

# AN URGENT ENQUIRY: FINGAL



26/1/2018

Portrane Peninsula, Balleally Landfill,  
The Hide Sculpture at the Rogerstown Estuary

---

# HANS VISSER

BIODIVERSITY  
OFFICER



# RAYMOND BRETT

THE  
COASTAL  
LIAISON  
GROUP



26/1/2018

## Portrane Peninsula Talks

An Urgent Enquiry: Fingal began with a shore visit to the Portrane Peninsula. Biodiversity Officer Hans Visser and local citizen, Raymond Brett, from the Coastal Liaison Group, spoke about their individual and often conflicting experiences of dealing with the coastal erosion of the dunes along the coastline of County Fingal, in particular the neighbourhood of the Burrow.



Figure 1: Portrane Peninsula on 26/1/2018, multiple citizen laid sand bags line the shore



Figure 2: Portrane Peninsula after Storm Emma at the beginning of March 2018. Note the same side of the green shelter at the left-hand edge, middle of the picture.

Hans Visser provided the ecological context for the shore visit explaining that there is an extensive dune system found along the coastline of County Fingal. However, over the past decade or more the dunes in Portrane have become severely affected by dune erosion, pedestrian access, housing development and patches of sea buckthorn. The dunes, in a healthy and robust state, support the biodiversity of Portrane providing a habitat for rare plants and animals and are an important natural protection zone between the sea and the hinterland.<sup>1</sup> He maintained that while it is critical that they be conserved as part of feasible, sustainable, economic and environmental strategies, any foreseeable impacts on the surrounding ecosystems and adjacent coastlines must also be taken into account.

Most immediately affected by the long-standing issues of coastal erosion in County Fingal are the residents of Portrane and specifically The Burrow. In 2017, several metres of the Portrane coastline slipped into the sea. This resulted in two emergency motions being passed in order to try and preserve the coastline and prevent the erosion from breaching the road.<sup>2</sup>

However, government intervention extends back much further, to at least 2007, with the drafting of a dune management plan together with the local community which sought to address the various issues of coastal erosion. It

<sup>1</sup> Fingalbiodiversity.ie. (n.d). *Fingal Biodiversity Programme - Projects*. [online] Available at: [http://www.fingalbiodiversity.ie/proj\\_dune.html](http://www.fingalbiodiversity.ie/proj_dune.html) [Accessed 3 Apr. 2018].

<sup>2</sup> Bowers, S. (2018). Minister hears about coastal erosion fears. *Dublin People*. [online] Available at: <http://www.dublinpeople.com/news/northsideeast/articles/2018/02/08/4151694-minister-hears-about-coastal-erosion-fears/> [Accessed 13 Apr. 2018].



was in 2007 as well, that several local community groups and Fingal County Council built a sandladder boardwalk through the dunes to deal with the pedestrian access issues. Several areas of dunes have since been fenced off by the County Council to limit access by people and cars and 3-year erosion monitoring programme was flagged to be established in 2009.<sup>3</sup>

Furthermore, an application by Fingal County Council for funding under the Office of Public Works Minor Flood Mitigation Works and Coastal Protection Scheme was approved in February 2013 for a Coastal Erosion Risk Management Study for Portrane/Rush. The approved funding of €57,800 was fully drawn down and the Report has been completed by consultants RPS.<sup>4</sup> The Report recommended that a dune management system including dune re-profiling, matting and planting in conjunction with sand fencing was to be put in place along the eroded part of the central and southern sections of the Portrane dunes where significant erosion has occurred in recent times.<sup>5</sup>

More recently in 2014, additional funding of €200,000 was also provided by the OPW for repair works to damaged coastal protection infrastructure which included Burrow beach.<sup>6</sup>

The official position of the Office of Public Works is that coastal erosion is a natural and ongoing process which takes place around the entire coastline. 'The primary objective of Government policy on coastal erosion is to ensure that in areas identified as being at greatest risk of damage or loss of economic assets through coastal erosion or flooding, appropriate and sustainable measures are identified by local authorities to protect those assets and, where such measures are economically justified on cost benefit grounds and compatible with all required environmental and other statutory requirements, they are implemented subject to the availability of resources.'<sup>7</sup>

At the current time, there is no indication for the additional allocation of funds for Portrane as the OPW is not currently in receipt of an application from the Council under the Minor Works Scheme to prevent further coastal erosion in Portrane. The OPW has posted the official position on their website stating, 'The local authorities may carry out coastal protection works using their own resources. If necessary, they may also put forward proposals to the relevant central Government Departments for funding of appropriate measures depending on the infrastructure or assets under threat.'<sup>8</sup>

---

<sup>3</sup> Fingalbiodiversity.ie. (n.d). *Fingal Biodiversity Programme - Projects*. [online] Available at: [http://www.fingalbiodiversity.ie/proj\\_dune.html](http://www.fingalbiodiversity.ie/proj_dune.html) [Accessed 3 Apr. 2018].

<sup>4</sup> Maddock, F. (2018). 'Sluggish' erosion response putting homes 'in danger. *The Irish Independent*. [online] Available at: <https://www.independent.ie/regionals/fingal/independent/news/sluggish-erosion-response-putting-homes-in-danger-36489749.html> [Accessed 3 Apr. 2018].

<sup>5</sup> Daly, C. (2018). *Portrane Coastal Erosion*. [online] Clare Daly TD. Available at: <http://claredaly.ie/portrane-coastal-erosion/> [Accessed 3 Apr. 2018].

<sup>6</sup> Opw.ie. (2017). *The Office of Public Works*. [online] Available at: <https://www.opw.ie/en/pressreleases/2017/articleheading,37456,en.html> [Accessed 6 Mar. 2018].

<sup>7</sup> <https://www.opw.ie/en/pressreleases/2017/articleheading,37456,en.html>

<sup>8</sup> Maddock, F. (2018). 'Sluggish' erosion response putting homes 'in danger. *The Irish Independent*. [online] Available at: <https://www.independent.ie/regionals/fingal/independent/news/sluggish-erosion-response-putting-homes-in-danger-36489749.html> [Accessed 3 Apr. 2018].

Raymond Brett of the Coastal Liaison Group explained the concerns of the residents emphasising the urgent need for coherent national policies and initiatives to assist the council and other agencies to deal with coastal erosion. He explained past projects of the group, some entirely self-funded, of sandbagging. In 2013 the group laid multiple sandbags just north of the main access to the bathing area only to witness them be completely destroyed by a high energy storm in 2014.

Despite the funding and resource previously allocated to the dune management system of Portrane, members of the Coastal Liaison Group, are highly critical of the government and council responses to the crisis and have appealed for locals to join their campaign in numbers to tackle the emergency situation which now faces the residents of The Burrow.<sup>9</sup> Most recently as a result of Storm Emma in March and April of 2018, significant areas of the dunes have been washed away. Pictured below is Grainne Hannigan, of The Burrow sitting at the new eroded perimeter of her property.



Figure 3: Grainne Hannigan of Portrane Peninsula on 5/3/2018

The issue coastal erosion on the Portrane Peninsula is not solely an environmental or ecological concern, but also a social, political and technological one. Between the members of the Portrane community, the Fingal County Council and the OPW, one could presume that all would ideally prefer the same outcome – for both the residential homes and ecological habitats of peninsula to be restored to their previous condition. However, opinions diverge to what extent this restoration is feasible, fiscally responsible, environmentally advisable and even sustainable. The Coastal Liaison Group, Fingal County Council and members of Portrane have made their positions clear citing that multiple family homes are in danger of being destroyed. The OPW stating 'Given an intervention within a coastal area may cause problems further along the coast, any proposed intervention measures by a Local Authority are best developed in conjunction with a formal coastal erosion risk management study which has carefully investigated the problem and explored the full range of management options,' has also made its position clear.<sup>10</sup>

---

<sup>9</sup> Fingal Independent (2018). Meeting called on erosion. [online] Available at: <https://www.independent.ie/regionals/fingalindependent/news/meeting-called-on-erosion-36671393.html> [Accessed 10 Apr. 2018].

<sup>10</sup> Maddock, F. (2018). 'Sluggish' erosion response putting homes 'in danger. *The Irish Independent*. [online] Available at: <https://www.independent.ie/regionals/fingalindependent/news/sluggish-erosion-response-putting-homes-in-danger-36489749.html> [Accessed 3 Apr. 2018].

# IVISIBLE DUST

## ALICE SHARP



26/1/2018

### Presentations at Balleally Landfill

Alice Sharp set up Invisible Dust in 2009. Since then for Invisible Dust the artists she has worked with include Elizabeth Price, Jeremy Deller, Dryden Goodwin, Faisal Abdu 'Allah, Mariele Neudecker, Martin Parr, John Akomfrah and Tacita Dean. She co curated 'Offshore: artists explore the sea' as part of Hull UK City of Culture in 2017. Scientist advisors include Professor Frank Kelly, King's College London, Government Advisor on air pollution and Professor Alex Rogers, Marine Biologist, Oxford University. In 2015 she won the Guardian PEA (People, Environment & Achievement) UK Arts, Fashion, Music & Film Award; recognising inspirational people who are making a difference to the green agenda. <sup>11</sup>

<sup>11</sup> Invisibledust.com. (2018). *Invisible Dust | Things you don't see but should....* [online] Available at: <http://invisibledust.com/> [Accessed 15 Mar. 2018].



Figure 4 : Dryden Goodwin, *Breath*, 2012

The following six pages are a composite overview of Alice Sharp's presentation and curatorial practice as director of Invisible Dust, a charity, art and environmental organisation. The mission of Invisible Dust is to encourage awareness of, and meaningful responses to, climate change and environmental issues. They achieve this by facilitating a dialogue between leading visual artists, creative technologists and scientists.

Invisible Dust engages audiences with artists commissions, large scale events, education and community activities and seek to raise awareness of environmental concerns- aiming to connect with people on a personal level through making the invisible visible.

Dryden Goodwin created a series of expressive pencil drawings, which, when combined and animated, showed a young boy (head and torso) progressing through fluctuating breathing patterns, at some moments regular, and at others more laboured as he stared out from the frame. The act of breath embodies the transcoding of air – from the ethereal to solid, the invisible to the concrete, the fluid to the dense. *Breath*, animated by the vibrations of billions of airborne molecules, floating particles and fibres of the human body, is an elemental poetry: it is one of the most beautiful encounters between living bodies and the living world.

Dryden Goodwin's *Breathe* is an evocation of this poetry. He created over a thousand drawings of a five year old boy (his son) inhaling and exhaling air. But their most startling quality is their ability to evoke the materiality – the heaviness – of the invisible. In Goodwin's works, air is not unremarkable, transient or still. Rather, air is an object that permeates the human figure, carrying with it the incredibly diverse and even harmful residues of the city of London.<sup>12</sup>

<sup>12</sup> Invisibledust.com. (2012). *Dryden Goodwin Houses of Parliament 12 | Invisible Dust*. [online] Available at: <http://invisibledust.com/project/dryden-goodwin-kings-college-and-st-thomas-london/> [Accessed 10 Mar. 2018]





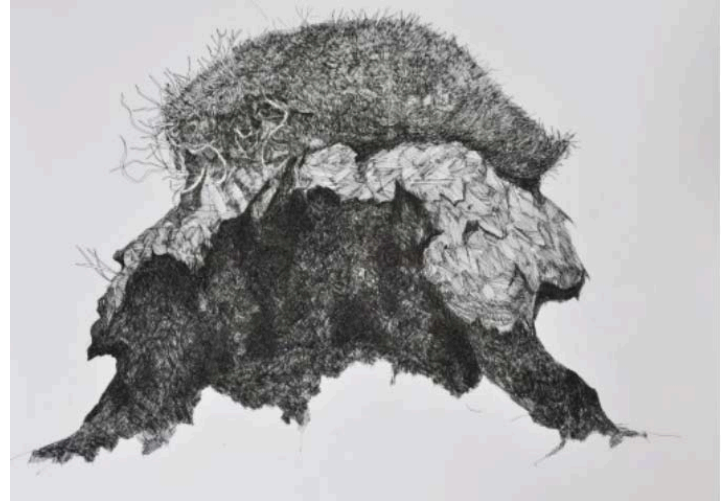
Figure 5 : Eve Mosher, *HighWaterLine Bristol*, 2014

The above image during the performative public work entitled *HighWaterLine Bristol*. In January 2014 with the storms and high tides Bristol suffered the most dramatic flooding from the Avon River in over 20 years. Bristol is very susceptible to flooding through increases in the levels of the Bristol Channel passing through to the River Avon according to Bristol City Council data. The following September, from the 9<sup>th</sup> -21<sup>st</sup>, residents in collaboration with artist Eve Mosher, created a public artwork by physically drawing a chalk line of the high water mark set out by scientists of future flooding in Bristol. Local people from many different backgrounds drew a 32 mile long line around the river and harbour areas of Bristol, handing the sports chalkier creating the line from one community group to the next. The project aimed to stimulate residents to use art to engage people in Bristol with conversations about flooding, climate change impacts as well as solutions.

*HighWaterLine* 2014 was realized in partnership with the Unearthed History Collective, University of West of England, Bristol Civic Society, St. Werburgh's Living History, Alison Crowther Associates and Bristol City Council Flood Risk Management Team.<sup>13</sup>

<sup>13</sup> Invisibledust.com. (2014). *HighWaterLine Bristol Eve Mosher* | *Invisible Dust*. [online] Available at: <http://invisibledust.com/project/dryden-goodwin-kings-college-and-st-thomas-london/> [Accessed 10 Mar. 2018]





Figures 6 & 7: Laura Harrington, *The Liveliest of Elements, an Ordinary Extraordinary Material*, 2015

The two images above are the work of Laura Harrington from an exhibition entitled *The Liveliest of Elements, an Ordinary Extraordinary Material*. The project itself was developed from an elongated period of research into upland peat landscapes. Specifically Moss Flats, a bare peat flatland, approximately 50 miles west of Newcastle in the North Pennines. The landscape has given Harrington insight into the substance of peat as a dynamic and changeable material. A shared interest in upland environments and peat as a lively and dynamic material provided the impetus for a collaboration with physical scientist Jeff Warburton (Department of Geography, Durham University) as part of a Leverhulme Trust Artist Residency. Their collaboration focused on Moss Flats, an upland bare peat flat in the North Pennines. Harrington evolved this research into an exploration of this dynamic eco system through moving image, words and sound.<sup>14</sup>

---

<sup>14</sup> Varc.org.uk. (2015). Varc | *The Liveliest of Elements, an Ordinary Extraordinary Material*. [online] Available at: <https://varc.org.uk/connect/the-liveliest-of-elements-an-ordinary-extraordinary-material/> [Accessed 18 Apr. 2018].



Figure 8 : Jeremy Deller, *Bats in Space*, 2012

Above are two images from Jeremy Deller's 2012 project entitled *Bats in Space*. Deller, visual artist, collaborated with bat scientist and chair of the Bat Conservation Trust Kate Jones who gave advice and bat facts during the walks. The audience was provided with bat detectors, mobiles and tablets to lower the high frequency calls to within human hearing and to see visuals of the bat sounds as they hunt insects and navigate around the Olympics perimeter. Bats make different calls for socialising, navigating and hunting insects, with different species using different frequencies to detect their favourite prey.

At the launch on 2nd July, the Sussex Bat Hospital brought some captive bats (which are being looked after due to being injured) for people at the opening to see and understand more about these wonderful creatures. Deller's bat walks took place 3-13th July 2012. The walks enabled the audience to listen and see the incredible sounds of bats flying around the Olympic Site, through mobiles, tablets and special microphones.

During the project, daily updates were received from those on the bat walks. When bats were found their calls were inserted onto a map. The map was constantly updated with sightings from our guided bat walks along the Greenway, in East London.<sup>15</sup>

<sup>15</sup> Invisibledust.com. (2012). *Jeremy Deller Tracking Bats | Invisible Dust*. [online] Available at: <http://invisibledust.com/project/dryden-goodwin-kings-college-and-st-thomas-london/> [Accessed 10 Mar. 2018]



Figure 9: Brochure, Offshore: Artists explore the Sea Exhibition in association with Ferens Art Gallery and Hull Maritime Museum, 2017

*Offshore: artists explore the sea*, curated by Invisible Dust, took place at Ferens Art Gallery and Hull Maritime Museum from 1st April till 28th August 2017 as part of Hull UK City of Culture. It examined the many contrasting ways that the sea has shaped our culture, our imaginations and our physical existence through mythical sea monsters, superstition and seaside traditions as well as trade and travel. While inherently without borders, we have mapped the sea for exploitation, geo-political advantage and for conservation.

Ten new commissions were produced specially for *Offshore*, including works developed in conversation with leading marine scientists. Existing works by contemporary artists were selected for their related insights into the sea. The works were presented across Hull Maritime Museum and the Ferens Art Gallery. At the Museum, artworks found a new meaning in relationship to historic maritime collections where artists intervene within the museum displays. At the Ferens, maritime paintings from the fine art collection gained a new perspective within this contemporary exhibition.<sup>16</sup>

<sup>16</sup> Invisibledust.com. (2017). *Offshore artist explore the sea brochure* | Invisible Dust. [online] Available at: <http://invisibledust.com/project/dryden-goodwin-kings-college-and-st-thomas-london/> [Accessed 10 Mar. 2018]



Figure 10: The expedition submersible that took author China Miéville on a descent into the deep ocean, courtesy of Nekton Mission and VRTÜ, 2016

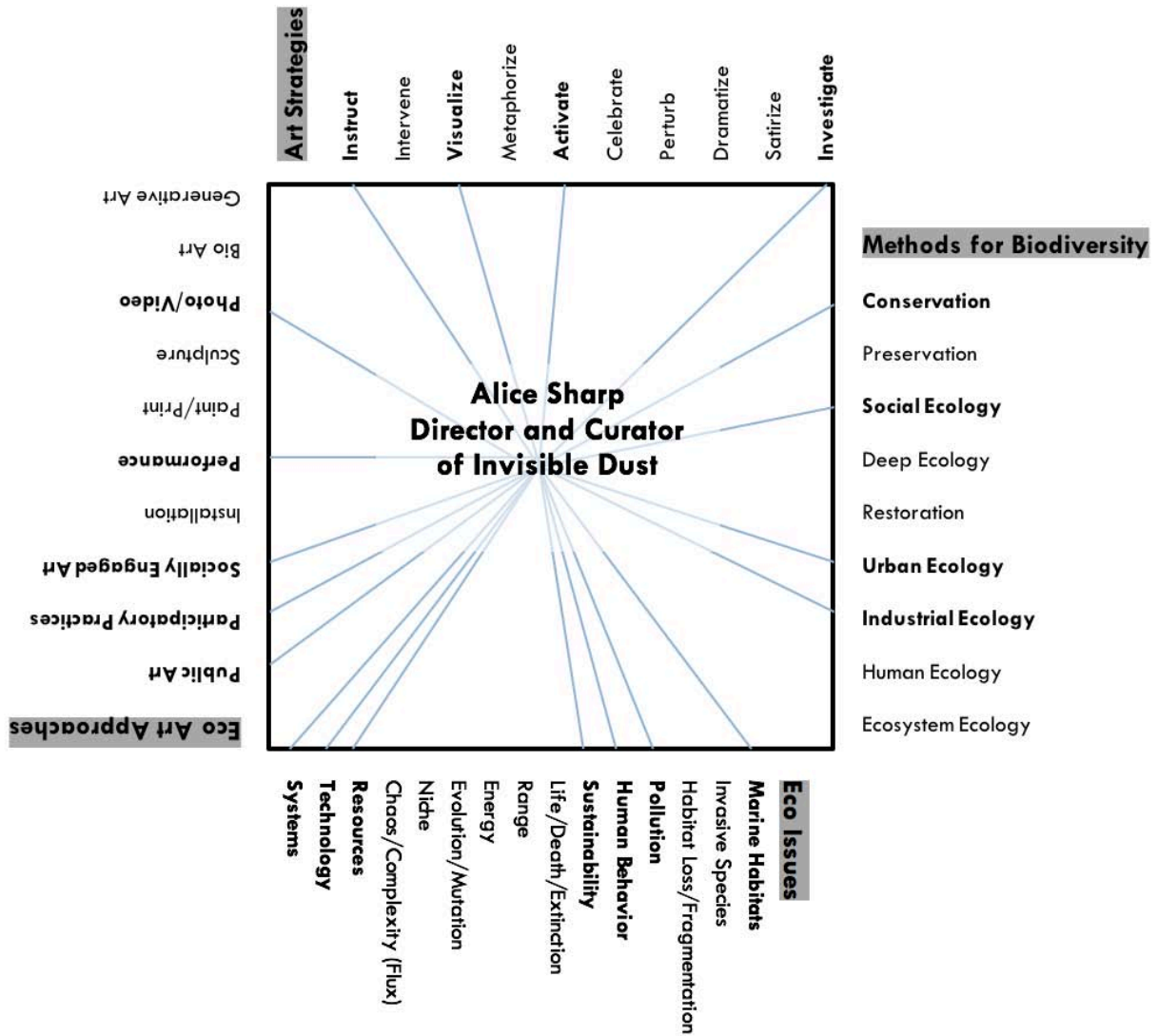
In August 2016, fantasy fiction writer China Miéville travelled to Bermuda to follow in the footsteps of American naturalist William Beebe eight decades before. He descended the depths of the Atlantic Ocean in a submersible inspiring a new essay which describes a journey into the darkness of the ocean. The title of the essay, *Tehom* is the Hebrew word for the Deep or the Abyss. Miéville also includes accounts from early pioneers of underwater exploration and the reflections of eminent poets, philosophers and writers from across the centuries.

*Tehom* provides fascinating contexts into what remains uncharted territory. 50,000 beautifully designed copies of the essay were produced for visitors to take away for free during *Offshore: artists explore the sea* at Ferens Art Gallery and Hull Maritime Museum from 1 April to 28 August 2017. Visitors to the gallery and museum were also invited to listen to the audio extracts that are available on this page and that have been read by the author.<sup>17</sup>

---

<sup>17</sup> Invisibledust.com. (2016). *China Miéville | Invisible Dust*. [online] Available at: <http://invisibledust.com/project/dryden-goodwin-kings-college-and-st-thomas-london/> [Accessed 10 Mar. 2018]





Rather than assess each of the artists or projects individually, it is of more use to assess the curatorial practice of Invisible Dust as a whole over the past year, as it is more closely related to the methodologies associated with Public Art and Biodiversity programming and commissioning. Invisible Dust's curatorial approach centres, not surprisingly around Public Art, but is also deeply rooted in Participatory Practices and Socially Engaged Art. The central tenets of community, local environments and ecology as well as public engagement, are fundamental to the curatorial philosophy. This is clearly reflected in the art strategies regularly implemented: Instruct, Visualize, Activate, Investigate. By focusing on climate change/eco issues such as marine habitats, pollution, human behaviour, sustainability, resources, technology and systems, Invisible Dust are simultaneously applying the methods and the deeper frameworks of ideology associated with conservation, Social Ecology, Urban Ecology, Industrial Ecology. The role of Invisible Dust is one of facilitation, bridging art and science, connecting people to place, making the invisible visible.

# SIOBHAN MCDONALD



26/1/2018

## Presentations at Balleally Landfill

Siobhan McDonald is a visual artist and has been an Artist in Residence at the School of Science (2013 – 2018.) Her projects employ an interdisciplinary approach that manifests in many forms including painting, drawing, film and sound. Using diverse methodologies, Siobhan works collaboratively with historians, scientists & composers on projects combining ideas of interaction on the natural world and materiality. Her projects are supported by the Institute of Physics, Culture Ireland, The Arts Council, The European Research Council and are found in many international and national collections.<sup>18</sup>

<sup>18</sup> Tcd.ie. (2018). *Siobhan McDonald: Future Breath*. [online] Available at: <https://www.tcd.ie/trinity-creative/challenge/2017/siobhan-mc-donald.php> [Accessed 10 Mar. 2018].



Figure 11 : Siobhan McDonald, *Journey to the Epicentre II: An expedition to the Vatnajökull glacier in Iceland*, 2013

The following three pages are a composite overview of Siobhan McDonald's presentation, focusing on the central tenets of her practice and collaborations with scientists, botanists, geologists and the European Space Agency.

The above image is taken from an Icelandic expedition McDonald took part in as part of her UCD artist in science residency programme. In 2013, McDonald and a team of scientist from University College Dublin set off on an expedition to the Vatnajökull glacier in Iceland. They placed an array of seismometers along the flanks of Grimsvotn, an active volcano that sits at the edge of the glacier, and record the tremors and rumbles that occur deep below the glacial ice. The idea was that by listening closely to the "heartbeat" of Grimsvotn, McDonald might understand the inner workings of the volcano. The above image depicts what McDonald terms 'an ephemeral event in a place that was completely unpredictable.' The site-specific installation and functional experiment is composed of wire and rocks. <sup>1920</sup>

<sup>19</sup> Courtney, K. (2018). Volcanic Art: Iceland is like a blank canvas. *Irish Times*. [online] Available at: <https://www.irishtimes.com/news/science/volcanic-art-iceland-is-like-a-blank-canvas-1.1508369> [Accessed 18 Apr. 2018].

<sup>20</sup> Siobhan McDonald. (n.d.). *Siobhan McDonald Website*. [online] Available at: <http://www.siobhanmcdonald.com/> [Accessed 9 Mar. 2018].



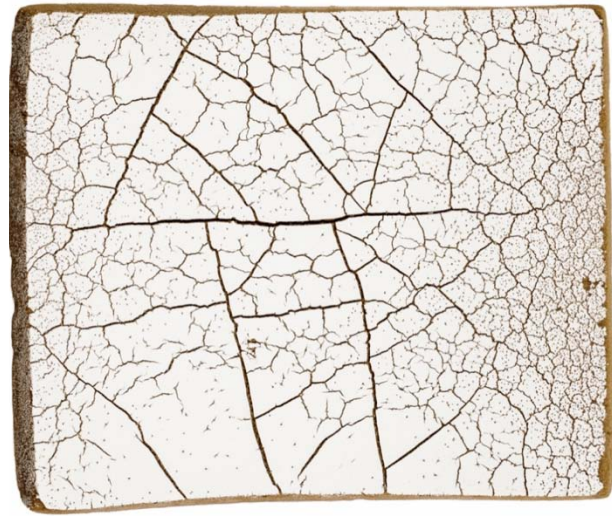
Figures 12, 13, & 14 : Siobhan McDonald, *Cyathea Australis* & *The Programme for Experimental Atmospheres and Climate at UCD* , 2017

*Cyathea Australis*, is a body of work consisting of photogenic drawings that narrate the changing state of the Earth's atmosphere. In each of the drawings, the light and the atmospheric carbon dioxide content recreate the conditions of the Triassic, Cretaceous, and Devonian periods, as well as the Anthropocene epoch. With permission and assistance from the Royal Botanic Gardens, McDonald germinated seeds, at PÉAC, from one of the Franklin expeditions to Arctic. The Programme for Experimental Atmospheres and Climate (PÉAC), is a nationally and internationally unique climate controlled facility designed, fundamentally, to assess the processes and systems underlying plant growth and development. Each of the fifteen chambers is capable of simulating a range of both future and prehistoric environmental conditions allowing scientists to predict how changing environments, in particular atmospheric composition, will and previously have affected plant growth conditions for almost any terrestrial biome on earth.<sup>21 22</sup>

<sup>21</sup> Dixon, D. (2018). Deep Exposures. *Science*, [online] (6328), p.916. Available at: <http://science.sciencemag.org/content/355/6328/916> [Accessed 18 Apr. 2018].

<sup>22</sup> Siobhan McDonald. (n.d.). *Siobhan McDonald Website*. [online] Available at: <http://www.siobhanmcdonald.com/> [Accessed 9 Mar. 2018].



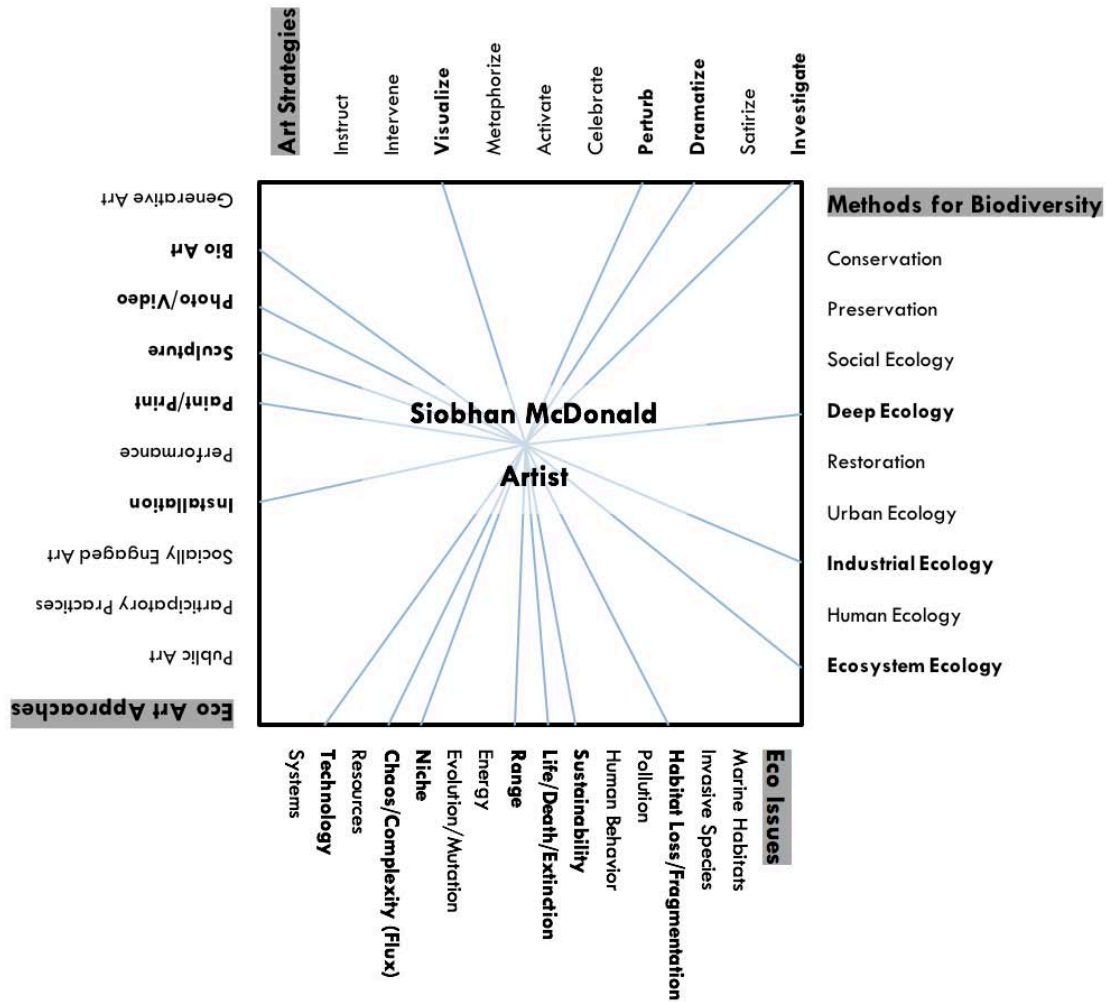


Figures 15 & 16: Siobhan McDonald, *Crystalline*, 2017

*Crystalline* is a series of white sculptures that are composed of foam substrates coated with a pigment that contains carbon and charred bone. McDonald responding to the retreating Arctic glaciers, says “This installation is made up of 166 pieces and each one represents a year since we screwed up the atmosphere,”<sup>23</sup> dating this back to the beginning of the Industrial Revolution. The material itself developed by the European Space Agency for the Solar Orbiter mission was inspired by the materials used by cave painters. “SolarWhite” will bond with the titanium heat shield of ESA’s Solar Orbiter, to be launched into space into 2018. In *Crystalline*, the cracks of the white tiles reference the melting glaciers of the Anthropocene. The installation brings the elements of contemporary engineering together with prehistory in the use of carbon and charred bone.

The installation also features pressed plants, seeds in glass vessels, ghostly after-images of butterflies on antique paper, a series of mysterious white sculptures, a striking work on calf skin, a few small, eerie paintings, and even a short film with an original soundtrack.

<sup>23</sup> O’Sullivan, J. (2017). Her crystalline mine. *The Sunday Times*. [online] Available at: <https://www.thetimes.co.uk/article/her-crystalline-mine-b5nrgfp8c?i=ie> [Accessed 1 Mar. 2018].



Siobhan McDonald's research based interdisciplinary practice is realized in a multiplicity of ways including Painting, Sculpture, the lens based practices of Photography and Video, Installation and Bio Art. She states of her practice, "I work collaboratively with cartographers, scientists, and composers combining ideas of interaction on the natural world," she explains. McDonald has decided painting alone cannot convey her vision: "I need to use different forms of expression."<sup>24</sup> Through these varied media, McDonald employs the following strategies in order to connect to a wider public audience: visualize, perturb, dramatize and investigate. It is through these strategies that the central tenets of climate change, habitat loss, sustainability, life, death, and extinction are expressed. Her practice also investigates notions of range, niche, chaos/complexity/flux and technology so as to elucidate the more nuanced aspects of humanity's relationship to the natural world. Deeply embedded in her practice are the frameworks of ideologies such as Deep Ecology, Industrial Ecology and Ecosystem Ecology. McDonald bridges the languages and methodologies of art and science, opening up reflective spaces between artist, scientists and viewer.

<sup>24</sup> O'Sullivan, J. (2017). Her crystalline mine. *The Sunday Times*. [online] Available at: <https://www.thetimes.co.uk/article/her-crystalline-mine-b5nrgfp8c?i=ie> [Accessed 1 Mar. 2018].

## WHAT IS 'NATURAL'? AND WHAT DESERVES PROTECTION?

DR RUTH BRENNAN



26/1/2018

### Presentations at Balleally Landfill

Positioned at the interface of science, policy and the arts, Brennan uses innovative visual and participatory and qualitative methodologies to explore how the articulation of culturally-embedded relationships between people and place can facilitate engagement with the related policy environment. Her research investigates ways in which marine spaces are conceptualised by users, managers and human-environment interactions, how this relates to marine resource governance and, in particular, what it means for community engagement.<sup>25</sup>

Stephen Hurrel's relational practice takes into account the wider ecology of people and place and the resulting bodies of work grow out of an engagement with specific contexts. He works across a range of media including video, sound, sculpture, light, text, digital, interactive, photography and writing.<sup>26</sup>

<sup>25</sup> Tcd.ie. (n.d.). *Dr Ruth Brennan - Trinity Centre for Environmental Humanities - Trinity College Dublin*. [online] Available at: <https://www.tcd.ie/tceh/people/ruth-brennan/ruth-brennan.php> [Accessed 10 Mar. 2018].

<sup>26</sup> Glasgow Sculpture Studios. (n.d.). *Stephen Hurrel - Glasgow Sculpture Studios*. [online] Available at: <http://www.glasgowsculpturestudios.org/2010/03/03/hurrel-stephen/> [Accessed 10 Mar. 2018].

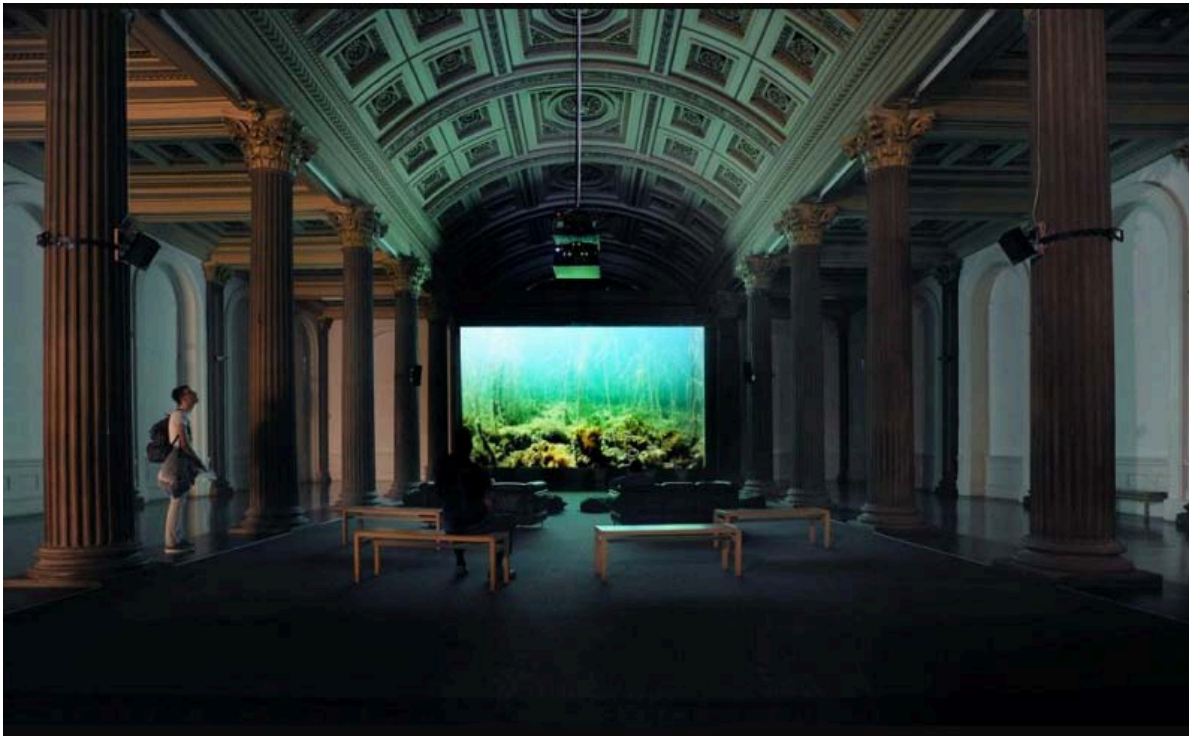


Figure 17: Ruth Brennan and Stephen Hurrell, *Clyde Reflections*, 2014

In her presentation entitled 'What is 'Natural'? And What Deserves Protection? Making Visible Bio-Cultural Diversity through Art-Science Collaborations,' Brennan spoke, on behalf of herself and her collaborative partner Stephen Hurrell. She introduced and discussed three projects, *Clyde Reflections*, *Belonging to the Sea* and *Sea Stories*. *Clyde Reflections*, pictured above, is a 33-minute film that opens up space for contemplation by reflecting the unfixed, shifting nature of relationships between people and place. It is projected and installed so as to be a meditative, cinematic experience based on the marine environment of the Firth of Clyde on the west coast of Scotland. The film features underwater and microscopic footage, combined with voice recordings of people who have a close relationship with, or specialist understanding of, the Firth of Clyde. These include a retired fisherman, a marine biologist, a diver, a marine conservationist, a spiritual leader and a physical oceanographer.

By engaging with people who connect deeply with their environment, *Clyde Reflections* presents a multi-perspective representation of a particular marine area in order to challenge a simplistic representation of this environment. The film provides a creative example of how 'landscape' is not a fixed entity, or separate from people, but is dynamic in terms of its socio-ecological properties as well as how it can be perceived.<sup>27</sup>

<sup>27</sup> UHI, S. (n.d.). *Clyde Reflections* — The Scottish Association for Marine Science. [online] Sams.ac.uk. Available at: <https://www.sams.ac.uk/people/fellows/brennan-dr-ruth/clyde-reflections/> [Accessed 10 Mar. 2018].





Figure 18: Ruth Brennan and Stephen Hurrel, *Belonging to the Sea*, 2012

The second project that Brennan discussed was *Belonging to the Sea*, an exploratory work that asks questions about the deeper nature of conflict, specifically in relation to two separate Gaelic-speaking island communities – one in Ireland and one in Scotland. The project centres on recounting how these communities have found themselves actively opposing decision-making process of government bodies whose remit is to protect aspects of the natural environment in the island people live. The project takes the form of a publication funded by Colmcille<sup>28</sup>. The detailed account of these two communities' experiences looks behind the political antagonism to explore shared maritime traditions and principles of belief and conduct that may be motivating the resistance manifest on both islands to the legislation of the states that rule them. It also examines international policy instruments that are relevant to traditional knowledge and cultural heritage. In this report, the collaborative duo seek to convey 'dúchas / dùthchas na mara' — the sense of belonging to the sea — and the role this sense of belonging plays in the life of these island communities. To the Gaelic mind, dúchas/dùthchas is a total field of understanding, encompassing "not so much a landscape, not a sense of geography alone, nor of history alone, but a formal order of experience in which all these are merged".<sup>29</sup>

<sup>28</sup> Colmcille is a partnership programme between Foras na Gaeilge and Bòrd na Gàidhlig, that promotes the use of Irish Gaelic and Scottish Gaelic in Ireland and Scotland and between the two countries.

<sup>29</sup> Brennan, R. and Hurrel, S. (2012). *Mapping the Sea*. [online] Mappingthesea.net. Available at: <http://www.mappingthesea.net/Belonging-to-the-Sea.pdf> [Accessed 15 Mar. 2018]



Figure 19: Ruth Brennan and Stephen Hurrel, *Sea Stories*, 2013

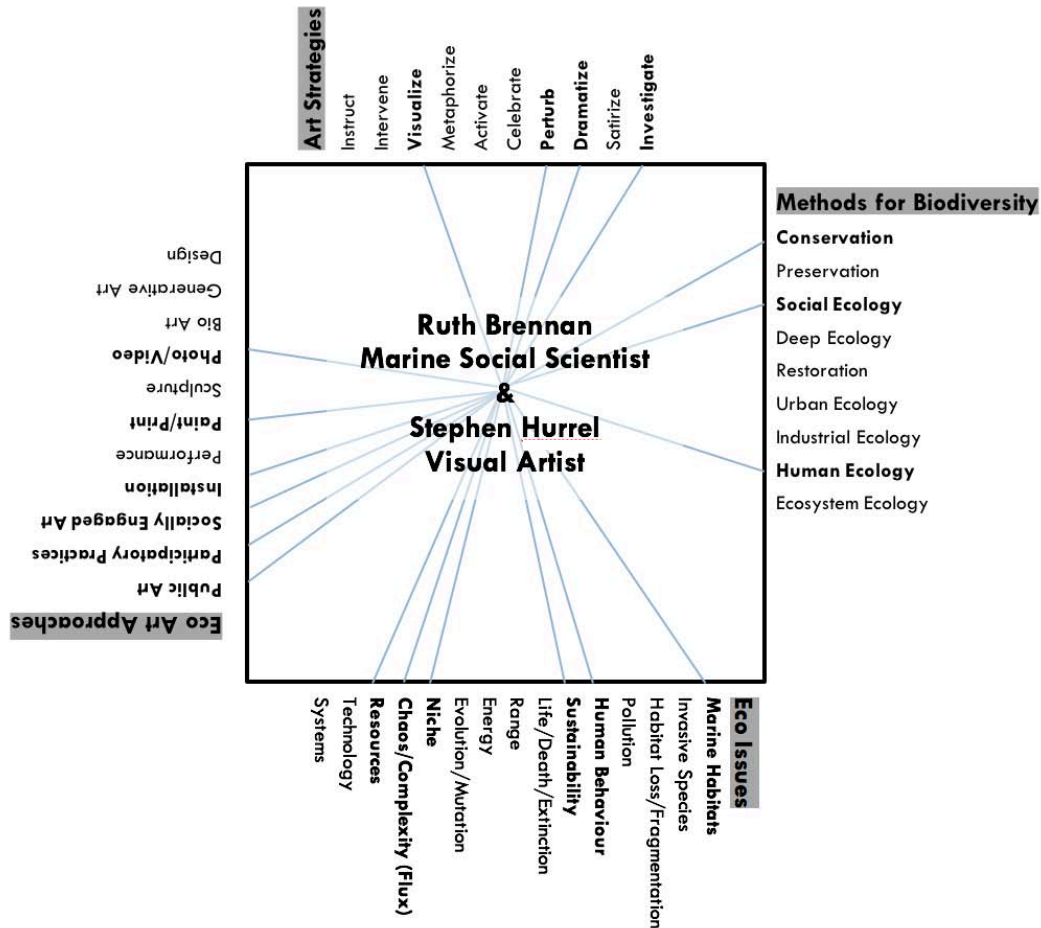
The third project discussed was *Sea Stories*, an online, interactive, cultural map of the sea, is based around the island of Barra, in the Outer Hebrides of Scotland. The project explores the intimate relationship between people and place and seeks to make visible the rich cultural knowledge that exists in the seas around Barra. It has been developed in association with Voluntary Action Barra & Vatersay and involved school pupils interviewing local Barra fishermen and the older members of the community. The idea of a dynamic map- to reflect intergeneration knowledge, fishermen's way of knowing the sea and the intangible cultural heritage of the marine environment was developed by Brennan and Hurrel as a way of bringing to life and making visible what is often invisible to most people.<sup>30</sup>

At the end of the presentation Ruth proposed that Art-Science collaborations had the potential to:

- Open up reflective spaces for dialogue between policy makers, those who live and work with the marine environment and the general public.
- Show how our understandings of the 'natural' environments are framed by human value systems, practices and identities
- Articulate different value systems and find ways to reflect these in a transparent policy process.

The final key points of her presentation lent considerable insight into the scientific perspective of the potential and advantage of art and science collaborations.

<sup>30</sup> Farrell, B. (2013). *Barra*. [online] Mappingthesea.net. Available at: <http://www.mappingthesea.net/barra/> [Accessed 10 Mar. 2018].



The collaborative practice of social ecologist Ruth Brennan and visual artist Stephen Hurrel is demonstrative of a growing trend of developments in methodologies and research in both artistic and scientific disciplines. The three projects discussed previously represent contemporary approaches in Public Art, Participatory Practices, Socially Engaged Art, Print, Painting, and the lens based practices of Photography and Video. At the heart of their practice is a deep engagement with place, community and the marine environment. This is evidenced in the themes of eco issues such as marine habitats, human behaviour, sustainability, niche, chaos/complexity/flux and resources. The issues are definitively established upon the ideological frameworks of conservation, Social Ecology, and Human Ecology. As so much of their practice is centred on community engagement, as both a research platform and catalyst for these projects, it follows that the strategies of investigate, visualize, perturb and dramatize are implemented. Brennan and Hurrel's practice is a model example of how scientists and artists can continue an ongoing collaborative, research based enquiry.

# LAZARAS LINGUA

SUZANNE WALSH



26/1/2018

## Performance & Talk at the Hide Sculpture

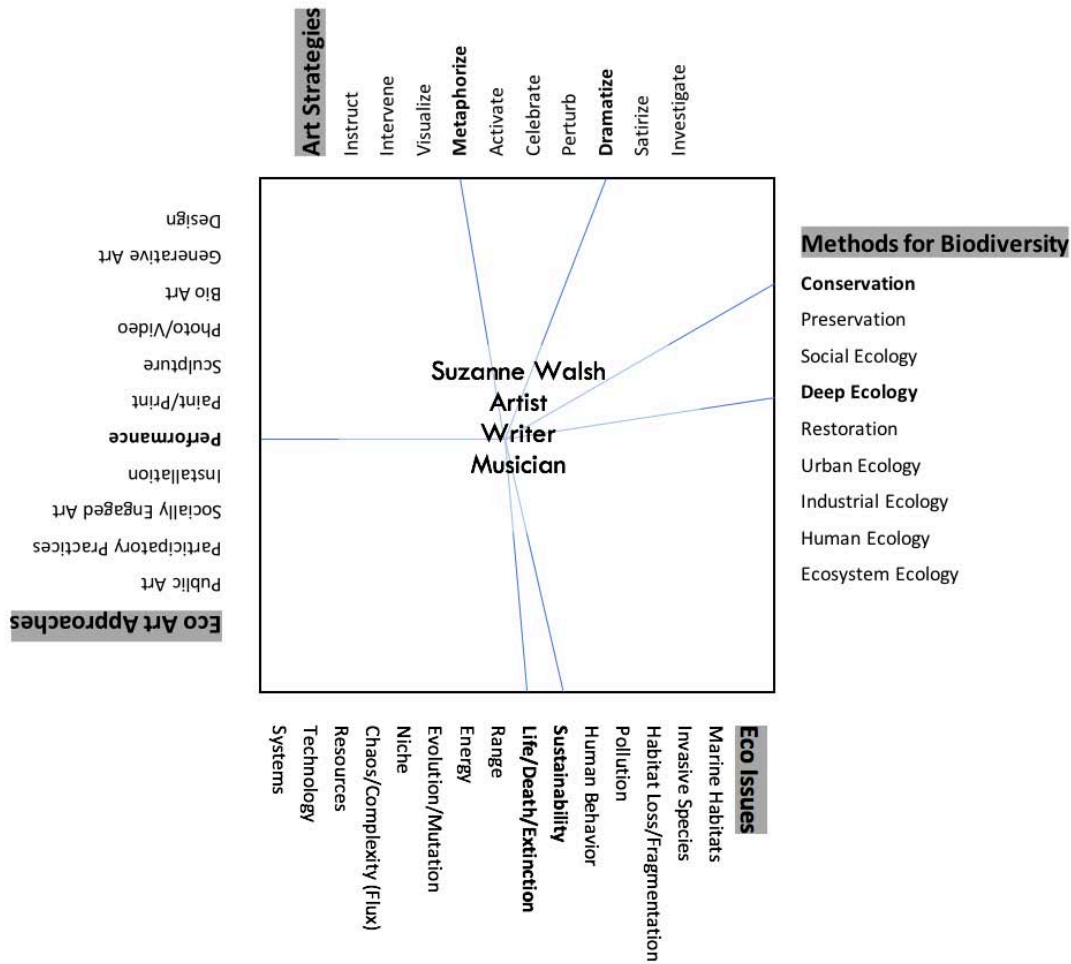
Suzanne Walsh is a trans-disciplinary artist who works mainly with text, performance and audio/music. She writes essays, poetry and art-writing and is an editor for Critical Bastards art publication. She often collaborates with other artists and film-makers. Her work often explores the animal/human divide, ecologies and language.<sup>31</sup> She has recently shown work in galleries including IMMA, The LAB Gallery, and Eight Gallery and is published in Gorse literary journal and Circa magazine amongst other publications. She has also performed at events such as the International Literature Festival, Mountains to Sea Book Festival and Electric Picnic music festival.<sup>32</sup>

---

<sup>31</sup> Firestation.ie. (n.d.). *Suzanne Walsh - Fire Station Artists' Studios*. [online] Available at: <http://www.firestation.ie/artists/artist/suzanne-walsh/> [Accessed 10 Mar. 2018]

<sup>32</sup> Arts & Disability Ireland. (n.d.). *Suzanne Walsh | Arts & Disability Ireland*. [online] Available at: [http://adiarts.ie/artists/showcasing/meet-an-artist/suzanne\\_walsh/](http://adiarts.ie/artists/showcasing/meet-an-artist/suzanne_walsh/) [Accessed 13 Mar. 2018]





Suzanne Walsh's performance and text based work entitled Lazarus Lingua was performed within Garrett Phelan's The Hide Sculpture situated within Rogerstown Estuary. The artist read out, in Latin, the names of extinct species both animals and plants. Hearing Latin spoken with an Italian dialect was simultaneously familiar and foreign. In reviving and reanimating an extinct language she awakened the memories of the vast number of species that no longer inhabit this planet. The performance itself was haunting, passionate, disheartening as the list seemed to extend page after page. Walsh employs the strategies metaphorize and dramatize to reflect on notion of sustainability, life, death and extinction. The performance itself was based on the ideological frameworks of conservation and deep ecology and existed as an eloquent memorialization to past biodiversity.

# THE HIDE SCULPTURE

Garrett Phelan

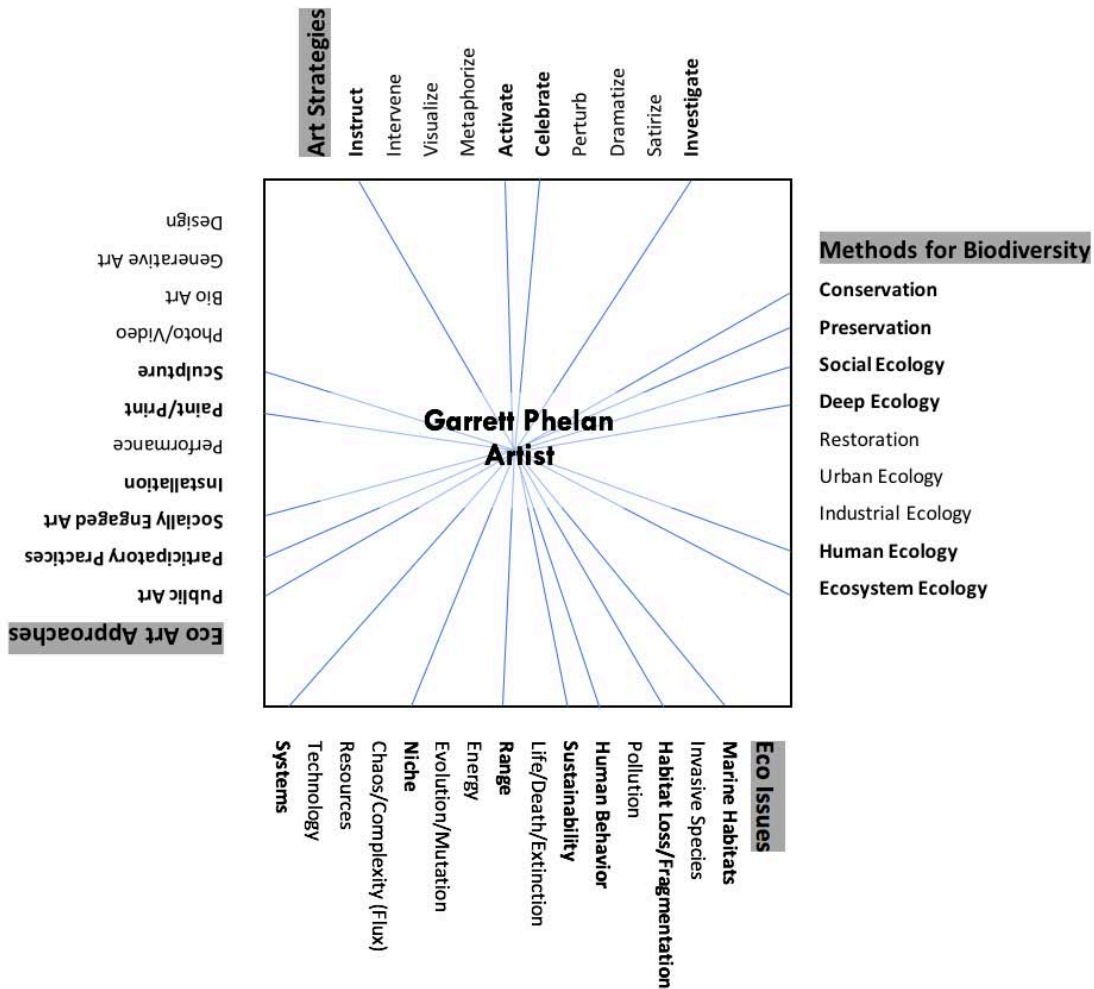


26/1/2018

## Performance & Talk at the Hide Sculpture

Garrett Phelan makes site-specific projects that include independent FM radio broadcasts, sculptural installations, photography, film, animation and drawing. In 2007 Garrett Phelan was invited by the Fingal County Council Arts Office to develop a public art project for the county, Phelan was selected based on his previous work and associations with the area. After a period of research he proposed a project entitled THE HIDE PROJECT which was influenced by the Balleally landfill site, a unique location which sits on the Rogerstown Estuary and is renowned for its birdlife.<sup>33</sup>

<sup>33</sup> Phelan, G. (n.d.). *The HIDE Project | a 21st century functional monument*. [online] Thehideproject.com. Available at: <http://www.thehideproject.com/> [Accessed 3 Mar. 2018].



*The Hide Sculpture* is a large-scale sculptural installation consisting of a gateway, pathway, surrounding foliage and fauna and a fixed structure located at the Balleally site. It is a sculptural work that exists as a significant piece of public art in Fingal acting as a service to the community in the form of a fully functioning Bird Hide - an observation point to view birds along the Rogerstown Estuary. It is reflective of contemporary practices such as Socially Engaged Art, Participatory Practices and Installation. Additionally with inside the hide are Printmaking and painterly processes.

In the realization of *The Hide Project*, Garrett Phelan employs strategies instruct, activate, celebrate and investigate to speak to issues of marine habitats, habitat loss and fragmentation, human behaviour, sustainability, range, niche and systems. The issues are founded on ideological notions of preservation, conservation, Social Ecology, Deep Ecology, Human Ecology and Ecosystem Ecology.

This work of art work challenges our notion of a contemporary monument, cast in dyed green concrete with a hyper-realistic wooden texture finish, the work also complements the profile of a location that is both natural and manmade, permanent yet constantly changing.

*The Hide Sculpture*, situated on a former landfill site, is a work of art that provides a service to the visitor as a fully functioning observation point for viewing a wide variety of the estuary's roosting birds. It will function as a space for conversation, contemplation, education and exploration into the world of art, nature and politics. The artist has hand carved the wooden interior of *The Hide Sculpture* with symbols associated with the site and the recurring themes within his own work.

