

NATURE RESERVES

curated by Tom Jeffreys



GV
art

Front cover image : Liz Orton, *Splitters and Lumpers 5*

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Natures Reserves : tracing thoughts and the future of the archive

by Tom Jeffreys

"Since nature has become the object of special studies it has been the universal aim of all naturalists to arrange the objects of their investigations in the most natural order possible."

Louis Agassiz, Essay on Classification, 1869

"Every archive is at once institute and conservative, revolutionary and traditional... it keeps and puts in reserve, it saves, but in an unnatural fashion."

Jacques Derrida, Archive Fever, 1995

"Nature is a language, can't you read?"

The Smiths, Ask, 1986

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From inside the Ferryman's Cottage – separated from the RSPB nature reserve of Ailsa Craig by a neat little line of lawn, a hedgerow pin-pricked with vibrant floral bursts, a short stroll of shingle, fallen strata of yellowed lichen-spattered rock, and several miles of Kilbrannan Sound – the nighting sky glows indigo within white-painted window frames. Sprawled across the floor are open folders, reference books, notepads, a newly purchased OS Explorer Map (sheet 356 – Kintyre South), and pages of text printed out from the municipal library at Campbeltown and scrawled upon semi-legibly with near-inkless biro. Among

other things – editing artist statements and biographies, writing this – I'm attempting to find out a little about a shore-line plant that, earlier in the day, was providing such a draw to a loose cluster of thrumming bumble bees as I sat nearby, half-snoozing in a stripy deckchair. The image of the flower seemed so clearly imprinted on my mind. But already it is fading under interrogation from the Field Guide to the Wild Flowers of Britain (part of the Reader's Digest Nature Lover's Diary series) found among the rental cottage's collection of place-specific books. "How many petals are there?" it wants to know. "And how are they attached?" Are the leaves in level pairs or clusters?" "Or are they scattered along the length of the stem?"

Why do I even want to know? The plant itself is just there, outside, free to study and examine, test or taste. The Guide itself posits one answer: "For most people," it says, "the greatest satisfaction lies in being able to name the plant which they find." Why? Because "a flower's name is the key to all further information about it". Without the name, the entire store of information and knowledge that has been accrued about the plant in question remains locked away, reserved just a little out of reach. The feeling therefore lingers that a nameless plant is a plant unknown.

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Fifteen days earlier, I'm at University College London, inside the Wilkins Building on Gower Street, where the geology department is housed on the first floor. The

research process for *Nature Reserves* – an exhibition conceived to explore how different methods of archiving might impact on the human-nature relationship – has taken me from coffee shops in Dalston to artist studios in Borough, a Victorian house in Tulse Hill, home to the South London Botanical Institute, and, now here, to UCL.

Walking up cold flights of stairs, along empty, blue-girdered corridors, we make our way to the Rock Room. Inside are display specimens in glass cabinets, hand specimens in drawers, and, amazingly, a 'trace fossil' dating back some 243 million years. Unlike, say, the imprint depicted in Theresa Moerman Ib's *I Like to Leave an Impression*, one of two photographic works by the artist to be included in the exhibition, a trace fossil is not the mark left by the remains of a plant or animal, but the preserved impression of an individual action or event – in this case, the footprint of an early mammal-like reptile called *Chirotherium*. Surely they won't let me borrow this?

Next door is a locked 'common' room with shelves bearing rows and rows of green and blue lever-arch files labelled 'Year 2 Coursework'. Inside, behind another locked door, is a small side room, with barely space for two people inside. Against one wall are two small stacks of wooden drawers, organised by location – predominantly in Italy or the UK. This is part of the Johnston Lavis Collection, one of the most important components of UCL's Geology Collections. It is this, or part of it, that will be included in *Nature Reserves*.

The opposite wall is filled with large metal cabinets, stretching some twelve feet up towards the ceiling. Each is labelled according to its contents – 'Lizardite to Leucite'; 'Outsize Specimens'; 'Smithsonite'; or, simply, 'Unclassified'. Containing samples of volcanic rock yet to be fully catalogued by the department's curatorial staff, this latter cabinet is perhaps the most intriguing – not least for its proximity to the work of Liz Orton, whose series, *Splitters and Lumpers*, consists of photographs of unmounted plant specimens as they wait to be classified by

taxonomists at the Herbarium at Kew Gardens. This series, documenting the sensitive creativity at the heart of such archiving projects, was a kind of kernel out of which grew my subsequent thinking about the exhibition.

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"Natural history is nothing more than the nomination of the visible." So declares Michel Foucault in 1966's *The Order of Things*, in which he discusses the eighteenth-century origins of the science. Is this the moment that marked a new divide between humans and nature? Certainly, it saw the foundation of a new discourse, as the likes of Carl Linnaeus; Michel Adanson; and George-Louis Leclerc, Comte de Buffon built on the work done by Joseph Pitton de Tournefort. From these origins, and until the arrival of comparative anatomy thanks to George Cuvier, natural history was concerned, at least according to Foucault, entirely with what was visible. Linnaeus himself declared that "every note should be a product of number, or form, or proportion, of situation". Anais Tondeur's *Mutation of the Visible* demonstrates that such privileging of sight-based metaphors is not limited to the Enlightenment, nor indeed to science, but is at the heart of our understanding of the external world, especially when that world is (or was) so apparently out of reach. Today, botany – and natural history more broadly – is about far more than the merely visible. But it is still very much a science of names.

That little Scottish patch of shoreline flower (Sea Campion by the way) was formally named as *Silene maritime*, a species within the genus *Silene*, just one of those instituted by Linnaeus himself in 1754. The Genus name, *Silene Linnaeus*, bears the mark of its father and has subsequently been listed as *nomen conservandum* – a scientific designation which ensures the continuation of this specific nomenclature for the present and into the future. According to the catchily

entitled 2012 International Code of Nomenclature for algae, fungi, and plants (ICN) it refers to either 1) "a name ruled as legitimate and with precedence over other specified names even though it may have been illegitimate when published or lack priority" or 2) "a name for which its type, orthography, or gender has been fixed by the conservation process." Translation: the name is key, and botany involves not just a fixing of specimens but a fixing of language too.

While instituting itself as a nascent science, natural history also sought recourse to the authority of the past. Unsurprisingly, in what has since been dubbed the Classical Age, authority was associated with antiquity; in this case, Latin. Natural history is famous for its language of (largely) bi-partite Latin descriptions that divided living beings into a capitalised Genus and a lower case species (*Silene* and *maritime*, in the case of the Sea Campion; *Bombus impatiens*, the bumble bees so besotted by it). These names (both newly conceived and drawing upon the authority of an ancient grammar) replaced, or rather overlaid, the old medieval terms. The aim was to overcome the apparent difficulties inherent in the Medieval dependence on use-function, superstition and regional and vernacular variation. Instead, the New Latin (or Neo-Latin) order overran regional boundaries to impose itself in the name of universal clarity – even, as the ICN above attests, when imposed without accuracy or relevance or even the appropriate authority.

This retrospectively self-legitimising imposition of Latin terminology has a certain proximity with religion and, in particular, the Catholic Church, which claims for itself in its very name (κατά + ὅλος) that which is 'universal' or agreed by all. There are also unavoidable parallels with the colonialism practised by the nations in which natural history was founded. The two are arguably indissociable, and not simply in terms of shared origins and history; both also share a desire for knowledge and control over the dominion of The Other, an instinct for the universal, and a passion for mapping.

Botany has benefitted greatly from the rise of colonialism, with notable examples including the Frenchman Adanson, who studied not only the flora and fauna but also, interestingly, the local languages of then French colony Senegal. Much later, Charles Darwin famously voyaged aboard the Royal Navy ship HMS Beagle under the command of Robert FitzRoy, himself later Governor of New Zealand at the time of the Flagstaff War between the British and the Maori.

Natural historians returned from such voyages laden with specimens with which to fill their newly founded botanical gardens and herbaria – to such an extent that species such as *Pharotis imogene*, a vesper bat from New Guinea, have been all but wiped out by the colonising impulses of scientific knowledge. This overlap between colonialism and species extinction is precisely the territory explored by Sally Ann McIntyre's sound works, *Huia Transcriptions* and *Collected Silences for Lord Rothschild*, both of which demonstrate how even a past absence can continue to signify into the present.

But this is not confined to the past: even today, as Tim Smit, creator of the Eden Project, wrote in the 2004 introduction to Maggie Campbell Culver's *The Origin of Plants*, there is now "a greater range of species rhododendron in the UK than in Nepal, Bhutan and Sikkim, their countries of origin". And this is not down to the 'invasiveness' (oh, the irony) of the species: most of these examples are found not superseding the 'native' flora of the Welsh mountains but in sundry botanical gardens across the country.

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None of this is to denigrate natural history. The science – and its Latin names – generated a wealth of new and valuable knowledge, and helped ring the death knell for such dubious theologically justified concepts as the doctrine of the

signatures, an ancient belief that herbs resembling parts of the (human) body could be used to treat ailments of that part. According to Andrew Dickson White, "It was reasoned that the Almighty must have set his sign upon the various means of curing disease which he provided." The tradition lingers in such folk names as lungwort, bloodroot and toothwort, and is preserved, strangely, in one small area of the South London Botanical Institute: the Gerard's Border is named after John Gerard of Holborn, who listed many of these plants and their 'uses' in his *Herball* of 1596.

No, the point is rather to examine, if there is indeed a divide between Humanity and Nature, at what moment it might have been opened up. Might this divide be tangled up somehow with the violence that accompanies the imposition of a name? Or, with the very origin of identity – consciousness itself? In *Archive Fever*, Jacques Derrida notes in parentheses the "violence of communal dissymmetry" inherent in any notion of the 'we'. The grouping together that is required in any use of 'we' involves an often-concealed process of exclusion and a bifurcating approach to difference – overlooking the internal while overstating the external. It is, Derrida says, at once extraordinary and "most common", and takes place "each time we address ourselves to someone, each time we call them while supposing, that is to say while imposing a 'we', and thus while inscribing the other person in this situation of an at once spectral and patriarchic nursling."

When we therefore speak of humanity as *we*, as defined in opposition to nature or the environment, we are making just these suppositions and inscriptions. This is unavoidable. But in the case of Nature – the non-human animal, plant or planet or particle or the networks and ecosystems that bind 'them' and 'us' together – such violence is all the more evident and so all the more easy to overlook on account of the perceived voicelessness of the other. The very term 'nature' – so often, as here, capitalised and placed in sharp opposition with the communal 'we' of humanity – is frequently an unwilling perpetrator of this violent imposition.

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Just across the street from the UCL Geology Collections stands the Grant Museum of Zoology and Comparative Anatomy. Over the years since its inception in 1828, the collection has been added to, edited, adjusted, reorganised and relocated. Today it is both a publicly visited repository of curiosity and a valuable tool of knowledge and learning. Excitingly, in the context of this exhibition, Curator Mark Carnall tells me that "The Grant is also a museum of changing systems of documentation." Inside, this becomes clear: a pig's skull is presented with -Z173 written in ink on its jawbone. Attached is a paper tag reading SUI FORMES SUS SP. (PIG). "Domestic pig," reads the most recent, more visitor-focused designation. Round the corner a two stick strongfish was once known as *Perciformes*. This has been crossed out and renamed *Scorpaeniformes*. Unfortunately, any meaning once associated with the accompanying code (o. ao. f. V.151) is withheld.

Similar changes in the ordering of knowledge and nature are also in evidence in another of the books lying on the cottage floor up in Scotland. In particular, a small booklet entitled *Birds of Kintyre*, published by Eddie Macguire in 1996. Macguire is the warden at Machrihanish Bird Observatory, where he spends most days watching birds through binoculars and taking photographs using a small digital camera attached to the lens of a high-powered telescope. Some of the resulting images are quite incredible, depicting rare migrating visitors such as Sabine's Gull, Whiskered Tern and Bean Goose that visitors would be unlikely to see with their own eyes during a short visit to the observatory. Nonetheless a certain flattening of the image acts as a trace of this multi-mediated perspective.

In Macguire's booklet, by the entry for the Mediterranean Shearwater, is a small

asterisk. Neat little handwriting at the bottom of the page alerts us to the division of the species in 1996 into two subspecies: the Balearic (or Western) Shearwater – *Puffinus mauretanicus*; and the Yelkouan (Eastern) Shearwater – *Puffinus yelkouan*. A note in passing: *Puffinus puffinus* is the Latin name for the Manx Shearwater. The Common Puffin, recently breeding again on Ailsa Craig following the eradication of the island's imported rat population, and from whom this duplicating New Latin name has been taken, is actually a species of auk: *Fratercula arctica*.

Even names change. As Helen Pynor's photographic series, *The Life Raft*, so deftly demonstrates, the archive exists in time, and is subject to decay, disorder and destruction. It is not the lifeless, passive, permanent principle that the theorist, the natural historian, or even the archivist herself might wish for, but a living body – an organising organism of sorts, that expands, contracts and develops over time. In part this is simply due to its components. As Richard Weedon writes in the catalogue to the Johnston Lavis exhibition of 2006: "all materials have a natural lifespan".

But this is also due to the changing linguistic mechanisms by which an archive might be ordered. The Herbarium at the South London Botanical Institute, for example, is organised along two different systems after an update to correspond to the Flora Europaea of 1976 proved too time-consuming and so was only administered to the British specimens in the collection. Language too is a material: as we've seen from the puffin and the shearwater, despite the anchoring in time of the *nomen conservandum*, nomenclature moves on. Neither nature, then, nor language, can ultimately be fixed. This is helpful...

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If the archive may be seen to be alive, so too does life enact its own process of archiving. This has been an important point in the conception of the exhibition, its title also functioning as a statement. Nature, too, reserves. Information from the past is stored for the future in potash mines (in the works of Pauline Woolley), tree trunks (Amy Cutler punning *PINE*) and symbiotic cultures of bacteria and yeast known as kombucha (*Microbial Familiars* by Hestia Peppe) – each contributing to complex networks of signs analogous (at the very least) to human language. Evolution itself is a kind of "biological archive" according to Derrida.

Signification, of course, is not unique to humans, whatever the fast-fading mechanistic hegemony might have argued since Descartes. As David E Cooper writes: "the droppings at the entrance to the tunnel indicate a fox, which signifies a threat to the badger's young, whose squealing expresses hunger, which refers the badger to the berries behind that tree, the scent on which means the recent presence of a fox, which indicates...etc." And these signs are just as open to interpretation or misinterpretation, subterfuge and exploitation, pastiche, pretence, and play as any other language. The playful bite of the young bear; the careful camouflage of the flower mantis; the scarlet toxicity warning of the Cinnabar moth; the duplicitous lure of the tropical pitcher plant: even without getting embroiled in a discussion about non-human consciousness, it nonetheless seems difficult to disagree with Cooper when he argues that "animals, too, dwell in a field of significance".

But the archive institutes a kind of signification that operates beyond that of the immediate present – "the so-called live or spontaneous memory" as Derrida terms it – in a manner that is apparently divided, supplementary, somehow *unnatural*. Using some memorably clunky phrasing, Derrida contrasts this with a notion of the archive as "a certain hypomnesic and prosthetic experience of the technical substrate". Or perhaps it is his translator, Eric Prenowitz, whose choice of strongly Graeco-Latin vocabulary seems here to emphasise a kind of human or arguably post-human, mechanical (certainly not 'natural') understanding of the

archive.

Derrida is quick to link the archive with the technologies that produce it – printing in particular, but also email – but to read him as arguing for a concept of the archive that is limited to the human or the mechanical would, I think, be problematic. Throughout Derrida's work, and in *Limited Inc* specifically, is repeated reference to the "iterability of the mark" – the structural repeatability that enables language to function, but that also enables quotation and pastiche, misunderstanding, the non-serious etc.

The reason that this is relevant here is the use of the word 'mark' – which does not confine Derrida's theories of language to the (human) word or letter, less still to the title or proper noun. Instead, it may be seen to apply to any sign that operates within a network of signification. Incidentally, the Proto-Germanic etymology of the word 'mark' has to do with the delineation of boundaries, and so any sign that may be drawn on paper or scratched or urinated on post or tree may be understood in the same terms – structurally repeatable, signifying apart from its own materiality, and archivable beyond the singularity of its event.

This is not to deny the artificiality of the archive, the manner in which it grafts itself (as "prosthetic experience") onto the moment or event – like the synthetic latex and metallic paint layered over soil in Charlie Franklin's *Relic*. Rather it is to argue that it is inscribed in advance within the structure of the 'natural' event – always archivable in another form of "technical substrate", as fossil or ripple or tree trauma, flowers cast in resin (Laura O'Neill's clumsily delicate *Somewhere*) or imprinted in the mud that turns to stone. This grafted artificiality might therefore be seen not in opposition to 'nature' but a constituent component of it.

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"What is required of environmental ethics?" wonders Robert Briggs in *Wild Thoughts: A Deconstructive Environmental Ethics*. If *Nature Reserves* is underpinned by anything, it is an interest in environmental ethics: what ought we to do? This is one question touched upon by Victoria Browne, whose *Caught the Wild Wind Home* depicts a coppiced Sweet Chestnut tree in the highly managed forest of Norsey Wood, Essex. Does the bright red of the cut signify alarm or danger? Or the violence implemented by the forces of management?

Briggs' own answer draws upon the earlier writings of Jim Cheney and Anthony Weston: What is needed, "is a certain – perhaps impossible – 'universal' (re) consideration: 'an open-ended, nonexclusive consideration of everything: people, bacteria, rocks, animals, everything, – including epistemology-based ethics and anthropocentrized culture – 'insofar as we can'." What does this mean? What might this look like?

What might help here is to return to the title of the exhibition, *Nature Reserves*. We have seen how this functions in a straightforward sense: Nature reserved; named and set aside in more or less fixed, more or less accessible herbaria and botanical gardens. We have seen how Nature enacts its own kind of reservation – a storage of information through a multiplicity of diverse signs, each signifying differently to different individuals and species in different contexts. But there is also another supplementary interpretation available: nature reserves, not only in the sense of storing information to be used in the future; Nature also reserves in the sense of withholding or keeping back. Nature refrains from full and final comprehension, translation, subjection within the confines of science (or any other discourse).

Such a perspective should entail a certain humility in the face of the irreducible (but re-presentable) other – as evidenced in the quietly painstaking paper sculptures of Laura Culham. Her work is scrupulously produced, ordered and presented, whilst the weeds themselves remain unnamed. But this is not (only) to

underscore Nature as mysterious other (that has been done too much already); rather to recognise that, ultimately, there are things we can't understand, whatever neatly organised names we give them.

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What, finally, in this context, will the archive achieve? Archiving is a process inseparable from a relationship to the future. The assembled archive can always (only?) be understood retrospectively, and functions even when no longer tethered to the ideology that instituted it. Even with the current erosion of the mechanistic worldview (by the likes of Mary Midgley, Rupert Sheldrake and others) herbaria such as that at the South London Botanical Institute are still invaluable resources of so many different kinds of knowledge (phytogeographical, anatomical, morphological etc) now and tomorrow. The archive therefore entails a sense of responsibility – both for the future and to it.

But the future of the archive itself is in question. Digitisation looms as a kind of spectre over the academy and elsewhere – a tempting project in a global age, one that can increase accessibility in democratic fashion, speed up the dissemination of knowledge, and even help to preserve an existing object collection by limiting the frequency with which it need be handled.

Herbaria@home, to which the South London Botanical Institute is contributing, is an instructive example here.

But the digitising drive does not freeze time any more than photography or the *nomen conservandum*. The digitised archive is just that: an archive, that is not 'virtual' (airless, non-real, fixed in time) but real – tied to an individual technological platform, powered by vast servers (consuming vast amounts of energy and belching out CO₂ emissions) and subject to far likelier and more

rapid redundancy than any number of hand-written labels and dusty old cabinets. The specific experience of the individual archive is indissociable from the medium in which it exists, each with its own unique life-span and limitations. Digitisation of the archive is never transcendental.

That much should be self-evident. When *Nature Reserves* is over – works sold or packed away, specimens and labels returned, the gallery cleared and rehung for another exhibition – all that remains beyond the memory of the individual, is this. Some files saved somewhere, countless drafts on a laptop – emailed back and forth – and a document, available to the public, for an uncertain time to come.

Tom Jeffreys, London
July 2013



Victoria Browne

Victoria Browne draws on public special collections to appropriate material research, applying traditional and innovative print techniques in the development of site-responsive installations. Browne's printmaking combines an act of creative intention with mechanical precision and digital innovation; maintaining a link with the past in order to intervene on the present and a pre-dictated future.

As the Founder of KALEID editions her practice extends to artists' books in addition to curating and representing European based artists. She is a visiting lecturer in the UK and Norway, and facilitates printmaking and digital media workshops in London, where she is Head of Print at Art Academy London. Browne's work is held in public collections at the Tate, V&A Museum, The National Art Library, Bristol City Museum and Bergen Council. In 2013 she was nominated by Gill Saunders, Senior Curator of Prints at the V&A Museum and shortlisted for The Arts Foundation Printmaking Fellowship.

Nature Reserves includes a stone lithograph by Victoria Browne entitled *Caught the Wild Wind Home*, first exhibited in her recent solo show 'Training Nature'; focusing on mankind's attempts to manipulate and control the natural environment. Taking inspiration from the Flemish dedication to topiary, Browne developed a series of reduction relief prints, highlighting our attempts to improve nature through constant pruning and shaping.

Caught the Wild Wind Home, however, is situated closer to home and depicts a coppiced Sweet Chestnut tree in Norsey Wood, Essex, near where Browne was born. The work was conceived during a five-day field trip to the medieval forest where harvesting the regrowth of mature trees is still practised. Stone lithography is a labour intensive nineteenth century printmaking process, involving hand-grinding Bavarian limestone with different grades of carborandum. The cumulative drawing, which necessitated the use of magnifying goggles, was created on the surface using oil-based crayons and etched with a nitric acid and gum arabic. The ensuing work was printed on Van Gelder Simili Japon paper during a residency at the Frans Masereel Centrum for Print in Belgium.



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Victoria Dunne '12

Laura Culham

Laura Culham is an artist living and working in Hertfordshire. She completed her BA in Fine Art at University College Falmouth in 2009 and her MA in Printmaking from the Royal College of Art in 2011. During her masters, Culham was the recipient of an exchange scholarship to Kyoto, Japan, which enabled her to experience a cultural aesthetic that is influential to her work, and helped calcify some key themes within her practice.

Culham has been the recipient of a Wilhelmina Barns-Graham Scholarship in 2006; was exhibited as part of Saatchi Gallery / Channel 4's *New Sensations* in 2009; and won the Prize of Honour from the Association of Independent Schools, also in 2009. Since graduating she has continued to develop her practice and has been involved in several group exhibitions in London and elsewhere.

For *Nature Reserves*, Culham is presenting a new work entitled *Weeds, 111*. During the month of June, 2013, Culham selected a single example of each of the most commonly occurring weeds found in her garden in Hertfordshire. The first weed that fulfilled a simple size specification was selected, regardless of its condition, and constructed from till receipt paper and glue. Working on a 1:1 scale over the course of two months, Culham has produced a quiet archive of the mundane, which shyly offers itself to the public during the course of the exhibition before withdrawing itself from view.

Weeds, 111 continues Culham's exploration of the mundane and overlooked – broken pieces of china, moths, lichen – and extends her practice of painstaking reproduction of small-scale subjects. Time spent in the garden tends to be dominated by weeding, but here Culham inverts the priorities of the proud gardener, paying minute attention to that which is usually found only on the periphery of normal observation. There is therefore a certain tentative humility in the relationship between subject and object, and a quiet, firm reticence in the face of grand statements about knowledge, power, and the creative act.



Amy Cutler

Amy Cutler is a poet, curator, writer and academic who is in the process of completing a PhD at Royal Holloway on coasts and forests in modern British poetry. Cutler has also written for various academic publications, and her debut collection of poetry, *Nostalgia Forest*, was published by Oystercatcher Press in 2013. Cutler has been the recipient of a number of awards, including National Winner, Best Film Education Programme in the British Federation of Film Societies Awards 2012 for her cultural geography cinema *PASSENGERFILMS*. She also edits the online series *Land Diagrams* and works on public engagement with research as an appointed ambassador for the National Co-ordinating Centre for Public Engagement.

In June 2013, Cutler curated a critically acclaimed exhibition, *Time, the deer, is in the wood of Hallaig* at St John on Bethnal Green. The exhibition explored the properties of forest memory through text, archive, and 'xylarium', or wood collection. Art works examining the cultural expression of time and history in the forest were placed alongside archival photographs, small press texts, specimens, and museum objects, in an old, low-lit belfry designed by Sir John Soane.

Cutler has produced a new work for *Nature Reserves* entitled *PINE* which follows up some of the ideas in *Nostalgia Forest* and *Time, the deer, is in the wood of Hallaig*. The work aims to explore the perceived and real environmental storage of the past – in particular, the concept of "forest trauma" (a French horticultural term), and the recording of events in history into the flesh of timber as it grows, as well as the public perception of this idea and its uptake as a metaphor for time and memory. It has been created in collaboration with the arborists at Connick Tree Care woodyard in Surrey, where dysfunctional timber is kept temporarily before chipping. These specimens are all too diseased, rotten, or strange in shape to be used as lumber.

The work takes text from a famous French poem in memory studies, 'Une connaissance inutile', by Charlotte Delbo – part of a number of writings made about her time at Auschwitz, and used as an example of PTSD and the eternal return (a constant re-circling of experience of the original trauma). It is famous for her neologism, 'je remeurs'; not an existing word in French, but often translated as 'I re-die'. For *Nature Reserves*, two lines of the poem are projected onto a trunk slice of a pine tree, felled for disease and the significant structural damage of woodworms. Delbo's words translate as 'Tell me have I come back / from that other world?' The incorporation of historical trauma in the growth of tree rings – revealed only by felling a tree and inspecting its internal calendar – resounds with Delbo's writings, as does the double meaning of 'pine'.

DITES-MOI SUIZ-JE
REVENUE



Charlie Franklin

Charlie Franklin is an artist living and working in London. She completed her BA in Fine Art at Middlesex University in 2005 and her Masters degree in Fine Art at Chelsea College of Art and Design, London, in 2008. Franklin makes sculpture using a broad range of materials and found objects. Her work increasingly investigates the role of nature and the language of landscape, as she questions how familiar, tangible materials can be sublimated into the realms of the supernatural, historical and spiritual.

Recent exhibitions include *Other Structures* (London), *PITV* (Stockholm), and *Graphite* at GV Art (London). In 2011 she had two solo shows, *Inland* at The Dunwich Museum (Suffolk) and *Mushrooms Like Lace* at Motorcade/FlashParade (Bristol). She is one of the winners of The Whitechapel Gallery East End Academy Studio Prize (2010) and in 2012 completed a month-long artist's residency at the Hafnarborg Centre of Culture and Fine Art in Iceland, where she produced the twelve-strong *Hinterland Series* of mixed media compositions. Due to their fragility, the series now only exists in the form of an accompanying publication.

Relic, by Charlie Franklin, is a small-scale sculptural piece developed using a time-consuming layering process: covering dry soil blocks with man-made substances, metallic paint and latex. *Relic* exemplifies Franklin's interest in combining traditional painting and sculpting materials with the everyday or natural, exploring ideas of reverence in relation to the mundane. Her work is informed by the formless sculpture and land art of the 1970s as well as her own research into alternative historical beliefs such as paganism and druidry.

Soil first entered Franklin's work in the form of a covering or scattering, but took on a more fundamental role by experimenting with pre-formed blocks as a solid armature. The constant struggle between disintegration and preservation became key through this working method, where the fragility and impermanence of the sculpture defies the futile attempt at petrification. Soaked and encrusted with impasto, the work appears to be the remains of an experience such as an alchemical deposit, an archaeological by-product, or an ambiguous specimen.



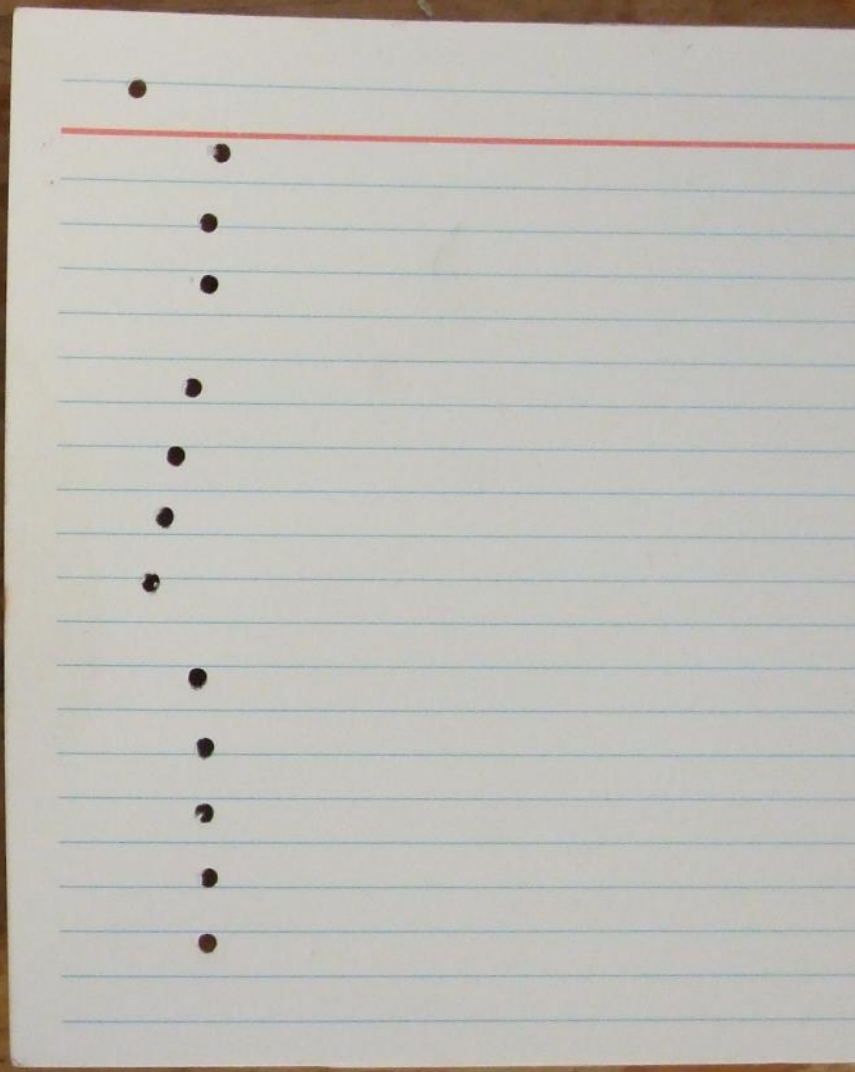
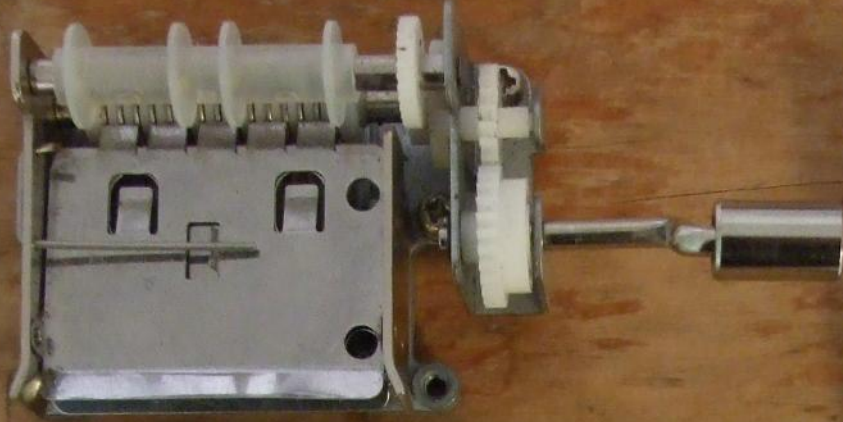
Sally Ann McIntyre

Sally Ann McIntyre is a sound and radio artist, curator and writer working out of Dunedin, New Zealand. She hosts the mini FM station Radio Cegeste 104.5FM as a solar or battery-powered, exploratory, nomadic platform for site-specific radio art projects, focusing on the airwaves as a revelatory medium for aspects of sited materiality. Recent Radio Cegeste projects have been themed around concerns such as museology, the sonification of extinct species, memory and memorials, old buildings and other historic sites, bird migration and electromagnetism, and the recorded and transmitted history of birdsong.

Working with small-radius, site-responsive transmission, location audio recording becomes a key element in the development of a 'plein air' radiophonics which works in situ with the material (sonic and electromagnetic, architectural and social) elements of a site. McIntyre has staged radio programmes in a diverse range of localities - including biosecure ecosanctuaries, islands, public transport, shopping malls, private gardens, stairwells, gallery spaces, and unstable earthquake-zoned buildings.

Nature Reserves contains two sound works by Sally Ann McIntyre with accompanying documentation. The first, *Huia Transcriptions*, is an assemblage of simple musical notation, playback device, and text relating to a two-day performance work conducted within the biosecure bird sanctuary of Kapiti Island, off the coast of New Zealand in June 2012. The Huia was a sacred bird (*taonga*) to the first peoples of New Zealand, whose official extinction in colonial times (c. 1907) was hastened by both habitat loss due to the clearing of forest for farming and the excessive acquisitive practices of British and European natural history collectors. No direct sonic recordings of the song of the Huia exist, so the notation was taken from the 1921 book *Bird Song and New Zealand Song-Birds* by Johannes C. Andersen, a former director of the Dominion Museum of New Zealand.

The second work, *Collected Silences for Lord Rothschild*, consists of five recordings of the silences of extinct endemic bird specimens, all held in the collections of the Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa, and all wiped out in the late 19th and early 20th Centuries, as a direct result of the impact of European colonisation on Aotearoa/New Zealand. The recordings were carried out in collaboration with Wellington paranormal researcher James Gilbert via strict adherence to the methods of the paranormal research technique known as EVP (electronic voice phenomenon).



Theresa Moerman Ib

Theresa Moerman Ib was born in The Netherlands and grew up between Denmark and the UK. She has a degree in English Literature and has previously worked in the Danish media as a web content editor, writer and photographer. In 2012, Theresa Moerman Ib graduated with a BA (Hons) First Class in Fine Art Photography from the Glasgow School of Art. During her third year at art school, she spent four months on exchange at the University of New Mexico, a trip that spurred her to expand her practice to include text-based work, printmaking, sculpture and installation. She continues to live and work in Glasgow as an art school library assistant and practising artist.

Theresa Moerman Ib's work centres on the unreliability of memory, the blurring of fact and fiction, and the tension between holding on and letting go. Her upbringing in a family of collectors and tinkers inspires her to apply a make-do-and-mend mentality to her practice, which is also influenced by a deep-seated interest in folklore and storytelling traditions. By embedding new stories in found objects, she creates images, text works and installations that attempt both to pin down and reinvent a fugitive archive of materials and moments collected on everyday journeys.

Nature Reserves contains two photographic works by Theresa Moerman Ib. The first, *Backbone*, is a photograph of a found object installed in a recent exhibition as part of a seven-day residency with Unit 7 Artist Studios in Glasgow. During the residency, Moerman Ib worked primarily with the phases of the moon as a symbol of transformation. The lunar cycle was approached as the seven stages of grief experienced after the breakdown of interpersonal relationships. The object itself is a metal wire from a spiral notebook, found in an old graving dock that locals have dubbed The Waste Land. Shreds of burnt paper are still stuck like feathers inside the spiral binding: a metal spine containing the remnants of lost information, as well as a backbone carrying the weight of a memory which a single puff of air can transform into dust.

The second, *I Like to Leave an Impression*, was taken in New Mexico and captures two leaf imprints on a concrete pavement slab. The work demonstrates how something short-lived and fragile can leave an imprint on something apparently impermeable to signify its once-time presence after it has long since disappeared.



Laura O'Neill

Laura O'Neill is a sculptor based in London who completed her BA in Mixed Media Fine Art at the University of Westminster in 2012. In 2013, O'Neill was included in Bloomberg New Contemporaries.

Her evolving practice focuses on the simple business of making; creating meaning through structure and material. Combining a hands-on sculptural practice with improvised materials, O'Neill's work – strangely familiar – initiates reflective questions of its new context and use. The (dys)functional state of the objects that she constructs is difficult to articulate, but has something to do with the attempts by human beings to create the beautiful, useful or meaningful, that end most often in failure.

Nature Reserves includes two works by Laura O'Neill: *Somewhere* and *Wonky D*. The first, *Somewhere*, represents the beauty and clumsiness found within nature. A cluster of resin sculptures hovers between states of beauty and decay, functional thing and aesthetic object, making and un-making. The casts are minute, carefully observed replicas of the undesirable and/or abandoned elements of nature that we encounter in everyday life.

Outside in the courtyard lies *Wonky D*, growing organically out of the gravel surface with a mind of its own, twisting and turning through the space in the courtyard. Snaking, tendril-like, across the ground and bearing traces of the handmade, the glazed ceramic pieces form a kind of spine – a tentative rising/fallen column that supports the dissemination of information, but ironically itself must lay its weight across the ground for support.



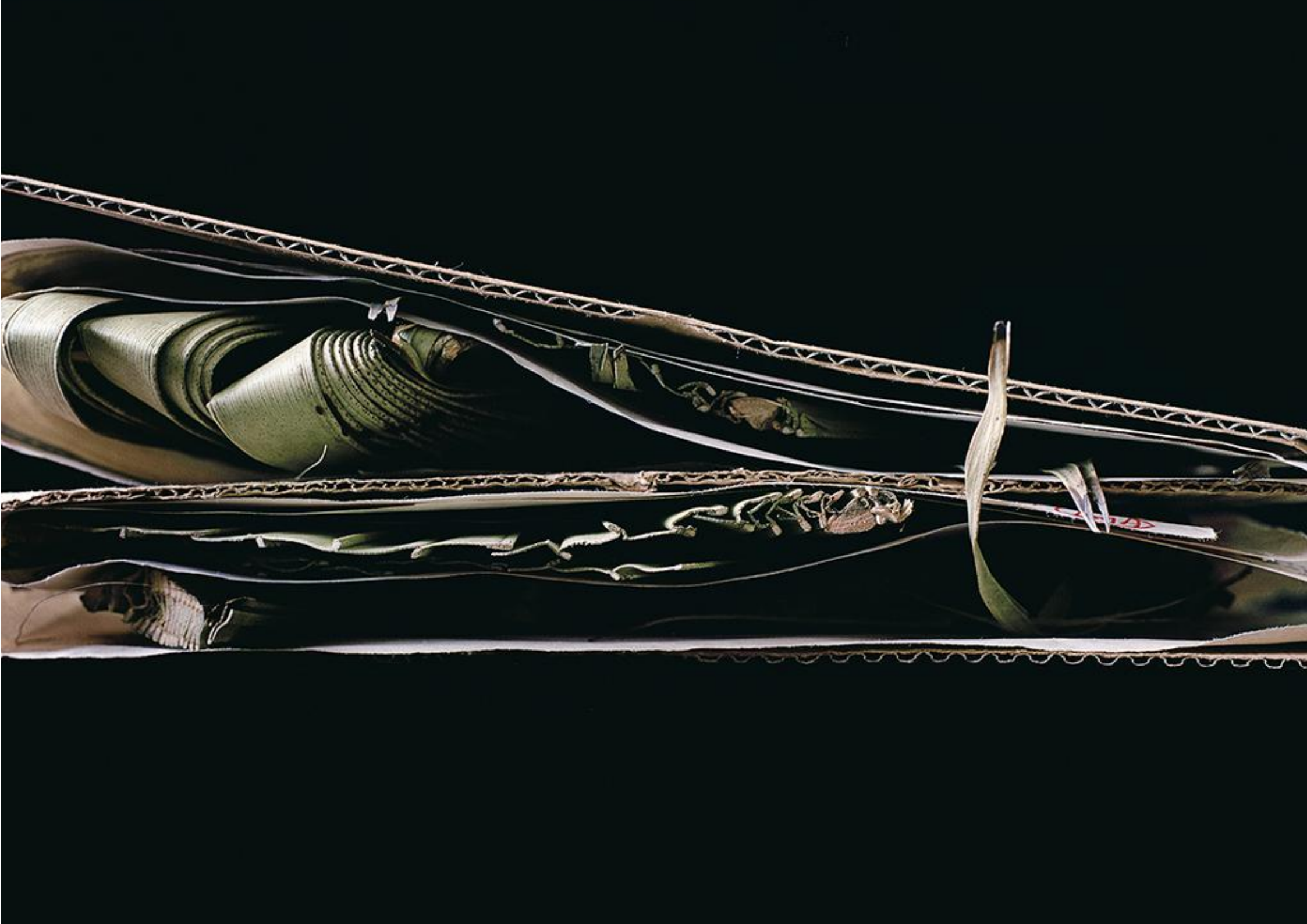
Liz Orton

Liz Orton is a London-based artist whose practice is broadly concerned with entanglements of vision, land and science. Orton is interested in the interplay of visual and scientific systems in generating theories and representations of landscape and nature. A recurring theme in her work is classification and the archive, and tensions between personal and systematic forms of knowledge. Orton has been a visiting artist at Kew Gardens Herbarium, collaborating with taxonomists on a series of projects and she is currently studying an MA in Photography at London College of Communications.

Alongside her own practice, Orton also works as an artist educator on long-term participatory photography projects. In recent years she has worked with young carers, blind and visually impaired people, young refugees, older people in day care, and pupils with special needs. These projects enable participants to use the medium of photography to reflect on and represent their world to others. Orton is currently a resident artist in Stormont Special School, and an associate artist with the award-winning Performing Medicine programme. She is also an artist-researcher on a new three-year study with the Photographers Gallery into visual literacy in schools.

Splitters and Lumpers is a series that considers the concept of species, through photographs of unmounted plant specimens as they wait to be described, named and classified by taxonomists at the Herbarium at Kew Gardens. These bundles only exist for the camera, created temporarily as extracts from larger specimen piles that may sit for months or years – awaiting taxonomic attention – in the extensive network of boxes and cupboards that make up the Herbarium collection. The specimens' unfixed nature is mirrored in the physical movement of plant matter towards the edges of the paper. The cross-section view produces a kind of stratigraphy in which layers of organic and inorganic materials from around the world come together as temporary assemblages. The photographs deliberately decontextualise the material, opening it up to a more speculative, non-taxonomic consideration.

This series reflects Orton's continuing interest in herbaria as complex, physical systems, and their relationships to the evolutionary, botanical world. Taxonomy seeks boundaries where in nature there is often continuity and similarity. As new knowledge comes to light, old categories can fall apart. The title of the work, *Splitters and Lumpers*, is a reference to the acknowledged role that subjectivity plays in classification: in establishing distinct species some taxonomists emphasise differences and others commonalities. Though categorical, taxonomy is also a sensuous and tender science. The material is delicate and requires the gentlest of touches.



Hestia Peppe

Hestia Peppe is an artist, a writer and a governess, who situates herself – weedlike – in the cracks and thresholds between disciplines. Peppe completed her MFA in Computational Studio Arts at Goldsmiths in 2011. Previously she studied Drawing at Camberwell College of Art and graduated in 2005.

Since then she has been working with political and aesthetic issues emerging as a result of the development of social media in the fields of performance, technology and mediation. This recent work is informed by early experiences in experimental communities and by her formal training in drawing and computation.

For *Nature Reserves*, Peppe has produced *Microbial Familiars*, a site-specific installation for which vessels of live Kombucha tea have been cultivated in various locations by volunteers from the artist's own creative network and then collected and grouped together in the gallery. Acetobacters, yeasts and other microbes create themselves, respond to the world and reproduce; in so doing they record themselves, their own histories and that of their external environment in their own DNA. The cultures in these jars inhabit and sample first the air and flora of the homes of the artist's friends and collaborators and then the gallery space, in a move from the private to the public that is characteristic of archives themselves.

Kombucha synthesise a nutritious acidic 'tea' that has led them to be fed and tended by humans for centuries in an ancient and intimate interspecies symbiosis. Nonetheless, they have repeatedly evaded the attention of mainstream institutional science – in part due to a possible prejudice against their domestic, DIY associations.

The artist would like to thank Josh Pollen and the Nordic Food Lab from whose Birch Sap Kombucha the mother of these SCOBYs is descended.



Helen Pynor

Helen Pynor works across a range of media spanning installation, media art, video, photography, sculpture, and performance. Her work explores the materiality of living and dying bodies, the ambiguities that lie at the borders between these states, and the relationship between consciousness and the material body. Pynor holds a Bachelor of Science (1st Class Hons, Macquarie University), a Bachelor of Visual Arts, and a practice-based PhD (both from Sydney College of the Arts, The University of Sydney).

She has exhibited widely in Australia and Europe, most recently in solo exhibitions at The Australian Centre for Photography, Sydney, GV Art, London, Dominik Mersch Gallery, Sydney, and Galerija Kapelica, Slovenia (the last in collaboration with Peta Clancy). Recent group exhibitions include ISEA2013, Sydney, Science Gallery Dublin, and The Wellcome Collection, London. In 2012 Pynor was awarded an Honorary Mention in the Hybrid Arts Category of Prix Ars Electronica for her collaborative work with Peta Clancy, *The Body is a Big Place*, a work exploring the philosophical and experiential implications of organ transplantation. Pynor has received national awards in Australia including the RBS Emerging Artist Award (2009) and The Josephine Ulrick and Win Schubert Photography Award (jointly, 2008).

The Life Raft continues Helen Pynor's ongoing fascination with the materiality of bodies in life and in death. In this latest photographic series a historic collection of insects and crustaceans collapses slowly into the paper on which it is mounted – in the process bearing witness to the dissolution of both collector and the creatures collected. The artist has employed the traditional photographic techniques of toning and hand-colouring fibre-based, gelatin silver prints to reflect the rich tones and intricacy of the collection itself.

The series title refers ironically to the fate of these specimens, metaphorically encased within their own failed life rafts in the form of the original wooden specimen drawers, replaced here by the photographic frame. The title also harks back to the sea journey made by the specimens in an earlier era when they travelled from Europe to Australia. The artist found the collection in Sydney but its provenance has been lost. Clues embedded in the closely written, yellowing specimen labels tell us that the specimens were collected in Sierra Leone and England in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, but the identity of the collector(s) is unknown. The labels, the only identifiable objects left in some drawers, locate the collection more broadly within specific European signifying conventions used to systematise understandings of the natural world at that time.

32 *Hydroptera* *viridis*
 35 *Seligeria selaginella*
 36 *Agonum punctellum*
 37 *Agonum punctellum*
 39 *Exallagma apterum*
 33 *Hydroptera* *viridis*
 30 *Platycnemis pennipes*
 29 *Zygoptera* *sponsa*

NF = New Forest
 R = Romsey
 C = Cambridge

23 *Aeschna* *cyanea*
 24 *Aeschna* *grandis*

NF = New Forest
 R = Romsey
 C = Cambridge

26 *Calopteryx* *virgo*

NF = New Forest
 R = Romsey
 C = Cambridge

18 *Limnodynastes* *limnodynastes*
 17 *Cordulegaster* *annulatus*

NF = New Forest
 R = Romsey
 C = Cambridge



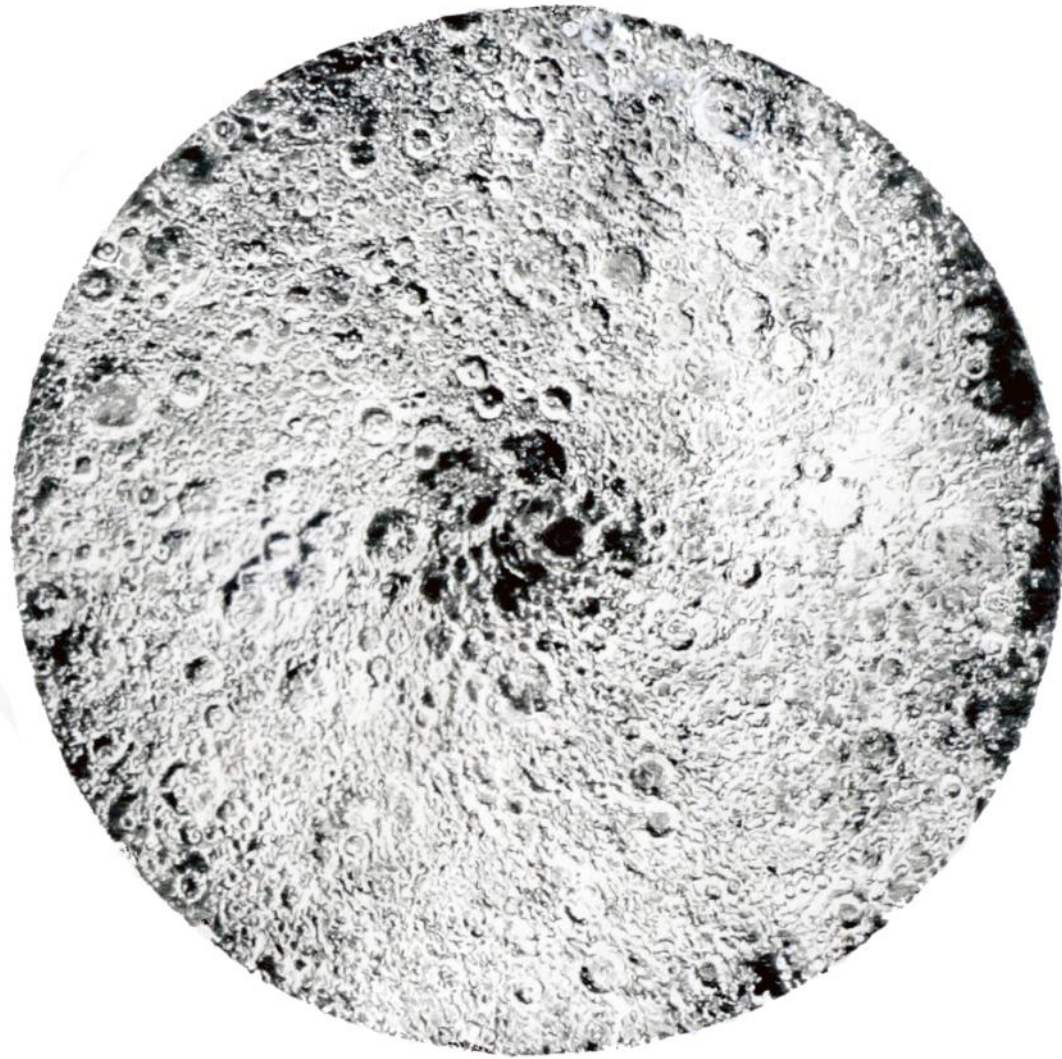
Anaïs Tondeur

Anaïs Tondeur is a visual artist who works and lives in Paris. She graduated from the MA Mixed Media at Royal College of Art in 2010, after completing a BA (Hons) in Textiles at Central Saint Martins in 2008. She has been commissioned as an artist in residence at the Audax Textiel Museum (2011, Netherlands), the Cité Internationale de la dentelle (2011, France) and Les 26 Couleurs in their Centre for New Media Arts (2013, France). Her work has been presented in solo exhibitions in Paris and London and group exhibitions shown nationally and internationally.

Tondeur's art practice draws on an exploration of the interface between art and science, perception and cognition, fact and fiction through a pluridisciplinary practice that encompasses drawing, installation, new media art and early techniques of photography. Her work stems from a fascination of the history of ideas, and she has collaborated with scientists in the fields of geo-sciences, physics, astrophysics and engineering. She is currently developing a performance around an improbable trip to the moon imagined by Johannes Kepler between 1620 and 1630.

Produced especially for Nature Reserves, *A Mutation of the Visible* consists of five drawings that investigate significant stages in mankind's shifting perception of the moon. This pictorial research explores the ways knowledge is formed and evolves through visions and understandings of the moon from antiquity's myths to the invention of instruments of observation and 20th century space exploration.

Since time immemorial, the moon has been observed, studied and worshipped. It holds a place of particular fascination in our earthbound lives provoking the imagination to escape its limits. However, whilst the moon has always been in man's field of vision, its symbolism and nature have changed considerably according to different cultures and eras. This series of drawings starts with one of the most ancient and anthropomorphic perceptions of the Moon: the pareidolia of a human figure imagined amidst the dark lunar markings. The project then investigates the determining role played by optical instruments from the 17th to the 19th century, before going on to explore new viewpoints opened up by lunar exploration and never before available from the earth's surface.



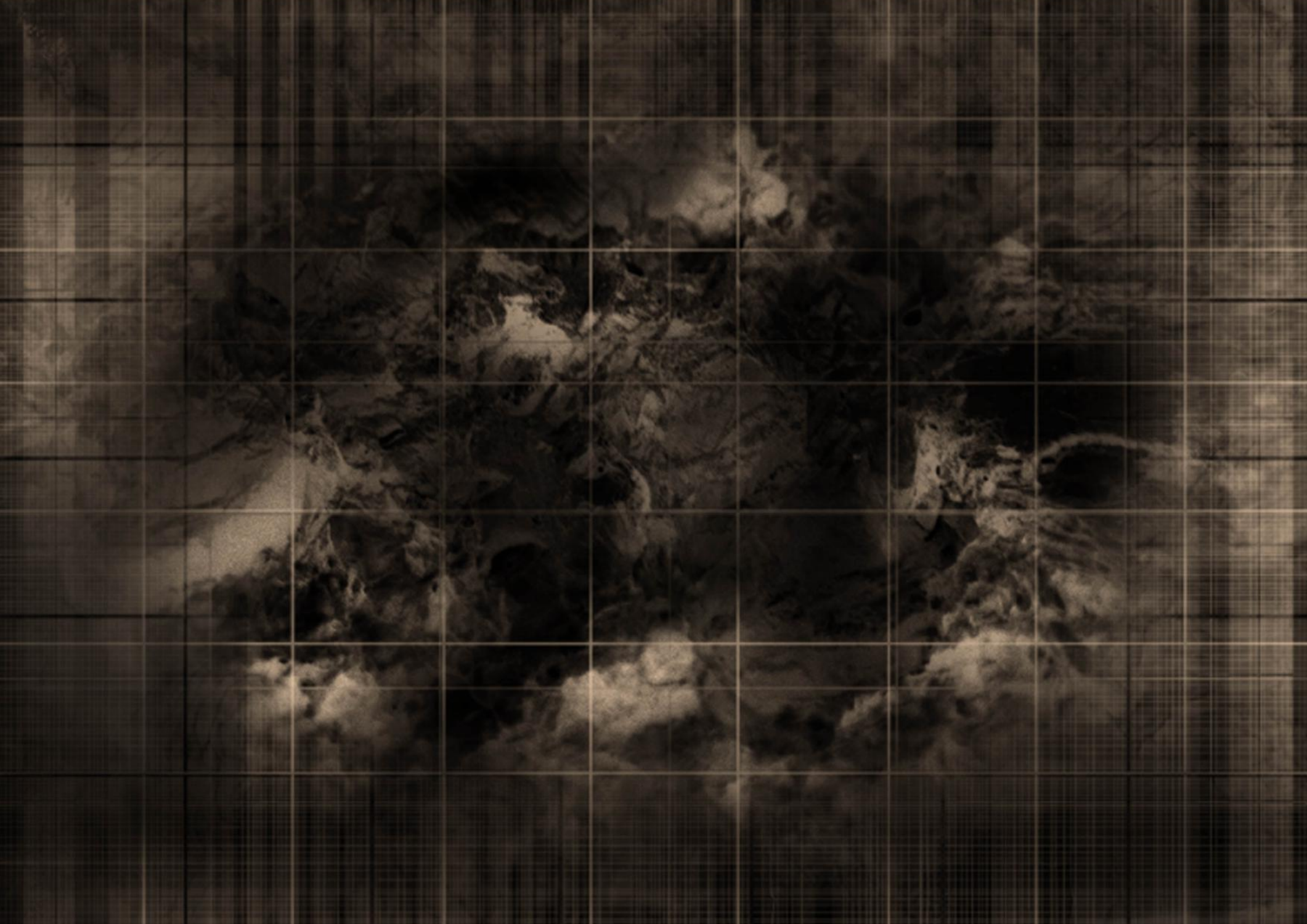
Pauline Woolley

Pauline Woolley is a visual artist based in the East Midlands. She graduated from Leeds Metropolitan University in 1997 with a degree in Fine Art. Her most recent solo show has just finished its two-month showing at The Lakeside Art Centre at the University of Nottingham.

The aesthetics in science, geology, space and the natural world have underpinned her work for the last fifteen years. This includes a deep interest in the terrain of Iceland which she has visited in 2009 and 2011. The first visit to the country concluded in a three-week residency at the 'Goldfactory' in Nottingham in which photography, drawing and painting pulled together the primary research from the trip to produce a series of paintings. More recent work has seen a move into photography and camera-less methods of image-making, often combining digital and analogue techniques to explore these areas of interest in a new way.

In 2012, Pauline Woolley was one of seven artists invited by Rednile Projects as part of their Factory Nights season to travel 1,100 metres down and six miles out underneath the North Sea to the workface of Boulby Potash Mine in Cleveland. Potash is the name for mined salts that can be used as a fertiliser

Health and safety prevented any use of photographic or electrical recording devices underground to gather information so the creation of the work pulled extensively from a few jotted notes, visual memory and samples of the potash itself. After some months, archived internet images of the mine were introduced to help when the recalling of images from memory began to fade. Digital photography, drawings, photograms and darkroom printing have been used in constructing this sequence of work; static rock, moving rock and fallen rock. The title, *Falling apart from the earth into the hands of man*, comes from the writing of Joanna Brown, one of the other artists present on the expedition



Grant Museum of Zoology UCL

About

Founded in 1828 by Robert Edmond Grant, the Grant Museum of Zoology is today the only remaining university zoological museum in London and houses around 68,000 specimens. When Grant arrived at the newly founded University of London (later University College London) as the first Professor of Zoology and Comparative Anatomy in England, he found no teaching materials with which to conduct his courses and immediately began to amass specimens, material for dissection, diagrams and lecture notes and these form the basis of the museum today.

In 1875 Sir Edwin Ray Lankester took over the running of the museum, building the collection, moving it to new premises, and creating a detailed printed label catalogue. This catalogue, however, contained not only specimens found in the museum but also those that Lankester hoped to add to it. In the 1880s and '90s, ceiling collapses and flooding destroyed a number of specimens, and in the 1970s the roof was completely missing. During world war two the whole collection was evacuated to Bangor. Following formal accreditation as a public museum in 1996, and autonomously run within UCL since 2005-7, the Grant remains a valuable teaching aid and a source of wonder and interest to the public.

Materials

On loan from the Grant Museum for *Nature Reserves* are a collection of labels that have, for one reason or another, become detached from the specimens that they were created for. The labels span the 170 years of the collection and range from notes of warning and old exhibition labels to collection letters, import tags and undecipherable memos. Ordinarily, these labels are stored in a box in the staff office at the Museum, but are displayed within the gallery as objects of significance in their own right.

The diversity of the labelling formats demonstrates the way that systems of organisation at the Grant Museum have changed over the years: from Grant's personal collection, via Lankester's wish-fulfilling catalogues, to sundry spreadsheets initiated in 2001. These different systems "sometimes convey vastly conflicting information," admits Curator Mark Carnall, with less than a third of the collection currently accounted for on the database. Nonetheless, that the labels continue to signify in evocative fashion even without the specimens they once accompanied is testament to the creative power of organising systems. "Archives," says Carnall, "form primary bases of evidence and in some sense are more important than the objects themselves."

... Truncata. ... form. ...
 CHINODERMATA SSI
 MLLEROIDEA 70% alc.
 thasterius gracialis.

2369
 ALPINE
 MOUNTAINS

TIGES
 OSTZICH TYES
 RETIK & STERICH
 NEETERYEV
 HALE COSTOMI
 TELEDETEI
 KADTIVSEET

Aequorea? forskalea?

HFLIX A SPESA
 VAR. CATNRATH (CHENEA)
 VAR. UNICOLOR (PLAIBRENA)
 VAR. FLAMMA (TRANSVANA)
 SUBVAR. PUNCTICULATA (OH)
 " " UNIMULATA (PLAIB) (OH)

coelomic pouch.
 N. - N. ...
 The groove of the notochord traverses the mid-dorsal line of the mesenteron. By closing over its edges, it becomes eventually converted into a tube which by loss of its cavity becomes a solid rod of cells. In the vertical section through the first coelomic pouch it is seen marked out, but not separated, from the hyoblast. The coelomic sacs are completely nipped off from the mesenteron, and are triangular in shape.

O.
 F.
 Mugiliformes
 Sphyracnidae
 Sphyracna vulgaris

ICHINODERMATA SSI
 SP. ALTERA 2004
 C. STALLERBERGA
 D. FRE. ...
 ...
 ...
 ...
 ...

Musca
 Lanell, brachia
 Tenedo mivales

... (one removed from tube)

Panthera Leo.
 Z. 332.

Order Unguicula
 BOS TAURUS
 Portion of (coelomic cavity) placenta, ...
 constituent injected ...

ATELES
 PANIQUUS
 Skull of jaws

Palaeoniscoid?

oglossus sp.
 ARIA LARVA. 1.34.

PENGUIN
 FORE-LIMB

Semouria baylorensis
 No. UC 663
 Horizon Early Permian
 Clear Fork grp., Arroyo fm.
 Field or other No.
 Locality Brushy Creek, Baylor County, Texas
 C. 406

Thailand Water lizard
 Agamidae family
 Physignathus coincinus.

PICES SSI
 C. OSTZICH TYES
 SC. ACTINOPTERYGII
 IC. NEOPTERYGII
 S. HALECOSTOMI
 SD. TELEDETEI
 CP. EUTELOSTEI
 IO. ANTERIOR MOEPA
 O. ANTERIOR MOEPA
 IO. EXOCOSTOIDEI
 EXOCOSTOIDEI
 ...

ERIPHIA SPINIFRONT
 SC. Malacostroma
 F. Decapoda sp. Brachyura
 F. Xanthidae
 H. 307

A.
 Rec'd. from
 Collector P.C. Miller, 1910
 Description Skull [skeleton not c]

CHIRIPANZEE
 antiopepithicus
 (Pan satyrus)
 Z. 488

DERMOPTERA.
 Cynocephalus sp.
 "Flying Lemur".

TRICHOSURUS VULPECULA
 Order Marsupialia
 Sub-order Diprotodonta
 Skull
 Z. 539

Class Primates suborder Catarrhini
 Order Primates
 Elaphes

Fig'd by Williston, 1911: Journal of Geology, 19, p. 105, Pl. 1, fig. 1
 Fig'd by Williston, 1911: American Journal of Science, 20, p. 105, Pl. 1, fig. 1

Z. 539

Echinosorex
 GYMNURA SP.
 Borneo
 Skull & LT
 Z. 1005

CETACEA GH
 DELPHINUS (skull)

Hyaena
 from
 Cave.



Ateles nas Lagotheria

Z. 1005
 Badger
 1027

... 1976 - February 1977
 ...
 ...
 ...

Black = Albino
 1
 Giorsal Ruadh
 8:24

Class Primates suborder Catarrhini
 Order Primates
 Elaphes

B 35 Red lead Stockholm tax
 suspended on
 orange fishing silk thread

Pig at birth (Piglet)
 This pig was dead when killed. It had evidently been dead a few days before; but the sow was about 3 days beyond parturition & therefore this was the earliest possible time for a true fetus.

pl-0110

South London Botanical Institute

About

The South London Botanical Institute was founded in 1910 by Allan Octavian Hume. Originally a civil servant in India, where he was also a famous ornithologist, after his retirement Hume co-founded the Indian National Congress and led the Indian independence movement. Later in life, he developed his interest in botany, employing field naturalist W.H. Griffin, also a keen geologist, as his botanical assistant from 1901.

Hume's intention was to make the study of plants accessible to the working classes: he recognised the difficulty in identifying alien plant species and began growing and pressing for a herbarium. This interest led him to purchase in 1909 a Victorian domestic home in Tulse Hill, which became, one year later, the South London Botanical Institute. The Institute combines a library, herbarium and botanical garden, itself divided into various sections, including a medicinal border; the Gerard's Border for Tudor ailments; and a bed planted to retrospectively correspond to a newspaper article and photograph dating from 1910. The aims of the Institute have not changed in over 100 years, and it remains a welcoming environment where those interested in plants, be they amateur or professional, may meet and develop their knowledge of plants.

Materials

For Nature Reserves, the South London Botanical Institute has loaned a selection of ferns from their European Herbarium. These are contained within black-painted iron boxes, which were constructed by local firm J Mitchell & Co Engineers, bespoke for the Institute when it opened in 1910. Each of the 200 such boxes is housed within four-storey cabinets, made by the same firm. At the Institute in Tulse Hill, these imposing cabinets fill two rooms of the house, in which ornate Victorian cornicing and a tiled fireplace bear witness to the building's previous domestic function. Strangely, the cabinet feels more 'at home' in the relative sterility of a contemporary art gallery.

The specimens themselves were gathered by a range of different collectors between the 1820s and the 1990s, and are organised according to Carl Fredrik Nyman's long since superseded *Conspectus Florae Europaeae*, published in various parts between 1878 and 1882. The specimens - dried, pressed, arranged and named - are all ferns, plants belonging to the botanical group, Pteridophyta. Inside every box is a folder for each genus, within which is an inner folder for each species. Upon their return to Tulse Hill, the specimens will be frozen at -20°C for a week before rejoining the rest of the collection.



EX-HERBARIO
CROYDON HORTI (CYN)

CROYDON NATURAL HISTORICAL
AND SCIENTIFIC SOCIETY

HERBARIUM HORTI PISANI
Blechnum spicant L.
legit in umbra / 1840 / P. J. S.
communicavit P. J. S.
anno 1840 Junii

EX HORTI
CROYDON HORTI
CROYDON HORTI
CROYDON HORTI

UCL Geology Collections

About

With a history stretching back to at least 1841, the UCL Geology Collections today comprise over 100,000 geological specimens of rocks, minerals and fossils, as well as art works, books and artefacts, collected from the founding of University College London until the present day. Like many such collections, UCL's Geology Collections are a composite affair, including gifts, donations and transfers. One important constituent is the NASA Regional Planetary Image Facility, one of an international system of planetary libraries. This includes thousands of images and data from almost all of NASA's planetary missions since the 1960s. The Johnston-Lavis Collection, which has particular emphasis on South Italian volcanoes, is of international significance for its minerals and rocks, its historical collection of books and art works, and its photographic record of volcanism in the late nineteenth century.

After a temporary move away from London during the Second World War, the collections were brought back, only for the north side of the first floor Museum to be taken over for the telephone exchange. The collections were 'telescoped' and the BMNH and Geological Survey were offered the type specimens so they could be incorporated into the National Collections. In the early 1980s, as a result of a merger with Queen Mary College, a major reallocation of rooms took place, priorities changed, and several of the collections were moved into store. While continuing to be used by Earth Sciences in practical classes and lectures, today the Geology Collection is used increasingly by staff and students from other faculties as part of a drive to bring object-based learning back into the classroom. Highlights of the collection are displayed in the student common room, which is open to the public as a museum Fridays between 1 - 3pm.

Materials

Just prior to the First World War, a Trust deed was in preparation to arrange for the transfer of a valuable collection of volcanological material to the department. This collection belonged to Dr Johnston-Lavis and consisted mainly of rocks and minerals, books and engravings specialising in Mediterranean volcanoes. The collection had been most recently housed at Beaulieu, Alpes Maritimes; after his accidental death shortly afterwards, transfer of the material to London was delayed by the war, and did not arrive until 1921. For a brief period from July 1925, the collection opened to the public and was housed in temporary accommodation at 134 Gower Street.

For Nature Reserves, UCL has agreed to loan two drawers of hand-specimens from the Johnston-Lavis collection. These rocks, normally only available for research purposes, are accompanied by a range of different cards and labelling systems that reflect changing methods of organisation. In addition are three catalogues of the collection. Two are believed to date from the 1920s and were made by the Geology Department Curator K.W. Earle. Although they are duplicates of Dr Johnson-Lavis' original catalogue, several of his original pages have been pasted into the catalogue, and can be identified by his handwriting. The third catalogue is believed to be a copy from slightly later, and combines the two earlier catalogues into one; however it is in worse condition due to heavy use.

UNIVERSITY COLLEGE, LONDON,
JOHNSTON-LAVIS BEQUEST, 1914
ROCK COLLECTION

Name: Reg. No.: 3722

Andasite Tuff.
(Silurian)

Locality:
Sunnyhill Qy.
W. Shepton Mallet
Som.

3722
Mallet Som.



JOHNSTON-LAVIS
UNIVERSITY COLLEGE

ROCK COLLECTION
LONDON

Tom Jeffreys

Tom Jeffreys is an art critic, editor and curator. He is the Editor of the Journal of Wild Culture, an online magazine exploring the fertile intersection between nature and culture. Tom writes catalogue essays and exhibition publications for artists, galleries and fairs, and has written on a wide range of other topics for various international magazines, newspapers and websites. Tom has previously curated the critically acclaimed Et Cetera in 2012; won the 2009 Sunday Times / Saatchi Gallery award for arts reviewing; sat on panels at cultural conferences; and judged prizes for contemporary art.

GV Art gallery, London

GV Art is the UK's leading contemporary art gallery which aims to explore and acknowledge the inter-relationship between art and science, and how the areas cross over and inform one another. The gallery curates exhibitions and events that stimulate a dialogue focused on how modern society interprets and understands the advances in both areas and how an overlap in the technological and the creative, the medical and the historical are paving the way for new aesthetic sensibilities to develop.

Further Reading

Louis Agassiz, *Essay on Classification* (Dover Edition), 2004

JA Baker, *The Peregrine*, 1967

Robert Briggs, *Wild Thoughts: A Deconstructive Environmental Ethics*, 2008

Maggie Campbell Culver, *The Origin of Plants*, 2001

Dark Mountain, Book 3, 2012

Jacques Derrida, *Archive Fever*, 1996

Jacques Derrida, *Limited Inc*, 1988

Brent Elliott, *Flora: An Illustrated History of the Garden Flower*, 2001

Edward Payson Evans, *Animal Trials*, 1906

Michel Foucault, *The Order of Things*, 1966

Vicki Funk, *100 Uses for an Herbarium (Well at Least 72)*, 2003

Richard Jefferies, *After London, or Wild England*, 1885

Elspeeth Haston et al, *The Linear Angiosperm Phylogeny Group (LAPG) III: a linear sequence of the families in APG III*, 2009

Wendy Kirk (ed.), *Violent Earth: The unique legacy of Dr. Jonstone Lavis*, 2005

Eddie Macguire, *Birds of Machrihanish*, 1996

Richard Mabey, *Nature Cure*, 2005

Mary Midgley, *Science as Salvation*, 1992

Brett Mills, *Television wildlife documentaries and animals' right to privacy*, 2010

Brett Mills, *The animals went in two by two*, 2013

Field Guide to the Birds of Britain (Reader's Digest Nature Lover's Diary series), 1981

Field Guide to the Trees and Shrubs of Britain (Reader's Digest Nature Lover's Diary series), 1986

Field Guide to the Wild Flowers of Britain (Reader's Digest Nature Lover's Diary series), 1986

Rupert Sheldrake, *A New Science of Life*, 1981

Rupert Sheldrake, *The Science Delusion*, 2012

Standart Thinking, *Fields*, 2013

Carol Kaesuk Yoon, *Naming Nature*, 2012

NATURE RESERVES

Curated by Tom Jeffreys

An exhibition catalogue produced in conjunction with the exhibition *Nature Reserves* held at GV Art gallery, London 26 July - 13 September 2013.

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