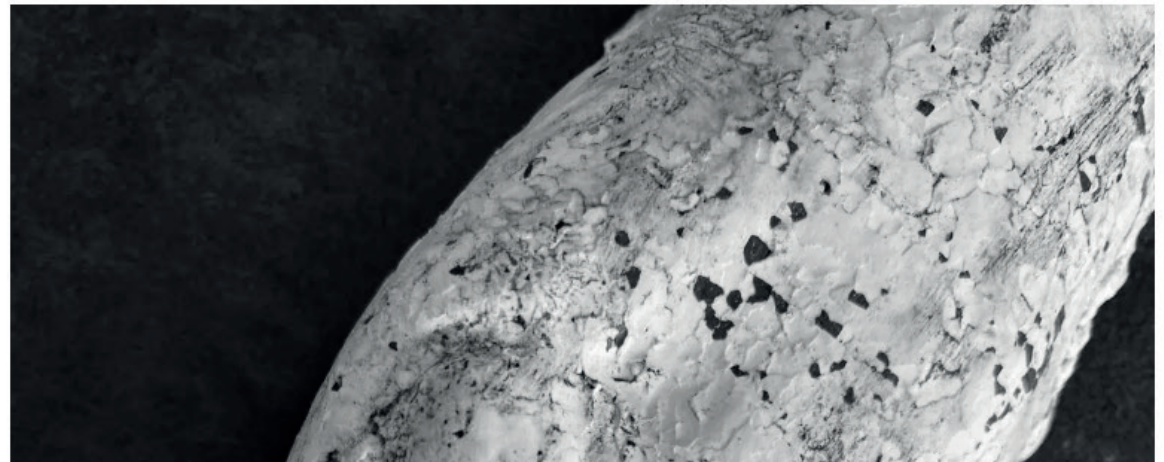
Joobin Bekhrad

OUROBOROS

² Bekhrad, J. (2017). 'The ancient symbol that spanned millennia' in BBC Culture [online] <https://www.bbc.com/culture/az...> [last accessed 16/10/22]

³ *ibid.*

The ouroboros symbol features in a number of ancient traditions, contexts and geographies, as Joobin Bekhrad has ascertained.² In addition to Egyptian symbolism, the 'tail devourer' is significant in Greek alchemy, Norse mythology, Hinduism, Iranian Mithraism and Mesoamerican religion. It is also "comparable to the Chinese *yin and yang*, depicting the harmony of contrary forces, as well as the cosmic dichotomy of light and darkness in Manichaeism and the Zoroastrian philosophy of the *farvahar*, which first posited that each soul was composed of a pure, divine component, as well as a human one".³



The two ouroboros snakes situated on the entrance gate to the General Sheffield Cemetery are wonderfully grotesque. Their mouths are elongated, more crocodile than serpent, and their swollen features suggest that they have in fact choked on their own tails and met their end (or beginning). The gates have been painted numerous times since their installation, and are now in a state of entropic breakdown thanks to the effects of Sheffield's volatile climes.

The snakes, disheveled and tired, are slowly shedding their painted skins. This process of flaking and peeling is documented in the surface of the cast made during the residency, as mottled fragments of paint along with its absence are highlighted by the soot and dirt that mark stylised scales. A symbol of rebirth and renewal emerges from the materiality and limitations of exterior metal paint.





*The ouroboros appears in the classic alchemical study, *Atalanta Fugiens* (1617), by the physician to Emperor Rudolf II, Michael Maier (Credit: Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin)*

Montez Press Radio Podcast



maud_haya

...



maud_haya New Commission 🎨

Thank you so much [@montezpressradio](#) for commissioning a new podcast! I started working on it while on an Artist Residency [@g39cardiff](#) with the [#heavywatercollective](#) ([@victoria_lucas_gallery](#) and [@jowhittleart](#)) they both feature in the podcast as well as the fabulous [@anthonyshapland](#) - the brilliant [@janehenderson](#) and the truly amazing [@sara_huws](#)

The podcast is on sustainability in the cultural sector and it will be playing live on Saturday the 3rd of September at 1pm in the square opposite [@sitegallery](#) as part of Out & About Weekender. More info listed on [@visitsheffield](#)

The podcast will also be playing on Montez Press Radio on Tuesday the 6th at 1pm (8am in New York). More info on [radio.montezpress.com](#)

Out & About is generously supported by [@sheffieldcitycouncil](#) and their Economic Recovery Fund. The event is led by a partnership between [@sitegallery](#) [@showroomworkstation](#) [@yartspace](#) [@blocprojects](#)

[#outandaboutciq](#)



Liked by [seikokino](#) and 63 others

AUGUST 30, 2022



Add a comment...

Post

Exploring the Archive Workshop, Sheffield Hallam University

Friday 27th January, 10am -4pm

Level 4 BA (Hons) Fine Art Students (52 maximum)

In this day long workshop, the Heavy Water Collective introduced their practice and recent projects, focusing on how they work together as a collective while outlining their responses to archival material and sites of interest. Students were given a series of activities to undertake, and were introduced to the John Wid-dowson Folklore Collection, before being invited to make artwork in response to the artefacts sourced.

I include our lesson plan and images of the workshop across the next few pages. Feedback from the workshop was extremely positive.

Materials

10 x 12kg stoneware clay
Selection of clay tools and rolling pins
100 x A3
100 x A4
100 x tracing paper
Carbon paper
52 x Pencils
25 x erasers
10 x pencil sharpeners
10 x scissors
20 x tapes (masking / sellotape / Duct tape etc)
20 x glue sticks
selection of wire / chickenwire rolls
Range of pliers / cutting tools for wire
Newsprint / tissue paper
PVA glue
Ink brushes
Dip pens
Black or Indian Ink
Pallets for mixing ink (watercolour pallets)
Selection of Acrylic Paint
52 x Paint Brushes (different sizes / textures / including watercolour brushes)

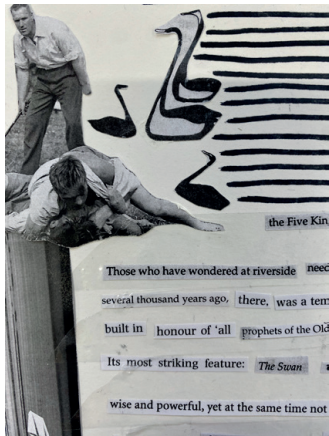
Lesson Plan - Heavy Water Workshop

Time	Activity	Details	Materials	Room
10.00- 10.30 30 mins	Introduction to the Heavy Water Collective	VL, MHB & JW will introduce their practice to the group and outline activities for the day	Projector and Screen	Adsetts Library- screening room
10.30 – 10.50 20mins	Brief warm up exercise- describing <u>artefacts</u> or sources	This warmup will be about how <u>artefacts</u> and sources are described: • What do the descriptions mean? And what information do they give about the archive? • Photocopied images from the books in the archive without description can be presented and participants can be asked to describe what these are- what they think they may be, including imagined dates etc. • Descriptions are then given and participants can write down as much as they can gather <u>form</u> the source material. I.e dates, location, any historical narratives. Is this before we introduce them to the archive? <u>Might be nice</u> to have an activity that is object based, before we delve <u>in to</u> the books in the archive?	Photocopies of books from the collection Artefact analysis worksheet We all bring in 5 objects each - i.e. a vegetable, a fossil, a twig, an ornament, a pebble etc. Students are invited to choose an object of their own too - could be an iPod, a phone, a leather purse, etc. Ask them to write a brief history of that object - thinking materially about where it has come from and what processes it has been through. The archives that exist in objects - using AASheet	Maud confirm room

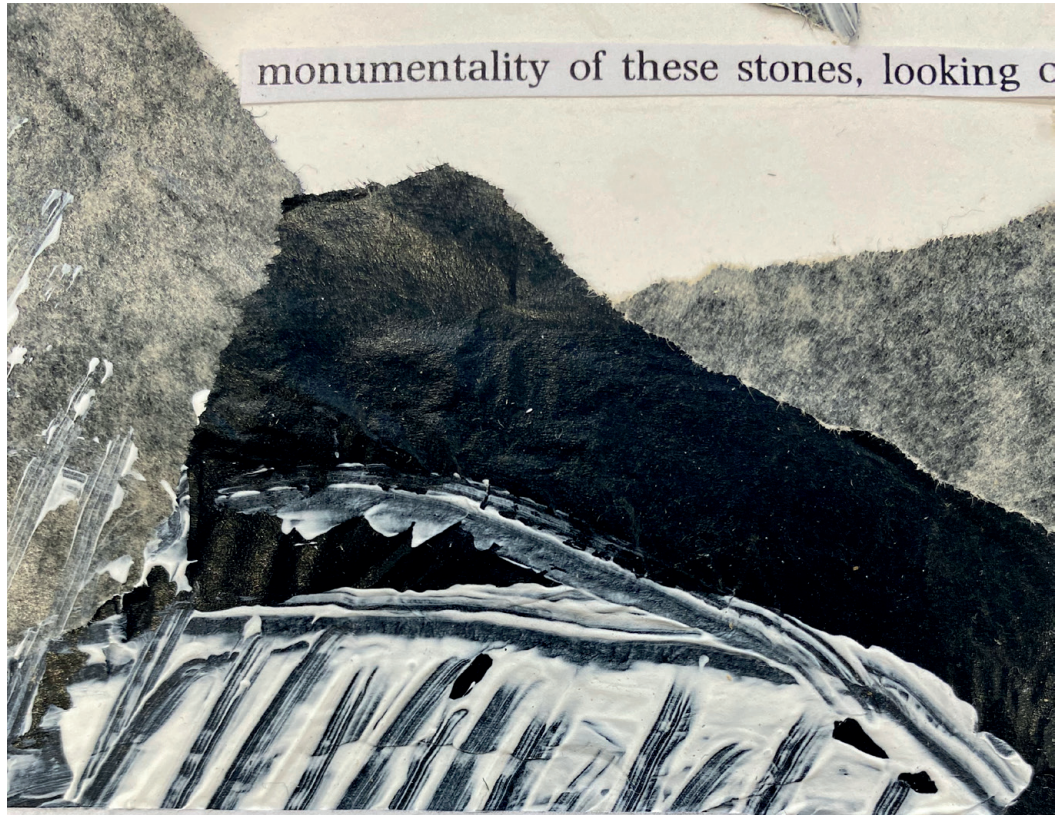
1050- 1100 10mins	Introduction to the John Widdowson Folklore Collection and research procedures	The group will be introduced to the archive: • History of the archive- why is it here • What the archive contains • Handling of archival material • Copyright considerations • how it can be used to generate artworks (materials available in afternoon session, etc)	Archive And preselected books (the ones we selected before)	John Widdowson Folklore Collection selection?
11-11.40	Searching Archive	Participants engage with the pre-selection of items from the archive – selecting items , listing items and then making notes, photocopies , taking pictures etc for prep for making work after lunch	Books in the collection, pencils, paper. ONLY PENCILS WHEN USING ARCHIVAL SOURCES Use of photocopier/ printer/ scanner	John Widdison Folklore Collection: Option of walks if larger numbers to Ruskin Collection we'll just use pre selected material
1200- 1230 11.40-12	Feedback on sources	Group to feedback on their findings	Collected materials and notes	Maud to confirm - Adsetts Library Confirmed
1200-1300	LUNCH Lunch at 12, so we have more time for <u>making in PM?</u>			
13-13.45	Warm up exercise x 3	VL- Collage / Drawing - Creating new associations and meaning between images / subjects / sources through visual placement. Cutting, gluing, layering MHB- Clay – although clay may not be best as an information recording material unless at sites where you can use it to cast...so maybe clay better just be used in the making session? Clay sounds great to me	Paper, tracing paper, photocopied items clay	Maud Confirm room for afternoon session

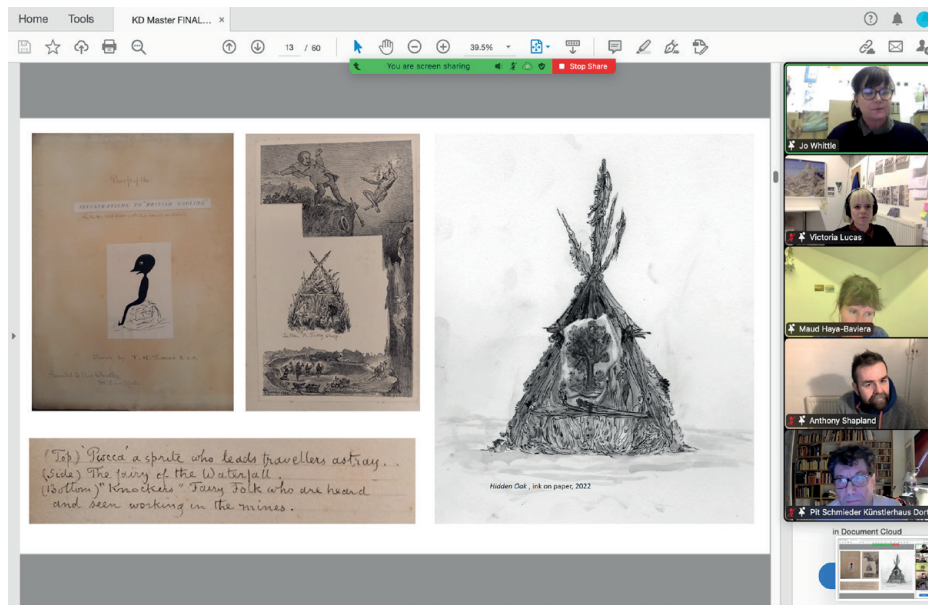
13.45-15.15	MAKING	Students to work independently, or collaboratively, on developing new works from the sources engaged with, using materials provided or other facilities on campus i.e. mac suite - I can also do digital collage if some students are interested Clear up Presentation decisions	All materials Works made Plinth	
1515- 1600 30mins	Feedback and Crit	Participants will feedback on the work they have made: - Presentation decisions ● Identifying sources ● Why selected / why interesting to you or your practice ● Artwork made in response- choice of materials etc.	Works made Plinth	











Four Nations International Fund: Closing In-Conversation

This Heavy Water Collective 'In Conversation' took place online, and formed a presentation and discussion with Anthony Shepland from G39, Pit Schneider from Künstlerhaus Dortmund and Sara Huws, Cardiff University Special collections. This final discussion was an occasion for us to present our findings from our Four Nations funded residency in Cardiff in 2022, where we worked with the Special Collections archive to develop work at G39, and through further discussion with Künstlerhaus Dortmund.

This event was recorded, and can be viewed here:

<https://vimeo.com/793072090>

38 people were in attendance at the live online event.



'A really beautiful evening with my fellow Heavy Waterers... I thoroughly enjoyed beautiful insights from @jowhittleart about the poetic similarities between snow and paint, and from @maud_haya regarding her tender handling of war correspondence. I was also really moved by @anthonyshapland insights... regarding narrative, and how the pulling together of narratives through creative practice can increase a sense of empathy. This really resonated. I also took away Pit's brilliant comments regarding the connections we have made with history, through engagements with the archive, and how the glitches and fissures we generate through the works creates a temporal fluidity and a new kind of actuality. It was also so lovely to hear @sara_huws talk about the importance of archive-based research - meeting Sara during a tour in Cardiff as part of the @freelandsfoundation residency was hugely inspirational and we are so grateful'

- Victoria Lucas (Instagram post reflecting on the event)



PostNatures, Heavy Water Collective

In the PostNatures exhibition at Graves Gallery, the Heavy Water Collective present images and objects that respond to two very different archives - The Special Collections at Cardiff University and The Sheffield General Cemetery site in Sharrow - where they undertook research residencies in 2022. In this exhibition, the Heavy Water artists, Maud Haya-Baviera, Joanna Whittle and Victoria Lucas, select source material from these sites and use it to grapple with notions of the landscape in relation to embedded socio-cultural structures. Representations of landscapes correlate with tail eating snakes, female reproductive organs, plant matter, ritual objects and strange human forms. Myth and symbolism bleed into and out of the materiality of each object, creating a constellation of fluid and mystical associations. Alongside the display case, a printed schema designed by Studio AW-AR draws together these associations through further fragmentary reference points.

PostNatures is an exhibition curated by Victoria Lucas, and is submitted as a separate but related research output on CLOK.

PostNatures

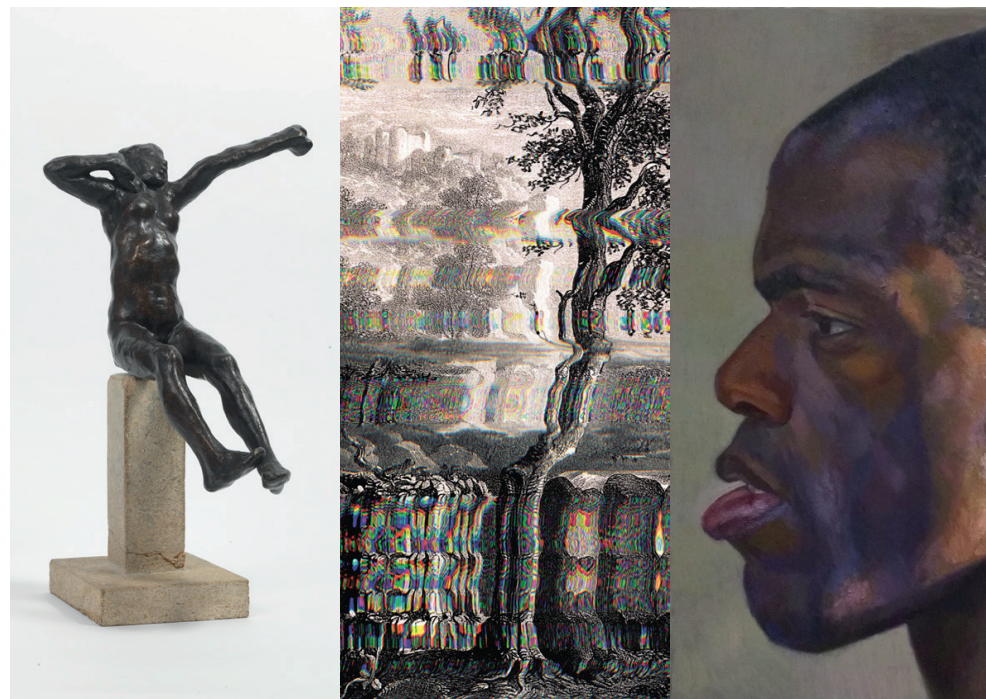
Open: Thu 16 March - Sat 2 December 2023

This exhibition, curated by artist Victoria Lucas, is centred around JMW Turner's painting *The Festival of the Opening of the Vintage at Mâcon*.

PostNatures sees Lucas draw on the constructed composition of Turner's painting to highlight how imaginary subjects can affect our individual or cultural perceptions of reality. The exhibition features a range of artworks and objects from Sheffield's collections which depict other representations of the relationship between women and nature, alongside recent works from Victoria Lucas and the Heavy Water Collective. Together, they invite us to rethink and further explore ideas of the feminine in nature.

The exhibition is generously supported by the Ampersand Foundation.

<https://www.sheffieldmuseums.org.uk/whats-on/postnatures/>



GRAVES
GALLERY



Join us for a special evening
viewing as we celebrate

George Fullard & the New Collection Displays

Wed 15 Mar 2023
6 – 8pm





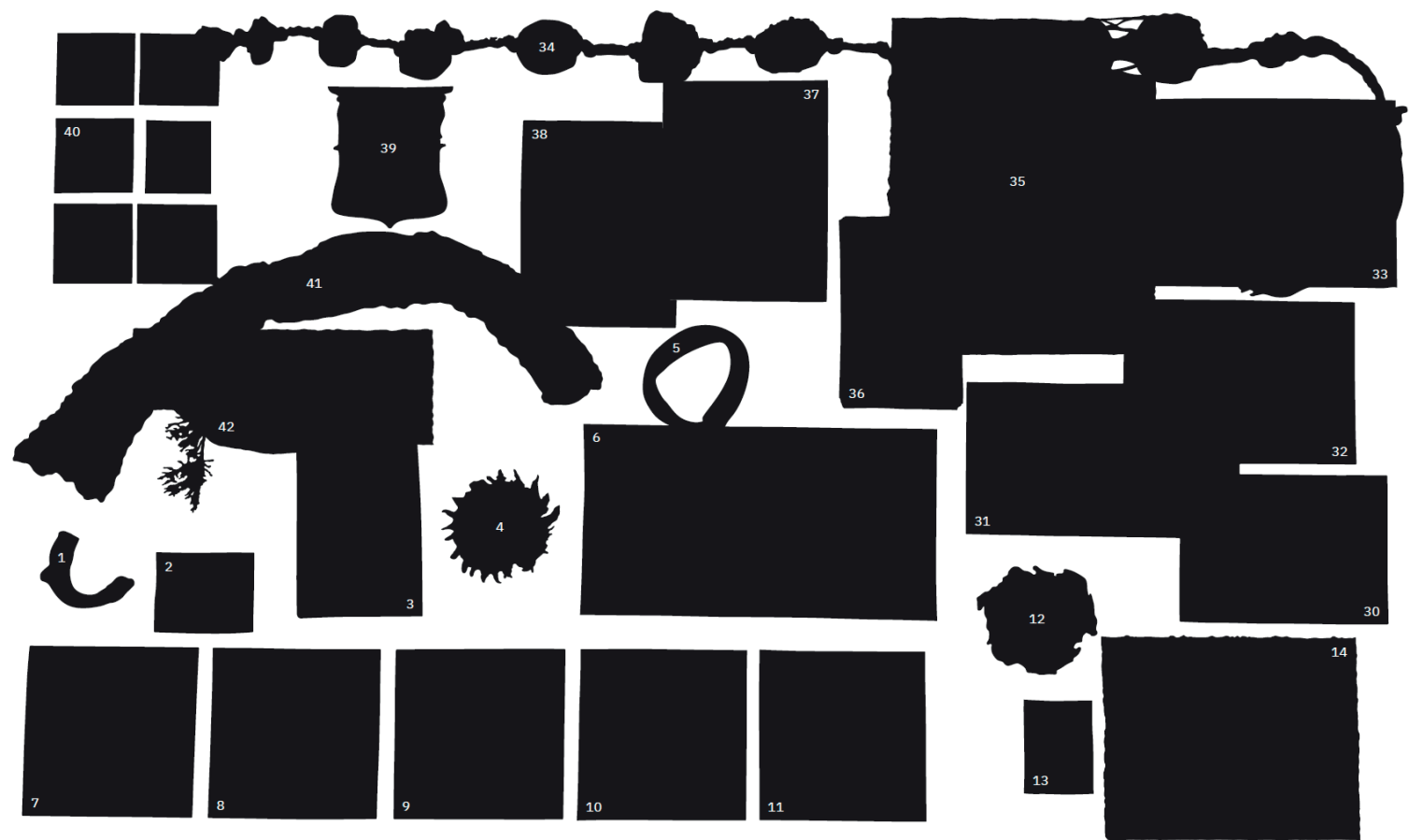


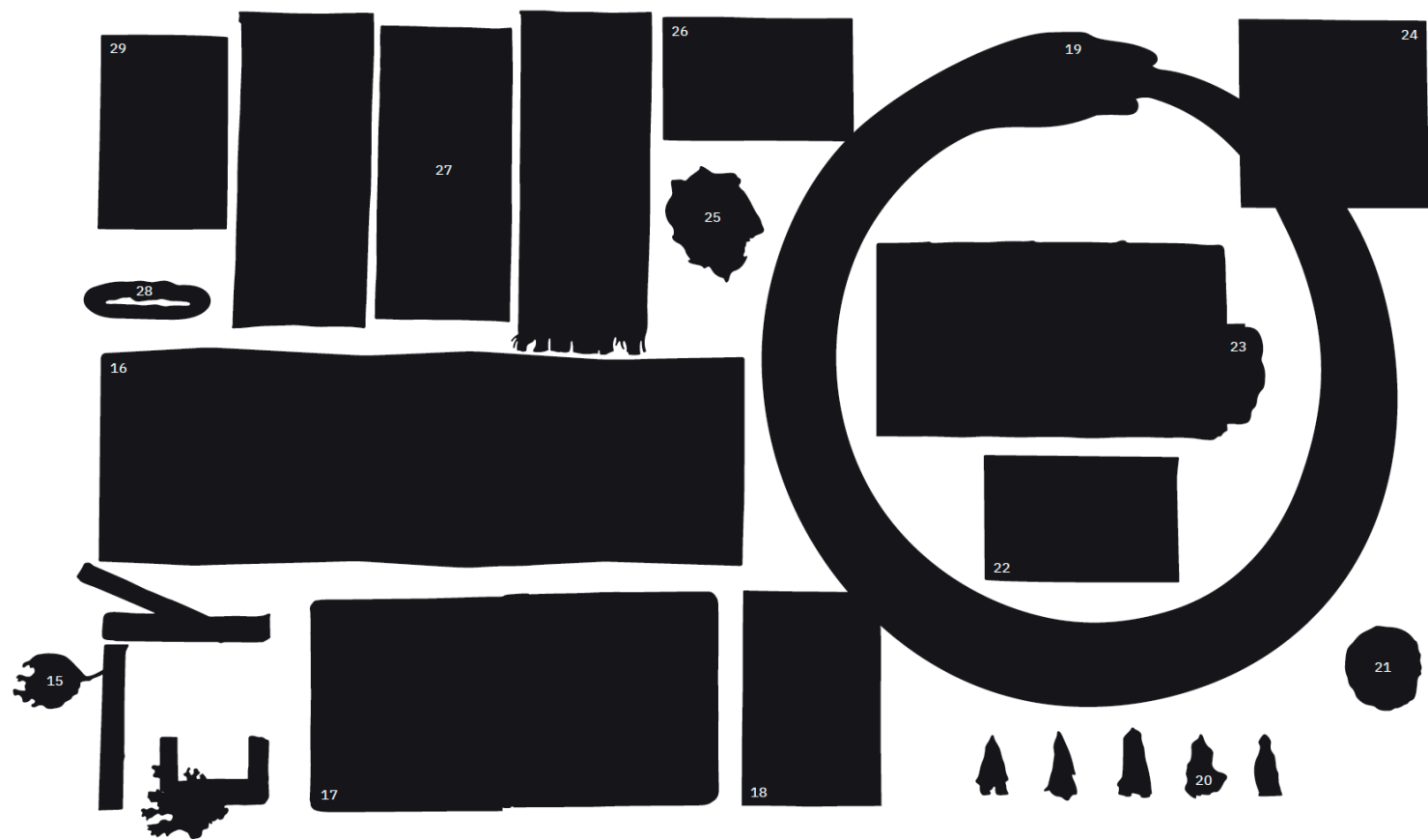












1 ● Maud Haya-Baviera
Alive (2023)
Glazed porcelain and fritted oxides, in response to plants collected in Sheffield General Cemetery, 8 × 5 × 1.5cm

2 ● Victoria Lucas
Sourced image referencing Greek mythology. This engraving by Johann Ulrich Kraus (c.1690) depicts prophet and clairvoyant Tiresias being transformed into a woman by the Goddess Hera, after striking two snakes with a stick.

3 ● Joanna Whittle
Postcard depicting *Kippfigur with Hoop*, painted with oil, 14 × 9cm (2022)

4 ● Joanna Whittle
Immortelle Flare (Spiked), used in funerary practices between 24th January 1849 to 31st July 1915, clay, E903, wax, allotrope of carbon, copper, zinc and brass, approx 7 × 6cm (2023)

5 ● Maud Haya-Baviera
Child's Bracelet in the Form of a Snake (2023)
Glazed porcelain and fritted oxides, in response to children's graves and Sheffield General Cemetery's Egyptian Gate, 8.5 × 8 × 2cm

6 ● Victoria Lucas
Cave (Womb)
Cartographical drawings of islands, made by 18th Century colonialist explorers, are positioned on top of an illustration of a cave inhabited by men with guns. This experimental work explores the historical colonisation of women's bodies through representations of landscape. This image has been copied from Lucas' sketchbook [17].

7 ● Maud Haya-Baviera
If Only Rome, in Pink (2023)
Digital collage in response to the late Romantic and early Victorian periods, which have inspired the design of Sheffield General Cemetery. Giclee print on Hahnemühle Matt FineArt cotton archival paper, 11.5 × 11.5cm

8 ● Maud Haya-Baviera
If Only Rome, The Trees Take Over (2023)
Digital collage in response to the late Romantic and early Victorian periods, which have inspired the design of Sheffield General Cemetery. Giclee print on Hahnemühle Matt FineArt cotton archival paper, 11.5 × 11.5cm

9 ● Maud Haya-Baviera
If Only Rome, Adorned (2023)
Digital collage in response to the late Romantic and early Victorian periods, which have inspired the design of Sheffield General Cemetery. Giclee print on Hahnemühle Matt FineArt cotton archival paper, 11.5 × 11.5cm

10 ● Maud Haya-Baviera
If Only Rome, The Sky (2023)
Digital collage in response to the late Romantic and early Victorian periods, which have inspired the design of Sheffield General Cemetery. Giclee print on Hahnemühle Matt FineArt cotton archival paper, 11.5 × 11.5cm

11 ● Maud Haya-Baviera
If Only Rome, the Sky Opens (2023)
Digital collage in response to the late Romantic and early Victorian periods, which have inspired the design of Sheffield General Cemetery. Giclee print on Hahnemühle Matt FineArt cotton archival paper, 11.5 × 11.5cm

12 ● Joanna Whittle
Immortelle Flare (Whorl), used used in funerary practices between 24th January 1849 to 31st July 1915, clay, metals, E903 and allotrope of carbon, approx 7 × 8cm (2023)

13 ● Victoria Lucas
Sourced image of an Ouroboros with the words "the all is one", extracted from the *Chrysopoia of Cleopatra the Alchemist*, published in the 3rd or 4th century A.D. The ouroboros symbol features in a number of ancient traditions, contexts and geographies. It is a symbol that represents the unity of all things, which never cease to be but perpetually transform in an eternal cycle of destruction and recreation.

14 ● Joanna Whittle
Ingress Ruin (not that we fear, not that we are lonely)
Composite drawing created from sources in Cardiff Special Collections referring to Paul Nash, poet Richard Adlington and 19th Century scrapbooks. Graphite on paper, 15 × 19cm (2023)

15 ● Maud Haya-Baviera
If Only Rome, in Bronze and Gold (2023)
Concrete, bronze, ink, pink plastic mesh fabric, plaster, in response to plants collected in Sheffield General Cemetery and tombs, variable dimensions.

16 ● Victoria Lucas
An Account of the Voyages (2022)
Victoria Lucas has worked with digital technology to create a rupture in the fabric of these illustrations, which have been extracted from a 1773 account of the British colonisation of the Southern Hemisphere. British depictions of their encounters with indigenous communities are torn apart though the glitch of the scanning process, creating space in-between the pixels for new narratives, perspectives, and becomings to emerge.

17 ● Victoria Lucas
This sketchbook was developed during the Heavy Water Collective's research residency at g39, in Cardiff, in response to the University of Cardiff's Special Collections. It comprises a number of collages, drawings and text works, some of which have been reproduced for this exhibition [6, 23].

18 ● Joanna Whittle
Postcard of ceramic vessel depicting *The Witness (Sentinel) (Kippfigur)*. The original vessel (approximately 7 × 7cm) was created in response to WWI images in Cardiff University Special Collections and Mediaeval communion vessels (2023)

19 ● Victoria Lucas
Self-Destructive Acts (2023)
In reference to late capitalism and the resulting climate emergency, the ouroboros is recontextualised as an ancient symbol that warns of a time in which humans move towards their own destruction. In the context of Lucas' research, this retelling of the symbol becomes a marker for the rebirth of the earth without us.

20 ● Joanna Whittle
Various *Kippenfiguren* charms (also known as *Talismen*), used between 1685–2023, coated with wax and carbon, dimensions variable up to 4cm (2023)

21 ● Victoria Lucas
Plaster Relief of Wood Avens that have gone to seed, found in the Sheffield General Cemetery Grounds.

22 ● Joanna Whittle
Photograph showing *Kippfigur* seen in Lille, on 19th December 1914.

- 23

Victoria Lucas

Collage reproduced from Lucas' sketchbook [17], depicting images sourced from a 1773 account of the British colonisation of the Southern Hemisphere.
- 24

Maud Haya-Baviera

In Paradise
Photograph of the sculpture In Paradise (2023), made in response to draped urns, 14 × 14cm
- 25

Joanna Whittle

Immortelle Flare (Mummy Cloth), used in funerary practices between 24th January 1849 to 31st July 1915, clay, metals, E903 and allotrope of carbon, approx 7 × 7cm (2023)
- 26

Joanna Whittle

Photograph showing the *Witness/Sentinel* first seen on 24th July 1915, 14 × 9cm
- 27

Joanna Whittle

Selection of memorial ribbons depicting, (left to right), *Draped Stone*, *Oak Stone* and *Hill Rock (Hunched)*, reflecting early 20th century memorial practices.
Oil on satin ribbon, all arrow folded and 10cm wide (2022)
- 28

Victoria Lucas

Image sourced from the internet, depicting a snake eating its own tail.
- 29

Joanna Whittle

Photograph depicting *Kippfigur* witnessed on 8th November 1914, a repeated motif in subsequent reproductions, 14 × 9cm

- 30

Maud Haya-Baviera

Beyond The Woods
Image depicting an archival postcard digitally recomposed and used as a still image as part of the video work *Beyond The Woods* (2023), 15 × 11cm
- 31

Maud Haya-Baviera

The Darling One
Image depicting a photograph found in a USSR travel brochure, digitally transferred, recomposed, and used as a still image as part of the video work *Beyond The Woods* (2023), 19.5 × 11cm
- 32

Maud Haya-Baviera

*The Village
Where He Came From*
Image depicting an archival postcard digitally edited and used as a still image as part of the video work *Beyond The Woods* (2023), 21 × 12cm
- 33

Victoria Lucas

An image of a missing charm, used to locate treasure buried in the earth, found in the 1651 publication Scot's *The Discoverie of Witchcraft*
- 34

Victoria Lucas

Witches Ladder (2022)
The earliest example of a witch's ladder is held at the Pitt River's museum in Oxford, and was discovered in a Somerset attic in the 19th century. This one comprises nine talismans made of soap, knotted together with yarn.

- 35

Joanna Whittle

*Kalend, Yielding Fire,
Yielding Palm*
Composite drawing created from sources in Cardiff Special Collections referring to Reformation and folklore texts. Graphite on paper, 28 × 20cm (2022)
- 36

Joanna Whittle

Postcard depicting *Hollow Flame*, lit on 8th January 1916, painted with oil, 14 × 9cm (2022)
- 37

Maud Haya-Baviera

The Vanishing Church
Image depicting an archival postcard digitally recomposed and used as a still image as part of the video work *Beyond The Woods* (2023), 12 × 16cm
- 38

Victoria Lucas

Photograph of a page from *A Treatise on the Theory and Practice of Midwifery*, published in 1752 by William Smellie.
- 39

Joanna Whittle

*Forest Tomb
(we fear, we are lonely)*
Composite drawing created from sources in Cardiff Special Collections referring to the tomb of John Bunyan, images from WWI and 19th Century scrapbooks. Graphite on paper, 17 × 19cm (2022)
- 40

Joanna Whittle

Illustration of a selection of *Immortelle Flares* used between 24th January 1849 to 31st July 1915.

- 41

Victoria Lucas

Cast of an ouroboros sculpture located at the top entrance to Sheffield General Cemetery. The snake, disheveled and tired, is slowly shedding its painted skin, which is documented in the uneven surface of this reproduction. A symbol of rebirth and renewal emerges through the materiality and limitations of exterior metal paint.
- 42

Maud Haya-Baviera

Horror
Image depicting an archival postcard digitally recomposed and used as a still image as part of the video work *Beyond The Woods* (2023), 23 × 15.5cm

PostNatures: Victoria Lucas Artwork Examples

Left:

PostNatureGlitch II, 2022

Victoria Lucas (born 1982)

digitally manipulated image. Edition 10/10

This disrupted image foregrounds the glitch in a 19th Century lithograph by JS Templeton. The agitation of nature, through a digital process of fragmentation, becomes a metaphor for the impact that capitalism has wrought on the natural world. This digital unravelling of the picturesque creates a fissure, within which new possibilities of being and becoming may manifest.

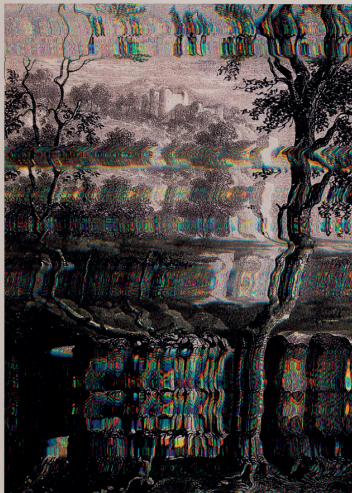
Right:

Self-Destructive Acts, 2023

Victoria Lucas (born 1982)

Jesmonite

In reference to late capitalism and the resulting climate emergency, the ouroboros is recontextualised as an ancient symbol that warns of a time in which humans move towards their own destruction. In the context of Lucas' research, this retelling of the symbol becomes a marker for the rebirth of the earth without us.





PostNatures Programmed Events

Heavy Water Collective
Talk and Website Launch
19th April 6-7pm

Join the Heavy Water Collective as they talk about the work they currently have on display as part of the PostNatures exhibition, The objects and images on display draw from and respond to artefacts sourced from UK-based archives and collections, and subjects such as witchcraft, religion, childbirth, war, folklore and cartography have been brought together and reinterpreted in a contemporary context. Collectively, the work creates a constellation of meaning, in relation to the landscapes and accounts revealed. In this event, artists Maud Haya-Baviera, Victoria Lucas and Joanna Whittle will discuss the junctures in which their respective practices intersect, before officially launching their new website, which has been generously funded by the University of Central Lancashire. They will also unveil a free, newly published leaflet containing an essay by Lauren Velvick, designed by Studio AW-AR and funded by Sheffield Hallam University.

Victoria Lucas

Artist Victoria Lucas (b.1982, UK) lives and works in Sheffield, UK. Recent shows include Aggregate, Freelands Foundation, London, 2022, The Strata of Things at Threshold Sculpture, Leeds, 2021, Heavy Water at Site Gallery, Sheffield, 2021 and The Search at The Hepworth, Wakefield, 2021. Commissions include a site-responsive work for Iodeposito, Udine, Italy, 2022 and a video artwork for the National Portrait Gallery, London, 2014. Curated projects include Deadpan Exchange VIII at Casa Maauad, Mexico, 2014 and Postnatures, Graves Art Gallery, 2023. She is a Senior Lecturer in Fine Art at UCLan and is undertaking a PhD at SHU.

Joanna Whittle

Joanna Whittle is a painter who creates narrative artefacts. Recent projects include On Shifting Ground, Whitaker Museum, Lancashire, 2022; Material Mourning, Millenium Gallery, 2022 and Between Islands, Welbeck Estate, 2020. Recent group exhibitions include Tyranny of Ambition, Highlanes Public Gallery, Drogheda, Ireland, 2023; Aggregate, Freelands Foundation, London, 2022 and Heavy Water at Site Gallery, Sheffield, 2021. She is a member of the Contemporary British Painting Society and is currently undertaking a period of research with the National Fairground and Circus Archive. Her work has been written about by Griselda Pollock, Lauren Velvick (Corridor 8) and Albert Godetzky (Courtauld Institute)

Maud Haya-Baviera

Maud Haya-Baviera has exhibited her work in both solo and group shows nationally and internationally, receiving a number of awards in relation to international projects. Recent exhibitions include Brewers International, Towner Gallery, Eastbourne (2022/2023), Things Fall Apart, Haarlem Artspace, Wijkswijk (solo) (2022), Aggregate, Freelands Foundation, London (2022), Heavy Water, Site gallery, Sheffield (2021), Big Screen Southend, Focal Point Gallery, Southend on Sea (2021), Some Palaces, Künstlerhaus Dortmund, Germany (solo) (2019). Her work has appeared in various publications and has been written about by Zoe Sawyer (Curator at Eastside Project), Lauren Velvick (Director at Corridor 8) and Angelica Sule (Director at Site Gallery).











POSTNATURES: HEAVY WATER COLLECTIVE

ESSAY BY LARSEN VELVET

The objects and images in Heavy Water Collective's vitrine overlap with each other. Things made from ceramics, soap, carbon, wax, oil and knotted rope lie atop found, reproduced and digitally edited images on paper and card. Some are printed on matte photo paper whereas others are tiny oil paintings, and while not quite scattered, they are not arranged taxonomically but instead seemingly through a process of knolling. While this may not be intentional, the way in which modes of vernacular collecting and curating mimic the archive and the museum is worth considering here; the decorative and 'satisfying' arrangement of objects at right angles on a flat surface, with differing sizes, shapes and textures placed in proximity to create the illusion that they fit together.

Knolling can be seen purely as a form of consumerist pleasure, and this is one pertinent lens (or window) through which to view this vitrine in particular, and the vitrine as a mode of display in general. A reading that is reinforced by the artists' use of souvenir formats in their newest work, informed by research residencies at Cardiff University's Special Collections • and The Sheffield General Cemetery • site in Sharrow. However, such an analysis offers only one single route in and through the work of Heavy Water, and as their research methods and modes of display attest, this collective practice is better understood fractally. Each individual work can be read straightforwardly, but then also expands and deepens in its relation to the others, to the archive or site it stems from, and to its wider connotations within art and world history. This frisson is an essential part of Heavy Water's work, with similarities or overarching narratives repeatedly undercut by the specificities of each artists' practice. Dialogues

emerge in post-production and curation, and so here it seems that consumerism and desire are critiqued and scrutinised through the re-deployment of visual objects that arise directly from the activities of bourgeois leisure and travel, postcards and souvenirs. This reading may be convincing, but the postcard can also be a site in itself, and nothing about Heavy Water's work is straightforwardly illustrative.

The Heavy Water vitrine is part of *PostNatures*, an exhibition at Sheffield's Graves Gallery • curated by Victoria Lucas, the curatorial lodestone of which is JWM Turner's *The Festival upon the Opening of the Village of Macon* (c.1803), a landscape painting combining elements that would and could not appear in the same time or place in real life. Lucas's work deals with how nature is constructed, and how the concept of nature in turn constructs our political and social imaginary, with a particular focus on how gender is produced, reinforced and can be

undimmed through the self-representation of women within the landscape. As such, a clear challenge to the concept of objective reality is posed on the walls of the space, and then turning back into the world of the vitrine, archival images spanning several centuries of exploration, collecting and colonisation are recombined and recomposed in subtly different ways by Lucas, Maud Haya-Baviera and Joanna Whittle. These prints and collages constitute an illustration of how the character of each artist's work interacts with and reinforces the others. In Whittle's work the ludic persona of the trickster seems to dart and dash through the undergrowth, appearing in painted windows and then disappearing on second glance, telling tales embellished with details so seductive that their objective truthfulness is concealed, whereas Haya-Baviera's focus on teasing out cultural understanding through documentation and correspondence brings to mind a science-fiction envoy, like Le Guin's Genly Ai in *The Left Hand of Darkness* (1969) or more recently Mahit Dzmare in Atkady Martine's *A Memory Called Empire* (2019); the imperfect and thus reliable character through whom we as the reader and viewer explore and become familiar with the world we are temporarily inhabiting. Lucas, then, makes a clear ethical argument with direct cuts, superimpositions and interventions into the canon through her curatorial handling of Sheffield's collection, and the landscape itself with digital means.

These complementary modes each employ 'fictioning' as discussed in *Fiction as Method* (2017) eds. Jon K Shaw and Theo Reeves-Evison, identifying two strands of artistic storytelling:

'those that reveal structures and gain agency in the construction of the everyday, and those that are deployed as holes to let in the "future" or "abstract-outside"'

As well as in the real-world display of the vitrine, the Heavy Water Collective presents their project via another type of ubiquitous screen on a deliberately designed website, wherein documentation of their growing body of work is found interspersed with each artist's reflections on the collections and archives encountered. Offering a multitude of ways into and around each aspect of their artistic research and making, interdependent modes of fictioning assert themselves in how the same kernel is germinated variously by each artist. During *Material Remains* at Sheffield General Cemetery •, the interplay between how funerary ornaments embody wealth, social status and nationhood while simultaneously representing the most emotionally rich and fraught aspects of individual human existence is borne out in distinct approaches to ceramics. The ancient symbol of the ouroboros, found on the cemetery's 'Egyptian gate', is brought forth in the vitrine as a weighty and monumental marker of our human frailty in the face of natural and planetary cycles in Lucas's *Self-Destructive Act* (2023) •, but also as a precious reminder of the ephemerality and continuity of human life in Haya Baviera's *Child's Bracelet in the Form of a Snake* (2023) •. Fictioning is especially conspicuous in the descriptions of Whittle's work given by the artist, where the apparent history and traditions of a community are relayed in snippets that belie attitudes and belief systems, in much the same way that these interpretive texts behave in 'real' museums. Whittle's approach here opens up a space around the pragmatic 'need' for labelling, with details like 'used in funerary practices between 24th January 1849 to 31st July 1915' and 'city, metals, E903 and allotropic of carbon' associated with *Immortal Flare* (Spiked) (2023) •, where extremely specific dates and chemical names are juxtaposed with approximate references.

The choice around which details to include here is reminiscent of the fictions we create to explain things like Mesolithic monuments, matching the prevailing ideologies and moralities of our times. Similarly, with the

supposedly 'pagan' symbols found intermingled with early Christianity in what has become the British Isles, a current example of which would be the inclusion of the 'Green Man' on Prince Charles's coronation invitation. This symbol that is popularly referred to as 'ancient' was named relatively recently, along with the codification of many folk traditions within a certain aesthetic and towards a particular understanding of British identity. By so clearly and playfully fictioning within an active arena of debate, Whittle successfully upsets the fundamentally conservative impulse towards lineage and homeland. Indeed, each of the practices that go towards Heavy Water's treatment of objects, texts and sites perform a destabilising manoeuvre, but without necessarily sacrificing the desire and wonder that attracts us towards the museum, the collection and the vitrine in the first place. In this way their work, particularly this display within its vitrine, can be understood within surrealist thought in its oscillation between aesthetic desire and the revolutionary impulse. In *Sculpture and the Vitrine* (2016) ed. John C Welchman, Dr. Marion Endt-Jones discusses glass as lens, barrier and window during the rise of the shopfront and arcade, with bourgeois consumerism as the mirror to surrealism's attempts to invoke the unconscious. Here, the material of glass is identified as dialectical in itself, and moving beneath the lid of the vitrine for a moment, it is pertinent to apply this framework to the other material investigations undertaken by Heavy Water. For example, with Lucas's *Witches Ladder* (2022) •, where both materials having a purported 'proper' use, but here are being manipulated otherwise. Then, the buffed and layered surfaces of Whittle's ritualistic objects, especially the ceramic items that are doubly removed from their apparent use, creating a legend and significance for these objects which are, along with many others in the vitrine, recently produced ceramic sculptures. Similarly, the postcard as both medium and message behaves dialectically, consider Haya-Baviera's *Beyond the Woods* (2023) •, where stills from a film work are frozen in the vitrine, in conjunction with Whittle's *Postcard depicting Kippfgr with Hoop* (2022) •.

The choice of a vitrine for an exhibition that seeks explicitly to move beyond questioning, in actively destabilising the ideological implications of the works selected, creates a parallel from our vantage point in 'late capitalism' with those surrealistic investigations from the birth of consumerism as we know it. Endt-Jones traces the 'paradoxes of classification' that haunt Western cultural history back to the 16th Century Wunderkammer, through natural history and its museological practices, to contemporary consumerism, noting how the pleasurable unease that emerges from that which defies categorisation is present in each era. A contemporary engagement with collections and archives is necessarily part of this lineage, and with Heavy Water the artists' reciprocal approaches bring a vitality to their investigations, despite this weight of history. Without labouring the correlation, there are numerous satisfying analogies in approaching Heavy Water's art-research work through the winding corridors and foggy windows of surrealism, given that the movement was founded almost exactly a century ago. While they were responding and reacting to a new and thrilling proliferation of consumable objects, materials that can be manipulated and perform mimicry in previously unimaginable ways, and a desire to transgress and remake social norms, it now feels like we are gazing back over the wreckage. Since 1924 we have witnessed the rise and fall of materials as world-shaking and ubiquitous as plastic, which now drifts and settles in the deepest oceans, and are finally reckoning in the public sphere with the looming and destruction wrought by the British Empire.

From within this historical context, the careful, thoughtful and playful way that Heavy Water engage with the symbols, treasures and ephemerality of our past cultivates a kind of webbed thinking. As Endt-Jones points out, a drive towards categorisation at the birth of natural history did not remove, but in fact heightened the desire for and curiosity about the marvellous and monstrous;

'at certain moments in twentieth-century history and culture, the exotic, the strange, the rare, the fantastic and the grotesque were revived, signalling moments of transition and of intellectual and epistemological uncertainty' ...

'curiosity and the marvellous emerge as concepts that allow us to question, reshuffle and redefine beliefs and attitudes.'

(ed. Welchman, 2016, p.98) Through this approach the inherently paradoxical nature of the material that Heavy Water deal with can be handled, both literally and figuratively. Histories and traditions that are harmlessly pleasurable from one perspective but clearly

exploitative and violent from another, or symbols and customs that have been invented and reinvented so many times that the question of their authenticity becomes ridiculous, are taken up in individual works but also through their mode of display.

'The juxtaposition of a number of objects in the confined, sealed universe of the vitrine involves a heightened awareness of the mechanisms and criteria that lead to their selection and arrangement'

(ed. Welchman, 2016, p.97) and here they overlap and jostle with each other, seeming to shift between foreground and background, not least due to the digital 'glitching' employed in some individual works. This flickering between stillness and movement, history and future, the immovable landscape and teeming, squirming riverbank is where the unequivocally feminist revolutionary potential of this work can be located.

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POSTNATURES:

In the *PostNatures* exhibition at Graves Gallery, Sheffield, Heavy Water Collective present images and objects that respond to two very different archives – The Special Collections at Cardiff University • and The Sheffield General Cemetery • site in Sharrow – where they undertook research residencies in 2022. In this exhibition, the Heavy Water artists, Maud Haya-Baviera, Joanna Whittle and Victoria Lucas, select source material from these sites and use it to grapple with notions of the landscape in relation to embedded socio-cultural structures. Representations of landscapes correlate with tail eating snakes, female reproductive organs, plant matter, ritual objects and strange human forms. Myth and symbolism bleed into and out of the materiality of each object, creating a constellation of fluid and mystical associations. Alongside the display case, a printed schema draws together associations through fragmentary reference points.

The Heavy Water Collective (Maud Haya-Baviera, Victoria Lucas and Joanna Whittle) research archives and collections to create artworks that reclaim historical narratives, and provide alternative readings, in a contemporary context. Since the collective was formed in 2021, they have developed projects while undertaking various research residencies and exhibitions across the UK. Residencies include the Freelands Artists Programme, London, 2021; Cardiff University Special Collections; Sheffield General Cemetery. Exhibitions include Heavy Water, at Site Gallery Sheffield in 2021, Aggregate, Freelands Foundation in 2022, and PostNatures, Grave Gallery in Sheffield in 2023. They have facilitated various events, including workshops and talks, as part of exhibition and visiting lecturer programmes.

FOR MORE INFORMATION PLEASE VISIT:
HEAVYWATER.INFO
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Upcoming:

2023: Research Residency, University of Leeds Special Collections

2023: Generating New Sediment: Artistic Responses to Archives and Collections, Research Paper, Archive Research Community Conference, Sheffield Hallam University