

# PORTFOLIO

Helen Kirwan

April 2018

# ABOUT THE ARTIST

[helenkirwan.com](http://helenkirwan.com)



I am a British-Irish conceptual artist. Born in Ireland where I lived for many years, I now divide my time between the UK and Brussels but travel extensively, especially in Central Asia and the Middle East. I took Social Science and Law degrees at the University of Dublin, Trinity College and practised law as a barrister for nearly twenty years before becoming an artist full time.

I took a B.A. (First Class Hons.) in Fine Art at the University for the Creative Arts Canterbury, (formerly Kent Institute of Art and Design) in 2000 followed by an M.F.A. in Fine Art Practice at the University of Middlesex, London in 2002. In 2004, I took an M.A. in Aesthetics and Art Theory (Merit) at the Centre for Research in Modern European Philosophy, now situated at Kingston University, London.

Recent exhibitions and projects include: UK, London, Space Arts Centre 2018; London, P21 Gallery 2017; Folkestone Triennial Fringe 2017. Cuba, Camaguëy International Festival of Video Art 2017; Italy, European Cultural Centre, Venice Biennale 2017 and 2015; USA, Chicago, Rapid Pulse International Performance Art Festival 2016; Turkey, Bodrum International Biennale 2017 and 2015; UK, Towner Art Gallery Eastbourne, 2017 and 2016; Portugal, Fonlad Festival, Coimbra, 2016; UK James Hockey Gallery, (2014-5); Azerbaijan, Contemporary Art Centre, Baku, 2015; France, Maison de l'Art et de la Communication Saullaumines (2015); Switzerland, United Nations, Palais de Nations, Geneva, (2014); India, Contemporary Art Centre, Delhi, (2013).

# ARTIST STATEMENT

I work with performance, moving image, installation and photography to explore loss and mourning. Recurring themes are memory and memorial and fragment and trace. The memorial function asks what action can be done, what objects can be assembled and what journeys can be taken as memorial.

Typically I work on the move and away from the studio in outdoor locations; these sites are an important part of the work. My performances usually involve doing apparently absurd and futile tasks, such as measuring the sea with buckets or counting and weighing stones on a vast shingle beach- endlessly repeated over and over again as if for eternity and as a kind of practice of the philosophical fragment. Sometimes the performances are live but more often simply filmed for subsequent presentation of an edited video work.

Drawing on my own experience of a sudden and unsettling loss, grief is conceived of as endless journeying, yearning and searching<sup>1</sup>. The performances reflect acts of inward keening and meditation, bringing memories to consciousness. I am interested in the idea of the trace: the mark that has barely been made or that may disappear, and asks was something there, and was something left behind? The performances serve also metaphorically; as a means of wayfinding through the 'fog', confusion and bewilderment of bereavement. This haptic/kinaesthetic perception and contact between body and physical environment involves apprehending different aspects of the body sequentially as one moves along. In wilderness and fog, physical contact with objects and external surroundings serves as a form of mapping (and survival); things can be discovered visually by touch and by moving the body in its immediate location and surroundings.

The yearning and searching prompts also a preoccupation with travel which I undertake widely, especially in Central Asia and the Middle East. This evokes a sense of endless movement, boundlessness, a world without borders and infinite webs of connection and disconnection. The phenomenology of travel and the liminal zones one enters on the move become heightened. The work questions time, space and existence as it oscillates between past, present and future and enquires into what is memory and how might it function and be represented. Central to this is the question of how is time in itself memorial and memory?

Intrinsic to my futile reiterations and journeys is an essential incompleteness which is itself the mode of fulfilment. The work is underpinned by my philosophical inquiry into the concept of the fragment especially as explored by Frederic Schlegel. Schlegel posited a radical recasting of the concept as a dynamic form of creative practice which aims at fragmentation for its own sake and in which totality is both finite and plural at the same time<sup>2</sup>. Thus, the fragment is a dynamic process of thinking that is both self-defined and simultaneously defining itself and which opens up questions about the relation between the finite and infinite, unity and chaos. My own use of the fragment acknowledges and explores the partial nature of the fragment as a shard of memory oscillating between past, present and future.

<sup>1</sup> Parkes C. Bereavement: Studies in Grief in Adult Life. London, England: Tavistock; 1972 and Maciejewski PK, Zhang B, Block SD, Prigerson HG. An empirical examination of the stage theory of grief. JAMA 2007 ; 297: 716– 23.

<sup>2</sup> Rodolphe Gashé, Ideality In Fragmentation; in the forward to Philosophical Fragments by Friedrich Schlegel, transl. Peter Firchow, (Minneapolis, University of Minnesota Press 1971).



## Memory Theatre 2017-

Two channel video, 4K. 42 min 23 sec Selected video stills.

[vimeo.com/215311298](https://vimeo.com/215311298)



*Memory Theatre: video. 57th Venice Biennale, European Cultural Centre, Palazzo Mora.*

<https://vimeo.com/215311298>

Selected video still.



*Memory Theatre: video. 57th Venice Biennale, European Cultural Centre, Palazzo Mora.*

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*Memory Theatre: video. 57th Venice Biennale, European Cultural Centre, Palazzo Mora.*

<https://vimeo.com/215311298>

*Memory Theatre* (2017) was first shown during the 57th Biennale di Venezia 2017 at the exhibition Personal Structures - Crossing Borders presented by the European Cultural Centre. It developed out of an earlier work on memory and memorial titled *Fragment and Trace* (2015). Now it is an ongoing experimental project, which so far has been manifested as a video installation, live outdoor performances and a live performance/installation.

The work began as a series of videoed performances carried out in Dungeness and Joss Bay, Kent, Merzouga, Morocco, and in The Burren and Connemara, Ireland. Dressed in black, I endlessly undertake apparently futile tasks, bordering on the absurd such as measuring the sea, counting stones, measuring sand, and scraping turf on an Irish bog. The resulting footage was edited to create the video and a sound piece by the award-winning Dublin-based composer Dr. Tom Lane was commissioned for the work.

It is a continuation of my exploration of the recurring themes of my practice: memory and memorial and fragment and trace. All deaths presage other deaths and as the widow awaits her own, she marks with infinite futility and pointlessness, the finitude of human existence. Again, the sensorimotor and haptic elements of the performative encounters serve also as a metaphor for navigation- as tools for way finding and personal mapping in the wilderness (of bereavement). This involves the pursuit of that which is apparently elusive; not necessarily in order to achieve a goal at the end but to consider the thing that cannot be held.

Subsequently, in October and November 2017 for audiences during the Folkestone Triennial Fringe, I performed live in the sea at Sunny Sands Beach, Folkestone, UK. I simply repeatedly walked out into the water carrying a bucket to collect the seawater and carry it back to shore; then, using other buckets lined up on the sand, the sea was 'measured'. These performances were scheduled according to the tide tables for that section of the coastline.



*Memory Theatre*: Live performance, Folkestone, UK..  
<https://vimeo.com/241898158>  
Project documentation.



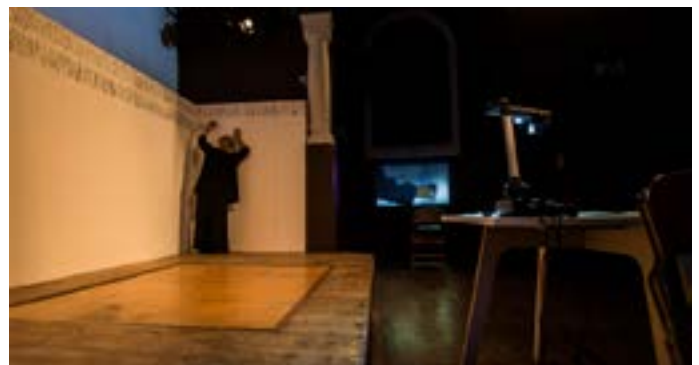
*Memory Theatre*: Live performance, Folkestone, UK..  
<https://vimeo.com/241898158>  
Project documentation.

Next, in January 2018, Memory Theatre was expanded both literally and conceptually beyond its initial form as a moving image. The video material was re-edited into fragments for installation as seven projections for a live performance-installation-experiment at The Space Arts Centre, London UK. I performed live simultaneously with the composer Dr. Tom Lane whose improvisations with sound synchronized with my mark making with lumps of charcoal on boards.

The recorded and repeatable nature of the seven videos projections stood in contrast to the singularity of the live performances. This was an opportunity to share with audiences a potential opening up of their experience to multiple interpretations, at once collective and singular. The development marked my long-standing exploration of diverse media to express memory, repetition and archive and stimulate multiple readings.



*Memory Theatre* Live performance/installation, The Space, London, UK.  
<https://vimeo.com/256805607>



*Memory Theatre* Live performance, The Space, London, UK.  
<https://vimeo.com/256805607>  
Project documentation.



*Memory Theatre* Live performance, The Space, London, UK.  
<https://vimeo.com/256805607>  
Project documentation.



*Memory Theatre* Live performance, The Space, London, UK  
<https://vimeo.com/256805607>  
Project documentation.





# Fragment and Trace 2015

Two channel video, 4K. 23 mins. selected video stills

[vimeo.com/126117878](https://vimeo.com/126117878)



*Fragment and Trace 2015, 56th Venice Biennale, European Cultural Centre, Palazzo Bembo.*

<https://vimeo.com/126117878>

Selected video still.

*Fragment and Trace 2015, 56th Venice Biennale, European Cultural Centre, Palazzo Bembo.*

<https://vimeo.com/126117878>



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*Fragment and Trace 2015, 56th Venice Biennale, European Cultural Centre, Palazzo Bembo.*

<https://vimeo.com/126117878>

## *Fragment and Trace*

*“Time present and time past  
Are both perhaps present in time future  
And time future contained in time past.”<sup>1</sup>*

The recurring themes in my conceptual practice are: memory and memorial and fragment and trace.

This digital video ‘Fragment and Trace’ concerns a woman whose husband died: suddenly. Her lament includes pacing and measuring. During these activities she summons him back to her consciousness and the remembrance of times past develops into time present. She knows the futility of this process; it’s absurdity and its exquisite agony. But it’s the futility which generates the activity and which lies at its core.

All deaths presage other deaths and sudden death does so with particular acuity. As the widow awaits her own, she traces with infinite futility and pointlessness, the finitude of human existence. The work questions time, space and existence through an enquiry into what is memory and how might it function and be represented. Central to this is the question of how is time in itself memorial and memory?

The idea of the trace is explored in a fascination with the question of the mark that has barely been made or that may disappear, and asks, was something there? And, was something left behind? Memory and memorial are not necessarily the same, but also, are not exclusive. The fragments acknowledge and explore the partial nature of the fragment as a shard of memory.

The memorial function of the work is not directly representative, in the commemorative sense- that events or persons are remembered with an object that is their equivalent- but rather asks what action can be done, and what objects can be assembled and what journeys can be taken as memorial.

The themes suggested by my interest in the fragment and the trace involve the pursuit of that which is apparently elusive; this is not necessarily in order to achieve a goal at the end but to consider the thing that cannot be held. Hence an exploration of what practices can be undertaken that are in the service of memory. Broadly, my work includes installation, assemblage, drawing, moving image, photography and mapping. There is an attempt towards the subtle, thoughtful and thought provoking. All is underpinned by my inquiry into the concept of the philosophical fragment especially as suggested by such thinkers as Frederich Schlegel.

<sup>1</sup> T. S. Eliot, *Four Quartets (Burnt Norton): The Complete Poems and Plays of T.S. Eliot, Faber and Faber, London 1969 p.171.*

transcend borders.

*transcend borders. 2017*  
Slide Projection. Selected slides.



*transcend borders 2017. Thread of Light exhibition P 21 Gallery London. UK. Selected slide, Syria.*



*transcend borders 2017. Thread of Light exhibition P 21 Gallery London. UK. Selected slide, Brandenburg Gate, Berlin.*



*transcend borders 2017. Thread of Light exhibition P 21 Gallery London. UK. Selected slide, Maalloula, Syria.*



*transcend borders 2017. Thread of Light exhibition P 21 Gallery London. UK. Selected slide, Palmyra, Syria.*



*transcend borders 2017. Thread of Light exhibition P 21 Gallery London. UK. Selected slide, south of Deir ez-Zor, Syria.*



*transcend borders 2017. Thread of Light exhibition P 21 Gallery London. UK. Selected slide, south of Deir ez-Zor, Syria.*

## *transcend borders. 2017*

Slide Projection. Selected slides.



*transcend borders 2017. Thread of Light exhibition P 21 Gallery London. UK. Selected slide, Pergamon Museum, Berlin.*



*transcend borders 2017. Thread of Light exhibition P 21 Gallery London. UK. Selected slide, Umayyad Mosque, Damascus, Syria.*

Catalogue text for 'Thread of Light' exhibition P 21 Gallery London. UK.

My visit to Syria in 2011 left abiding memories. Wonderful people and Syria's exceptionally rich cultural heritage left me with strong positive impressions even though the civil war was beginning. Now my Syrian friends are scattered abroad. We stay in touch especially one particular family, whom Germany welcomed.

I have never made art work about Syria: this seems impertinent with the war so bleak. Nevertheless I was pleased when the curator Asmaa Alanbari invited me to participate in Thread of Light at the P21 Gallery, London. This presented an opportunity to offer a reminder that peoples and cultures can connect rather than oppose. We need to hold onto threads of light in a world darkened by prejudice and divisions.

*transcend borders* is an assemblage of naïve 'snaps' originally taken as personal mementos, not for exhibition. Nevertheless, such every day, dead pan images subtly convey that which has been lost. Images of Syria 2011 have been interwoven with images recently taken in Europe. The fine lion statue outside the Damascus museum, the great Pergamon museum Berlin; the interconnectedness of cultures and peoples. A Kebab shop in Europe where a friend now works; his daughter's name on the window to remind him of why he keeps going despite long hours and low pay. Recently Syrian friends and I saw the magnificent reconstruction of the Ishtar Gate (c. 575 BCE) in Berlin with hundreds of visitors from all the world. It originates from Mesopotamia, now modern Syria and Iraq. Webs of connections, before our eyes.

*Image of the Road.*

## *Image of the Road. 2013-*

During Image of the Road (2013- ongoing, with Simon Pruciak), we documented a 19,000 Km. journey across 10 countries by car along the E40 route from Calais to Kazakhstan.

The E40 was conceived by the UN to promote trade and help the regeneration of Europe after World War II. It is a complex physical and communal social space, a dynamic, trans-national and multi-cultural web of connections and disconnections. The concept of an overarching route evokes a sense of borderlessness yet outside the European Union distinct national borders with lengthy customs and immigration procedures seem to emphasise the arbitrariness and potential instability of these frontiers.



*Image of the Road. 2014-15*  
*James Hockey Gallery, Farnham, UK:*  
<https://vimeo.com/108910507>  
<https://vimeo.com/119118625>

Digital image: part of installation- four channel video, slide projection and artefacts.



*Image of the Road. 2014-15*  
*James Hockey Gallery, Farnham, UK:*  
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Digital image: part of installation- four channel video, slide projection and artefacts.

## Tracing Lines

by: Jane Madsen

paper written for the exhibition *Image of the Road* at the James Hockey Gallery, UK.

*Image of the Road* by Helen Kirwan and Simon Pruciak explores the trans-European route: E40, which stretches across Europe to Central Asia from Calais in France to Ridder in Kazakhstan, through ten countries - France, Belgium, Germany, Poland, Ukraine, Russia, Kazakhstan, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan and Kyrgyzstan. *Image of the Road* considers what links Europe and Asia and creates a tension between them as geographical and political entities. Edward Said identified the spatial, conceptual and political questions of place: 'Just as none of us is outside or beyond geography, none of us is completely free from the struggle over geography.'

The E40 traces a line across the conjoined landmass of Europe and Asia utilising ancient elements of the silk routes and prehistoric migratory tracks it is a physical reminder of tens of thousands of years of mobility of the European and Asian peoples. Kirwan and Pruciak's artwork is a construction of many layers of time – the time of the journey, the time in the car, the time of the moving image and the archaeological layers of time beneath the material surface of the road. The road is the subject and the object of the installation. The artists do not insert any self-referential experience of undertaking the journey and there is an absence of the biographic from the work.

The persistence of the road is the compelling image of the materiality of a black line – sometimes in the newly laid surface as it is in Poland or other times fragmented and crumbling, but always there. The road appears in the installation in two ways: firstly, through the windscreen as a vanishing point stretching out in the never-ending distance and secondly, in the horizontal shots from beside the road where the lateral movement of the traffic bisects the image. The horizontal exploration of the road is the continuous thread throughout, as the geography of Europe unfolds to the Central Asian republics. There is an absence of the vertical intersect of the political borders on the E40, the difficult crossings and the demarcations of separate political terrains are not shown, instead the E40 as a continuous space becomes a conceptual, but unintelligible and uncertain unity.

The dead time of driving is measured in the accidental, mismatched score created by the incidental sound of the radio inside the car – popular music, cheery voices, advertisements, and news, and in the delays of traffic jams where engines, car horns and everyday life intermingle and in the swishing, slip stream rush of wind as the traffic passes the camera when it is parked by the side of the road. While Kirwan and Pruciak set out to avoid the picturesque concentrating instead on the poetics of the quotidian E40, the scale of the landscape of the steppes of Central Asia where the sky, horizon, and road meet finds an unintentional sublime through the scale of these unknown and largely unrepresented places.

Throughout *Image of the Road* Kirwan and Pruciak ask questions about place and space, and about the pointlessness of such a venture to the end of Europe and all the way across Central Asia. The E40 stops, but does not really end, despite reaching its limit in Ridder, a seemingly arbitrarily chosen, unremarkable small town in Kazakhstan near the borders of Russia and China. Ridder, on the E40 is an uncertain edgeland, it is not a boundary; yet is defined by negations: it is not Europe, not the end of Central Asia – it is not China, not Russia, and at the same time not quite on the absolute delineation of the border – it is a place, but not somewhere. As such, there is no sense of a destination, no arrival and no ending to the journey. Travelling to a place of no significance and empty of meaning underscores the pointlessness of the E40 as a total entity that is at the same time a space and a place and an idea envisaged with reference to possible need for movement. Throughout *Image of the Road* the concept of the part and whole is questioned since the road is both a single place, and, a series of points that are joined together in an aggregation of parts. Perhaps, the only way the vast geography of the E40 can be understood is as fragments of the whole.

October 2014

Dr. JANE MADSEN is an artist working in film and video, installation, experimental film, and documentary. Madsen currently teaches at London College of Communication, UAL. She recently completed her interdisciplinary research in a practice-based PhD in Architectural Design at the Bartlett School of Architecture and the Slade, UCL, London.



*Image of the Road. 2013-*



*Image of the Road* 2013.  
<https://vimeo.com/108910507>  
<https://vimeo.com/119118625>  
Giclée print on archival paper.



*Image of the Road* 2013.  
<https://vimeo.com/108910507>  
<https://vimeo.com/119118625>  
Giclée print on archival paper.



*Image of the Road* 2013.  
<https://vimeo.com/108910507>  
<https://vimeo.com/119118625>  
Giclée print on archival paper.



*Image of the Road* 2013.  
<https://vimeo.com/108910507>  
<https://vimeo.com/119118625>  
Giclée print on archival paper.

*Image of the Road* - Conference.  
University for the Creative Arts, UK.  
10 January 2015.

## TRACING LINES | CALAIS TO KAZAKHSTAN

# Conference

## 10 January 2015, 10am – 5pm

### UCA Farnham

BOOK TICKETS

#### THE EXHIBITION

The exhibition *Image of the Road* by Kirwan and Pruciak in the James Hockey Gallery at University for the Creative Arts Farnham explores the trans-European route E40, which stretches across Europe to Central Asia through ten countries – France, Belgium, Germany, Poland, Ukraine, Russia, Kazakhstan, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan and Kyrgyzstan; parts follow prehistoric ancient pathways and sections of the so-called silk routes.

*Image of the Road* comprises a four screen video installation, photographs and found objects gathered during the artists' journey of 54 days along the entire E40 in 2013. It considers what links Europe and Asia and creates a tension between them as geographical and political entities. The E40 is presented as both a concept and a complex physical and communal social space – a dynamic trans-national and multi-cultural web of connections and disconnections.

The exhibition has been organised by Richard Hylton, Cultural Programme Curator, Surrey. It runs from 7 November 2014 – 10 January 2015. A limited edition risograph poster with text by Jane Madsen accompanies the exhibition.

#### THE CONFERENCE

Using the exhibition, *Image of the Road*, as its starting point, University for the Creative Arts Farnham presents a one day conference, *Tracing Lines | Calais to Kazakhstan* which will examine how the trans-European route the E40 might be conceived, mapped, experienced and 'understood', in relation to post-Soviet politics of Central Asia.

Tracing Lines provides an opportunity to consider the role and ways in which film and moving image are employed to explore history, identity and approaches to interrogating the concept and experience of 'place' in non-narrative film. Presentations by artists, filmmakers, film theorists, historians and archaeologists will span a range of topics including film, archaeology, the politics of authoritarianism and water in Central Asia.

#### Ticket Prices

General – £10  
Students – £5

#### Date & Time

10 January 2015, 10am – 5pm

#### Address

Lecture Theatre W02  
University for the Creative Arts  
Falkner Road  
Farnham  
Surrey GU9 7DS

#### Further Information

+44 (0) 1252 722 441  
[www.ucreative.ac.uk/galleries](http://www.ucreative.ac.uk/galleries)

#### SPEAKERS

**Dr Tim Williams**  
Senior Lecturer, Institute of  
Archaeology, University College  
London

**Dr Rico Isaacs**  
Senior lecturer, International  
Studies, Oxford Brookes University

**Jane Madsen**  
Artist and filmmaker, PhD candidate  
in Architectural Design at the Barlett  
School of Architecture and the  
Slade, University College London

**James Swinson**  
Film theorist, Central Saint Martins,  
University of the Arts London

**Helen Kirwan**  
Conceptual artist working in  
installation, assemblage, drawing,  
photography and moving image

**Simon Pruciak**  
Lens-based artist working across  
photography, moving image and  
installation

**Dominic Rahtz**  
Senior Lecturer, History and Theory  
of Art, University for the Creative  
Arts Canterbury

**Professor Nicky Hamlin**  
Filmmaker and writer on artists' and  
experimental film and video, University  
for the Creative Arts Canterbury

Image of the Road. 2013-  
'Confined Projections'



Image of the Road: 'Confined Projections' 2016.  
International Festival of Projections, University of Kent, UK.  
*Digital image, installation.*

## *Image of the Road.*

'Confined Projections' International Festival of Projections, University of Kent, UK.



Image of the Road is a collaborative work by Helen Kirwan and Simon Pruciak. The video traces their 10,600 mile journey along the E40, a transnational highway between Calais in France and Ridder in Kazakhstan. Conceived by the UN after the Second World War, the E40 snakes through ten countries from West to East and partly overlays the ancient silk routes that have, for centuries, facilitated commercial movement and migration between the regions.

The phenomenology of motorized movement was one of the impulses behind Image of the Road and the video provides ample opportunities for one's embodied perception of the blurred tarmac and road signs whizzing high above. The camera mechanically recorded the highway spectacle while the artists relinquished all control, removing the possibility of mastery and command of the journey not only for themselves but also for the viewers. "We deliberately put the visual imagery in disorder as we wanted to disrupt the notion of the linear and the concept of the road moving smoothly from one country to another" explains Helen. The radio songs that happen to play in the car are another source of incongruity - English songs blare loudly from the Kazakh radio station so identifying countries by language proves problematic.

The two artists nor their car appear in the video because, as Helen explains, the work is not about them. Simon adds to this that the work can be seen "as an indexical finger moving along on the map and it is not leaving the space of the road." The focus on the road is apparent - it is seen from front, back and side. Helen likens this aesthetic to an "Ed Ruscha approach which is about not contriving." "The camera always occupies the same position in the front or the same position when filming from the side so the subjective choices are reduced to a minimum. It was a mechanical observation rather than us choosing interesting material"

Issues of culture and nationhood as well as site-specific political and ecological awareness became part of the journey's investigation. E40, purportedly signifying unity and cohesion, has frequently revealed profound differences of appearance and treatment. As Simon puts it, "it is an artificial, man-made concept. You can see how well-organized it is in Europe but this doesn't happen that much in central Asia. Everyone drives the way they want to, children play football on the road at night." The video footage maps out a highway which relentlessly alternates between a four-lane textbook perfection and a patchwork of broken concrete slabs or even a pile of sand, hardly distinguishable from the surrounding arid fields. The Image of the Road lies at an intersection of the multiple meanings of its title - on the one hand, a physical representation of the road's many faces and on the other its conceptual, abstracted image that reads more like a distant metaphor than a viable plan. There is scope for deliberating these notions in between honking cars and the horizon stretching into infinity but, ultimately it is the road and the transitions it triggers - in time, space, perception, comprehension - that takes centre stage.


Text by: Miroslava Kotuličová in the publication 'Confined Projections' Pub.Univ Kent ISBN:1-902671-97-X

*And May There Be No Sadness of Farewell.*

*And May There Be No Sadness of Farewell.*

29.08.14 – 10.11.14

**HELEN KIRWAN & SIMON PRUCIAK  
WITH SOUND BY TOM LANE**



39 TONTINE STREET FOLKESTONE CT20 1JT / THURS-SUN 13:00-18:00

**'AND MAY THERE BE NO  
SADNESS OF FAREWELL'**

Exploring the role of the sea as boundless territory, based on a line from Alfred Tennyson's poem *Crossing the Bar*,  
*'...and may there be no moaning at the bar when I put out to sea...'*

## *And May There Be No Sadness of Farewell.*



Digital image: documentation of video installation .

This video, filmed between Folkestone and Sandgate was inspired both by the theme of the Folkestone Triennial (2014) LOOKOUT, devised and curated by Lewis Biggs, CBE. 'Lookout' in this context is taken to mean the view towards the sea and infinite horizon.

This work invoked Alfred Lord Tennyson's poem Crossing the Bar in which he contemplates his own transition from life to death in terms of putting out to sea. At first the video seems to comprise only one static image showing the elements earth, sea and sky in three layers. However, slowly, and almost imperceptibly, these begin to 'move' across the screen, shifting and evolving as if in a process of transition.

An ambiguity between movement and stillness, the discontinuous and the continuous is suggested by the slight movement of almost static images. Time seems suspended as seascape follows seascape in one continuous progression. Whilst firmly of this world, these video images also imply the infinite and universal. Tennyson hopes for a smooth crossing as he commences his voyage towards death.

Homer sometimes refers to the sea as apeiron- boundless, beyond the imagination or concept of 'man'. Perhaps as Heraclitus suggests, ultimate reality is infinite, not subject to death or decay but rather to that which continuously generates resources anew and from which everything we can perceive is derived. Hence there need be 'no sadness of farewell'.

The division of the frame into the thirds; earth, sea, sky; each section equally relevant and irrelevant creates symmetry evoking the tranquility which Tennyson hopes for during his voyage, untroubled by 'moaning' i.e. turbulence over the (sand) bar. Three is the only number to equal the sum of all those below it, and the only number whose sum with those below equals the product of them and itself. It has universal significance, applying to: birth, life, death: beginning, middle, end: past, present, future: heaven, earth, water: body, soul and spirit.

The video encourages the viewer to linger and reflect on mortality, to encounter the potential for interpretation and even transformation through his/her own experiences and perceptions.

*ARCHIVE AND MEMORY  
(INDIA 1889- 2017)*



## *ARCHIVE AND MEMORY. 2017 -*

I am working on a project concerning archive and memory prompted by family albums of photographs taken in Southern India between 1889 and 1924.

It is deeply rooted in India's colonial past in what in southern India is now usually referred to as 'the British times'. It touches memory and archive and at this early stage, it remains to be seen how it can and will develop.

Lionel Edward Kirwan, who travelled to India in 1889 become a coffee planter and took many photographs, in particular, of the Santawerry and Arabedicool coffee estates the surrounding countryside near Chikmagalur in the Western Ghats. He also had close associations with Coonoor, Ootacamund and Chennai (formerly Madras); he was on the editorial staff of the 'Madras Mail' and secretary of the Madras Agri-Horticultural Society.

I spent last August finding the precise locations of these historic photographs together with photographer Simon Pruciak with the aim of re-photographing them. Starting in Bangalore where Lionel is buried, we travelled near Chickmagalur, visiting the coffee estates which Lionel once owned and staying in one of the plantation bungalows where he once lived. We then travelled to other places he photographed such as Jogg falls Gorsoppe, Koppa, Madakari, Mysore, Coonoor, Ootacamund, the Nilgiris hills and then Chennai, before returning to Bangalore.

*ARCHIVE AND MEMORY. 2017 -*



Roses. Calotype print on paper: 1889 - 1924.



Roses. Giclée print. 2017.



Drying field. Calotype print on paper: 1889 - 1924.



Drying field. Giclée print: 2017.



Coolies house. Calotype print on paper: 1889 - 1924.



Coolies house. Giclée print: 2017.

*Perpetum Mobile.*

*Perpetuum mobile.*



Digital image: project documentation on parts of the Czech/  
German/Polish borders.



Digital image: project documentation on parts of the Czech/  
German/Polish borders.

## Perpetuum mobile.



Digital image: archival research from; The Times Atlas of the Second World War, (1989) Times Books, London.

*perpetuum mobile* is the working title of a new project I am filming and researching which aims to be a meditation on memory in terms of the fractured narratives of epic journeys. People have been on the move since the beginning of time. However traumatic journeys around the globe are undertaken to seek refuge from genocide, massacres, disappearances, persecution, wars and totalitarianism throw everything- peoples, belongings, ideas and identities- into flux.

Estrangement and displacement are life-changing: mourning and personal grief coalesce into a collective pain of separation and loss. It is now recognized that memories of violence have an impact on second, third and possibly further generations of the survivors. "For a child of exile, the interior landscape of one's psychic life becomes a matter of moving between different border crossings of the past, in which memories are 'housed' in different languages".<sup>1</sup>

This project focuses specifically on the mass migrations of people caused by enforced expulsions during World War II (1939-45) especially across points where the Polish, Czech and German borders now coincide. I have begun videoing performative activities in the Czech Republic on locations within walking distance of the German and Polish borders. I have conducted interviews with Syrian Bedouin refugees now living in that region. These will be weaved into the work which will be presented as a multi-channel video comprising film, archival material and text. The aim is to avoid documentary realism. Instead I will present a poetics of affect as an alternative approach to the dialectic of history and memory. Through 'discontinuities and associations using a multiaccentuated, performative and reflective mode of address'<sup>2</sup>, I intend to open up an interpretative space for the viewer and touch on the universal themes of journeying, mass migration, cultural displacement and the arbitrariness of national borders.

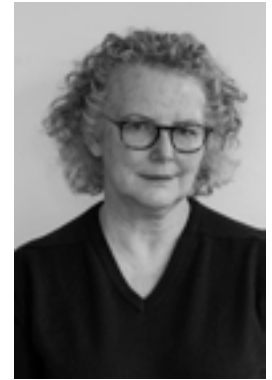
1. Malik, Amina, Conceptualising Black British Art through the lens of Exile, in *Exiles Diasporas and Strangers*, Mercer, Kobena (Ed); MIT Press with Iniva; Conneticutt, USA & Lobdon, 2008 p 179. and Mercer, Kobena, *Diaspora, Culture and the Dialogical Imagination: the aesthetics of black independent film in Britain*, in 'Welcome to the Jungle', New York and London: Routledge 1994, 58.

2. Fisher, Jean, *Diaspora, Trauma and the Poetics of Remembrance*, in *Exiles Diasporas and Strangers*, Mercer, Kobena (Ed); MIT Press with Iniva; Conneticutt, USA & Lobdon, 2008 p 198



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## ACADEMIC & PROFESSIONAL QUALIFICATIONS

- 2004 M.A. Aesthetics & Art Theory (Merit)  
Centre for Research in Modern European Philosophy, London, UK.
- 2002 M.F.A. University of Middlesex, London, UK.
- 2000 B.A. Fine Art (First Class Hons), Kent Institute of Art & Design, UK.
- 1979 LL.B. University of Dublin, Trinity College, Dublin, Ireland.
- 1972 B.SS. University of Dublin, Trinity College, Dublin, Ireland.

## SELECTED SOLO EXHIBITIONS/GROUP SHOWS/PROJECTS

- 2018 *Memory Theatre*. Video projection: Close-Up Cinema, London, UK.  
*Memory Theatre*. Performance/installation/experiment.  
Space Arts Centre, London, UK.
- 2017 *Memory Theatre*. Live performances, Folkestone Triennial Fringe, UK.  
*Memory Theatre*. Video 44 mins International Bodrum Biennale, Turkey.  
*Memory Theatre*. Video 44 mins, Sussex Open, Towner Gallery, Eastbourne, UK.  
*transcend borders*. Slide projection, *Thread of Light* exhibition P 21 Gallery, London.  
UK.  
*Memory Theatre*. Video Installation, 44 mins, 57th Venice Biennale,  
European Cultural Centre, Palazzo Mora, official collateral event curated by Global Art  
Affairs Foundation, Italy.  
*Fragment and Trace*. 7th Festival Internacional De Videoarte De Camagüey, Cuba.
- 2016 *Memory Theatre*. Installation, 15th International October Festival,  
Çankaya Gallery, Ankara, Turkey.  
*Memory Theatre*. Video/photographic installation,  
Centre for Substructured Loss, Berlin, Germany.  
Berlin Residency, with Centre for Substructured Loss, Toronto, Canada.  
*Fragment and Trace*. Video, 23 mins.  
Rapid Pulse International Performance Art Festival, Chicago, USA.  
*Fragment and Trace*. Video 23 mins. Towner Art Gallery, Eastbourne, UK.  
*Fragment and Trace*. Video 23 mins. Fonland Festival 2016;  
Projecto Videolab, Portugal.  
*Image of the Road*. EINA, Espai Barra de Ferro, Artist Book Fair Barcelona, Spain.  
*Image of the Road* as Mutoscope. *Confined Projection* - International Festival of  
Projections, University of Kent, UK.

- 2015 *Fragment and Trace*. Video 23 mins. colour, International Bodrum Biennale, Turkey.  
*Image of the Road*. MiM Centre for Contemporary Art, Baku, Azerbaijan.  
*Fragment and Trace*. Video 23 mins. 56th Venice Biennale, European Cultural Centre, Palazzo Bembo, Official collateral event curated by Global Art Affairs Foundation, Italy.  
*Image of the Road* in *Frontière et Territoire*. Maison de l'Art et de la Communication de Sallaumines, France.
- 2014 *Image of the Road*. James Hockey Gallery, University for the Creative Arts, (UCA), UK.  
*Propositions*. ESADHAR Gallery, Le Havre, France.  
*Propositions*. Studio 65, Rouen, France.  
*Propositions*. Brewery Tap Gallery, Folkestone, UK.  
*Let there be no Sadness of Farewell*. Video, installation, Folkestone Triennial Fringe, UK.  
*Image of the Road*. Palais des Nations, United Nations, Geneva, Switzerland.
- 2013 *Image of the Road*. Experimental Art Gallery, Contemporary Art Centre, Delhi, India.  
*Image of the Road*. Hall of Nations Gallery, IRTE, Faridabad Delhi, India.  
*Venetian Drift*. (with Jane Madsen) part of David Goldenberg's Postautonomy group, video installation, Alternative Structures, GAA, Palazzo Bembo, 55th Venice Biennale, Italy.
- 2012 *Postautonomy Research Group* with David Goldenberg and others. UK.
- 2011 *East Kent Cultural Conversations*. University for the Creative Arts (UCA), UK.
- 2010 *Drawing Together*. Parabola Arts Centre Cheltenham, UK.  
*The Sculpture Question Research Group*. Researcher-facilitator UCA, Canterbury, UK.
- 2007 *Becket Pilgrimage*. Performative project with outsidedge: Noli's Gallery, London, UK.
- 2006 *Spatial Politics* OE10 SE15 installation with outsidedge: Sassoon Gallery, London, UK.
- 2004 *Amicalement Vôtre "Jöelle Tuerlinckx + collection d'oeuvres d'amis" / "Jöelle Tuerlinckx Invité..."* installation: Musée des Beaux-Arts de Tourcoing, Lille, France.
- 2003 *Venetian Drift*. Video 18mins. colour, with Jane Madsen.  
For Omtrent de Biennale van Venetië [2003] with ASK! Architectuur Stad Kunst, Dept. Architecture & Urban Planning, Ghent Univ. Belgium.
- 2002 *Expanded/Thinking*. Installation: Quicksilver Gallery, London. UK.  
*Expanded/Thinking*. Installation: M17 Johnny's Arthouse, London, UK.
- 2001 *Action Without Knowing* with Jöelle Tuerlinckx | Argos, Brussels & Vooruit Ghent, Belgium.  
*Parallel Realities*. Installation: Quicksilver Gallery, London. UK.  
*Who Is Here: Who Is Not Here?* Installation: Byam Shaw Gallery, London, UK.
- 2000 *Sweet Art: a Banquet for the End of Art installation*. Quicksilver Gallery, London, UK.  
*It's not the End: interventions for London Biennale*  
Curated by David Medalla: London, UK.\*  
*Three: Art Projects for Social Change*: Project Facilitator and Co-ordinator / visiting artist with Public Art Research Centre (UCA) and Smith & Fowle. East Kent UK  
*COS Project (Cultural Operations and Services): interactive dialogue and installation*.  
Herbert Read Gallery, UCA, Canterbury, Kent UK



- 1999 *Sightseeing Cruise*, River Wensum, Norwich performative project with Southern Steamers, supporting East International: Norwich UK\*  
*2000 Drawings Project*. Post-Ulu group exhibition: Substation Gallery, Singapore. \*  
*Dream Plan Project*, with Footbridge to all platforms: organised by Wei, Woon Tien and Shimizu, Miho: international conference and collaborative projects; cultural mediators with David Goldenberg, Jörn Ebner & Lee Patterson: Fusion Gallery Socho-Gu Arts Institute, and Kwanhoon Gallery, Seoul, South Korea. \*  
*Homeless Project* with David Goldenberg at the Curating Post – Institutions conference and off-site talk, Co-mediator of interactive tools: ICA and Mota Gallery, London, UK.\*  
*24 Hour Smile Project*. Chelsea & Westminster Hospital, London, UK. \*  
*Roma Petlicof*. Installation curated by Peter Lewis: UCA, Canterbury, Kent, UK.  
*Homeless*. Developing a Range of Models of the Exhibition Event, Assistant to curators David Goldenberg, Rayna Nadeem and Kathy Williams; facilitator/mediator between interactive text-based tools and participants: Mota Gallery, London, UK. \*
- 1998 *Iatrogenesis*. The Queen Elizabeth the Queen Mother Hospital, Margate, Kent, UK.  
*Words of Art*. Installation, Barton Mill, Canterbury Kent, UK.  
*Suehtemorp Project*. Field museum / installation: portacabin, UCA, Canterbury, Kent, UK.  
*Ruins of Jellopolis*. Curated by Anthony Heywood & Derek Hampson: UCA, Canterbury, UK.  
*Interactive Dialogue: unlimited by temporality and geography*. UCA, Canterbury, UK.\*
- 1997 *Interactive Fax Project: transcending geographical & temporal barriers*, UCA, Canterbury, UK.\*

## TEACHING/ACADEMIC

- 2017- External Examiner. Middlesex University, BA (Hons) Fine Art for partner, AKTO, Greece.
- 2016-date Sessional Tutor. Research Dialogues, M.A. Fine Art, UCA, Canterbury, Kent U.K
- 2016-date Visiting Tutor. Research Dialogues, B.A. Fine Art, UCA, Canterbury, Kent U.K.
- 2010-date Researcher. The Sculpture Question Research Grp, UCA, Canterbury, Kent U.K.
- 2007-date Lead Tutor. Cultural & Critical Studies: BA Fine Art, BA Visual Communication Brighton University, Sussex Coast College, UK.
- 2005-2009 Lecturer/Tutor: B.A.(Hons.) Fine Art, Canterbury College, UK.

## PAPERS/ TALKS/ PUBLICATIONS /OTHER COLLABORATIONS

- 2017 Paper and screening: *Gesture, Trace and Performance* - interdisciplinary conference, UCA, UK.  
*Memory and Memorial*; talk and screening: Towner Gallery, Eastbourne, UK.  
*transcend Borders* ISBN is 978-1-5272-0905-3
- 2015 *Tracing Lines*: Conference: lecture- 'trace, fragment, experience'  
 James Hockey Gallery, UCA, UK.
- 2014 *Image of the Road*: talk, James Hockey Gallery, University for the Creative Arts, U.K.  
*Image of the Road*: talk, Brighton University, Sussex Coast College, UK.
- 2013 *Politics at the Heart of Aesthetics*: Univ. for Creative Arts, Lalit Centre, Delhi, India.
- 2005 *Footprints* [Omtrent de Biennale van Venetië [2003] /About the Venice Biennale: with Jane Madsen & outsidedge: Issue 3, ed. James Swinson, Pub. The London Group. UK.

- 2003 *Early German Romanticism's Enduring Themes in Contemporary Art Practice*  
M.A. Aesthetics and Art Theory, dissertation.
- 2003 *Venice as Theatre*, with Jane Madsen, in ASK! Magazine, [Omtrent de Biennale van Venetië [2003] Published: Dept of Architecture, University of Ghent: pp. 9-16.
- 1999 *Three, international public art project*. Curated by Smith & Fowle, with N55 (Denmark), Muf (London), Kathrin Bohm & Stefan Saffer (Germany) funded by ACE, PARC, YOTA, Danish Contem. Art Foundation and others.

## MEMBERSHIP

Visual Artists Ireland.

Artquest.

Outsidedge, South London Artists' Collective, UK.

B+K artists' collaboration with Dr. M-L Barratt.

Honorable Society of the Middle Temple, (Barristers of England & Wales), London, UK.

Honorable Society of King's Inns, (Irish Barristers), Dublin, Ireland.

Stour Valley Arts, Kent, UK. Director & Trustee, 2000-2010.

\* undertaken with Dr. Mary-Lou Barratt as B+K.

Image of the Road, ongoing, is a collaboration with Simon Pruciak.