



RANE

YEARBOOK 2011 - 2012

FALMOUTH
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YEARBOOK 2011–2012

A pictorial record of activities and events associated with the
RANE Research Group at Falmouth University
over the past academic year

This publication records activities and events associated with the RANE Research Group during the academic year of 2011–2012. It has been designed and produced by Falmouth University and is available as a PDF document, downloadable from the RANE website at www.rane-research.org. Downloaded and printed copies are for reference use only.

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Introduction

Sifting the sand on a beach in Cornwall, a group of environmental artists are searching for nurdles and other pieces of abandoned plastic. The larger pieces are easy to spot – plastic bags, broken toys, cigarette lighters, tangled fishing nets and many other scraps of undetermined origin. But the nurdles are harder to find. These are the small pieces of pre-production plastic, about the size of a small pea, that now litter our beaches.

Grasping another handful of cold sand I consider its genesis in the fire-forged rocks when the Earth was still young. Ground down over millennia by the incessant action of the oceans, the sands are now becoming peppered with plastic. Amongst the world's uncountable grains we have secreted millions of small particles of our own making. Most people appear not to notice the nurdles; they slip through the net of perception, and are invisible to the families playing in the sand. It seems our beaches are gradually disappearing under a tide of micro-plastic, and, long after we have departed, our passing will be recorded in whatever stratum remains. The current period will be delineated by a thin layer of excess carbon that marks our explosion on the planet and our brief, yet excessive, consumption of fossil fuels.

Our species has, in a remarkably short time, learnt how to extract the essence of prehistoric life in the form of oil; to capture the energy of the ancient sun, and turn it into miraculous objects and trivial trinkets, undreamt of by previous generations. We have, in turn, become captured by our technological prowess; ensnared by a net of our own making.

The warnings about our addiction to hydrocarbons are now arriving with increasing urgency and intensity. This year has seen a torrent of reports, reinforced by some extreme weather events, outlining the need to drastically reduce our dependency on carbon. If we are to turn the tide that now threatens to engulf us it is clear that collective and unprecedented action needs to be swiftly taken.

Back on the beach the remaining sand trickles away and I am left with a scattering of nurdles, too big to fit through the thin gaps between my fingers. As the last few grains disappear I return to the present, well aware that time also is running out.

We are undoubtedly at a critical point as our culture, propelled by 'progress' and 'growth', heads towards the precipice. But even as we are swept along there is a rapidly expanding counter current of ideas, actions and projects, that are attempting to address the situation in a myriad of different ways, and lead us away from the edge.

Among the free thinkers who have responded to this task, of clearing safe tracks away from the edge, are an increasing number of artists. This small publication documents a few of these, in the hope that it will connect with and inspire others who are equally engaged in similar actions.

Dr Daro Montag

RANE Research Group Leader

and MA Art & Environment Award Leader

On page 47 of the 2012 RANE Yearbook we see MA Art & Environment student Pete Ward looking slightly perplexed – referring back to his instructions perhaps... or maybe pondering the mind-numbing statistics concerning ocean plastic pollution – as he sets out to gather plastic fragments from within a small quadrat drawn onto a Falmouth beach as part of fellow student Clare Thomas' Ocean Debris project.

On the opposite page is a comment from Clare herself, recalling that participants in this project found that the experience of clearing the plastic from within a bounded patch of sand led to a growing sense of frustration with the boundary itself. That working on their specified piece of ground served chiefly to make them aware of the much greater portion that lay outside of it, which of course remained laced with toxic residue. Clare observes that their frustration seems an apt image for the futility that many artists feel when seeking to address themselves to environmental concerns – concerns whose most frequent common denominator is perhaps their overwhelming scale. A scale which can seem, at times, to crush any meaningful grounds for optimism.

That question of futility seems important: looking into it might even help us to focus on the specific contribution that an arts practice may bring to the table as we stand before the baffling complexity of environmental concerns besetting 21st-century industrial civilisation. Turning a curious eye towards that sense of futility might allow us to consider how thinking as artists may inform a mode of response that, if not bristling with solutions to these problems, may nonetheless be able to throw new light on them. Into the hotbed of ecologically-informed ethics and environmentalist activism steps the barefooted artist. In the face of these hope-crushing big numbers, what on earth has that artist got to offer?

From shoppers eschewing plastic packaging to NGO's lobbying governments for policies that preserve marine health and biodiversity, environmentalist discourse is, naturally enough, largely concerned with what we can, what we should, what we must do about this or that aspect of the situation. And behind all these do's lies a mounting sense of alarm about what will, we are told, happen if we don't succeed – if we don't act together, act decisively, and act in time.

And yet... the deeper we dig into the issues, the more we are confronted by the paucity of responses out there which seem genuinely proportionate to the problems. Confronted, too, by the largely symbolic nature of many of our own attempts to help, to avert, to mitigate. More fundamentally perhaps, we seem increasingly to be confronted by the uncomfortable fact that we ourselves – in almost every aspect of our modern lives, including our perceptions, thought processes – are an inherent part of those problems which we would set out to address. Pick an issue, look into it, and see how long you can keep that issue disentangled from all the rest.

Into this deepening dilemma steps the artist, whose practice – among other things – affords its various participants the luxury of a space in which to re-imagine the ground they stand on, and in doing that, to begin to revision the problems confronting industrial civilisation. Clearing a small patch of sand on an otherwise polluted beach seems a very good image for what we can do, can do thoroughly, and do well – can do in a way that is, perhaps, unique to the arts.

Standing apart from the succeed-or-die functional imperatives of activism, art practice holds out the possibility that – even when that practice embraces an activist strategy and intent – we can begin the revolution closer to home, in a re-imagining of our own humanity, and of our citizenship of a

more-than-human Earth. Perhaps here lies the beginning of a coherent answer to that crushing sense of futility. And the basis for an unconditional optimism – one not dependant on either the scale or the success of an action, so much as it's poetic resonance in reframing the problem itself, and in doing so, helping to inform a meaningful response to it.

Therein may lie one important aspect of art's contribution – and its potency in helping to foster what is being called by some “a culture of inhabitation” – which begins in the work of freeing ourselves from our catastrophic culture of occupation whose psychopathic operations are so ubiquitous, so normalised that we can hardly bring them into focus:

“Imagine the technologies that would be invented by a culture of inhabitation, that is, a sustainable culture, that is, a culture planning on being in the same place for 10,000 years. That culture would create technologies that enhance the landscape...that remind human inhabitants of their place in this landscape. The technologies would promote leisure, not production. The technologies would not be bombs and factory conveyor belts but perhaps stories, songs, and dances...”

Derrick Jensen – Endgame Vol. 1: The Problem of Civilisation.

Mat Osmond

MA Art & Environment Lecturer

Visiting Speakers: Lectures & Workshops

Emily Penn – Pangaea Explorations



There are endless articles and statistics on the steadily degrading state of the world's ocean but rarely is communication effective enough to compel people into action. Pangaea's solution is to take people – scientists, journalists, artists, youth, and everyday individuals – to see for themselves, to engage with the ocean and sustain the connections for us all.

In March, Pangaea Explorations' programme director, Emily Penn, visited Falmouth to talk about the problem of plastics and their environmental impact. Emily's story since graduating from Cambridge University with a degree in Architecture has followed an unconventional path.

In 2009 she crossed the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans on the revolutionary bio-fuelled vessel, *Earthrace* and was shocked and horrified by the plastic in the ocean and piles of rubbish on small islands. Determined to do something, she sailed to Tonga with *Sustainable Coastlines* where she implemented a community based clean-up project. Eight shipping containers of rubbish were removed from these remote islands. Wanting to learn more about plastic pollution she hitched a ride on a container ship to California to work with 5 Gyres, on the first comprehensive study of plastic pollution in the world's ocean.

Her current role with Pangaea Explorations, has her co-ordinating expeditions on board their ocean research vessel, *Sea Dragon*, with Scripps Institute of Oceanography, Algalita Marine Research Foundation, 5 Gyres Institute and the United Nations Safe Planet Campaign. During 2011 she led expeditions in the Pacific studying coral reef health, micro-plastics and eutrophication. All of her adventures are recorded in travel sketch-books, and this talk at Falmouth can be downloaded at the RANE website: http://rane.falmouth.ac.uk/penn_details.html

Paul Kingsnorth



“And so we find ourselves, all of us together, poised trembling on the edge of a change so massive that we have no way of gauging it. None of us knows where to look, but all of us know not to look down. Secretly, we all think we are doomed: even the politicians think this; even the environmentalists.

Some of us deal with it by going shopping. Some deal with it by hoping it is true. Some give up in despair. Some work frantically to try and fend off the coming storm. Our question is: what would happen if we looked down? Would it be as bad as we imagine? What might we see? Could it even be good for us?”

Uncivilisation: The Dark Mountain Manifesto, Paul Kingsnorth and Dougald Hine, 2009

Non-fiction author, poet and novelist, Paul Kingsnorth is one of the UK's most original – and controversial – writers on the environment. His first book, *One No, Many Yeses* (2003), explored the rise of the global resistance movement. In 2008, his polemic travelogue *Real England: The Battle against the Bland* was described in the Independent as “a watershed study, a crucially important book”. In 2009, Paul co-founded the *Dark Mountain Project*, a global network that aims “to bring together writers and artists, thinkers and doers, to assault the established citadels of literature and thought, and to begin to redraw the maps by which we navigate the places and times in which we find ourselves”. Paul is also a former editor of the Ecologist magazine and a frequent contributor to national newspapers. His first novel, *The Wake* will be published in 2013.

In March 2012 Paul visited the college for the second time and a recording of his lecture can be downloaded from the RANE website. In addition he provided the following previously unpublished poem.
http://rane.falmouth.ac.uk/kingsnorth2_details.html

Abraço – Paul Kingsnorth

I walked from this place in a rain of evening
took the cinder path that led to the sea
I had questions for the sea.

I took along all that had knotted my shoulders
and torn through my digestion
and had me muttering in the streets like an outpatient
and reaching up to the trees and howling under the stars
and kneeling in my world's dirt, rolling it between my fingers
and calling the birds my brothers
and asking the grasses how to live
and never being heard for years
for years.

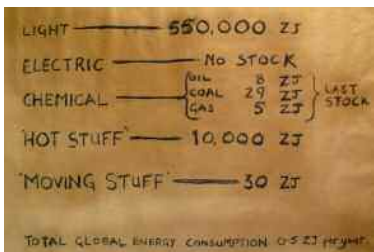
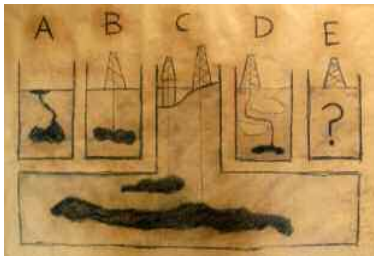
I took all this and I thought
to heave it into the swell
and watch it sigh away on the evening ebb.
Instead I stood on the flats by a fist of drowned roots
in a low drift of seacloud as dusk came down
and I watched three young dolphins arch in the fjord mouth
as if I were the sand itself or nothing at all
And I waited until they went under
and did not rise again
and then I thanked them
and I shouldered my load
and went home.

Daro Montag – Vinegar and Brown Paper



In this lecture Daro talked about the role of art in relation to the unfolding global crises. By showing the relationships between the collapsing economy, our dependency on fossil fuel and the impact our growing population has on the environment, a question is posed about the responsibility of culture. A film of the talk can be viewed on the RANE website:

http://rane.falmouth.ac.uk/rane_char_details_frm.html





External Projects: Events, Expeditions & Residencies

This year has seen members of the RANE group instigate and participate in a number of external events, both locally and further afield. Events ranged from the cultural and climate focused gathering on the banks of the Helford in Cornwall to an expedition along the Thames discussing oceans, plastic, landfill and food production. Staff and students also organized exhibitions at the Eden Project and the Poly, Falmouth and participated in conferences and group shows around the country.

EXTERNAL EVENT

Gather

Celebrating Resurgence's 45th Birthday

Gather was convened with the cooperation and hospitality of local farmer Charlie Pugh, whose creek-side farmland at Goongyllings, Constantine, provided the site for this one-day celebration of the creative power of local communities in seeding a cultural response to the problems embodied in runaway climate change.

Planned as a birthday celebration to mark 45 years of the Resurgence journal, *Gather* was also timed to mark *350.org's* international day of climate action, Moving Planet (24 September 2011).

MA Art & Environment student James Towillis, the principle organizer of the event, collaborated with *Transition Constantine* and his MA peers to create a diverse and festive celebration of art, music and culture – from a dance performance in the woods to a live charcoal burning (which narrowly missed smoking the former out). As night fell, the festivities convened within a central marquee for an evening of live music, celebration and discussion – the main highlight of which was an on-stage conversation between Leo Hickman and Satish Kumar.



Images of the preparations for Gather...





...and of the event itself, including a 350.org symbol formed on the hill by participants.



ShortCourse/London

Subheading to write

Cape Farewell's *ShortCourse/UK* is a series of short, rural and urban expeditions that brings emerging art and design students into a dialogue with scientists and leading scientific research in order to stimulate a creative response.

Created by Cape Farewell together with three of the UK's top art schools – Falmouth University, John Moore's in Liverpool, and University of Arts London colleges Chelsea, Camberwell and Wimbledon, over the course of three years, 2010 to 2013 – three *ShortCourse/UK* expeditions have acted as platforms for learning, collaboration and making.

The project aims to influence arts-based research methods and learning practices across UK universities by encouraging a positive engagement with local landscape and the human and environmental processes that shape it. The landscapes students travel through become context for discussion and investigation where conventional understandings of land, water, and of tangible reality are upturned and interrogated. As the dust settles following each journey, images, sounds and artefacts appear as visceral responses to this experience, eventually reaching a wider audience in a clear, concise representation of people and place.

In 2011 a group of 20 students and staff from Falmouth completed the Cornish expeditions. To provide some continuity for the next leg of the journey Lucy Morley and Daro Montag joined the first stage of the 2012 London expedition along the Thames to the largest landfill site in the UK.



For video clips of Cape Farewell's *ShortCourse* expeditions visit: <http://www.capefarewell.com/media/video> and scroll down to *ShortCourse/UK*

Participants on Cape Farewell's *ShortCourse/London* expeditions.



EXTERNAL EVENT

Hevva! Hevva!

Group Exhibition at The Eden Project

Participants in last year's *ShortCourse/UK* expeditions across Cornwall exhibited their work in response to climate change at the Eden project over the Easter holidays (5000 visitors through the doors each day!).

Coordinated by MA Art & Environment student Bryony Stokes, the work ranged from an aquaponic growing system, bird sound installation in the rainforest biome, insect etchings in the flower beds, 6ft whale drawing photographs being hung off the balcony, and rock paintings.

The opening night rekindled the journey experience the students had felt on the *ShortCourse/UK* trips with packed lunches, expeditions to the biomes and film screenings from the trips.



Work by *ShortCourse/Cornwall* participants at the Eden Project's Hevva! Hevva! group exhibition.





EXTERNAL EVENT

The Value of Trees

North Devon Biosphere Action Week 2011

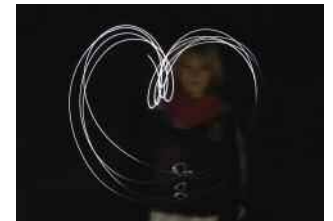
An event developed and co-ordinated by student Peter Ward for North Devon Biosphere Action Week 2011, in association with RANE, Falmouth University and Beaford Arts, to engage the general public with issues arising from the theme 'the value of trees'.

After much planning and organizing, a last minute change of venue and a great deal of generosity by students and organizers the event took place in Barnstaple Town Square on a sunny day in October.

Students travelled to North Devon and were accommodated in Beaford Arts residential centre, cooking communal meals and taking part in a walk exploring the James Ravillious Archive. The event and field trip also provided a welcome opportunity for the MA students to get to know each other in a working environment.

The change of venue, from Rosemoor RHS Garden to Barnstaple, a major urban centre in the region, allowed the event to engage with people not normally able to access woodland and was hence considered a great success.

Past and present MA Art & Environment students Freya Morgan and James Towillis, as well as other participants at The Value of Trees.





Other participants at The Value of Trees event.



EXTERNAL EVENT

The Home & The World

A summit for artists and other thinkers

A number of RANE researchers took part in this three-day summit held at Dartington Hall Estate. Organized by RANE associate Dr Richard Povall, in collaboration with *Aune Head Arts*, this event was timed to coincide with the Rio+20 United Nations summit on Sustainable Development, 19-21 June 2011.

The Home & the World invited all those concerned with “how creative people interact with the world around them, how the arts can speak about nature and the challenges facing the world, how place and community can be at the heart of creative choices, how our identities and place in the world is defined by what we call home”.

It set out to create an alternative summit, one that addressed these themes by offering a “mix of formal, informal, and creative contributions showcasing some of the most interesting work from across the globe – an academic conference with the feel of an arts festival”.

MA Art and Environment students Pete Ward and Arabella Pio, as well as RANE PhD student Natalia Ernstman and RANE Associate Clive Adams from CCANW, all offered events within what proved to be a stimulating and thought-provoking gathering, one which provided a rich opportunity for those all concerned with addressing these themes – both within their everyday lives and through creative practice – to meet, to share and discuss experience, and to hatch future collaborations.

<http://www.auneheadarts.net/conference2012>

MA Art & Environment student Pete Ward's workshop at The Home and the World.



EXTERNAL EVENT

In the Midst of Wonders

Interim Exhibition at Falmouth Poly December 2011

Conceived and initiated by MA Art & Environment student Francesca Owen, this exhibition was organized as a collaborative event. Held at Falmouth Poly, participants recreated the exhibition space as a living room, complete with a convivial space equipped with comfy chairs and pertinent inspirational reading.

Visitors were welcomed with cups of tea, and in all things the focus was on inviting the audience into a consideration of a range of environmental concerns, without hectoring or preaching to them. In spite of the diversity of work shown, a unifying message of care and concern for the planet was clearly presented.

Participants encountered a crash course in dealing with the limitations presented by insurance policies, and in finding new ways of working together to outflank imposed barriers. As well as participating in the show itself, MA student Pete Ward generated some impressive publicity material for the event, a PDF of which can be found on the RANE website.



Plenary discussion at the conclusion of In the Midst of Wonders.

Exhibits from In the Midst of Wonders, including phosphorescent phytoplankton bottled at the Helford Passage by Katy Lodge.





MA Art & Environment students during a foraging field trip.

MA Art & Environment: Field Trips & Student Projects

Much of the learning on the MA Art & Environment happens outside of the studio and lecture theatre. Students and staff are regularly found immersed in the landscapes of Cornwall. As usual the academic year started with a trip to the Potager, a productive organic garden and community resource. Here students were immediately exposed to the realities of local food production which resulted in the harvesting and preparation of a seasonal feast. This year also saw an annual visit to Boot Up!, a project supported by Falmouth University aimed at providing experiences in nature for children who are in danger of being excluded from regular schooling.

On a cold November day the trip to Trenoweth Quarry, with PhD student David Paton, offered an insightful glimpse into the workings of the quarry and its relationships with historic, social and ecological issues. History was touched upon again in the expedition to St Pirran's Well and the abandoned gunpowder works at Kennall Vale.

Maintaining traditional skills was an important issue during the visit to Annie Lovejoy and Mac Dunlop's *Caravanserai* project at Treloan. This hands-on workshop provided experience of the traditional skills of willow coppicing, crab-pot making, small-boat fishing and seashore food foraging.



Left and opposite page:
Field trip participants preparing
a feast at Potager community
garden project.





Above: Field trip to Boot Up!
community education project.
Opposite page: Field trip St
Pirran's Well and Kennall Vale.



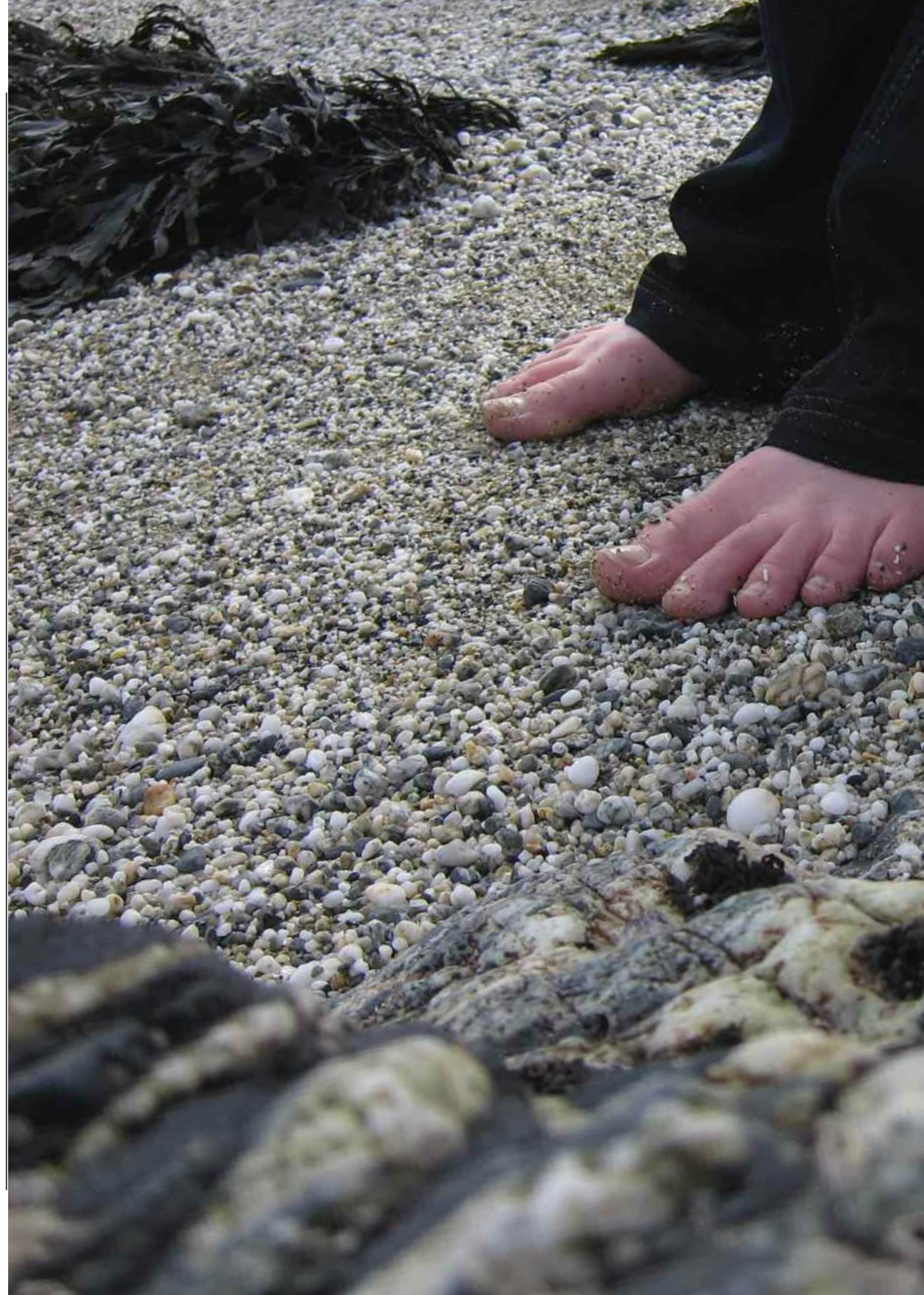


Left and opposite page: Field trip to Trenoweth Quarry at Mabe with PhD Student and sculptor David Paton.





Left and opposite page: The field trip to *Caravanserai* at Treloan on the Roseland peninsula.



STUDENT COLLABORATIONS

Swap Shop Truro Library

Students Bryony Stokes and Saffron Orrrell in collaboration with Truro Library held this swap shop for the Jubilee opening of their gardens. It was also Saffron's first trip out with her newly made mobile kitchen – the wild soup went down a treat.

Exchange Inc. Freeshop Redruth

Students Bryony Stokes and Saffron Orrrell took over an empty Boots store on Redruth high street and turned it into an alternative economy with a large swap shop, recycling workshops and the Exchange café where foraged, free and waste food was turned into soup and tea for anyone wanting to join in. The swap shop was the main success as word soon spread you could swap anything for anything and the interpretations of this unfolded over the week.



Students Bryony Stokes and Saffron Orrrell at their collaborative Swap Shop and Exchange Inc. events.



Pebble Ridge

Appledore Visual Arts Festival 2012

As part of the Appledore Arts Festival 2012 'Landmarks' an interdisciplinary expedition was organized by two students – artist Pete Ward and artist and conservationist John Fanshawe – with geographer Ralph Brayne. The expedition set out to explore the issues and processes surrounding the Pebble Ridge in North Devon. The event was based on research being conducted by Exeter University and North Devon's Biosphere Reserve and the inherent narrative associated with the natural landmark.

MENDRS symposium

In June 2012, student Clare Thomas was invited to speak at the first annual MENDRS symposium, held on a farm in the Lake District. As well as talking about her work, and sitting on a panel discussion about the blurring of life and art, she collaborated with plantsman Ben Pople to lead a walk through the beautiful Cumbrian countryside.

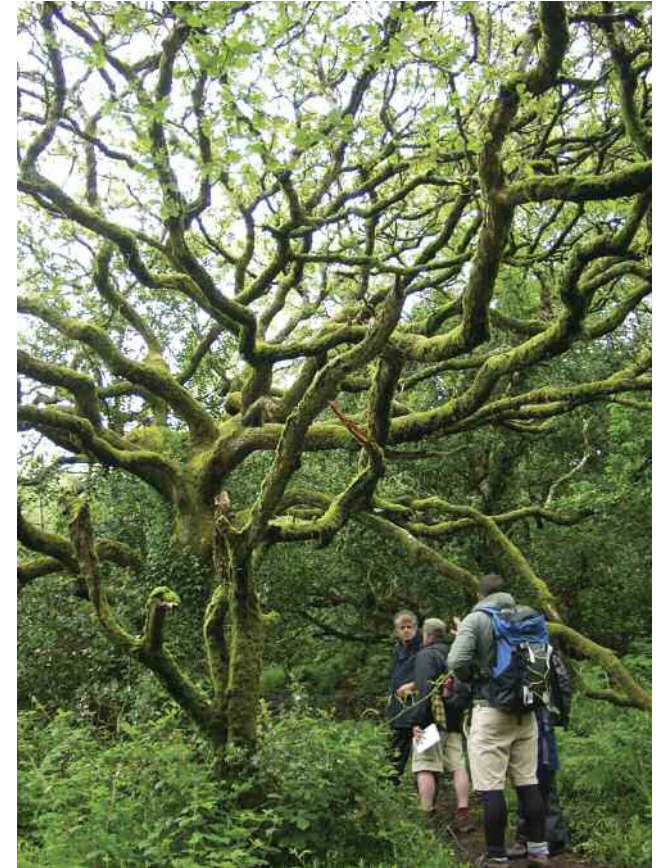
Ben talked about the medicinal and edible plants growing in the hedgerows, and nine bags of rubbish were picked up from the verges, a small amount of which was able to be recycled. www.mendrs.com

Photos: Luis Fernandez



Left: MA Art & Environment student Clare Thomas at the MENDRS symposium.

Right: MA Art & Environment students John Fanshawe and Pete Ward leading participants in the Pebble Ridge walk.



Gylly Beach Ocean Debris

In October and November 2011 Art & Environment student Clare Thomas, with the help of fellow student Jan Nowell, led two 'citizen-science' inspired investigations of ocean debris on Gylly Beach in Falmouth.

The first investigation involved five people collecting rubbish found within one-metre square quadrats. It didn't take long before some of the group started deviating from the task by making sculptures.

The second event involved a larger group who wore Hi-Vis vests with such designations as 'ARTIST' or 'TOXIC WASTE' printed on the back. This had the effect of bringing greater attention to the work from members of the beach-going public many of whom were keen to help with the project.

A number of the participants expressed frustration at the limitation imposed by working within a one-metre quadrat when there was evidently plastic debris on the entire beach.

<http://cleaningbeaches.wordpress.com>

Pete Ward and other participants in Clare Thomas' ocean debris project





MA Art & Environment: Graduating Students

Work by MA Art & Environment
student Saffron Orrell.

Since the 1960s an increasing number of artists have engaged with environmental issues and ecological thinking. The MA Art & Environment builds on this artistic tradition and enables students to generate a professional practice in response to our current environmental crises.

Each graduating student researches a specific area of concern to inform the production of a critical and creative practice. Using art as a cultural agent they aim to: communicate issues; raise awareness; stimulate audiences; and provoke actions.

Issues researched this year include: local food production; the impact of consumerism; responses to climate change; the precarious state of the oceans; the value of trees; and human-scale acts of repair.

Students on the award have the opportunity to link with our UK partners including Cape Farewell, the Eden Project, the Centre for Contemporary Art & the Natural World and the Chartered Institute of Water and Environmental Management. They also participate in the global network of environmental artists.



GRADUATING STUDENT

Nina Boe

MA Art & Environment

My theatre work has comprised classics, new drama and devised theatre. I have produced a range of projects alongside dancers, composers, musicians, authors and visual artists, and am constantly exploring new grounds through inter-disciplinary work.

The performances strive to achieve a fluent synthesis of the different languages, whilst sharpening and defining the individual artistic expression. Through site-specific, community based work, I aim to restore a primeval theatre, to bring it out of the theatre houses and back into the square; bring it home where it is needed.

The work evolves around the harsh and the fragile, it always carries elements of a shifting nature, and a commitment to the environment we live in. Recurring themes are survival under shifting circumstances, our will to live regardless of experiences of grievance, loss, degradation and war.



GRADUATING STUDENT

Daniela Coray

MA Art & Environment

As a landscape designer operating within the context of art, I find I am situated more at an in-between of the two, rather than jumping from one to another. My work is highly influenced by an ecological design language which attempts to help myself, and an audience, to read the landscape from the perspective of natural process versus individual object. This leads often to outcomes which allow for public participation and contribution, as space is shaped by natural process and people.

Currently, I am intrigued by the urban environment, as the city becomes a battleground for debates about environmental sustainability in designed landscapes. I use my work, whether it manifests as sculpture, socially-engaged happenings, or place-making initiatives, to challenge the expectation of how landscape can function. I am drawn to utilitarian spaces, with their potential to offer opportunity for growth both horticulturally and socially. The spaces we tend to forget can often be the ones best poised for creating value.

Being situated between landscape design and art allows my practice to holistically develop solutions through design that integrate participatory outcomes with the creation of place, forming opportunities for addressing the current and future impact of designed landscapes.

www.danielacoray.com



GRADUATING STUDENT

John Fanshawe

MA Art & Environment

Through walking in the countryside, creating journeys short and long, all this work reveals fleeting encounters with nature, often with birds as totems and – through field drawings, photographs, maps, and sound-recording – explores watching, listening, memory, and loss, and seeks to challenge people's increasing disconnection from wild places.

As the poet, Eugenio Montale, so potently writes, nature is 'rough, scanty, and dazzling', raw, honest and filled with wonderment. Every brief encounter has the power to enchant, to build momentum and fuel conversation, discussion, and valuable collaboration.

john.fanshawe@birdlife.org



GRADUATING STUDENT

Katy Lodge

MA Art & Environment

My practice has become greatly involved with striving to engage people with the 70% of our planet that's hidden beneath the waves; the Ocean. I have always been drawn to the smaller pieces of an ecology and plankton had captured my attention because of our worldwide dependence and negligence towards it. A great amount of my practice has been exploring and raising awareness about plankton and the ecosystems that depend on them. My concern for the current critical state of our ocean has driven me into a multidisciplinary approach working with Cornwall Wildlife Trust and I have become greatly entangled in marine conservation, running workshops and working with the public.

I am inspired by artists Xavier Cortada, Betsy Damon, Jason deCaires Taylor and Mark Dion and my work is catalysed by my experiences with the public and the knowledge gained through collaborating with the marine sciences.

I have a very experimental approach to practice and work through a broad range of materials and techniques including bioluminescent phytoplankton, glass, painting, collecting and arranging yet my practice is brought into fruition through public participation, conversation and education. I believe that my practice holds many creative solutions that can both directly impact an ecosystem through eco actions and interventions and through embracing arts ability to question our assumptions, reframing what may seem ordinary and drawing attention to the smaller elements of ecosystem that we often overlook.



GRADUATING STUDENT

Jan Nowell

MA Art & Environment

The core of my practice is to make small/gentle actions that restore, support and appreciate the natural environment. I like remote places and makes journeys to be in them. Since moving to Falmouth, with a 'wild watery space' on its doorstep, I have been walking coastal paths and spending time on beaches, photographing and picking things up.

In the book *The Art of Possibility* by Rosamund Stone Zander and Benjamin Zander there is a story of a woman on a beach. At first sight, to a man passing by, she seems to be following a ritual dance. When the man is closer he sees that the beach is covered with starfish and the woman is picking them up, one at a time, throwing them back into the sea. 'He lightly mocks her: "There are stranded starfish as far as the eye can see, for miles up the beach. What difference can saving a few of them possibly make?'. Smiling, she bends down and once more tosses a starfish out over the water, saying serenely, "It certainly makes a difference to this one.'"

I haven't rescued any starfish – most of the things I pick up are made of plastic. Plastic is an amazing material that humans have made – durable, versatile, lightweight, 'economical', convenient... But it is used for unnecessary things, and for things that are intended to be used just once then thrown 'away'. Plastic doesn't go away - it just breaks into smaller pieces. It is harmful to marine life – the small pieces can be ingested, others entangle. It seems we use plastic to avoid waste and it creates waste. We keep making more things. Now there are huge gyres of mainly plastic debris floating in the oceans.

So in my work, I have been picking up the pieces from beaches, even though I acknowledge this is probably a rather futile gesture.



GRADUATING STUDENT

Saffron Orrell

MA Art & Environment

Still It Rained is a personal response to a point of global crisis. A makeshift raft is packed full of perennial plants in a symbiotic permaculture system producing a diverse, edible ecosystem. An Aquaponics system growing annuals trickles through gutters, fish and plants working together. A hand drawn story tells the motivation behind the creation of the raft.

I create functional metaphors, often sculptural or event based, to encourage ideas towards alternative approaches to living. During my MA I have led a range of actions from supermarket interventions to 'pop up' free shops, often using food as a common element.

Using reclaimed and salvaged materials wherever possible I ensure the aesthetics remain synonymous to the ethics. My work embodies a positive approach to activism. For me the work is not only about plant growth; it's the experience, the cooking, the eating and the imagining.

I studied Contemporary Photography at Northumbria University, following this I worked on Organic farms worldwide before settling in the South West.



GRADUATING STUDENT

Arabella Pio

MA Art & Environment

I'm fascinated by the complexity of reality, the invisible thread that connects events apparently very distant from each other. Through my practice I try to discover, create and investigate such connections.

My aim is to create disruptive fragments of time and space where a change, although infinitesimal, can take place, diverting imagination from the familiar trajectory. My projects are social and cultural inquiries about myself, others and the environment we share. I believe in the existence of dots that need to be connected to fully express their potential. Each single one is essential to the system for its survival.

I believe baking bread can connect the dots. I believe gardening can connect the dots. I believe cooking a meal can connect the dots. I believe talking to strangers can connect the dots. I believe walking can connect the dots. I believe telling a story can connect the dots.

I believe that simple, individual actions can propagate and generate important social, political and economical changes.

That's my practice.



GRADUATING STUDENT

Bryony Stokes

MA Art & Environment

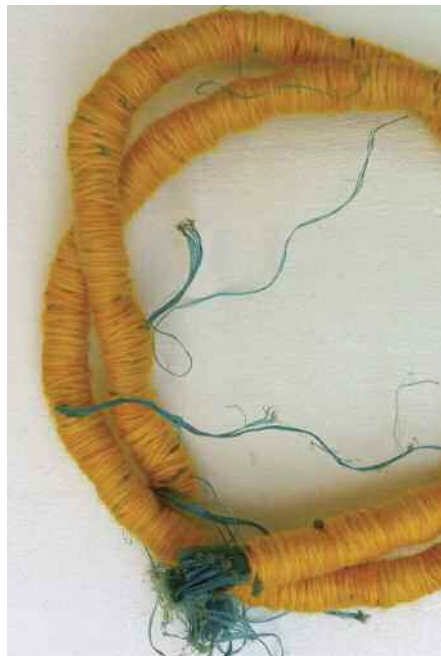
'Bryony Stokes loves the power film has to speak to all groups within and across societies. She aims to use her technical and story-telling skills to inspire positive change in people's lives'

Humanity productions.tv

In a world of urgent environmental issues all struggling to be expressed, I use film and photography to bring art and activism together. By converting potentially impenetrable or alienating subjects into these accessible mediums I make the debate more digestible.

Since completing my Fine Art degree ten-years ago, I have worked in a variety of multimedia capacities. The last five year's saw a focus on short online documentaries about a range of ethical subjects. This resulted in a move to Cornwall to specifically address environmental issues. I have now turned to look at my own attitude towards consumerism instead of using external subjects to tell a story. By living without buying anything new for a year I explored my own and others approaches to art and activism.

www.bryonystokes.com



GRADUATING STUDENT

Clare Thomas

MA Art & Environment

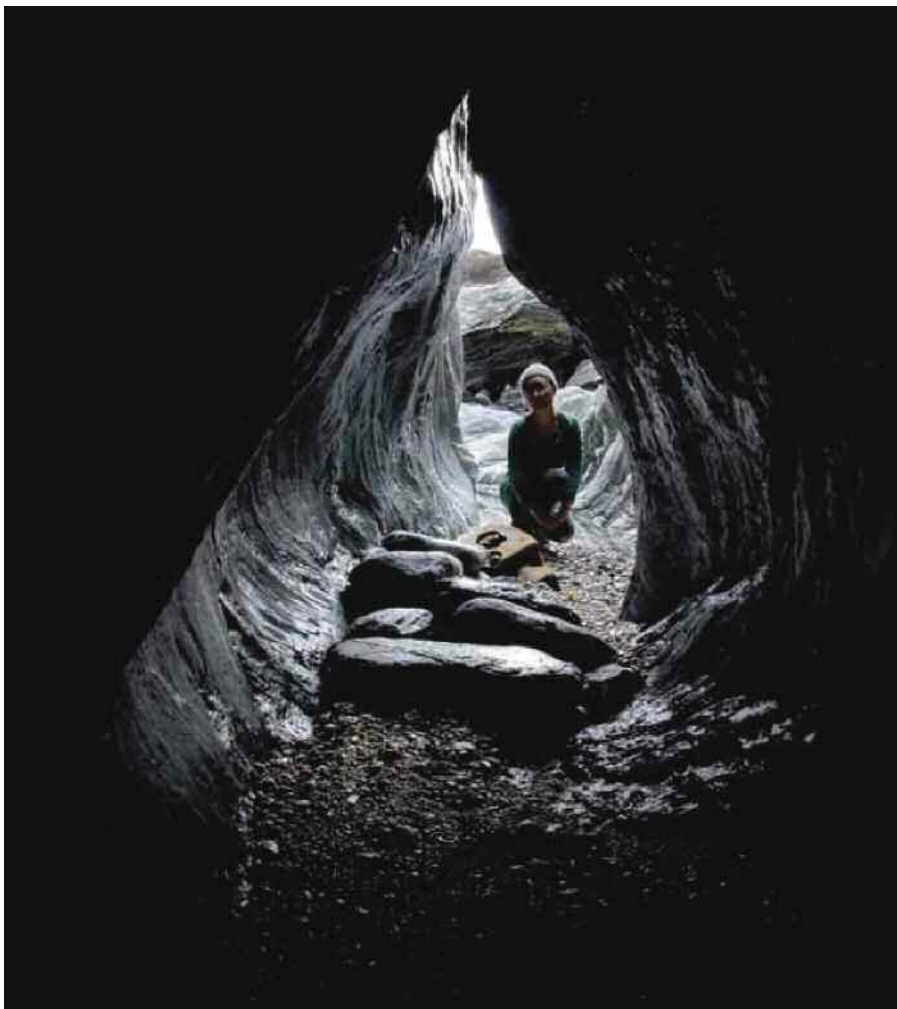
You, who live by the sea, it is
a small thing to close your gate behind you and
head to the beach. And once there, it is
a small thing to walk into the cold water or
lie on the beach, feeling the press of pebbles.
And once you have sunned yourself enough, and
let your body float in the sea enough, and
sunk your feet into the sand enough, it is
a small thing to pick up a few pieces of plastic, or foam
and take them away with you.

If we have souls, surely your soul will remember
the touch of air and water and pebble and
hold them for dark days later.

And if there are spirits, surely they will see you and
remember that you took care of something greater than yourself.

And if there are gods of small things, surely what you have
done will sustain them for just a little longer.

www.cleaningbeaches.wordpress.com



GRADUATING STUDENT

Megan Treasure

MA Art & Environment

My work often blurs the distinction between aesthetics and function by challenging the audience to go beyond looking, and instead touch or even climb inside an art piece. Some of my works include usable outdoor structures for people to engage with in their environment.

I predominantly work with clay because of its elemental ability to remind us of the earth. I frequently elaborate on the female form because of woman's ability to transmit a message of inclusion and acceptance. Depicting elements of the environment in conjunction with anatomy and structure, my work engages with ecological awareness arousing thoughts about our responsibilities to our selves and environmental wellbeing.

I study Anatomy, Anthropology, Botany, and Horticultural Sciences and use this knowledge as catalysts for my artwork.

I have a BA in ceramics and a BSc in ecological restoration and sustainable agriculture. I have exhibited work in the United States and the United Kingdom.

megan.treasure.art@gmail.com

www.megantreasure.com



GRADUATING STUDENT

Peter Ward

MA Art & Environment

Can a single action be creatively catalytic in effort and effect? May we truly listen to the wind and waves and utter her words for all the world? Is a prayer from the heart as large as a shout in a crowd?

As an ecological artist, my practice is rooted in a sense of our evolving relationships within the animate earth. Art, as a holistic interdisciplinary process, is the means through which I investigate and share these relationships. It is an intimate response to the social and ecological conditions of our age.

Inspired and informed predominantly by the principles of Social Sculpture and instruments of consciousness developed by Joseph Beuys and Shelley Sacks, and by an appreciation of traditional indigenous cultures and practices, my latest project A BUNDLE OF STICKS as a simple process, has provided a rich emergent structure through which to examine and develop my work and its potential to enrich and transform our lives.

www.peterward-artist-illustrator.co.uk

www.intim8ecology.wordpress.com

Tom Baskeyfield

MA Art & Environment 2011

Tom has contributed work to Dark Mountain Book 3, and exhibited in Cultivation Field (Reading) and The Barnaby Festival (Macclesfield).

He has now taken up a part-time post as an art technician at Macclesfield College and part-time care support worker with the Rossendale Trust in Sutton.

www.tombaskeyfield.carbonmade.com

Lucy Morely

MA Art & Environment 2011

Lucy Morley has been working for a design practice in London while continuing to exhibit her own work through organisations such as Stitch: Art for Earth and The Eden Project. Lucy is currently collaborating with a furniture designer to promote sustainable materials in interior design.

www.lucymorley.co.uk

Sonia Shomalzadeh

MA Art & Environment 2011

Since leaving the course Sonia has been funded by the International Fund for Animal Welfare (IFAW) to complete an artist residency in the Azores onboard research vessel Song of the Whale, a marine mammal conservation vessel, and exhibit the resulting work. Sonia also won the 2012 Young Marine Artist award in London.

www.soniashomalzadeh.com

Freya Morgan

MA Art & Environment 2011

Freya has been working with Botanic Gardens Conservation International (www.bgci.org). Following the launch of their Ecological Restorations Alliance, which proposes “a plan to restore 100 damaged, degraded or destroyed ecosystems... on six continents” Freya is currently working on a proposal for an artwork on the premise of ‘100 sites, 100 stories’, which will focus on one key plant species from each eco-system, and tell its story.

In February 2012 Freya was invited to exhibit at the Atkinson Gallery's MA & Other Post Graduates 2012 show in Street, Somerset.

In 2011 Freya won a slow art commission at the Eden Project. As part of her commission, Freya will be researching in the forests of Chile from September 2012, focusing on the Nothofagus or Southern Beech species, survivors from the ancient supercontinent of Gondwana.

www.freyamorgan.carbonmade.com

<http://storiesfromgondwana.tumblr.com/>



Worm Squirms 3 (2010) by
RANE Research Group Leader
Daro Montag.

Research Outputs: PhD Students & Staff

There are a number of PhD students and academic staff associated with the RANE Research Group. Most of the subjects taught at Falmouth – photography, design, media, performance and fine art – are represented within the group.

Particular areas of interest this year have included questions of ecological knowledge through a case study based on the Cornish seabed; art in the public realm; social learning for sustainable development; and the role of storytelling for changing social norms in relation to environmental change.

Staff research continues to pursue a wide range of environmental and ecological issues including the relationship between natural and managed landscapes and the role of art at a time of crisis. Questions of creativity have been raised by an orchestra playing music written by apple trees and drawings produced by earthworms.

Alex Murdin

Art in the public realm and the politics of rural leisure: access and environment

Alex Murdin's doctoral project is a programme of research through practice into the explicit and implicit political policies that shape the siting, structuring and content of rural public art in the UK. Particular areas of interest are how transgressive/antagonistic and consensual/dialogic artistic methodologies function alongside core political themes of access to nature and environmentalism and how some of the aesthetic politics particular to art production in the public realm (duration, instrumentality, collaboration and effect) are differentiated in this context.

This is underpinned by the development of a theoretical framework which centres on Slavoj Žižek's call for a new social order in the face of threats to the essential commons of humanity (cognitive capital, internal nature and external nature) and Ranciere's schema of aesthetic politics and exclusion from the sensible order.

Practice based projects in 2012 have included proposals responding to specific briefs by commissioners such as a picnic site in the form of a Neolithic ceremonial landscape in the Lincolnshire marshes and more sustainable sea-side lighting in Lyme Regis that responds to the growth of bird and human populations. These works are supplemented by self-initiated projects: Submergency is a prototype portable lifeguard's chair with FM transmitter for wild swimmers which appeared at Crazywell Pool on Dartmoor and as part of the Home and the World conference, organised by Aune Head Arts in May 2012.

In 2011/12 Alex has also been directing a programme of new commissions in Dorset, N3 : Network, Nature, Neighbourhood. This has followed up issues raised at the Wide Open Space conference, convened by Alex in 2011 on art in public and the new Localism planning agenda, and his paper on the subject at Ixia's national public art conference Beyond Angels, Elephants, Good Intentions and Red-Nose Rebellion: what is the future for art in the public realm?
www.ruralrecreation.org.uk



John Hartley

The Generation of Ecological Knowledge through Visual Arts Collaborations Around the Cornish Seabed

Considering its closeness, the seabed remains remarkably unknown and, depending on who we are and how we 'look' at it, unknowable. Hartley considers the ways we make knowledge about the Cornish seabed and the costs, responsiveness and openness of such processes.

For a range of reasons, the authorities of science, industry and commercial expertise face increasing challenges when dealing with complex issues of uncertain environmental futures. None of their methods and processes are enough on their own to furnish knowledge appropriate to the changing conditions and contentious 'uses' our environments face. Ways of knowing the seabed that were truly ecological would have to be easy to undertake and accommodate multiple perspectives and inescapable uncertainty. Such knowledge, as well as the equipment and processes used to make it, would be contingent.

'Contingent Research Platform' (2012) uses low cost and highly accessible methods to reconfigure materials from discarded research environments, namely suits, desks and computers. Guided by openly available knowledge, found on enthusiast websites and video blogs, these are broken-down, then steamed, bent, lashed and sewn to construct a traditional East Greenland sea kayak. The kayak, both a historical relic and highly contemporary and unremarkable leisure craft functions as a research platform and as an instructable for others to increase their access to and knowledge of the outlands.



Nikos Antzoulatos

The Design and Application of TouchPoints to influence Behaviour Change to advance Sustainable Tourism in Cornwall.

The topic of sustainable tourism has emerged in the last decades, due to the global growth of tourism and its various damaging by-products in a number of environmental, social and economical ways. One of the major ways to achieve sustainability in tourism is by influencing the behaviour and attitudes of visitor's and tourism operators. In the contemporary framework of sustainable design, many authors argue about the importance of design as a powerful means of furthering behaviour change towards more sustainable practices.

In his project, PhD researcher Nikos Antzoulatos uses "design for behaviour change" to address social, economic and environmental issues as they pertain to tourism. The researcher's main aim is to create a distributable methodology that can demonstrate behavioural and societal change through the design and application of successful product-service Touchpoint interventions to change touristic behaviour, lessen its impact and support sustainability in tourism.

Nikos is using User-Centred Design research methods and methodologies to create and field-test product/service design interventions (TouchPoints) that influence business and consumer behaviour in key tourism impact areas, in order to support sustainable tourism in Cornwall.

The project is in collaboration with Cornwall Sustainable Tourism Project (CoaST) Ltd; a non-governmental social enterprise aiming at promoting sustainability in tourism and contributing to the reach and impact of its One Planet Tourism Network.

Through the ESF funding, the industry and academia are utilised to join their skills, allowing CoaST to work with the Academy for Innovation & Research (AIR) of the University College Falmouth (the Design department), committing to develop innovative local community-based scenarios and solutions for sustainable tourism.



Daniel Metcalfe

Design for ecological reconciliation; exploring the role of design in biodiversity conservation along the Cornish coastline.

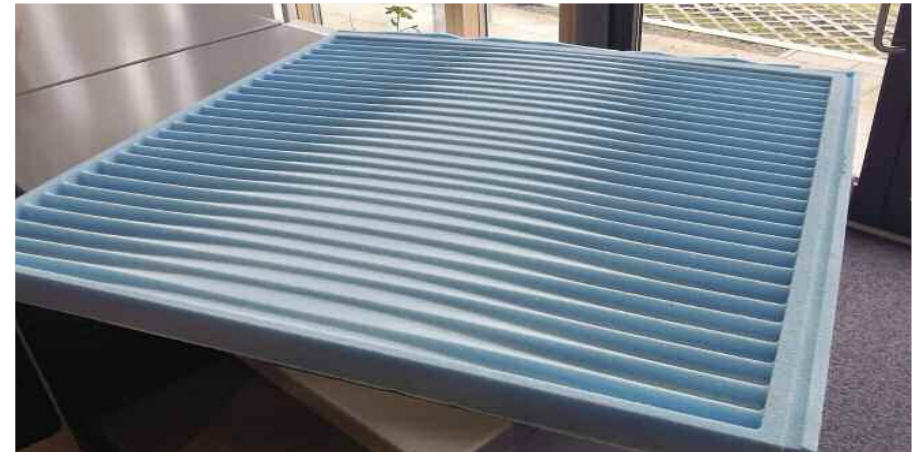
Daniel's research project aims to challenge the physical and social barriers that divide the world into human and natural habitats. These barriers are present both in the prevailing approach to biodiversity conservation and in the way human beings have shaped the anthroposphere.

The project looks at the potential of biodiversity conservation beyond reservation, within anthropogenic systems. It suggests that nonhuman species should be taken into consideration in the practice of design and architecture alongside humans.

The project focuses on artificial coastal structures which traditionally are built to resist bio-colonization and seeks to create synergies between their function for people and the potential ecological role they have in providing habitat, refuge and feeding grounds for marine life.

It uses scientific knowledge from the fields of ecology and evolutionary biology as a means of gaining insight into the needs of non-human species and combines it with design ethnography to propose habitats of coexistence for human and other species.

<http://reconciliationdesign.wordpress.com>



Natalia Ernstman

Art as a source of Learning for sustainability

Natalia's PhD 'Art as a source of Learning for sustainability' explores the potential of the arts in stimulating dialogues around sustainability issues in communities. The thesis is rooted in the idea that the term sustainable development (SD) is a 'fuzzy concept'. It argues against the prevailing notion that due to its vagueness the concept has lost meaning and credibility. It instead contends that SD purposefully lacks a clear-cut definition as its elusiveness provides a plasticity necessary for context and time specific solutions to arise. The research describes various 'fuzzy features' that revolve around multiple-perspectivity, ambiguity, uncertainty and open-endedness.

Because coping with these qualities are core to the creation of art, this thesis contends that the fuzzy feature of SD might be addressed, embraced and deployed through an art-based approach. It underpins and explores by borrowing from different art genres and examples of practices (eco-art, socially engaged art, dialogical art and site-specific performance). Based on the practice, interviews with artists and cases (i.e. works of art) the thesis proposes several art-based elements that facilitate the operationalization of sustainable development as a fuzzy concept.

This research is practice-based and in the past year the researcher mainly focused on developing and learning from a project in a village in Cornwall. This concerned a process in which she collected views of residents regarding their community and its environment by walking through the surroundings of their village. These recordings were edited into a mobile audio piece that interweaved and overlaid the collected narratives. The walking served as an embodied means to talk about the community and its surroundings, translating the global changes to a local, personal level, and exploring what the residents fear and desire for the future. The performance aimed to make the different and opposing perspectives on past, present and future tangible in the surrounding landscape. Entirely based on the voices and stories of residents it generated a non-linear experience of place, from where participants start to re-imagine positive and possible futures.



Carolyn Arnold

Carolyn's research aims to explore the potential to increase pro-environmental behaviour in Cornwall's business community by facilitating and constructing locally relevant narratives around climate change.

Storytelling is key in promoting social norms and may be more effective than simple provision of information. Studies from the field of psychology recommend positivity and engagement on a local level, therefore a large part of this research involves integrating with Cornwall's business community, both those changing their practises and those resisting.

Relevant stories from the county will be shared both online and in workshops, which Carolyn has started to gather. She utilises her experience as a practising artist in forming creative methodologies, for example by working with plastic bottles and disposable cups to inform the creation of new narratives, and objects as tools to encourage the exchange of stories.

Another important element of this research involves wider philosophical perspective - how the current situation might have come about and societal contradictions. Carolyn explored these in her paper 'Crisis of the Corporate Storyteller' at a postgraduate conference in June.



Bram Thomas Arnold

Media & Performance Department

Bram Thomas Arnold studied an MA in Arts & Ecology at Dartington College of Arts and out of this has developed an interdisciplinary arts practice that takes the act of walking as its focus and source.

His practice-based research is involved in navigating methods for the interpretation of footpaths as places, the translation of a lived experience through arts practice. His practice borrows from ecology, psycho-geography, autoethnography and poetry and out of these methodologies he produces performance installations, drawings, film and photography.

A recent participant of the Sideways festival, that took place in Belgium in 2012 he has just presented his findings from this 200km walk at a seminar organized by Cornwall Autonomous Zone (CAZ) in Penzance alongside members of the Articulating Space research group at Falmouth University. He has forthcoming presentations at the Parasol Unit in London and Juraplatz Gallery in Biel, Switzerland, both of which deal with the focus of his research project, a route Bram walked from London to Switzerland in 2009. He is also working with the ICIA in Bath and the Centre for Creative Collaboration in London to produce a series of workshops based around his peripatetic practice.

www.bramthomasarnold.com

<http://walkinghomebta.wordpress.com>



Dr Daro Montag

RANE Research Leader and Associate Professor

"It may be doubted whether there are many other animals which have played so important a part in the history of the world, as have these lowly organised creatures."

Charles Darwin *The Formation of Vegetable Mould, Through the Action of Worms, With Observations on Their Habits*, 1881.

Charles Darwin devoted the last years of his life to the meticulous study of one animal: the earthworm. He published this work in 1881 with the elegant title: *The Formation of Vegetable Mould, Through the Actions of Worms, With Observations on Their Habits*. In this book Darwin is mainly interested in the ways in which earthworms influence soil formation. At the time there was little scientific knowledge about worms, and their significance within the soil was largely unknown. He conducted numerous experiments and observed the behaviour of earthworms under many different conditions.

Daro's current research takes Darwin's original work as a starting point by adapting an experimental approach to earthworm ecology. Whereas Darwin sought to learn about the worm's senses – asking if they can see or hear, whether they have a sense of smell, or if they can feel hot or cold – Daro is seeking to discover if they have inner experience, to find out if they make decisions, or perhaps can even be considered creative.

In this project Daro collaborates with earthworms in the production of art. The creative methods allow the worms to wriggle on sheets of carbon-coated glass, producing drawings which Daro subsequently turns into large digital prints, or make drawings directly in blackberry juice on paper. These works contribute to an on-going investigation into the creative and cultural aspects of soil vitality.



Dr Andy Webster

Senior Lecturer and RANE Research Associate

During the last year Andy has been the recipient of awards including the Art Omi International Artist Residency, New York, USA, 2012. His solo exhibitions in 2012 include Dawn Chorus at the Waterfront Gallery, University Campus Suffolk, UK and Unsustainable? at the Ruskin Gallery, Anglia Ruskin University, Cambridge, UK. During 2012 Andy was awarded his doctorate for his PhD thesis entitled: 'Finding fluid form: A process aesthetic as a means to engage with the prevailing entitative model of thinking in ecological art'.

Andy's work critically engages with the prevalent ways of thinking and acting across social, environmental, and political dimensions, through developing artistic strategies as a means of resistance, and reflecting upon the relationship between dissenting acts and the production of new subjectivities. He works individually and collaboratively across sculpture, performance, moving image, sound and drawing, often as a response to the characteristics, approaches, attitudes and metaphors associated with a particular site, context or discourse.

His projects are often set up as open-ended processes so that dialogue, interactions and feedback between the work and its environment are influential in its development and realisation. He has explored these concerns through numerous projects and across varying scales from the use of electrochemical systems as generators of pattern and form, to the production of sculptural installations and collaborative curatorial projects. His recent projects can be found at:

www.andywebster.info



Mat Osmond

Lecturer and RANE Research Associate

Mat Osmond has been employed since 2009 as a Senior Lecturer on MA Illustration: Authorial Practice, as well as working on MA Art & Environment. He has recently had a PhD registered with U.W.E., to commence in 2013. Titled *Stories for Seeing in the Dark*, it will set out to weigh the value of a visual dialogue with poetry and storytelling within the contemporary engagement of artistic and ecological thinking, with a particular interest in moving that conversation away from propaganda-based models of art practice. This project will be practice-led, focusing on a cumulative accretion of image-text narrative poems.

Two installments of a current thread within this project, *deadman and hare*, have been published in 2012: in the IRIS Artists' Books collective's publication *Magic, Power, Presence: The Book*, and in Issue 3 of the *Dark Mountain Journal*, published by the Dark Mountain Project - a network of environmentalists, writers and artists that affirms the value of storytelling in renewing our understanding of what it means to be human in the face of accelerating ecocide.

<http://www.irisbookart.com> and www.dark-mountain.net



Tom Ingate

Senior Lecturer Photography, and RANE Research Associate

After five years of growing and collecting data at a seasonal pace, 2012 has been a relatively busy year for The Apple Tree Orchestra. The latest version of the score *Three Seasons* was part of the Cultivation Field exhibition at the University of Reading in June. An abridged live performance was also part of the Environmental Utterance conference hosted at University College Falmouth in September.

The Apple Tree Orchestra is an investigation into the growth cycles and maturing fertility of six young apple trees. The trees write the notes through the data collected from the falling apples; where they fell, the day they fell on and the weather conditions. This raw data is then interpreted by a group of classically trained musicians who translate the data into music. The final performance can be read simultaneously as data analysis and music, informing our understanding of these organisms that move on a much slower time frame than ours.



Deborah Baker

Award Leader BA(Hons) Photography and RANE Research Associate

The project 'Flora in Fluorescence' has developed alongside the planting of my woodland garden, which I designed and have nurtured for the last 8 years. One of my main aims is to photograph continually the growth and development of the garden over time. Consequently I have a large resource of images that chart the changes that have taken place, and the latest of these, are the images I am using to create this particular project. My attempt is to capture the experience and affect of simply being in the garden. I am aware that these images also reference issues of environmental concerns, together with plant identification and classification.

Apart from the need to record the growth and development of the garden, I also aim to challenge the problem of photographically recording this type of subject matter. I propose to explore the greater potential of the digital image to represent how we perceive the plants. Despite the abstract and expressionistic nature of these images, I intend the representation of this subject matter to be recognisable and arresting, emphasised and realised by the methods of process and production unique to digital photographic imagery

This research draws on contemporary and historical photography and abstract expressionism together with a basic understanding of botany and the identity of the species and genera of trees and shrubs collected and planted in the woodland. Each image is given a hybrid title made from fragments of the names of plants to give a distinct identity and classification of the images.



Acknowledgements:

Thank you to all those people both within Falmouth University and beyond whose generous help has contributed to a successful year of MA Art & Environment and RANE Research Group related activities and events.

For enquiries about the MA Art & Environment award or the RANE research group, please contact Dr Daro Montag:

daro.montag@falmouth.ac.uk

Photography by Bryony Stokes with supplementary images supplied by other MA Art & Environment students and staff.

Cover image: A detail from MA Graduate Saffron Orrell's work using reclaimed and salvaged materials.

Design and layout by Robin Hawes at AIR.

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