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Published in:
Performance Research

DOI:
[10.1080/13528165.2017.1433390](https://doi.org/10.1080/13528165.2017.1433390)

Publication date:
2018

Citation for published version (APA):

Jones, F. (2018). Agricultural detritus and artistic practices: Reflections on animating heritage and reclaiming place-specific narratives. *Performance Research*, 22(8), 115-126. [14].
<https://doi.org/10.1080/13528165.2017.1433390>

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Agricultural detritus and artistic practices:

Reflections on animating heritage and reclaiming place-specific narratives.

Ode to Perdurance/Awdl Amser was an output of my practice-led doctoral research project, and was the result of an accumulation of two years of ethnographic fieldwork at Cwmrhaidr farm located in Glaspwll, Powys, Mid-Wales. The farm is an upland tenanted sheep farm, my *Taid* (grandfather) took on the tenancy in 1964, and my Father inherited the lifelong tenancy in the mid-1990s. This article examines the process of creating a series of ten stop-animated films that draw attention to daily work and its remains, or leftovers, in the contemporary farm landscape and environment. Each animation was created with, on, or alongside an object or a site noted in my *Taid's* (grandfather's) agricultural diaries. The objects are mundane and functional items, such as fence-posts, fences, gates and bridges. Negotiating literature from disciplines such as Contemporary archaeology, Human Geography and Heritage studies, I suggest how our past and our present are entwined in our everyday, routine relationships with the place, whilst making considerations on the nature of heritage and landscape preservation; asking what gets saved and why?

1 Fieldwork/archaeology/animation

In the morning's half-light, Glynne (the current farmer, and for the purposes of my project -- my research participant) is standing by the side of the warm Rayburn stove, a crumbling blue bag clutched in his hands, bulging with small angular objects only partially visible through the frail, papery plastic. I peer within, assaulted by the unmistakable smell of the bat-infested attic -- "These are *Taid's* diaries, I thought you might like to have a look at them". Contained within are nineteen diaries -- they are the kind farmers receive free from the National Farmers Union (NFU), animal feed companies etc. I can easily spot the older ones by their dishevelled, moth-eaten edges. The diaries start in 1957 and are complete until 1996.

The diaries contain matter-of-fact information about daily jobs on the farm. Many of the diary entries list jobs that would have resulted in a durable object in a specific place within the landscape. I wondered what had become of these objects that were laboured on; the fences, handmade gates, posts, hedges, bridges etc. I looked through each diary picking out any activities that might have produced

something which may still be locatable on the farm. I concentrated on the diaries post-1964, which was the year that my Taid took on the tenancy at Cwmrhaidr farm. My subsequent method of searching for the objects from the diary was archaeological; looking at the description in the diary, deciding on a likely location and making a decision about whether the object found was indeed the same as the one described. I recorded my observations in a notebook and took a photograph of the artefact.

The relics that Taid left behind are distressed, abandoned and derelict when I find them. What was once a brand-new fence is a soggy, quivering entanglement of rusted steel and chewed up and spat out wood. In their rotting, a whole host of other life has taken them over. Coagulated and slimy, the algae become part of the sodden wooden mass, and in my touching I impart some warmth onto their dank existence. What does one make with and of the rotting remains of a life, a lifework? As they fade into the background or into the earth, the remains take on a life of their own, they grow, change, quiver and crumble under the influence of other phenomena; other cycles; other kairological times. Algae and fungi perform their symbiosis in perfect harmony to produce their feathery, spongy, alien clusters, whilst moss slowly grows and clings to any possible foothold. Woodlice move in, and other crawling creatures lay their eggs deep within the sodden wood. There is something overwhelming about the textures of these artefacts, they have gone from hard and rigid objects, to almost possessing fluidity: their textures are oozing everywhere; they leave their marks on me as I leave mine on theirs. The process of discovering them feels calculated and cold; I had imagined adventure and excitement. Writing in his monograph Industrial Ruins, Tim Edensor uses the term 'gothic sensibility' to describe the way that we encounter ruins. He suggests that to encounter the crumbling remains of the past is to be exposed to our own fear of our inevitable mortality (Edensor 2005:13). Although these fence posts and gates are not standard architectural ruins, for me there is poignancy in their ruination because they point to a past, a present and a future that I am a part of.

The objects had reacquainted me with my memories of the messy materiality of childhood play, and this in turn influenced my choice of using those materials that had been an important part of our play on the farm in my creative practice. Helen Tovey observes that

An outdoor environment for young children is a dynamic living place constantly changing as children and adults transform it. It is not a static predetermined layout to which children have to adapt, nor is it just a scenic backdrop for a series of “activities”, rather it is a domain that takes shape as children, or children and adults, inhabit it. Children interact with the environment almost like a play partner, shaping and transforming it, but in turn being shaped by the experiences and interactions it enables. (Tovey 2007: 54)

I had a very long and habitual relationship with outdoor spaces and natural materials as a child, and this relationship has evolved into an artistic alternative type of play. I felt the draw of play, of marking these objects/artefacts in some way with that of the marks of childhood, the constant shifting and moving of materials from one place to the next, of making something out of the textural polyphony of natural materials to hand. My encounters with these objects led me to create a series of stop-animations, each using a different found material and an object from my Taid's diary. I have provided a brief description of each below.

Moss on rails

12 January 1966: Codi rêls odan steps y dairy/Built rails underneath the steps of the dairy.

This was located near the farmhouse. At the bottom of the dairy steps, just below the cowshed, is a rotting fence post and a small section of wooden rails next to the gate. Small pieces of moss were placed on the post and rails, after each piece was placed a photograph was taken. When the photographs are played in sequence, the moss looks as though it is growing onto the object; it resembles time-lapse footage.

Spiky post

16 February 1965: Codi pyst yn top y paddock/put up a post in the top of the paddock.

The animation uses a rotten fence-post in the top right hand corner of the sheep pens. Clumps of rushes growing near the post were used as a material for this animation. Rushes played an important role in our play as children. We used to plait them, something that my maternal Grandfather had once shown us. For this animation, the post was pre-prepared with drilled holes, then individual rushes were placed in each hole and a photograph taken. This process was continued until the entire post was covered from top to bottom in spines.

Low wall

17 January 1969: Codi pwt o wal o flaen drysau mawr y ffald/built a low wall in front of the doors in the yard).

In the farmyard, there is a very low wall, which was completely obscured by moss, ferns and creeping buttercup. For this film, I did the opposite to the previous animations, and revealed the wall. This process of revealing reminded me of a particular childhood activity of excavating old rubbish tips from a demolished mansion on the farm. As children, we had found some shards of pottery and had been drawn to excavate the area. With sticks and sharp pieces of slate, we had dug and scraped away the dirt, revealing as we went, broken plates, glass, mug handles, clay pipes; all the usual debris.

Bridge

17 February 1966: Lewis yn diwedd y siety'n a finnau'n cwympe rhai coed i wneud pont ar draws yr afon yn cae Gallybladur/ Lewis finishes the hedge whilst I cut down a few trees to make a bridge across the river in Gallybladur field.

The animation was located on a rustic bridge over the river between Cae Bungalow and Cae Gallybladur. This animation used orange and grey clay, smoothed along the wood of the bridge, and highlighted by lichen deposited in a linear, horizontal formation. This object was adjacent to a part of the river where we would spend most of the summer holidays; making objects out of the river-clay and stones.

Lichen on post

2 March 1966: Taro i'r dref y bore, ffensio gyda ochr y ffordd i Gwmrhaidr y pnawn/Pop to town in the morning, fence alongside the road to Cwmrhaidr in the afternoon.

This animation used a post alongside the track that runs above Cwmrhaidr-Fêch. The film uses materials in an identical way to animation 1, only this one uses lichen rather than moss.

String on manger

8 December 1966: Diwedd codi manger rhestral i'r gwartheg/finishing building a feed manger for the cattle.

In the main agricultural shed, there is a single concrete manger running the length of the building. It has steel bars that run upwards from it. For this animation, everyday agricultural materials and objects are enrolled into an unusually playful activity. The long pieces of bailer-twine were wrapped around the manger bars and around the shovel, whilst images of cows and sheep from empty feed packaging travelled up the twine and became trapped against the bars.

Ysgubor doors

29 December 1966: Trwsio stonder drws Ysgubor/fix the door surround of the Ysgubor.

The Ysgubor is the shed where we keep some of the dogs. Animation 7 uses the double doors of the shed as a blackboard. Having written all the names of the farm's dogs that I had ever known onto the doors (around fourteen dogs in all), I wipe the door with a cloth along a horizontal line, erasing the names as I go. During the animation, two dogs walk across the door as I take a photo, drawing attention to the passing lives of these non-human beings. The use of the material (chalk from a

nearby shed) and the way that it was used to write on the door (a practice used by Glynne to note the numbers of sheep in different fields or areas of the farm on the doors of main agricultural shed), draws attention to everyday practices of inscription as an aid to memory.

Rotten post

15 February 1968: Diwedd y ffens ochr draw i'r afon yn Cwmrhaidr-Fêch /finish the fence on the other side of the river in Cwmrhaidr-Fêch.

This animation was created by manually disintegrating a rotten fence post in Cwmrhaidr Fêch with my hands and with tools. In this animation, I had intended to break off parts of the fence post, piece by piece until there was nothing left. The process of breaking the fence-post down was problematic, as although the outside was soft and rotten, the core of the wood, or the heartwood, was still very hard. I had to abandon the camera and tripod whilst making the animation in order to return to the farm to pick up tools to help the process.

Wdder and wool

29 March 1965: Codi wdder yng ngwaeod y mynydd/built an wdder at the bottom of the mountain.

This animation was created on an wdder at the bottom of Pistyll y Llyn. An wdder is a place-specific term for a piece of stock-proof fence that crosses a river. This was the only animation that I made where I used a material that was not found in abundance at the location. For this animation, I used sheep wool, wrapping it gradually around individual squares of fence; then felting it in place with friction, soap and water. This animation attempted to allude to how animal bodies leave their own marks on the landscape by referring to the weather-felted wool often found on fences around the farm.

Stones on post

16 February 1968: Ffensio o'r afon at waelod y cae gwair pellaf/fenced from the river to the bottom of the furthest hay-field.

This animation was located on a fence post at the bottom of the hay-field. Small, Smooth, river-stones were drilled with holes before being hung on wire around the entire circumference of the post. The idea to use stones in this way was simply an artistic re-creation of a caddis fly larvae that we often see stuck to the underside of rocks and stones in the river. When playing the sequence back, the passage of time is obvious, due to the fast movement of sheep in the background and the change in light due to the movement of clouds across the sky.

2 Reflections

2.1 labour

Labour and the labouring body remain invisible in the film, but the effort and the traces of the body's interactions with these objects is often palpable, sometimes even visible with the movement of mud below a post or the misplacement of a piece of moss. By removing the body from the film, I was drawing attention to it. By removing the labour (like the diaries), I was heightening the need to consider the body and its labour in relation to these sites. There is a sense of a body haunting these objects, not just mine, but also that of the original workers. Writing in Industrial Ruins, Tim Edensor, suggests that

Ruins are already allegories of memory, but in addition, the involuntary memories which ruins provoke and the ways in which they are haunted by numerous ghosts foreground experiences of memory which are contingent, frequently inarticulate, sensual and immune from attempts to codify and record them. (Edensor 2005:18)

Although Edensor is writing about the leftovers of industrial occupation, many of the ways in which he describes the interactions between ruins and ourselves could

equally be applied to the objects/artefacts/sites in the landscape that make up my sequence of animations. Like Edensor's ruins, they too 'contain a still and seemingly quiescent present, and they also suggest forebodings, pointing to future erasure and subsequently, the reproduction of space, thus conveying a sense of the transience of all spaces' (125). The lack of the body and the transformation of the object/artefact/site also draws attention to the messy mortality of both living and material things; the interconnectedness, the way that

As things decay, they lose their assigned status as separate objects. Deteriorating material separates into parts due to gravity or the tendency of weakening joints to stretch away from each other. Things give up their solidity, their form, yielding to processes which reveal them as aggregations of matter, erasing their objective boundaries, those edges which could be felt and looked at and suggested that the object was inviolable as a discrete entity. (114-15)

Even the human body eventually succumbs to the same phenomena that change the ruin from its rigid structural form. When looking at the films with a knowledge of the process, we may wonder about the lack of body; but we understand that its absence and the organic growth and blossoming of the dead and dying material of the objects into something else is just an illusion. In this seemingly uncanny version, perhaps even parody of natural decay and related phenomena, we hold on to the knowledge that bodies have, at one point or another left their mark on the landscape in numerous and sometimes subtle ways. Manufactured objects are colonised when our backs are turned; a riot of life takes over, and when we look again, their form is often irrevocably transformed.

We bear witness as the sound of Owen (my brother) and Glynne working on removing or repairing some of the objects described in the diaries; this is played as a soundtrack to the animations. The field-recording draws our attention to the negotiation involved in the knowledge transfer of farm skill and work, as Glynne advises Owen on the best way of undertaking such jobs, and is given the opportunity to practice his accumulating skills. There is also a sense that the posts and their metamorphosis are happening in the background, whilst they work; a sense of decay, of change, of time, of scale; of all kinds of labour: of bodies and of natural

processes. In *Notes on a Record of Fear: On the Threshold of the Audible* (2009), Louise Wilson describes her creation of an audio work using the contemporary archaeology of a Cold War military site in England. In this audio-work, particular historic, site-specific sounds are reinstalled on site, creating an audio haunting of that place. Through this audio installation, the material remains of the building are re-invigorated, re-awakened and drawn attention to. Similarly, the juxtaposition of the post, and the ambient sound of Glynne and Owen working, draws attention to the labour that created the object in the first place; it also suggests a future haunting of this landscape by the ongoing nature of farm work.

2.2 Time and rhythm

During the creation of the films, I became more aware of the different temporalities of the place. There were complex interactions and interrelations between measured (chronological) time and the more relational, qualitative (kairological) time. Jay Griffiths, in her book *Pip pip a sideways look at time* discusses how the idea of 'clock time' (chronological time) is just one version of time. She says that:

In rural place, days roll over the horizon at you, round and gold as the sun or stars or rainstorms. In this more Kairological time, the future comes towards you (*l'avenir*, in French, expresses that, or 'Christmas is coming') and recedes behind you while you may well stay still, standing in the present-the only place which is ever really anyone's to stand in. This is why the countryside, and access to it, is so vital in over-urbanized societies; it offers a kinder time. (Griffiths 2000, p.22)

Within the context of my research, Kairological time is time governed by natural phenomena. A farmer's life revolves around the opportune time to undertake certain tasks. These timeframes lie outside of 'clock time' and are based around the reproductive cycles of animals and plants. Richard Gault suggests that

Kairological time is a time of opportunities and events. It is the time of right times, the right times for things to happen...If we feel a hunger and consequently announce 'It is time for lunch', we refer to a kairological time. By

contrast if we declare, as we more commonly do, 'It is one o'clock, lunchtime', we are responding to an imperative of chronological time. (Gault 1995: 155)

Within *Ode to Perdurance*, the objects themselves belong to chronological time by nature of their being recorded in a diary, but they are now marked by a different, messier time, of natural phenomena, decay, insect habitation, weather, plant life and so on. The fieldwork that I undertake encounters interesting interactions between kairological and chronological time. For example, the chronological time of the tea and lunch break is not just based on the kairological time of the body's need for sustenance, but it is also loosely based on whether there is a half decent programme on the television. The working day is often built around the daylight hours as well as the idea that a task is undertaken until it is finished, regardless of what time it is (kairological). The yearly farming calendar is based around kairological time, of the ovulation of sheep, the conception of lambs, their birth, the growth of grass, of thistles, of growing lambs. The nature of following the pattern of natural phenomena means that you can only go at the pace and within a timeframe that natural phenomena makes available to you; these are spaces of a different rhythm.

Rhythm, as Henri Lefebvre states, is an awkward word, illusive in its definition (Lefebvre 2004: 5). Lefebvre suggests that rhythm is not to be confused with speed, movement or objects, it is reliant on repetition, but not exact repetition as Lefebvre proposes that there can be no repetition without difference (6-7), and that repetition can occur even though something has changed slightly. Rhythm then, according to Lefebvre's definition, is the result of an interaction between linear repetition (chronological time) and cyclical repetition (kairological time). It is their constant interruptions in each other's repetitive acts that produces what he calls rhythm (8). Rhythm can be defined as fast or slow only by its comparison with other rhythms; as an example, Lefebvre uses the act of walking or breathing or the beat of the heart (10). Lefebvre sees everything as possessing rhythm, even objects that seem immobile. Rocks are 'not inert' (20); they too possess rhythm, albeit a slower one when compared to the rhythms of our bodies (20). Rhythm, along with time, is a useful tool to think about the objects described in my grandfather's diaries. These objects possess rhythms that are much slower than those of the body. The decay of wood; the growth of algae, moss, lichen, fungi; the habitation and growth and endless lifecycles of insects; the germination of seeds and flowering of plants -- this

is what Lefebvre describes as eurhythmia (20) (a medical term used to describe organs that work in harmony with one another). The eventual removal or total disintegration of the object and then the reinstatement of the work of the object (to keep sheep in a field for example) and the steady rhythm of the body's labour as it hits the mallet onto the top of the new, replacement post, driving it further and further into the ground; this could be described as polyrhythmia (many rhythms at the same time) as well as arrhythmia (rhythms which do not work together, these produce disturbances) as the harmony of the rotten, decaying post is disturbed by the farmer replacing it with a new one.

The film as a whole and each individual sequence of animation has its own rhythm created by the particular interaction that I had with the object. What is of interest to me about the film is the contrast between the rhythm of the making and the rhythm of the end-product. I would suggest that these two rhythms are in opposition to one another. During the process of creation, the film-maker has carefully placed a single piece of material onto the object then taken a photograph. This has continued until the object has been completely covered. It has taken a whole day and has a slow but methodical rhythm; it is linear, as it has a starting point and an end point and does not continue cyclically over and over. The end product, the linking together of the photographs, fails to capture the rhythm of its making, but instead alludes to a rhythm of a cyclical process that of natural decay of natural phenomena reclaiming an object. However, this illusionary cyclical rhythm also draws our attention to its falsity; the intensely speeded up version of the cyclical rhythm cannot help but give away the game of its construction -- in the end we know its rhythm is one of a linear and illusionary nature. The use of the camera causes arrhythmia: it causes rhythmic disturbances. The film also suggests a series of other rhythms, those of the past; the work that took place to install those objects there, the future decay, the continuing renewal of the manufactured objects, and the eventual mortality of the body.

2.3 Archaeology of the contemporary past

I have already mentioned that there is a sense of an archaeological process in this work. Traditionally, archaeology has sought to discover and interpret the material culture of a distant historical past, but since the 1960s the discipline of archaeology

has evolved to include the study of a more recent past (Buchli and Lucas 2006: 3). In fact, newer archaeologies almost completely collapse the gap between the past and the present, as the present can be the object of study. Gavin Lucas and Viktor Buchli suggest that by studying the 'now', or as they put it 'us', the archaeologist makes 'familiar categorisations of spatial perceptions unfamiliar -- a translation from an everyday perceptual language into an archaeological one' (9). In conventional archaeology, the archaeological method attempts to resolve temporal distance. It is unlikely that an archaeologist looking at a distant past has any attachment to the objects of their study. However, when studying objects of the *now* (yesterday's crisp packet blowing down the street, or a piece of graffiti), the archaeologists' attachment to these very familiar objects, is challenged by the distance that the archaeological method creates (9). The archaeology of the contemporary past uses to its advantage the distancing effect that the method of archaeology produces in order to look at our present lives in contemporary society. It often bears a knock-on effect for the society being looked at, and can have positive or negative consequences which means that it can be a highly politically charged endeavour. An archaeology of the contemporary past can therefore have far-reaching effects akin to those of action research.

Lucas and Buchli suggest that the approaches of an archaeology of the contemporary past produce an uncanny effect, which 'seems to be the result of repetition, a "doubling" through a simultaneous process of presencing and distancing' (12). When I began to look for the objects described in my grandfather's diaries (which could almost be described as being archaeological in nature) I felt a sense of numbness on finding them, which could be attributed to the fact that they were familiar, everyday and yet forgotten objects. Through seeking out these objects for a particular project, I was defamiliarising them. Their familiarity slowly disintegrated the more time I spent with them. They went from being something that I lived with and passed by without even a second glance, to something that I looked at and thought about. Through the making of each individual sequence of animation, I felt both a void between myself and the object, whilst simultaneously feeling that the object had been renewed and presenced. One possible experience of the film may be the sense of the familiar made unfamiliar; this is definitely akin to the doubling up that Lucas and Buchli refer to (12). Lucas and Buchli suggest that

Archaeologies of the contemporary past expose just such realms of the abject and the uncanny; because of their approach focussing on the material, the non-discursive, they frequently engage with the unconstituted. This is not simply the unsaid, but the unsayable -- it lies outside the said, outside discourse. This does not mean it is not visible, not experienced, but all too often the experience is crowded out by other, hegemonic discourses. The feelings of abjection and the uncanny arise precisely because we are faced with no words to articulate the experience. (12)

The film is an archaeological act, concentrating on the material culture of a place and its people; it defamiliarises its object of study, and as Lucas and Buchli suggest 'the analytical distance that defamiliarises curiously enough establishes truthfulness about who we are' (13) now, in this present time and place.

2.4 Nostalgia

Our understanding of the word *nostalgia* has changed since its invention during the 17th century. 'In 1688, an Alsatian physician, Johannes Hofer, combined the Greek words *nostos* (return home) and *algia* (painful condition) to create a term for a newly observed physical ailment' which manifested itself as a psychological preoccupation with home and the past (Santesso, 2006:13). In modern usage, it retains its connection to the original term as we associate it with both homesickness and a longing for the past. Although nostalgia is often critiqued, especially with regard to the heritage industries (see Lippard 1997; Massey 2005; Relph 2008: 83), I suggest that it plays an important role as a way of making sense of, or justifying our right/need to be in a place. For my family at Cwmrhaidr, nostalgia is intertwined in our lives and plays a significant part; we often have to look back in order, not only to move forward, but also to reaffirm our connections in this place. Nostalgia serves an important purpose, to support our being in this place, to pass on knowledge and information and to allow us to keep our collective history alive here. If we are looking back nostalgically, there is often a clear understanding that we do not want to go back to that time; this nostalgia is not a wistfulness for an idealised past. For example, Glynne often recounts how as a teenager, he had to push an Allen scythe up the steep slopes of the farm in order to cut the bracken;[¹ he sounds

nostalgic when he speaks about this, but what is also clear is how pleased he is that things have moved forwards (in terms of technology). He does not have a nostalgic pre-occupation for returning to this era; he just enjoys the act of remembering it. Lucy Lippard suggests that 'Nostalgia is a way of denying the present as well as keeping some people and places in the past where we can visit them when we feel like taking a leave of absence from modernity' (Lippard 1997: 85). Doreen Massey discusses 'the prominence within the postmodern of feelings and expressions of *nostalgia*, including nostalgias for place and home' (Massey 2005: 123). She continues by describing her own personal experience of returning home, and the fact that what she loves about her return is 'the richer set of connections here, precisely its familiarity' (123). Massey also discusses negative aspects of nostalgia: she conjectures that because 'nostalgia articulates space and time in such a way that it robs others of their histories (their stories), then indeed we need to rework nostalgia.' (124). In both of Lippard's and Massey's consideration of nostalgia, there is a strong sense that it involves an attempt at traveling back through time. In Massey's personal account of going home she returns with an expectation that everything will be the same, 'But places change; they go on without you' (Massey 2005: 124). This is where the differences lie, I suggest, between our experience at Cwmrhaidr, and Lippard and Massey's experiences/concepts. We accept at Cwmrhaidr that things do change and I feel that nostalgia within the context of my research is not about denying the present, but rather about reaffirming connections to a collective history. It is about seeing our path from the past into the present, and showing us a possible future. The film attempts to condense historical linearity by combining the present and the past to form some sort of hybrid temporality where past-present-future are all at play. The past is one of the central points of our understanding of our present, not a denial of it. Lippard suggests that a reason why we ought to know our own history is so that 'we are not defined by others, so that we can resist other people's images of our pasts, and consequently our futures' (Lippard 1997:85). The notion of nostalgia that my animations emerge from is one of reclamation; a teasing-out of the past from a jumble of rotting posts and rusting wires; reclaiming our past from the romantic idyll it might be perceived to be -- a pragmatic visioning of the remains of my *Taid's* working life.

2.5 Heritage

The National Trust are a cultural heritage charity in the UK, whose motto is 'For everyone, Forever'.^[note]² In recent years, their policies regarding their property, Mullion Harbour, on the Lizard peninsula in Cornwall have evolved to include managed retreat. Over time, climate change is beginning to have an effect on the coastline, and as a result the harbour is under threat from a phenomenon that is much too extensive for the National Trust to ameliorate. Rather than continue to restore the harbour's breakwater wall to its original condition, the Trust has come to an agreement to repair only where it can, and to accept the fact that once the harbour walls become too unstable and unsafe, it will demolish the property.^[note]³ Caitlin DeSilvey's work seeks to find alternative ways of writing the history of the harbour, of narrating the story of this landscape in a dynamic rather than a static way (DeSilvey 2012: 34); it seeks to make 'connections between past dynamism and future process' (31). In her journal article *Making sense of transience: an anticipatory history*, DeSilvey writes a narrative history of Mullion Harbour, which encompasses its many layers of historical information into narrative ebbs and flows. It provides an antidote to the traditional linear historical narrative, and instead, seeks to give a sense of movement; looking at the future through the past, or the past through its possible future and how all these filter into the now (DeSilvey 2012: 31-54).

DeSilvey's work also draws my attention to the questions surrounding cultural and archaeological heritage. Who makes the choices about what gets preserved, and why? During my fieldwork at Cwmrhaidr, there were a number of occasions noted in my fieldwork diary, where Glynne had referred to a derelict building at the bottom corner of the field 'Caeae'r Cwm'. What was of interest was the fact that Glynne was required to fence off this derelict building, even though Cadw^[note]⁴ were unable to tell him what this building had been. In the first artistic output from my doctoral research (*The Only Places We Ever Knew*), my participants had led an audience on a guided walk, where Glynne pointed out particular objects/places/materials of interest; things which I had noted over the course of my first year of ethnographic practice were re-visited for an audience. During one of these moments, Glynne points to a pile of stones at the top of the mountain. He tells the audience that this was once a small stone building, built to shelter a man and his donkey who led Victorian excursionists up the narrow path past Pistyll Y

Llyn.[{note}]⁵ The rubble is not fenced off, Cadw has not requested Glynne to protect it and it has no significance for those undertaking archaeological surveying in the area (whereas mine workings have been recorded by archaeological surveys). For those that farm this landscape however, there is a story here, a history and a knowing; these stones do have import and significance.

Heritage is described by Graham et al. as a

View from the present, either backward to a past or forward to a future. In both cases, the viewpoint cannot be other than the now, the perspective is blurred and indistinct and shaped by current concerns and predispositions, while the field of vision is restricted to a highly selective view of a small fraction of possible pasts and envisaged futures. (Graham et al. 2000: 2)

Ode to Perdurance/Awdl Amser might be considered guerrilla-heritage;

simultaneously acknowledging the present and the future through a past labour forgotten about by landscape and archaeological preservationists. Such non-descript everyday artefacts are functional, yet uninteresting to those who make choices about what gets maintained or protected for the future; they defy the hegemonic discourses of preservation and heritage. In the demarcation of buildings designated as historically or culturally valuable within such landscapes, a myriad of stories and histories of that place are denied. Graham et al. describe this aspect of heritage as 'dissonance', arising due to the economising of such culture through tourism, and 'because of the zero-sum characteristics of heritage, all of which belongs to someone and logically, therefore, not to someone else.' (24). Heritage is a partial view of a culture within constrained temporalities and in a specific place, and therefore denies the stories and histories of some, whilst maintaining those of others. In Cadw's lack of interest in finding out the history of this place through interdisciplinary methods, the demarcated historical buildings and sites recorded at Cwmrhaidr, hold little function for either the inhabitants of this landscape, or for a present or future public. I am not suggesting that Cadw does not undertake important work, but their choices about what gets preserved are in-line with particular ideologies that are retained by 'experts' away from this specific location; and in their choices, those who live and work in the landscape are denied the opportunity to contribute to future narratives of the place.

2.6 Place

Doreen Massey's reading of the postmodern world through the discourse of globalisation and her rebalancing of the importance of space and place (Massey 2005: 11) does not fit easily with our everyday experiences here. She suggests that the longing for 'such coherence is none the less a sign of the geographic fragmentation, the spatial disruption, of our times' (Massey 1999: 1). She goes on to suggest that the search for places and locality is 'in part, a response to desire for fixity and for security of identity in the middle of all the movement and change' (7). She also suggests that place 'has come to have totemic resonance. Its symbolic value is endlessly mobilised in political argument' (Massey 2005: 5); it serves as an escape from the alienation of the postmodern world (5). Other authors share similar views: Edward Casey calls postmodernist space thinned place (Casey 2001: 407); Yi-Fu Tuan suggests that whenever a person feels threatened by a world that is changing too fast, he/she seeks out 'an idealised and stable past' (Tuan 1977: 188); Tim Cresswell says that 'mobility and mass culture lead to irrational and shallow landscapes' (Cresswell 2004: 45); Edward Relph sees mobility as the downfall of rootedness, but that this is not necessarily a bad thing (Relph 2008: 4); Lucy Lippard suggests that 'The lure of the local is the pull of place that operates on each of us, exposing our politics and our spiritual legacies. It is the geographical need to belong somewhere, one antidote to a prevailing alienation' (Lippard 1997: 7). If these are the contemporary operative discourses that surround the idea of 'place', then what does this mean for my family at Cwmrhaiadr? Are our experiences reactionary? Are we seeking solace from the alienation that the globalised world supposedly produces? To answer simply -- No. I would suggest that increased mobility, global networks and the global economy has very little impact on our affiliation and attachment to this place. I will not deny that globalisation has not changed certain aspects of our farming lives, but the rootedness of each one of my family in this place, I would suggest, has remained the same over generations. And maybe this is because we have worked at keeping ourselves placed through the stories we tell and are told, or through the erection of permanent fixtures on the farm, but I would argue that because life and work, land and home are not separate entities, place remains a

far more complex and enduring manifestation; out-weighting effects of the global world.

Ode to Perdurance attempts to reclaim the fragments that would, in the usual situation of day-to-day farming activity just pass by. Yuriko Saito suggests that 'our relative neglect of workday environments in favour of remote, dramatic, scenic environments does have dire consequences, because people's attitude and societal policies regarding protection of landscape are significantly affected, sometimes determined, by such aesthetic considerations.' (Saito 2007:52). In *Ode to Perdurance* the objects and sites lie outside of the usual conceptions of beauty; outside of the usual things that can be saved as cultural heritage; outside of the usual objects that serve as mnemonics in this place, but they too reveal the material culture of the farm. Raymond Williams suggests that:

Culture is ordinary: that is the first fact. Every human society has its own shape, its own purposes, its own meanings. Every human society expresses these, in institutions, and in arts and learning. The making of a society is the finding of common meanings and directions, and its growth is an active debate and amendment under the pressures of experience, contact, and discovery, writing themselves into the land...Culture is ordinary, in every society and in every mind. (Williams 1989: 4)

I would agree with Williams's assertion and suggest that Culture is embedded within the ordinary and the everyday at Cwmrhaiadr farm. The objects in *Ode to Perdurance* are the leftovers of ordinary lives and activities. For me they hold a resonance as containers of our familial culture; they tell me who my family were, who they are, and who they will become. There is a visceral tangibility to these objects that remind me of the bodies that installed them: It is not just the optic that is important here, but all that other stuff; the haptic, which coagulates our sense of being in this place. The animated film does not seek to recover a sense of place lost through the alienation of a globalised world, instead it attempts to draw attention to my family's own place in this complex working organism -- our farm. It allows us to see the importance of a storied, haptic and phenomenological landscape; of traces of labour, of past, present and future work and the ongoing cyclical, repetitive rhythm of the phenomena beyond our control. *Ode to Perdurance/Awdl Amser* has a 'place ethic' (Lippard 1997: 275); it disregards the optical splendour of the landscape

picture for a more hidden, more visceral experience of place; and through it, I reclaim the leftovers of our working lives as markers of our own unique cultural heritage.

Notes

1 An Allen Scythe is a powered scythe. It bears no resemblance to a hand scythe although it has the same function. It functions similarly to a lawnmower but has two wide serrated blades at the front that oscillate to produce a cutting motion.

2 The National Trust are a UK-wide conservation charity. They own and maintain properties of historical and cultural significance ranging from large country mansions, castles, coastlines and landscapes. The charity relies on public membership fees, donations and entrance fees from visitors.

3 The National Trust are still maintaining the walls of the harbour at present, but their general strategy is for a managed retreat. Should exceptional weather events or rising sea levels cause significant damage to the structure, they will demolish it, or parts of it, in order to make it safe.

4 Cadw is the Welsh government's historic environments service. They protect and conserve buildings and landscapes of historical and cultural importance.

5 Pistyll Y Llyn is a waterfall with a height of 160 Metres. It is said to be one of the highest in Wales.

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